

A  
DICTIONARY  
OF  
ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

Swami Harshananda

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# A DICTIONARY OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

(with two essays and ten charts)

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## PREFACE

Among the six systems of Indian philosophy, Vedānta the last, is the most well-known and widely studied. Based on the writings of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva, it has branched off into three major traditions which are very much alive even today.

Literature on the Advaita Vedānta is legion, thanks to the numerous descendants and defendants of the tradition. Among the simpler and more elementary treatises of Advaita, commonly called 'prakaraṇa-grantha,' the *Vedāntasāra* of Sadānanda is very popular. Being a later work, it has the advantage of systematizing all the important doctrines of the earlier works and presenting them in a comprehensive but compact way.

This dictionary has been prepared, drawing heavily from the *Vedāntasāra*. But, to understand the terms given here, some background is needed. This has been provided in the two essays given in part one. The first essay, *The Advaita Vedānta Darśana*, gives a brief history of the school and presents its essential teachings, including the later ramifications, in a nutshell. The second essay, *Sadānanda's Vedāntasāra*, summarises the

salient features of this work. The dictionary itself is given in part two.

Part three contains ten charts which give in a condensed form all the essential information of Advaita Vedānta as depicted in the *Vedāntasāra*. This can serve as a revision lesson to the students of Advaita.

We earnestly hope that this brief work will serve as a useful introduction to the students of Advaita Vedānta. If it prompts some scholars to venture on a much bigger work, we will feel blessed.

S. H.

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## KEY TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION

| Sounds like |    |                              | Sounds like |     |                            |
|-------------|----|------------------------------|-------------|-----|----------------------------|
| অ           | a  | o in son                     | ଡ           | đ   | d                          |
| আ           | ā  | a in master                  | ঢ           | ঢ়h | dh in godhood              |
| ই           | i  | i in if                      | ণ           | ণ   | in under                   |
| ই           | ī  | ee in feel                   | ত           | t   | French t                   |
| উ           | u  | u in full                    | থ           | th  | th in thumb                |
| ऊ           | ū  | oo in boot                   | দ           | d   | th in them                 |
| ঁ           | ṛ  | somewhat<br>between r and ri | ঁ           | ঁ   | dh theh in breathe<br>here |
| এ           | e  | a in evade                   | ন           | n   | n                          |
| ঁ           | ai | y in my                      | প           | p   | p                          |
| ও           | o  | o in over                    | ফ           | ph  | ph in loop-hole            |
| ঁ           | au | ow in now                    | ব           | b   | b                          |
| ক           | k  | k                            | ভ           | bh  | bh in abhor                |
| খ           | kh | ckh in blockhead             | ম           | m   | m                          |
| গ           | g  | g (hard)                     | য           | y   |                            |
| ঁ           | gh | gh in log-hut                | ৱ           | r   | r                          |
| ঁ           | ঁ  | ng                           | ল           | l   | l                          |
| চ           | c  | ch (not k)                   | ব           | v   | v in avert                 |
| ঁ           | ch | chh in catch him             | শ           | ś   | sh                         |
| জ           | j  | j                            | ষ           | ṣ   | sh in show                 |
| ঁ           | jh | dgeh in hedgehog             | স           | s   | s                          |
| ঁ           | ঁ  | n (somewhat)                 | হ           | h   | h                          |
| ট           | ṭ  | t                            | ঁ           | m   | m in hum                   |
| ঁ           | ঁh | th in ant-hill               | :           | ঁh  | half h in huh!             |

## **PART ONE**

### **ADVAITA VEDĀNTA DARSĀNA**

#### **PREAMBLE**

Man is often described as a rational animal. Once the animal in him is reasonably satisfied by the provision of basic biological and some psychological needs, the rational part gets an opportunity to evolve to higher levels. Philosophy including metaphysics is one of the highest aspects of this evolution.

