



# The Depiction of Māyā in Endō Shūsaku's Fukai kawa

## *The Case of Isobe and Kiguchi*

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**Abstract:** Fukai kawa or Deep River is one of the greatest novels of the well-known Japanese author Endō Shūsaku. He is considered as a Catholic writer and his works has been seen through the lens of Western perspective mainly. However his works are not confined to a certain world view but depicts various world views. According to Japanese scholar Sengaku Mayeda, the Indian ideas are deeply rooted in Japanese minds and Indian and Japanese people share same sense of spiritual values. Fukai kawa depicts this shared philosophy through its plot and characters. This paper attempts to focus on Indian philosophical element of Māyā and analyse it by studying the characters Isobe and Kiguchi. The analysis will be through an Indian perspective and based on the philosophical concepts of Māyā as perceived in the Advaita Vedānta system of Ādi Śaṃkaracarya. Ādi Śaṃkara is the great philosopher and reformer. His philosophy is deeply rooted in the Indian thought system. According to one of the great Japanese philosopher Nakamura Hajime the Vedanta philosophy of Śaṃkara maintains the central position in the philosophical world of modern India.

**IndexTerms - Maya, Advaita, Vedanta, Japanese Literature, Indian Philosophy, Endo Shusaku, Adi Shankaracharya**

## INTRODUCTION

Fukai kawa (深い河 Deep River), the final novel of renowned author Endō Shūsaku is one of his best and rare work of Modern Japanese literature portraying India and various Indian themes in its main plot. It also portrays Buddhist, Christian and Hindu world views mainly and deals with the unique spirituality of India, which has served as the basis foundation of Indian civilization for thousands of years (George 2020: 213). Indian philosophy is a very complex set of philosophies and there are various schools of thought in it. There are further divisions among these schools also and sometimes they present quiet contradicting views from each other. There are nine systems of thought in Indian Philosophy which are known as Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Cārvāka, Bauddha and Jaina. These are classified into two categories, viz. Āstika system and Nāstika system. Āstika schools are those which accepts the authority of Vedas while Nāstika schools does not accept the authority of the Vedas. Cārvāka, Jaina and Bauddha are Nāstika while rest of the schools are Āstika<sup>1</sup> schools. The school of Vedānta<sup>2</sup> holds the central position among these, specially the Vedānta of Śaṃkara which is known as the Advaita Vedānta (अद्वैत वेदान्त), is considered to be prominent school of thought in Indian philosophical system. Śaṃkara who is popularly known as Ādi Śaṃkaracārya is considered as an important authority in the realm of Indian thought. His commentaries on various scriptures are well known and studied and are important part of Vedānta text. He is also considered as the reformer and revivalist of Vedic philosophy and religion in the times when it was almost forgotten. The doctrine of Māyā (माया) is an essential part of Advaita Vedānta. Scholars are divided on the fact that Māyā is native to the Vedānta or was included later by Śaṃkara and his followers due to the influence of Buddhism (Radhakrishnan 1914). In any case the doctrine of Māyā is an important and prominent part of Advaita and pivotal to its theories. There are various meaning of word Māyā and most commonly in the present philosophical context it is considered to be 'illusion' as interpreted by scholars from Śaṃkara's definition. Although it may not be enough to define Māyā in the metaphysical sense considering the philosophy of Śaṃkara. In Fukai kawa, Endō attempts to portray the Indian philosophical concepts through his characters and the plot, the concept of Māyā is one of them which is common to both Vedic and Buddhist thought.

<sup>1</sup> The contemporary general meaning of Āstika is theist and Nāstika is atheist, but in philosophical context it means one which either accept or reject the authority of the Vedas. Interestingly within Āstika schools there are some systems which believe in the god and some which do not believe in God.

<sup>2</sup> Vedānta is also known as Uttara Mīmāṃsā i.e., later Mīmāṃsā while Mīmāṃsā is known as Pūrva Mīmāṃsā or early Mīmāṃsā

