

## The Ontological Status of *Mithyātva*: A Critical Analysis of Citsukhācārya’s Dialectical Interpretation

This paper investigates the conceptualization of *mithyātva* (falsity) within the framework of Post-Śaṅkara Advaita Vedānta, specifically focusing on the dialectical contributions of Citsukhācārya. While the foundational tenet of Advaita posits the absolute reality of Brahman and the sublatability of the phenomenal world, the formalization of "falsity" reached its logical zenith in the works of the 13th-century dialectician Citsukhācārya. The study begins by examining the philosophical necessity of defining *mithyātva* as a means to uphold *advaita* (non-duality) against the realist critiques of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and the dualistic challenges of *Dvaita Vedānta*. Central to this analysis is Citsukha’s *Tattvapradīpikā* (Citsukhī), wherein he presents a plurality of definitions for falsity. While Madhusūdana Sarasvatī’s *Advaitasiddhi* later canonized five primary definitions—attributing the fourth specifically to Citsukha—this paper highlights that Citsukhācārya himself explored ten distinct formulations. Furthermore, this article engages with the polemical landscape of the period, specifically addressing the counter-arguments raised by Vyāsātīrtha in the *Nyāyāmṛta*. Vyāsātīrtha identifies eleven definitions of *mithyātva*, asserting their logical fallaciousness (*duṣṭatva*). By critically analyzing Citsukha’s definitions in light of these criticisms, this paper seeks to elucidate the evolution of the concept of *anirvacanīyatva* (indescribability) and its role in Advaita ontology. The study concludes that Citsukhācārya’s interpretations provided the necessary logical rigor to transition Advaita from a descriptive metaphysics to a sophisticated dialectical system capable of addressing the rigorous demands of Indian logic (Navya-Nyāya).

**Keywords:** Advaita Vedānta, Citsukhācārya, *Mithyātva*, *Tattvapradīpikā*, *Nyāyāmṛta*, Dialectics, *pratiyogitva*, *sattva*, *asattva*.

Brahman is the only reality or *tattva* in Advaita philosophy. There’s a saying that Advaita Vedāntins hold: “Brahma Satyam jagannmithyā jīvo brahmbhaiva nāparaḥ”<sup>1</sup> But this eternal truth, i.e. Brahman, is the only reality that is not projected to ordinary people through empirical perception. In bondage, every *jīva* experiences the world as real and accurate and knows others as different from him. Thus, in bondage or the veil of ignorance, *jīva* does not know only reality or *ekatva*. They have the knowledge of duality when they are fully covered by ignorance. Because according to Advaita Vedānta, the truth is one and only, i.e. Brahman; there is no duality either. That is why, to establish non-duality or Advaita, it is necessary first to demonstrate the falsity of duality. Only then can we establish non-duality or *advaita*. Ācārya Madhusūdana, thus, at the beginning of his notable work, *Advaitasiddhi* starts with- “*tatrādvaitasiddheḥ dvaitamithyātvāsiddhipūrvakatvāt dvaita mithyātvameva prathamam upapādanīyam.*”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Brooks, R. (1969). The meaning of “real” in Advaita Vedānta. *Philosophy East and West*, 19(4), 385–398.

<sup>2</sup>Bāgci, Śītāmśuśekhara. (1971). *Advaitasiddhi* (Vol. 1, p. 29). Vārāṇasī: Tārā Publikeśans.

1 To establish that Brahman is the only real entity, Advaitin has to show that  
 2 apart from the Brahman, all the things that appear real are false and identical to  
 3 the Brahman. This phenomenal world seems real, and we all experience it. In  
 4 this sense, Advaitin claims the falsity or mithyātva of the world. The question  
 5 remains: if this projected real world is false to the Advaitins, then in what sense  
 6 do they consider the world as mithyā or false? To establish the dvaitaprapaṅca  
 7 as false, the nature and meaning of falsity or mithyātva is to be discovered first.  
 8 Establishing non-duality would be unascertained without knowing the nature  
 9 and meaning of falsity. That is why the concept of falsity in Advaita is so  
 10 essential. Our tradition says, “*lakṣaṇapramāṇabhyām hi vastusiddhiḥ*”<sup>3</sup>—  
 11 through definition or *lakṣaṇa* and evidence or *pramāṇa*, an object is established.  
 12 There is no other way to establish any entity. Therefore, to know whether there  
 13 is anything such as falsity or mithyātva in Advaita philosophy, we need first to  
 14 understand the definition of falsity, which we need to analyze.