#### **DARSANAS**

The Indian philosophical systems have developed not only as a result of intellectual speculation but also of mystical intuition. Hence the name 'darsana' (lit., 'seeing'), usually applied to them. The topics most commonly discussed by these darsanas are generally four: (a) nature of the physical world, its origin and evolution; (b) nature of man and other living beings; (c) existence of God, His nature and attributes; (d) the goal of human life and the way of attaining it.

Different standpoints and differing views of these topics of discussion have naturally led to

a variety of schools. These schools are broadly divided into two classes: the āstika and the nāstika. The former accept the authority of the Vedas whereas the latter do not.

### VEDĀNTA DARŚANA .

The Vedānta Darśana is the last of the former schools but has gained the most important place among them. A judicious combination of reasoning and acceptance of the authority of the Vedas, as also a long unbroken tradition, are responsible for its gaining the prominent place.

Though the 'Prasthānatraya' ('the three great paths') viz., the Upaniṣads, the *Brahmasūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, are the basis of the Vedānta Darśana, it is the *Brahmasūtras* (also called *Vedāntasūtras* and *Sārīrakasūtras*) of Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa that occupies the key position. The sūtras (aphorisms) being quite terse and often ambiguous have naturally led to widely differing interpretations, resulting in the three well-known systems of Vedānta viz., Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita.

The word 'Vedānta' itself means the 'end or the essence of the Vedas.' It is the Upaniṣads that mainly comprise the Vedānta since they normally form the last part of the Vedic literature and contain the quintessence of their teaching.

## ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

The Advaita Vedānta Darśana owes its systematisation as a formidable doctrine, to Gauḍapāda (7th - 8th cent. A. D.) who wrote his famous *Kārikās* on the *Māndūkyopaniṣat*, and Śaṅkara (A. D. 788-820). Śaṅkara's commentaries on the Prasthānatraya as also a few independent treatises form the bedrock on which the later Advaitins built their edifices.

### **Brahman, the only Reality**

'Advaita' means 'non-dual,' 'one without a second.' The system derives this nomenclature from the fact that it recognises Brahman (the Absolute) as the only reality and denies permanent reality to the world as also the individual souls.

The entire edifice of Advaita metaphysics is built upon the foundation that Brahman is the only reality, 'brahma satyam.' This premise is based firmly on the famous Upaniṣadic statement 'sadeva somya idamagra āsīt, ekamevādvitīyam,' 'Dear (Śvetaketu), in the beginning (before creation) Reality (or Brahman) alone existed, the one without a second' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1).

### **Anirvacanīya Khyāti**

However, the world of multiplicity is a matter of our day-to-day experience. Hence it

becomes necessary to offer an explanation as to how Brahman, the one without a second, appears as this world of multiple names and forms. The explanation offered by Advaita is *anirvacanīyakhyāti*, its theory of erroneous cognition, which defies logic. Perceiving silver in nacre in moonlight or snake in rope in insufficient light are the stock examples given by the Advaitins. In both cases there is an erroneous perception brought about by the impressions of silver and snake from an earlier idea of the same, now superimposed upon nacre and rope under conditions favourable to the error. This superimposition called 'adhyāsa' or 'adhyāropa,' is responsible for the *mithyājñāna* (false knowledge) that the object perceived is silver or snake.

The silver or the snake perceived is neither 'sat' (real) nor 'asat' (unreal). It is not asat or unreal like 'the son of a barren woman' since it is actually perceived. Neither is it sat or real since it disappears as soon as the substratum (the nacre or the rope) is perceived as it is. To explain such a peculiar phenomenon Śaṅkara creates, out of logical necessity, a third type of perceived objects which is 'sad-asad- vilakṣana' (different from both the real and the unreal). The 'khyāti' or the cognition itself is described as 'ānirvacanīya,' incapable of any precise definition or description.