## ENDŌ SHŪSAKU AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

Various of Endō's works have Christian themes and elements and he has extensively written about Christianity in his works also. Hence Endō is considered to be a Christian author and labelled as 'Japanese Graham Greene'<sup>3</sup> even though his works contain various other philosophies as well as various other elements that make him a mainstream author rather than a religious one. J. Thomas Rimer in his essay argues that even though it is a compliment since Greene is one of the finest British authors, it is a banal way to deal with the works of Endō Shūsaku in order to fit him into appropriate western style frames (Rimer 1993). According to Mark Williams the labelling only presents an oversimplified picture and obscures elements in Endō's art that establish him more within the mainstream of contemporary Japanese literature than often acknowledged (Williams 2002: 219). On the other hand, is it not possible for an author to be a Christian as well as a mainstream author? Definitely one can write on different themes and it depends on the perspective of the observer to put any label on the author depending on major themes of his works. Endō has written not only novels but articles, critiques, funny stories and various other types of literature including works with themes on Christianity and the scope of his works is broad. Even in his Christian themed literature we can find a view that contradicts the Western view of Christianity because it supports the pantheistic view of God. Although Christianity is neither Western nor Eastern in the sense of regionality, it is just Christianity. It is only due to the way the people perceive it according to their own cultural background that it may seem different in different regions. Endō perceived the Christianity according to his own Buddhist background and it differed from the way that the West see or think Christianity as. The West believes in the concept of one God. In fact, all the Abrahamic religious views<sup>4</sup> conform to this monotheistic perception of God and they dismiss the pantheistic and polytheistic view of God as paganism. Further, the concept of God in Abrahamic religions is different if not contrary to most of the East Asian religions which are closer to the Greek or Roman religions i.e., paganism. Christianity has evolved greatly from the time of Jesus Christ. It was born in Asia but that part of Asia believed in monotheistic god while the Europe and America were polytheistic. Later, when Christianity was introduced in Europe it slowly replaced Greek and Roman belief. In early Middle Ages many European kingdoms accepted Christianity. From Middle Ages the authority of Roman Empire began to fade and the dominance of the Church started increasing. The notion of Europe or the Western World was intimately connected with the idea of Christianity started appearing (Koch 1994). The West became the torchbearer of Christianity, in particular Catholicism. Europe became a force to spread Christianity in the Americas and other parts of World. In Japan also Christianity was brought by Europeans and thus it is considered as Western thought. Endō also perceived it that way and connects Christianity to Western or European thought in comparison to the Eastern or Japanese thought.

Endō Shūsaku was born in 1923, Sugamo (巣鴨), Tokyo to a middle-class affluent family. His father was working for a bank at that time but soon they had to move to Dalian (大連 Dairen) in Manchuria, China which was under the Japanese occupation at that time, Endō was three years old then. His childhood was traumatic due to the discords between his parents. In 1933 his parents got divorced and he came back to Japan with his mother. Endō and his mother stayed with his aunt in Kobe and at the age of eleven his aunt took him to a Catholic congregation and was baptized. According to Jean Higgins it was the first time Endō encountered with the West and it was a traumatic event in his life which he was unaware of, at that time. He says that the encounter with west was the occasion when his mother converted to Catholic faith which eventually led his own instruction to Christianity and his baptism. This was an involuntary and meaningless act for young Endō. Later in the life he understood the significance of baptism but his soullessness of his act haunted him which led to the intensifying of his love-hate relationship with Christianity (Higgins 1984-85). Endō's conversion into Christianity began a paradigm shift in a Buddhist influenced perception of reality to a modern and Western understanding of 'self', 'world', 'ultimate' and encountered a new system of beliefs, values and practices. But this shift could not dislodge his Japanese cultural worldview. He described this as the coexistence of his two selves, 'the Japanese self and 'Western or Christian self'. There was a coexistence but it also gave rise to a conflict within himself. But this conflict did not force him to abandon either of his selves (Higgins 1984-85). Prominent Japanese Philosopher Sengaku Mayeda suggests that Endō was a Catholic writer who was supposed to be unrelated or even at odds with the ideas of karman and saṃsāra but strangely he introduced the motif of saṃsāra i.e., death and rebirth as the main topic of his novel *Fukai kawa*. He further says that the ideas of karman and saṃsāra were still alive at the bottom of the mind of Japanese-Christian Endō and had long been a cause of his internal conflicts. According to him when the novel was first published it was well received by many general Japanese readers in Japan. This fact indirectly reveals that Indian ideas are still deeply rooted in Japanese mind and Indian and Japanese people have long been sharing the same sense of spiritual values, he suggests (Mayeda 2010). Death and rebirth are an unending cycle for the souls trapped in this world, the world which according to Śaṃkara's philosophy is itself a Māyā.