15 Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, in his well-known book *Advaitasiddhi*, has  
 16 discussed five different definitions of falsity, i.e. mithyātva. None of the five  
 17 definitions presented in the text is his own. The following verse bears the names  
 18 mentioned by Madhusūdana—

19  
 20 “Ādyaṁ syāt pañcapādyuktam tato vivoraṇodite  
 21 Citsukhīyam caturtham syādantyaṁānandavodhajam”<sup>4</sup>

22  
 23 Among these five, the first one is written by Pañcapādikākāra. Vivaraṇakāra  
 24 gives the second and the third. Citsukhācāriya gave the fourth definition of  
 25 falsity. The last, i.e. the fifth definition of falsity, is provided by the author of  
 26 *Makaranda*, Ānandavodhācāriya.<sup>5</sup> These five definitions of falsity are as  
 27 follows:

28  
 29 *Sadasattvānadhikaraṇatvam, Pratipannopādhou*  
 30 *traikālikaniṣedhapratiyogitvam, Jñānanivartyatvam,*  
 31 *Svāśrayaniṣṭhāyantabhāvapratiyogitvam, and Sadviviktatva.*<sup>6</sup>

32  
 33 In this connection, this is to state that Citsukhācāriya, in his  
 34 ‘*pratyaktattvapradīpika*’ has mentioned ten different definitions of mithyātva or  
 35 falsity. Vyāsātīrtha, the author of *Nyāyāmṛta*, has also given eleven definitions  
 36 of falsity and out of them, four definitions of falsity which are not mentioned in  
 37 the citsukhī. However, It is to be noted that all these definitions of falsity are  
 38 fallacious or duṣṭa. Let us analyze these definitions one by one.

<sup>3</sup>Mondal, B. (2021, January). Analysis of the first definition of ‘Mithyātva’ in the *Advaitasiddhi* of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. In G. Nath & O. Mahaldar (Eds.), *Philosophical Queries* (pp. 46–65). Kolkata: Cognition Publications.

<sup>4</sup>Gosvamī, Sītānāth. (1957). *Vedānta Darśane Paramārthatattva*, (p. 117). Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustaka Bhandar.

<sup>5</sup>Mondal, B. (n.d.). Definition of falsity or *mithyā*: An analysis of *Advaitasiddhi*. <https://core.ac.uk/download/266990492.docx>

<sup>6</sup>Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, (1971). *Advaitasiddhi* (Vol. 1, p. 31). Vārāṇasī: Tārā Publikeśans.

1 The first definition of falsity that has been mentioned in the Citsukhī is-  
2 **“*pramāṇāgamyatvaṃ mithyātvam.*”**<sup>7</sup> That is to say, what is not the viṣaya or  
3 object of the pramāṇa is mithyātvam. In this sense, falsity is what is not known  
4 through *pramāṇa*.

5 The opponents criticized and said, according to the Advaitins, Brahman is  
6 self-manifested and cannot be known by any *pramāṇas*. Being unknown by  
7 *pramāṇas*, he is *pramāṇāgamya*. Thus, if *pramāṇāgamya* is to be considered the  
8 meaning of mithyātvam, then there will be an over-coverage of the definition in  
9 Brahman.