### Ajñāna or Avidyā

The basic cause of this erroneous perception is termed *ajñāna* or *avidyā* (ignorance) which is said to be *bhāvarūpa* (existent) and is endowed with two *śaktis* or powers *viz.*, ‘*āvaraṇaśakti*’ (veiling power) and ‘*vikṣepaśakti*’ (transforming power). It veils the true nature of nacre and rope, and shows up silver and rope in their place by apparently transforming them. Such an apparently transformed object is called a ‘*vivarta*’ of the original and the theory that propounds this is known as *Vivartavāda*. Since this *avidyā* does not make the nacre and the rope completely disappear from view, but only makes them appear as something else, it is described as ‘*bhāvarūpa*’ or existent.

### Māyā

An attempt may now be made to explain how this world of duality has evolved out of the nondual Reality called Brahman in the *Upaniṣads*. The world of duality can be broadly divided into ‘*drk*’ (the seer) and ‘*drśya*’ (the seen). Both these, again, are divided into the innumerable living beings (*jīvās*) and the countless objects of creation. How does Brahman the Absolute, the one without a second, the indivisible Reality, appear divided into innumerable beings on the one side and countless objects on the other? It

is avidyā that causes the one Ātman (the Self) – incidentally, the Upaniṣads use both words, Ātman and Brahman, to indicate the same Reality – appear as many jīvas and it is māyā that causes the world of phenomena. Māyā is avidyā at the cosmic level.

### Three Degrees of Reality

Śaṅkara accepts three degrees of reality. The first, known as ‘prātibhāsika-satya’ (apparent truth, illusory appearance) is illustrated in the wrong perception of silver in nacre or snake in rope. The second, called ‘vyāvahārika-satya’ is illustrated by this world of our day-to-day experience. This world appearance has a much higher degree of reality and lasts till one gets ātmajñāna or brahmajñāna, realization of Truth. It is satya or true for all purposes of vyavahāra i. e. day-to-day existence or practical life. The third, designated as ‘pāramārthika-satya,’ is the highest Truth and the only truth that really exists. It is Brahman or Ātman, which is nirguṇa (without attributes) and nirākāra (without forms), hence incapable of being described except in a negative way ('neti, neti' – 'not this, not this').

### Creation

Brahman associated with māyā is Saguṇa Brahman (Brahman with attributes) or Īśvara (Lord of creation, God). It is this aspect of

Brahman that is responsible for creation, preservation and destruction of the world. As for the actual order of evolution of the created world, the descriptions given in the Upaniṣads are accepted.

For Śaṅkara who holds that the world process is only a vivarta (illusory appearance) due to adhyāsa (superimposition on Brahman), the very attempt to describe the various steps of evolution is a futile exercise. However, since the śruti (revealed scripture, the Upaniṣads) has done so, a place of honour must somehow be accorded to it. So he characterises such descriptions as giving ‘taṭasthalakṣaṇa’ (accidental or casual characteristics) of Brahman helping us to be directed towards it, even as the branch of a tree helps us to locate the crescent in the sky. On the other hand, Brahman as it is, can be comprehended only through its ‘svarūpalakṣaṇa’ (integral or essential characteristics), which is ‘sat-cit- ananda.’ ‘Sat’ (eternal reality), ‘cit’(pure consciousness), and ‘ānanda’ (unalloyed bliss) are not really its characteristics but its very essence.

### Jīva

This Brahman or Ātman which is sat-cit-ānanda, has inexplicably got itself involved in the body-mind complex, the involvement being

due to avidyā. Since the origin of this involvement can never be logically or satisfactorily explained, avidyā is stated to be anādi or beginningless. The involved Ātman is designated as 'jīva.'

This jīva, the Ātman in bondage, has five kośas or sheaths, three śarīras or bodies, performs actions motivated by desires, experiences pleasure and pain due to karma and undergoes transmigration until liberation. Śaṅkara declares that this jīva, when shorn of its upādhis or limiting adjuncts like the body and the mind, is identical with Brahman, since its essential nature also is sat-cit-ānanda.