## THE CONCEPT OF MĀYĀ IN ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

Vedānta is the one of the prominent schools of thought in Indian Philosophical system. It literally means 'end of the Vedas'. End of Vedas are the concluding part of the Vedic scripture which are commonly knowns as the Upanishads. Paul Deussen confirms that the explanation of word Upanishad by the Indian sages is definitely rahasyam i.e., 'secret' (Deussen 1906). So, the Upanishads contains the secret and mystical knowledge of the Vedas. The Upanishads contains mainly the ritualistic and philosophical concepts and had been enriched by various contributors over the ages. Due to this there is not a consistent system of thought within the Upanishads and at first sight they seem to have contradictions. So, there was a need for systemizing the thought of Upanishads. The attempt to systemize the Upanishads' thought was done by Bādrāyana by authoring the Brahmasutra (ब्रह्मसूत्र) or the Vedāntasutra. This is the text on which the philosophy of all the Vedānta schools is based. According to Swami Vireswarananda all the sects of India now hold this work to be the great authority and every new sect starts with a fresh commentary on it and without which no Vedantic sect can be found (Badarayana 1936). Although it is not the only text in Vedānta school of thought. Advaita Vedānta's philosophy is based on the Bhaṣya (भाष्य) or commentaries on the Brahmasutra written by Śaṃkara. He has written commentaries

<sup>3</sup> Henry Graham Greene (1904-1991) known as major writer of Catholic novels, thrillers, plays, short stories etc, one of the leading British authors of 20th century

<sup>4</sup> It includes the views of Judaism, Christianity and Islam about God, i.e., there is one true God and any other God is false God.



on various scriptures including the Upanishads in which Bhagavadgītā is well known and considered crown jewel among his commentaries collection. He has also authored various works of his own in which Vivekacūdāmaṇi (विवेकचूडामणि) is prominent. The philosophy of Upanishads mainly revolves around two fundamental concepts, they are Brahman and Ātman. Brahman is the cause of this world; it is the absolute. It is something that is unknown and which needs to be explained. Ātman is the known through which the other known finds its explanation. Ātman which exists within us and known in the inner self of man (Chhandogya 3:14). According to Chhānogyā Upanishad the whole universe is the Brahman and originate from it, exists within it and in the end absorbed by it. The Ātman which is inside us is also Brahma (Vivekachudamani verse no. 6). The unity of Brahman and Ātman is again emphasized by Śaṅkara in Vivekacūdāmaṇi. He says that until and unless we do not realize the unity of Brahman and Ātman we cannot attain salvation. This is the basis of Advaita – the non-duality of Brahman and Ātman which is also called monism by the Vedic scholars. This is beautifully expressed by the two mahāvākya or the ‘great saying’ of the Śruti<sup>5</sup> – tat-tvam-asi<sup>6</sup> i.e., “that art thou”. Śaṅkara explains it as “the truth is you”, and the other one is aham-brahma-asmi<sup>7</sup>, “I am Brahma”. This unity of Brahman and Ātman is the fundamental principle of Vedānta. This idea of oneness is expressed in the following verse from Śaṅkara’s Brahmagyanāvalīmāla:

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः।

[Brahma satyaṃ jagan mithyā jivō brahmaiva nāparah]<sup>8</sup>

Brahman is the reality, the universe is false, the Ātman is Brahman, nothing else (Shastri 1911: 48).