10 Citsukhācārya mentioned the second definition of falsity or mithyātvam as  
11 **“*apramāṇājñānagamyatvaṃ mithyātvam.*”**<sup>8</sup> This second definition of falsity  
12 defines falsity as the object of non-veridical (*apramāṇa*) cognition. This  
13 definition of falsity has also been refuted because there would be a charge of  
14 *arthāntara doṣo*. The opponent considers that if the object of non-veridical  
15 cognition or *apramāṇājñānagamyatva* is considered, then, concerning the  
16 Brahman, this world would also be the *definiendum* or *lakṣa* of this definition.  
17 This way, the fallacy of *arthāntara* or its non-intended meaning will occur. Even  
18 memory or *smṛti* is, according to the opponent, *apramā*. Thus, if this definition  
19 is accepted, it will also include memory; hence, over-coverage is necessary.

20 The third definition states falsity as **“*ayathārtha jñānagamyatva,*”**<sup>9</sup> i.e., the  
21 object of non-veridical cognition that is *mithyā*. If this definition of falsity is  
22 considered, the same charge, which applies to the second definition, will be  
23 given. But this definition removes the former charge of over-coverage in the  
24 memory. Because memory is not *pramā*, it is not the object of non-veridical  
25 cognition. So, this definition can no longer include memory.

26 Citsukhācārya then defines falsity as **“*sadvilakṣaṇatva.*”**<sup>10</sup> So, falsity is to  
27 be considered as something that is not real. Now, if this definition of falsity is  
28 considered, that will also include the hare’s horn as the hare’s horn is not real;  
29 that is *sadvilakṣaṇa*. Thus, there would be a charge for over-coverage, which is  
30 unjustified.

31 Then, there comes the fifth definition of falsity: **“*sadasadvilakṣaṇatvam.*”**<sup>11</sup>  
32 According to this definition, something that is neither real nor unreal is false or  
33 *mithyā*. The opponent has objected to this definition by showing a rule<sup>12</sup> which  
34 states an object must be either real or unreal, and there is no other alternative.  
35 So, if two objects are contradictory to each other, then if one alternative is valid,  
36 the other must be false, and that is the case; therefore, there cannot exist an object  
37 that is neither real nor unreal or which is *sadasadvilakṣaṇatva*.

<sup>7</sup>Citsukhī, p32.

<sup>8</sup>Citsukhī, p32.

<sup>9</sup>Citsukhī, p32-33.

<sup>10</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

<sup>11</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

<sup>12</sup>“*parasparavirodhe hi na prakārantarasthitiḥ. Naikatāpi biruddhānamuktimātravirodhataḥ*”  
Udayanācārya. (Nyāyakusumāñjali 3/8)

1 Citsukhācārya defines falsity as *“avidyātkāryayoranyataratva”*<sup>13</sup>. He  
 2 defines falsity as that which is either *avidya* (due to ignorance) or its effect. The  
 3 opponent has objected to this definition by saying, *“na śaṣṭha iti.”*<sup>14</sup> To refute  
 4 this definition, the opponent has said by *avidya* what the Advaitins intend to say,  
 5 is it the *anirvacanīya avidyā*? Or is it *agrahaṇa avidyā*? Or is it *mīthyājñānarūpa*  
 6 *avidyā*? The opponent said any of these three alternatives would be untenable.  
 7 Firstly, since there is nothing like *anirvacanīya avidya*, if the first alternative  
 8 meaning is accepted, the charge of *aprasiddhi* will occur. The second alternative  
 9 meaning is also absurd and will not be applicable. If the third alternative meaning  
 10 is accepted, there would be the arthāntara charge. Therefore, this sixth definition  
 11 of falsity cannot be a valid one.

12 The seventh definition of falsity, which Citsukhācārya states, is  
 13 *“jñānanivartyatva.”*<sup>15</sup> Here, the falsity is what eliminates the cognition. So, the  
 14 property of being the object that eliminates cognition is falsity. This definition is  
 15 also faulty because later cognition eliminates the former cognition. Later cognition  
 16 is an object that has the property of being the object that eliminates cognition;  
 17 therefore, it has to be considered *mīthyā*. But nobody would accept this.