### Sādhanas and Mukti

The main trouble with the Ātman become jīva is the tādātmya or false identification with the mind and the body, brought about by adhyāropa or adhyāsa (superimposition). Hence the only way of remedying it is by apavāda or desuperimposition, by denying this identification. For this, one has first to prepare oneself by the preliminary fourfold discipline or sādhanacatuṣṭaya viz., viveka (discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal), vairāgya (dispassion), śamādiṣaṭka (cultivation of the six virtues like self-control) and mumukṣutva (desire for liberation. Then one has to approach a competent guru (spiritual preceptor) and learn the truth from him by śravaṇa (hearing), manana

(reflection) and *nididhyāsana* (contemplation). The most important part of the guru's teaching will be in the form of 'mahāvākyās' (great sentences) like '*tat tvam asi*' (That thou art') or '*aham brahmāsmi*' ('I am Brahman'). Śravaṇa and manana produce the deeprooted conviction that one is the spirit. Hence in *nididhyāsana*, desuperimposition in the form of 'I am not the body, nor the sense-organs, nor the mind, nor even the ego' and so on, can be practised leading ultimately to the realization that one is the Ātman. This realization resulting in mukti or liberation can be had even while one is living in this body. It is known as '*jīvanmukti*.' He will attain '*videhamukti*' (liberation from future bodies) after the body falls off, the continuance of the body between the two states being due to *prārabdha-karma* (actions that have caused this body).

Mukti or liberation from transmigration is not the gaining of a new state but recognising the already existing original state.

#### **Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti**

Two kinds of mukti — *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti* — are envisaged in the Advaitic works. The Vivaraṇa school\* upholds the theory that mukti is simultaneous with *jñāna*. Hence

\*The terms '*Vivarṇaprasthāna*' and '*Bhāmatīprasthāna*' have been explained later.

Jīvanmukti is not only possible, but the only mukti that can be recognised. Continuance of the body for some more time, due to prārabdha-karma, has no effect upon jñāna. On the other hand, the Bhāmatī school\* holds that even after jñāna, if the body continues due to prārabdha karma, this imposes a limitation, thereby implying the existence of a trace of avidyā. The death of the body puts an end even to this trace of avidyā, and real mukti is obtained then. Since this comes after the death of the body, it is called 'Videhamukti.'

#### **Locus of Avidyā**

A favourite topic of discussion that frequently crops up in Advaita metaphysical works is the locus of avidyā. Since Brahman is the only reality that exists, it alone is the āśraya (locus) as also the viśaya (object) of avidyā. This is one school. Sureśvara and Padmapāda are the main protagonists of this school. According to them, avidyā is one only.

Since Brahman is pure consciousness, avidyā can never exist in It nor act on It. This is the opposing school propagated by Vācaspati Miśra. For him, the jīvas are the locii of avidyā and there is one avidyā for every jīva.

#### **POST-ŚAṄKARA ADVAITA**

Though Śaṅkara wrote profusely, clearly

enunciating the main doctrines of his school, there are certain places in his writings wherein the important aspects of certain doctrines are either vague or are capable of more than one interpretation. This has naturally, resulted in the growth of quite a voluminous post-Śaṅkara Advaita literature leading to different prasthānas or schools of thought. 'Vārttika-prasthāna' of Sureśvara (9th cent. A. D.) comes first in the series. This school gets its designation from the exposition contained in the 'varttikās' or commentaries in verse, of Sureśvara on Śaṅkara's bhāṣyas on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Taittiriya* Upaniṣads. According to this school, Brahman is the material cause of this world, and not māyā. The locus of avidyā is Brahman and not the jīvas. Avidyā is one only and not many. The mahāvākyas or the great Vedic dictums are capable of producing immediate cognition of the self as Brahman. Hence dhyānābhyaṣa or practice of meditation on the meaning of those dictums is not necessary. The jīvas are but ābhāsas or appearances of Brahman in the individual minds. (This has earned the theory, the designation of 'ābhāsavāda' as opposed to 'pratibimbavāda' and 'avacchedavāda' of other schools.)