According to the thought of Upanishad as explained by Śaṅkara, the Brahman or Ātman is real and the rest of the world around us is just Māyā – a sheer deceit, an illusion. The current definition of Māyā in Indian philosophical context is translated to be ‘illusion’ which may or may not define it correctly. This definition is suggested by most of the Western Vedic scholars following which the Indian scholars also define it as illusion. Māyā has various meaning depending on the context. In different ages it has been interpreted differently. By the time of Śaṅkara it was already established to mean something unreal and illusory. H.T. Colebrooke asserts that Māyā is not the tenet of the original Vedānta philosophy, but of another branch from which later writers have borrowed it and have intermixed and confounded the two systems. He says that there is nothing which countenances it in the Sutras of Bādrāyaṇa or in the gloss of Śaṅkara but in the minor commentaries and elementary treatises (Colebrooke 1837: 377, cited in Radhakrishnan 1914: 432). Dr. Radhakrishnan contradicts this observation that there is nothing in the gloss of Śaṅkara which countenances the Māyā doctrine but agrees with Colebrook that the text of Vedānta i.e., the Vedas, the earlier Upanishads and the Vedānta Sutras does not even remotely suggest the theory of Māyā. He further argues that Śaṅkara has imported the conception of Māyā into Vedānta system under the influence of Buddhistic teachings, following the tradition of Gauḍapāda with whom he was heavily influenced. Dr. Radhakrishnan asserts that Maya is pivotal principle of the later Śaṅkara Vedānta, but it is not a part of the primitive cosmological conception of the Vedas and the earlier Upanishads (Radhakrishnan 1914: 432). Prof. Prabhu Dutt Shastri writes that the word Māyā appears in seventy-five hymns of the Ṛgveda with its simple and compounded forms with meaning varying throughout the Ṛgveda. Mostly the meaning of Māyā in Ṛgveda is ‘a wonderous or supernatural skill’, ‘an extra ordinary skill’ and in Atharavaveda this supernatural element is emphasized with the meaning of ‘magic’ hence ‘illusion’. By giving the examples of various slokas from Vedas and Upanishads Dr. Shastri concludes that Māyā has been integral part of Vedic text and hence integral part of Vedānta philosophy. The concept of Māyā is central to Advaita philosophy and hence Advaita is also referred to as Māyāvāda. Dr. Shastri arrives at the conclusion that till the time of Śaṅkara the meaning of Māyā was fixed subsequently to illusion and this sense of illusion can be found even in the Vedic scriptures. The idea of mystery and magic was always present and their developed form gives the sense of ‘illusion’ or ‘appearance’. Māyā has been viewed principally from two aspects – (1) as the principle of creation – Māyā as a cause – corresponding to the sense of Śakti or (2) as the phenomenal creation itself – Māyā as an effect – corresponding to the sense of illusion or appearance etc. In the Śvetāśvara Upanishad Māyā is described as the Prakṛti in the form of Śakti or the power of supreme being and it is the reason for the creation of the world. In Vivekacūdāmaṇi Śaṅkara explains Māyā in the following verses:

‘Avidya (Nescience) or Māyā called also the Undifferentiated, is the power of the Lord. It is without beginning, is made up of the three Guṇas and is superior to the effects (as their cause). She is to be inferred by one of clear intellect only from the effects She produces. It is she who brings forth this whole universe.’ (Verse 110)

‘She is neither existent nor non-existent nor partaking of both characters; neither same nor different nor both; - neither composed of parts nor an indivisible whole nor both; She is most wonderful and cannot be described in words.’ (Verse 111)

‘This Māyā can be destroyed by the realization of the pure brahman, the one without a second, just as the mistaken ideas of a snake is removed by the discrimination of the rope. She has her Guṇas known as Rajas, Tamas and Sattva, named after their respective functions.’ (Verse 112)

It is evident from above verses that Māyā has a complex meaning in the Advaita system and it cannot be labelled just as illusion or appearance. Illusion can be an aspect of Māyā but cannot encompass the entirety of the concept. Another question arises here – what does the illusion exactly mean? Does it mean the simple meaning or is it something more in the philosophical sense? In metaphysical sense illusion cannot be just appearance. The dictionary meaning of illusion are – a false idea or belief; a deceptive appearance or impression; an instance of a wrong or misinterpreted perception of a sensory experience. Comparing with Śaṅkara’s definition of Māyā, illusion seems to coincide with all the meanings of illusion given above. But there is further explanation of

<sup>5</sup> Vedas are also known as Śruti

<sup>6</sup> Chhandogya (6:8:7)

<sup>7</sup> Brihadaranyā (1:4:10)

<sup>8</sup> First part of verse no. 20

Māyā which cannot be explained by illusion. For example, the three Guṇas or the existent or non-existent nature, power of the supreme etc. For simplicity illusion may be used for defining Māyā but the whole philosophical sense cannot be explained through it. It is not enough and is just a partial explanation of Māyā. Śaṅkara has explained his philosophy through various analogies and his philosophy comes from the Upanishads which is esoteric knowledge or rahasyam, so if we take only the literal meanings of the verses then it would not be sufficient to define the doctrines of Vedānta. He used Māyā synonymously with ignorance, unreal, false, illusion, delusion, appearance, power etc among other meanings and it depends on the context and interpretation of the text.