18 Thus, Citsukhācārya states the eighth definition of falsity, i.e.  
 19 *“pratipannopādhou niśedhapratiyogitva”*<sup>16</sup> That is to say, ‘falsity’ is the  
 20 property of being the counter-corelative of the absolute negation of what appears  
 21 to be its own substratum. The opponent has shown this definition to be faulty by  
 22 charging arthāntara doṣa. They say the expression “pratipannopādhou” if it  
 23 means verified cognition (*pramāṇa jñāna*), which would be contradictory. If it  
 24 indicates erroneous cognition, then there would be the charge of *siddhasādhana*tā  
 25 cause all have already accepted the error and thus accepted the absolute absence  
 26 of silver in the conch shell.

27 Citsukhācārya defines falsity as *“vādhyatva.”*<sup>17</sup> *Vādhyatva* means the  
 28 property of being the object of *vādhaka jñāna* (corrected cognition). The  
 29 opponent objected by showing two alternative meanings of this definition. The  
 30 opponent asked whether the significance of this definition is the property of  
 31 being the object of corrected cognition (*vādhakajñānaviśayatva*) or the property  
 32 of being the rectified cognition itself (*vādhakajñānanivartyatva*). Both the  
 33 alternatives are defective. If the first one is accepted, the real silver will also be  
 34 the object of corrected cognition. On the other hand, if the second sense is  
 35 considered, that will apply to the later rectified cognition because the later  
 36 rectified cognition corrects the previously corrected cognition. Thus, this  
 37 definition cannot be regarded as logical.

38 The tenth definition of falsity mentioned in the *citsukhī* is  
 39 *“svātyantābhāvasamānādhītyā praṭīyamānatvaṁ mīthyātvam.”*<sup>18</sup> This definition  
 40 defines falsity as something that appears in the locus of its absolute absence.

<sup>13</sup>“parasparavirodhe hi na prakārāntarasthitiḥ. Naikatāpi biruddhānāmuktimātravirodhataḥ”  
 Udayanācārya. (Nyāyakusumāñjali 3/8)

<sup>14</sup>Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, (1971). *Advaitasiddhi* (Vol. 1, p. 31). Vārāṇasī: Tārā Publikeśans.

<sup>15</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

<sup>16</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

<sup>17</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

<sup>18</sup>Citsukhī, p33.

1 According to the opponent, conjunction(saṁyoga), disjunction(vibhāga), words,  
2 etc., avyāpyavṛtti, and thus they can appear in the locus where their absolute  
3 absence is possible. If this definition of falsity is considered, there would be a  
4 charge of over-coverage in conjunction, disjunction and the like. Therefore, this  
5 definition will also not be accepted.

6 However, it has already been stated that none of these definitions of falsity  
7 have been compiled in the *Advaitasiddhi*. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī only placed  
8 the valid five definitions of falsity in his text. Citsukhāchārya has interpreted  
9 falsity, which is mentioned in the *Advaitasiddhi* as the fourth definition of falsity,  
10 which is unique to others. This definition of falsity he has given as a form of a  
11 śloka which is as follows:

12  
13 Sarveśāmapī bhāvānām svāśrayatvena sammate I  
14 pratiyogitvamatyantābhāvaṁ prati mṛṣātmatā II<sup>19</sup>

15  
16 The author of *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* also admitted to this definition in his text.<sup>20</sup>  
17 Citsukhāchārya's exploration of falsity in "*Citsukhī*" provides a profound  
18 understanding of the nature of reality<sup>21</sup> from the perspective of Advaita Vedānta.  
19 By recognizing the world as mithyā, individuals are encouraged to seek the  
20 unchanging truth of Brahman, leading to liberation from the cycle of birth and  
21 death.<sup>22</sup>

22 However, this definition of falsity states that falsity or mithyātva is the  
23 character of being the counter-correlative of the absolute absence, which is  
24 invariably present in the locus where it seems to be present. That is to say, which  
25 appears to be present in a locus, the absence of it in the same locus is the falsity  
26 or mithyātva. It can not be said that a thing can not be absolutely negated in the  
27 locus with which it is in contact or in which it is inherent. So, the falsity of an  
28 object is what seems to be there is not. For example, threads, etc., cause clothes;  
29 if any reality exists in the clothes, it exists in the threads. Apart from the threads,  
30 the reality of clothes can not exist in other objects. Just like shell-silver, it is  
31 something positive, but it is false. Because there is the absolute negation of it in  
32 the very shell that appears to be its own locus, in this connection, the  
33 commentator states, "*Nānyatra kāraṇāt kāryaṁ na cettatra ka dad bhavet.*"<sup>23</sup> It  
34 says the reality of an effect only exists in the cause, nowhere else.