The 'Vivaraṇaprasthāna' of Padmapāda (9th cent. A. D.) and Prakāśātman (A. D. 1200) comes next. The name is derived from the work

*Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa* of the latter, it being a voluminous commentary on the *Pañcapādikā* of Padmapāda. Though this name suggests that it covers five pādas or sections of the *Brahma-sūtras*, only the commentary on the first four sūtras is now available. The chief doctrines of this school are: Avidyā is a jaḍatmikā śakti (a force of material nature) and is the material cause of this world. It is bhāvarūpa, a positive entity, but not real. Māyā, prakṛti, avyakta, avyākṛta, tamas, śakti etc., are all its synonyms. It is called avidyā when āvaraṇa power is predominant and māyā when vikṣepa power becomes dominant. Alternatively, it is māyā at the cosmic level and avidyā at the individual level. Avidyā rests on Brahman but acts on the jīvas. The jīvas are pratibimbas or reflections of Brahman in the antaḥkaraṇa (mind). The reflected images have no reality other than that of the original (bimba) Brahman. This theory is called 'pratibimbavāda' as contrasted with 'ābhāsavāda.'

The 'Bhāmatīprasthāna' of Vācaspati Miśra (A. D. 840) is the third and the last of these major schools. *Bhāmatī* is his celebrated commentary on the Śāṅkarabhāṣya of *Brahmasūtras*. This school is built round the *Bhāmatī* along with its subsidiary commentaries *Kalpataru* of Amalānanda (13th cent. A. D.) and *Parimalā* of

Appayya Dīksita (16th cent. A. D.). The views of this school can be briefly summarised as follows: Brahman is the material cause of the world, not as the locus of avidyā but as the object of avidyās supported by the jīvas. Māyā is only an accessory cause. Avidyā cannot abide in Brahman. It abides in the jīvas and is plural since the jīvas are plural. Vācaspati advocates two varieties of avidyā: the mūlāvidyā or kāraṇāvidyā (primal nescience); the tūlāvidyā or kāryāvidyā (derivative nescience). It is the latter that is responsible for bhramasamskāras or error impressions. Also, Vācaspati appears more inclined towards the 'avacchedavāda' or the theory of limitation with regard to the appearance of the jīvas. Just as a pot limits the infinite sky in itself, avidyā of the individual limits Brahman and makes it appear like a jīva. Another point of importance in this school is that the māhāvakyās do not produce anubhava (immediate cognition). It is the mind seasoned by meditation that gives such experience.

Mention may also be made here of 'drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda' which advocates that the world is created simultaneously with its perception, and, 'ekajīvavāda,' which propounds that there is only one jīva which is in bondage and when it gets liberation, everything else disappears. Prakāśānanda (15th - 16th cent. A. D.) is the

chief exponent of these schools.

Advaita was subjected to continuous criticism by other Vedāntic schools as also the Buddhists and hence the growth of polemical literature became inevitable. Mention must be made of two most important works of this type: The *Khaṇḍana - khaṇḍa-khādya* of Śrīharaśa (12th cent. A. D.) and the *Advaitasiddhi* of Madhusūdana Sarasvati (16th cent. A. D.).

### CONCLUSION

It should be said to the credit of Advaita Vedānta that even now it is attracting the respectful attention from scholars of the highest calibre, both Eastern and Western.

## SADĀNANDA'S VEDĀNTASĀRA

Mokṣa or liberation from transmigratory existence is the final goal of human life. Hence it is also called parama-puruṣārtha ('the highest of the ends desired by human beings'). The mortal who attains to that state becomes immortal. He dives and swims in the ocean of bliss, he gets dissolved in it. Who would not wish to get such a beatific experience? However, none can get it without striving for it. There can be no siddhi (fulfilment) without sādhana (the means). That is why our philosophical treatises which keep before us the parama-puruṣārtha, give as much importance to sādhana as to intellectual speculation. In fact, this is the reason for calling them darśanas. Darśana means seeing, direct experience. The ṛṣis (sages) 'saw' the Highest Truth, experienced not only the nature of that Truth but also the path that leads to It. That is why these treatises were christened darśanas. This is the fundamental difference between our darśanas and the philosophies of the West.