Māyā gives the sense of individuality to the Ātman and separates it from the Brahman by imparting the false knowledge or Avidyā. This Avidya or ignorance is the belief in duality of Ātman and Brahman. The Ātman is trapped in the world created by Śakti i.e., Māyā and lives along with its physical carrier the Jīva, pursuing the worldly desires without knowing the Brahman. This ignorance is the Māyā which can be overcome by knowing the 'self' which is Ātman which again is Brahman itself. The basic principle of Advaita is that knowledge is the means of attaining liberation, this knowledge is Ātmasākṣātkāra or self-realization, the realization that Ātman and Brahman is one and the Brahman is inside of the Jīva and not outside and whatever is outside it is Māyā.

## DEPICTION OF MĀYĀ THROUGH THE CASE OF ISOBE AND KIGUCHI

Endō's last major work portrays the story of various Japanese characters who go to a journey to the land of Buddha with their personal quests on their mind. The main characters are Isobe, Kiguchi, Numada, Mitsuko and Ōtsu. The first four go to India with a tourist group in which Mr. and Mrs. Sanjo, the newly-weds are also fellow travellers. The group is led by the tour guide Enami who is also a fellow Japanese but he has lived in India and has some knowledge about its culture and ethics. Ōtsu apparently did not become a priest due to his rejection of the Western Christianity and belief in pantheistic view of God. He came to Varanasi and was living on the banks of Ganges doing the charity as a man of God. These individuals in the beginning are under the spell of ignorance and are trapped by its charm and soon their journey ends abruptly but before that they encounter with the truth and self-realization.

Fukai kawa begins with the chapter titled The Case of Isobe (磯辺の場合 Isobe no ba'ai) depicting the story of Isobe who is a Japanese salaryman always busy in his work. He is a typical Japanese husband who was embarrassed to express his feelings openly to his wife, although it is not that he didn't love her. It brought him lot of sorrow when his wife became sick and when it was confirmed by the doctor that she had only few months to live, it was beyond his imagination and comprehension. It never occurred to him that she might die actually. It felt like a dream and it seemed to be beyond reality. It was like watching a movie when suddenly a new movie was projected. He did not know what is real and what is unreal he was under some kind of illusion, a bhrānti (भ्रान्ति). It was the kind of sorrow and pain that he probably never faced before in his entire life. Several days passed after the death of Isobe's wife as if all this was dream. He thought that she has gone somewhere on a trip and soon she will come back and life will return back to normal. The reality was in front of him but he was not ready to accept it. He could not let the feeling go away driven by the affection or mohah (मोहः). His delusion or bhrama (भ्रम) is one of the characteristics of Māyā or one of its Guṇas called Tamas (तमस्) or Tamoguṇa which has the power to deflect the mind. After the funeral everyone gathered at Isobe's house along with the priest and they were discussing about the remaining rites for Isobe's wife. Someone asked the priest why the observance is on forty ninth day. The reply of priest was that the soul of departed reincarnate into next life by forty ninth day inevitably according to Buddhist teachings. This cycle of death and rebirth i.e., saṃsāra is work of Māyā and until a person does not know his true self or the Ātman he cannot be liberated or attain mokṣa. In Isobe's mind his wife's words were echoing that she will be reborn somewhere and he has to find her. Even in her journal she mentioned this desire, desire to be reborn and meet her husband again, a desire born by the power of the guṇa of Rajas (रजस्) or Rajoguṇa which is responsible for all kinds of desires in the jīva. Under the influence of same Māyā, Isobe decides to go in search of his wife who he thought would have been born again somewhere and he finally travelled to India for search of his wife. Isobe who is not a religious man and did not believe in things like reincarnation, but he was trying to meet his dead wife, having faith in things which he would not have believed before, such is the power of Māyā.