35 The opponent objected to this definition of falsity and showed that the  
36 definition could be charged with the fallacy of undercoverage. They say if the  
37 falsity is defined by 'svāśrayatveta sammate', there will be the scope of falling

<sup>19</sup>Citsukhī, p39.

<sup>20</sup>Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra. (1970). *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* (Pañcānana Bhaṭṭācārya, Trans.). (p. 191). Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar.

<sup>21</sup>Zielke, Z. (2023). Contesting religious boundaries with care: Engaged Buddhism and eco-activism in the UK. *Religions*, 14(8), Article 986. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14080986>

<sup>22</sup>Meaningful Moon. (n.d.). *Theosophy and reincarnation: Exploring the spiritual journey of the soul*. <https://meaningfulmoon.com/theosophy-and-reincarnation-exploring-the-spiritual-journey-of-the-soul/>

<sup>23</sup>Gosvāmī, Sītānāth. (1957). *Vedānta Darśane Paramārthatattva*, (p. 118). Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustaka Bhandar.

1 under-coverage in the ether etc.. Since ether, etc., are not substrated in any locus.  
2 Thus, this definition of falsity does not include ether as ether is an infinite  
3 substance, and it is nowhere āśrita. So, if this definition is accepted, there would  
4 be a charge of under-coverage or too narrow fallacy.

5 In reply to this objection, siddhāntins(the proponent) say all false objects are  
6 āśrita because only Brahman or ātmavastu is independent. Since apart from the  
7 Brahman, all are anātmavastu, and therefore being so ether is also āśrita  
8 somewhere. Thus, the charge of under-coverage will no longer be applied to the  
9 definition. Moreover, this definition is free from the charge of over-coverage as  
10 Brahman, apart from the rest of the objects, is the definiendum (lakṣa); thus, the  
11 definition does not tag to the thing except the definiendum.

12 One might say the fourth definition of falsity is the repetition of the second  
13 definition of falsity given by Vivaranācārya.<sup>24</sup> The fourth definition of falsity  
14 says that the falsity of a thing consists in its being absolutely negated in the very  
15 locus in which it presents itself. The second definition of falsity  
16 (*pratipannopādhanau traikālika niṣedha pratiyogitvam mithyātvam*<sup>25</sup>) says falsity  
17 of a thing is its character of being the counter-corelative of the absolute negation  
18 (*traikālika niṣedha*) what appears to be its own substratum. Since the fourth  
19 definition of falsity does not differ from the second definition. So, in this way,  
20 the charge of restating is inevitable.

21 To avoid the charge of restating the definition of falsity, Madhusūdana has  
22 reinterpreted the fourth definition, which is as follows: *svatyantābhāvādhikaraṇe*  
23 *eva pratiyamānatvam mithyātvam*<sup>26</sup> This means that the second and the fourth  
24 definitions of falsity are different based on the viśeṣya-viśeṣaṇa relationship. The  
25 definition differs only in so far as the viśeṣya and the viśeṣaṇa of the one are the  
26 viśeṣaṇa and the viśeṣya respectively of the other.<sup>27</sup>

27 Now, the opponent might ask, when falsity is defined as the counter-  
28 corelative of the absolute absence of the locus of itself, does this locus of the  
29 counter-corelative mean tāttvika adhikaraṇa? Or atāttvika adhikaraṇa? It will be  
30 fallacious if this counter-corelative locus is considered tāttvika. Because if T is  
31 treated as the tāttvika adhikaraṇa of X, then there can not be the absence of X,  
32 and, hence, if the absence of x is seen there in T, then T can not be the tāttvika  
33 adhikaraṇa of X.