Among such darśanas, the Āstika Darśanas — those which accept the supreme authority of the Vedas — are six in number: They are: Nyāya,

Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta. Vedānta, the last of these, is the crowning glory of the Indian philosophical systems. It depends mainly on the Upaniṣads. There are three main branches in Vedānta, the result of three types of traditions: Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita. Among these, Advaita seems to have been more popular and gathered greater number of followers. Starting with Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara, this tradition has flourished continuously for 1,400 years and has produced hundreds of works. Some of these works have been written as commentaries on the Prasthānatraya.\* Others have come down as glosses and explanations of the main commentaries. When the arguments put forward in these works to defend their thought were criticized by other schools, newer works — mainly dialectical — to counter them, had to be written. Apart from these, which were meant exclusively for the intellectual élite, simpler works for the benefit of common people were also composed. Such works were called prakaraṇas. Sadānanda's *Vedāntasāra* has a special place among such prakaraṇas.

Not much is known about this Sadānanda. Scholars opine that he probably lived at the end

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\*The three basic scriptures: the Upaniṣads, the *Brahmasūtras*, and the *Bhagavadgītā*.

of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th. He was the paramaguru (guru's guru) of Nṛsimha Sarasvatī, the author of *Subodhini*, one of the well-known glosses on the *Vedāntasāra*. Two more Sadānandas are known to us: Sadānanda Kāśmīraka, the author of *Advaita-brahma-siddhi*; Sadānanda Vyāsa, the composer of the work *Advaita-siddhānta-sāra*. Scholars are undecided whether all these three are the same person or are different. However there are no two opinions about the beauty and the speciality of this work, *Vedāntasāra*, for the following reasons:

1. It pays greater attention to the prameya (the things to be known) which are more relevant to the spiritual aspirants, than to the pramāṇas (methods of knowledge).
2. It refers briefly to the post-Śaṅkara schools of Advaita.
3. It deals in great detail with the interpretation of the famous Vedantic dictum, *tat tvam asi*.
4. It considers the Yoga of Patañjali as an integral part of nididhyāsana (meditation).

Though short, this work has been very popular among the students of Advaita Vedānta. The five commentaries that are available on it are proof of this. They are:

- (a) *Bālabodhīni* of Āpadeva;
- (b) *Subodhīni* of Nṛsiṁha Sarasvatī;
- (c) *Vidvanmanorāñjanī* of Rāmatīrtha;
- (d) *Vedāntasāra-ṭīkā* by an unknown author;
- (e) *Vedāntasāra-vyākhyā* by Rāmacandrānanda Sarasvatī.

Among these, the first three have been printed. The other two are available in manuscript form in some Oriental libraries.

The contents of this work may now be summarized as follows:

The word 'Vedānta' indicates the Upaniṣads which contain the quintessence of the Vedas, the *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa, the *Bhagavadgītā* and all other works which follow the spirit of these. The Vedānta philosophy describes not only the nature of the Truth but also the path that leads to its experience. But one who desires to follow it should have first cleansed his mind by the proper study of the Vedas and by the performance of the various karmas (rituals) and upāsanās (meditations) prescribed in them. After thus attaining a certain degree of purity of mind, he should now take up the practice of sādhana-catuṣṭaya or the fourfold spiritual practice. It consists of: viveka (discrimination), vairāgya (renunciation),

śamādiśaṭka (group of six virtues beginning with śama or peace of mind and ending with śraddhā or faith), and mumukṣutva (desire for emancipation).