The fifth chapter titled The Case of Kiguchi (木口の場合 Kiguchi no ba'ai) depicts the journey of Kiguchi who is a veteran second world war soldier who fought in Burma. He has seen hell during that time, it was death and despair all around him. He was concerned about his fate and thought he would also end up like one of those soldiers who were abandoned by their unit, sick waiting for their death. He was thinking if it was the end, but his thoughts were veiled by the ignorance. If only he knew that it was all a līlā or play of Māyā he would not have felt the suffering. He would know that this is not the end, his existence as an individual in the current life may end, but it is not an end actually. Because life and death are irrelevant if one seeks the absolute, then such things seem a mere illusion. Because to know the true self, one has to look inside rather than focussing outside, although Kiguchi was focused on the outside and not inside of him. He was driven by bhayam (भयम्) or fear, an anomaly of mind produced by the power of Rajas. He was not face to face with his Ātman but to his temporary vessel of his soul, his physical body. After returning from war, he resumed normal life but the emotions that he felt during the war experiences sometimes came flooding back and distracted him, all that the Māyā's work, pushing him back to the past. When his friend Tsukada a fellow war veteran became sick, he felt pity for him and shared his pain following the Rajas guṇa of Māyā. He felt a connection towards his friend, a connection which according to Śaṅkara is asat, or false. The outside body is just a temporary dwelling for the Ātman and the sense of this dwelling is given by Māyā and to come out of the cycle of transmigration this connection from outside should be severed and should renounce the self and selfish goals otherwise the soul will remain trapped in the vicious cycle of the transmigration. Kiguchi is a good man but his virtues are also driven by Māyā. Māyā can give false sense of virtue that can give rise to ahaṅkara or belief in false self. But with the true sense of self, it gives rise to true virtues which is driven by the Sattva guṇa of Māyā. Advaita confirms that Māyā is neither real nor false, it is Anirvacanīya i.e., for which nothing can be said about, that it is indescribable. It is neither good nor evil but it is reason for both. In the novel Endō mentions the same idea through Kiguchi when he was on the banks of Ganges, he says to Mitsuko that:



‘What I’ve been thinking... is what in Buddhism is described as “Good and evil are as one”, that there’s nothing a human being does that can be called absolutely right. To put it the opposite way, the seeds of salvation are buried in every act of evil. In all things, good and evil are back-to-back with each other, and they can’t be separated...’

In fact, according to Śaṅkara it is Ahaṅkara that is the root cause of all sins and it is greater evil than any other sin and the greatest barrier for attaining mokṣa. It dwells in every soul good or evil and stops them to be emancipated until and unless they know their true self.

## CONCLUSION

We have seen how the Vedānta philosophy can be relevant to Modern Japanese literature since Japanese and Indians share the same sense of spirituality and have shared values. In fact, modern Japan India relations can be partially attributed to the Vedānta thought. The contribution of Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Nakamura Hajime need no new introduction. Even Okakura Tenshin who was a scholar dedicated to the development of arts in Japan and had good relationship with Tagore, was inspired by the Advaita philosophy advocated by Vivekananda. Advaita – The philosophy of Śaṅkara can be the source of getting rid of all the evil of society. It teaches us about the reconciliation of faith. It says what is outside is false, the different identities and individuality is all a mithya, Because the Ātman is one with the Brahman and is inseparable. For this one has to look inside and know the true self. Māyā cause blurring of the eyes which can look inside. It deflects mind and cause various kinds of sufferings using the power of its guṇas. The seven deadly sins according to Christianity are caused by Māyā only. But on the other hand, Māyā with the power of its guṇa gives rise to virtues, peace and divine bliss. The divine bliss of knowing the Ātman and finding Brahman inside oneself. Māyā creates the world we know and which we call real and true. But Śaṅkara says that the world is not real. But this unreality is in comparison to Brahman. Unreal does not means it does not exist but it means it is not permanent like Brahman and Ātman. The outside world created by Māyā comes to end, its temporary that’s why it is not real. It is also mithyā or false because it will not help us reach our true self. So, it has no relevance to us if we want to know Brahman. Māyā will do its work we cannot stop it but we can ignore it and seek the Brahman. While the characters were driven by the forces of Māyā in the beginning they had their self-realization towards the end except some. They had the ultimate knowledge. Isobe realized that his wife is not born outside but she is born inside him. This is the time he looks inside of him. He comes face to face with his Ātman. Kiguchi goes to India and on the banks of Ganges he offers prayer to the souls of soldiers who died in the war, friends and foes alike without feeling any animosity. He chanted the Amida sutra and it was the time when he came out of the spell of Māyā and he found his Brahman by feeling compassion for enemies also. He knew that good and evil are in every soul and no one deserved to be hated. Both of them had their realisation of truth. They attained knowledge and knowledge is liberation according to Śaṅkara. This way both of them came out the spell of maya and were liberated. We can have the ultimate knowledge by ignoring the Māyā. Being inside this līlā or play of God and watching it like a sakṣī or a mere witness without feeling it as real. Playing within it but just as a character of a play. Keeping the focus only on the Ātman, remaining within Māyā but not under its spell. Then Māyā with the power of its sattavaguṇa will help to gain the ultimate bliss or paramānanda and ultimately the mokṣa.

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