34 The fourth definition of falsity may be objected to on the same ground as  
35 what has been put against the second definition of falsity. It has been objected  
36 that if mithyā be defined as what is eternally negated in the locus of its own  
37 appearance, the Advaita argument to prove the falsity of the world would commit  
38 the fallacy of arthāntara and as well as siddhasādhana.

<sup>24</sup>Chakraborty, Nirod Baran. (1967). *The Advaita concept of falsity: A critical study* (p. 71).  
Calcutta: Sanskrit College.

<sup>25</sup>Bhattacharya, K. (1992). *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī Advaitasiddhiḥ* (p. 143). New Delhi: Indian  
Council of Philosophical Research.

<sup>26</sup>Chakraborty, Nirod Baran. (1967). *The Advaita concept of falsity: A critical study* (p. 71).  
Calcutta: Sanskrit College.

<sup>27</sup>Bhattacharya, K. (1992). *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī Advaitasiddhiḥ* (p. 145). New Delhi: Indian  
Council of Philosophical Research.

1 A ghata appears on the ground in relation to saṁyoga. The same ghata can  
 2 be absent on the same ground in relation to samavāya. And that ghata appears in  
 3 its parts by the relation of samavāya, but it is also lacking in the same locus by  
 4 the relation of saṁyoga. Thus, the *ghata* is negated in the very locus in which it  
 5 appears. So, if the falsity or mithyātva is defined as what is eternally negated in  
 6 the locus of its appearance and the result is proving the reality of the world  
 7 instead of its falsity. In this way, the definition commits arthāntara. On the other  
 8 hand, by falsity, Advaitins mean a ghata that is present on the ground by the  
 9 relation of saṁyoga, it is negated in the same ground in relation to samavāya, or  
 10 while the ghata is present in its parts by the relation of samvāya, it is negated in  
 11 the same parts by the relation of saṁyoga. The opponent has no objection to the  
 12 Advaitin's view. In this way, this definition of falsity can be charged with the  
 13 fallacy of siddha-sādhana (proving what has already been proved).

14 To avoid this fallacy, Advaitins might say the falsity is what is negated in a  
 15 real locus in the self-same relation in which it appears in that locus. A ghata  
 16 appears on the ground in relation to saṁyoga, but it gets negated there in relation  
 17 to samavāya. Similarly, the same *ghata* appears in its parts in relation to  
 18 samavāya and gets negated in those parts in relation to saṁyoga.

19 The charge of avyāpyavṛtti may be encountered against this definition of  
 20 falsity. Conjunction (saṁyoga) is considered avyāpyavṛtti, which can both be  
 21 present and absent simultaneously in the same locus. When we say there is a  
 22 conjunction of a *ghata* on the table, the ghata is not there on the table wholly;  
 23 the point of the table where the ghata is present there is the conjunction of the  
 24 *ghata*, and apart from that, the other's point of the table there is the negation of  
 25 the conjunction of the ghata. The conjunction of *ghata*, therefore, can be negated  
 26 in the same table, which is the locus of its appearance, and it can be negated in  
 27 the self-same relation in which it appears on the table(samavāya). Do the  
 28 Advaitins say that the conjunction is false in the sense of being negatum of such  
 29 a negation? If the Advaita concept of falsity signifies only this, the opponent has  
 30 no problem with the Advaitins, resulting in siddha-sādhana. Moreover, suppose  
 31 the conjunction is considered real, even though it is negated in the same locus in  
 32 the self-same relation in which it appears in that locus, in the same logic. In that  
 33 case, the world is also to be real even though it is negated in the locus of its  
 34 appearance similarly.

35 In response to the charge of avyāpyavṛtti, Advaitins say, first of all, there is  
 36 no such object as avyāpyavṛtti, and if there is any, then conjunction is not  
 37 avyāpyavṛtti; rather vyāpyavṛtti.<sup>28</sup> When we say 'there is a monkey on the  
 38 branches of a tree', it does not reflect that 'there is a monkey on the tree'; instead,  
 39 it means that particular branches of the tree are a conjunction of a monkey.  
 40 Moreover, let's consider that conjunction is avyāpyavṛtti. There will require a  
 41 shred of evidence (*avacchedaka*) to confirm it; there will be another, which will  
 42 lead to an infinite regress in this way. Advaitins, thus, does not admit that there  
 43 is anything as avyāpyavṛtti. They say when we have apprehension such as “*vrkṣe*

<sup>28</sup>Gosvāmī, S. (1957). *Vedānta darśane paramārthatattva* (p. 120). Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustaka Bhandar.