Viveka is the knowledge that Brahman alone is real and eternal, and this world of attractive sense-pleasures is transient. This naturally produces vairāgya or spirit of renunciation towards the world. Then the aspirant tries to cultivate the six well-known virtues viz., śama (peace of mind), dama (self-control), uparati (withdrawal of the mind from the sense-objects), titikṣā (forbearance), samādhāna (concentration of mind) and śraddhā (faith). As a result of this, his mumukṣutva (desire for liberation) grows. Then he respectfully approaches a competent guru for instructions. He listens (śravaṇa) to the guru's teachings, reflects (manana) over them, and then meditates (nididhyāsana) on the Truth that emerges in his mind as a result. This ripens into realization of his Ātman or Self that has always been present in his heart, through the destruction of ajñāna (ignorance). As long as the prārabdha-karma (the karma that is responsible for this birth) lasts, he continues to live in the body, but as a jīvanmukta (one who is free even while living). Then, when the body falls, he attains videha-mukti (freedom from rebirth).

When the disciple, who is a *jijñāsu* (aspirant after Truth) and a *mumukṣu* (aspirant after liberation) approaches the guru, the guru teaches him the Truth by following the method of *adhyāropa* and *apavāda*. These are technical terms commonly used in Advaita literature. *Ādhyāropa* is also called *adhyāsa*. In semidarkness, we superimpose a snake on a rope due to the ignorance of the fact that it is a rope. Similarly, we superimpose this world on Brahman due to the ignorance of Its nature. This superimposition is *adhyāropa*.

This ignorance, technically called *ajñāna* or *avidyā*, is neither *sat* (real) nor *asat* (unreal) nor even *sat-asat* (real-unreal). It is impossible to define it, though it is a fact of experience. Hence it is termed *anirvacanīya* (indefinable). This *ajñāna* comprises three *guṇas* (qualities) called *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Also, it is *jñānavirodhī* (opposed to knowledge) and *bhāvarūpa* (positive).

This *ajñāna* has two powers: *āvaraṇa* (of concealment) and *vikṣepa* (of projection). Semidarkness conceals the real nature of the rope and makes it appear like a snake. Similarly, the *āvaraṇa-śakti* of *ajñāna* conceals the real nature of Brahman. Its *vikṣepa-śakti* projects the world appearance in the same.

The three aspects of the *jīvātman* (individual

self) *viz.*, viśva, taijasa and prājña; the three bodies — sthūla, sūkṣma and kāraṇa; the five kośas (sheaths) — annamaya, prāṇamaya, manomaya, vijñānamaya and ānandamaya; the three forms of Paramātman, *viz.*, Īśvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virāṭ; the fourteen worlds beginning with bhū; the bodies of the beings that inhabit them and the five elements that are their causes — all these are the products of ajñāna, the effect of its vikṣepa-śakti!

Through right perception, under the right circumstances, the snake is sublated and its substratum, the rope is seen as it is. Similarly, when through pramāṇa (right means of knowledge), yukti (logic) and anubhava (experience) the world which is being perceived in Brahman through ajñāna is sublated and its substratum Brahman is seen as It is, the method followed in doing so, is called apavāda or de-superimposition.

Brahman appears to evolve into this world, as described in the Upaniṣads, in a particular order. In nididhyāsana one should meditate on this in the reverse direction and dissolve the world into Brahman. Then Brahman alone remains and the world totally disappears.

The most important fact that emerges out of this apavāda is that the jīva and Īśvara are the same in essence. It is exactly this that the

mahāvākyas (Great Sentences) of the Upaniṣads declare. Among these, the sentences *tat tvam asi* ('That thou art') and *aham brahma asmi* ('I am Brahman') have been described and commented upon in great detail in the Vedāntic works. Incidentally, the first sentence is called *upadeśa-vākya* ('the sentence of teaching'); and the latter, *anubhava-vākya* ('the sentence of experience'). In this work, *Vedāntasāra*, the method by which *tat tvam asi* is to be interpreted has been depicted in great detail.