1 *śākhāyām samyoga*” (there is the conjunction in the branches of a tree), it will  
2 indicate “*vrkṣīyaśākhāyām samyoga*” (the tree-branches has the conjunction).<sup>29</sup>

3 Now, the opponent has raised another objection against this definition of  
4 falsity. Falsity is considered eternally negated in the very locus in which it  
5 appears, and negation is determined by the self-same relation in which it appears  
6 in that very locus. To the opponent, this can never be the case. It would be very  
7 odd to say that on the same grounds with which a *ghata* is perceived to be in  
8 contact, there is absolute negation of the *ghata*, which would be contradictory.

9 Madhusūdana said the opponent thinks a thing and absolute negation can lie  
10 in the same place, which is impossible. To him, both a *ghata* and its absolute  
11 negation can exist at the same point in time. At the moment when a *ghata* resides  
12 in its parts, its absolute negation is in the threads. Therefore, there is no problem  
13 in accepting that both an object and its absolute negation may exist at the same  
14 time.

15 Opponent accepts that the pratiyogīn and its absolute absence may reside  
16 simultaneously, but what cannot be logically accepted is that the pratiyogīn and  
17 its absolute negation cannot reside simultaneously in the same locus. Because  
18 accepting such a view is contradictory, even the *prāgabhāva* and *atyantābhava* of  
19 an object are opposed in nature and cannot reside in the same locus.

20 Advaitin replies at any moment when the parts of a *ghata* (*kapala*) are there.  
21 Still, the *ghata* is yet to be made of those parts; there remains *prāgabhāva* of that  
22 *ghata*, and at that very moment, there is also *atyantābhāva*(absolute absence) of  
23 the same *ghata*. In this way, *prāgabhāva* and the *atyantābhāva* of a thing can  
24 reside at the same point of time by the relation of *kalīka-viśeṣaṇatā*; so, if both  
25 *prāgabhāva*(prior absence) and the *atyantābhāva*(absolute absence) of a *ghata*  
26 can reside in the same point of time, by the same relation of *kalīka-viśeṣaṇatā*,  
27 they can reside in the same locus as well.

28 The opponent now has brought a fresh objection that if the fourth definition  
29 of falsity is considered, there would be a charge of over-coverage in the  
30 definition because this definition would apply to *alīka* also. According to this  
31 definition, falsity is eternally negated in the locus of its own appearance. In this  
32 sense, pegasus has to be considered false as it does not exist, and there is absolute  
33 negation everywhere. So, this definition of falsity will apply to pegasus, which,  
34 according to the Advaitin, is *alīka*. But, Advaitin does make a distinction  
35 between *mithyā* and *alīka*.

36 In reply to this objection, Advaitins put a couple of arguments. Firstly, they  
37 say pegasus or this sort of object is not cognitive in nature as they are the objects  
38 of *vikalpa vṛtti*. How desire, aversion, etc., are *vikalpa vṛtti* and are not cognitive.  
39 Similarly, being the object of *vikalpa vṛtti*, pegasus cannot be considered to be  
40 an object of cognition.<sup>30</sup> Secondly, when falsity is defined as what is eternally  
41 negated in the locus of its own appearance, its appearance does not mean

<sup>29</sup>Gosvāmī, S. (1957). *Vedānta darśane paramārthatattva* (p. 121). Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustaka Bhandar.

<sup>30</sup>Bhattacharya, K. (1992). *Madhusūdana Sarasvatī Advaitasiddhiḥ* (p. 156). New Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research.

1 whatever appears as non-existent'; instead, it has to be taken as 'whatever  
2 appears as existent'.

3 The opponent (Naiyāyika) has objected to this definition of falsity. They say  
4 that when a pegasus appears in cognition, it appears as sattva or existence. How,  
5 then, can we call Pegasus alīka? They further say when one says 'pegasus exists',  
6 pegasus and existence are incompatible with each other though, but when utter  
7 together, they may give rise to the cognition, in which pegasus appears as viśeṣya  
8 and existence or sattva as the prakāra. In this way, the same charge of ativyāpti  
9 or over-coverage will occur in alīka objects as it applies to the alīka.

10 Advaitins would answer, firstly, by the expression 'pegasus exists' there  
11 cannot be any śāvdavodha (understanding) because these two words do not have  
12 capability (yogyatā) in respect of each other and therefore cannot rise to any  
13 successful understanding. Secondly, it has been clearly stated that Advaitins have  
14 made a distinction between sattva and *asattva*. By meaning 'sattva', they  
15 understand what exists three times: past, present, and future, and by '*asattva*',  
16 they know what cannot be the object of our immediate perception. Since pegasus  
17 cannot be the object of our immediate perception, it is *asattva* or alīka. In this  
18 connection, it is to be noted that Naiyāyika does not consider *asattva* as alīka.

19 Furthermore, the authority of the śruti (neha nānāsti kiñcana)<sup>31</sup> justifies the  
20 co-existence of sattva and *asattva*. When we talk about an earthen pitcher,  
21 though the pitcher becomes absent in its material cause, the law of causality is  
22 not violated. The antecedent negation of a particular pitcher resting with a  
23 particular *kapāla*, regulates the production of that particular pitcher from that  
24 specific *kapāla*. In time and in the same place, the antecedent negation and the  
25 absolute negation of the same object can co-exist.<sup>32</sup>

26 However, Citsukhāchārya's ten definitions of falsity provide a  
27 comprehensive examination of how falsity can be understood from multiple  
28 angles. These definitions collectively highlight the complex nature of falsity in  
29 the Advaita Vedānta tradition and emphasize the importance of distinguishing  
30 between the empirical, apparent, and ultimate levels of reality. These varied  
31 definitions of falsity help Vedānta students grasp the subtle nuances of the  
32 concept and illustrate how different levels of cognition and understanding can  
33 influence the perception of reality. By establishing falsity as contingent and  
34 dependent, the discussion reiterates the Advaitin principle that only Brahman is  
35 independent and self-existent.

36 In conclusion, based on the analysis of the interpretation of Citsukhāchārya,  
37 we can say,

38 Firstly, the fourth definition offers a nuanced understanding of falsity as the  
39 absolute negation within the locus of its appearance, emphasizing the illusory  
40 nature of worldly objects. This aligns with Advaita's fundamental teaching that  
41 the empirical world (jagat) is mithyā, and only Brahman is real (satya).

42 Secondly, by establishing falsity as contingent and dependent, the  
43 discussion reiterates the Advaitic principle that only Brahman is independent and

<sup>31</sup>Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 4/4/19.

<sup>32</sup>Gupta, Sanjukta. (1966). *Studies in the philosophy of Madhusūdana Saraswatī* (p. 31). Kolkata: Sanskrit Pustaka Bhandar.

1 self-existent. In conclusion, this discussion on the fourth definition of falsity  
2 deepens our understanding of mithyātvā and exemplifies Advaita Vedānta's  
3 meticulous approach to philosophical inquiry. This exploration underscores the  
4 significance of critical reasoning in reconciling empirical experience with  
5 ultimate reality, encouraging aspirants to transcend illusions and realize the non-  
6 dual Brahman.

7 Thirdly, the synthesis of *śruti* authority (e.g., *neha nānāsti kiñcana*) with  
8 logical reasoning showcases Advaita's integrative methodology and the  
9 differentiation between mithyā (illusory objects) and alīka (non-cognitive  
10 constructs like pegasus) is critical in preserving the integrity of the falsity  
11 concept.

12 Fourthly, Advaitins maintain that mithyā applies to what appears existent  
13 but is negated, while alīka lacks even empirical cognition.

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