As already described, the literal meaning of the sentence: *tat tvam asi*, is 'That though art;' i. e., Īśvara, and *jīva* are the same, or identical. Since Īśvara, the Lord, and *jīva*, the individual soul, are poles apart, they can never be equal or identical in the literal sense. But the Vedāntic sentence is our supreme authority in all supramundane matters. Hence we have to interpret this sentence not directly or literally but indirectly or by implication. Among several such implications called *lakṣaṇas*, the particular one known as *bhāga-lakṣaṇā* (in which there is partial acceptance of the literal meaning, the rest being decided by implication) is adopted here for this purpose. "So'yam devadattah," 'He is that Devadatta' — this is the oft-quoted example to prove the point.

If the Devadatta whom we saw yesterday at

the market in a Western dress comes to our house this morning in Indian dress, we immediately recognize him as 'This is that Devadatta.' The person 'Devadatta' is accepted, rejecting the two different times, places, dresses and other accidental characteristics which are not the real aspects of the person. Similarly, in the sentence *tat tvam asi*, we should reject the accidental characteristics of Īśvara and the jīva (Īśvara is omnipotent and omniscient whereas the knowledge and powers of the jīva are very limited) and accept only the fact that both are caitanya, or pure consciousness, which is the essential characteristic of both. It is only then that they can be termed 'identical.' The unity and identity of the two should be accepted only in this sense.

This identity has to be experienced and for this the aspirant has to perform sādhana. In this scheme of sādhana, śravaṇa comes first. Śravaṇa does not mean merely 'hearing.' It is listening attentively to the teachings of the Upaniṣads from the guru, and determining their correct meaning as per six liṅgas or rules of understanding, like upakrama (beginning), upasamhāra (conclusion) and so on. What has been understood thus should then be subjected to manana, intensive thinking, to dispel all possible doubts and to sustain it thoroughly through reason and

logic. Once this manana becomes ripe it leads to *nididhyāyasana* or meditation on the nature of the Ātman/Brahman principle which has been the ultimate conclusion of śravaṇa and manana. The mind assumes the form of Brahman and flows on continuously. This is called *brahmākāra-vṛtti*. When this *nididhyāsana* ripens, it results in *samādhi*, total absorption, giving superconscious experience.

*Samādhi* is of two types: *savikalpaka* (with modifications) and *nirvikalpaka* (without modifications). In the former, along with the perception of Brahman there is also an awareness of oneself and the awareness of the process of contemplation. It is similar to the dual consciousness involved in seeing a clay elephant wherein there is a simultaneous awareness of clay as well as the elephant. In the latter, there is the experience of Brahman only, the other two aspects of awareness (of oneself and of the process of contemplation) being transcended.

To attain such *nirvikalpaka samādhi*, it is necessary to undergo the eight steps of *Yoga* viz., *yama* (general discipline), *niyama* (particular discipline), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (control of vital force), *pratyāhāra* (self-withdrawal), *dhāraṇā* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation) and *samādhi* (total absorption). They will ultimately lead to the realization of Brahman.

Prārabdha (the residual karma that is responsible for this body in this birth) can be exhausted only through its experience. Hence if one gets realization of Brahman before death, then he attains the state called jīvanmukti (liberation while living). In this state, though he has his body and the sense-organs, he does not have the sense of identification with them. Nor does he experience pleasure and pain through them as the ignorant do. The experience of Brahman is, of course, never interrupted. All the great and noble virtues come to him naturally and adorn him like ornaments.

Once the prārabdha gets exhausted, the body falls. Since ajñāna and its effects have already been destroyed, he becomes one with Brahman and never again returns to this mundane existence. This is termed 'videhamukti.'

## *PART TWO*

### **A DICTIONARY OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA**

#### **A**

##### **abhyāsa** ('repetition'):

Repetition of either the words or the idea in order to get it fixed in the mind. This is one of the six characteristic signs (ṣaḍvidhaliṅga) by which the purport of Vedāntic texts is to be determined.

##### **adhikārin** ('competent student'):

Any person who is competent and hence eligible to study an art or a science. The adhikārin of Vedānta should have purified his mind through the performance of his ordained duties and adopted the sādhana-catuṣṭaya or the four sādhanās or means to illumination.

##### **agni** ('fire'):

The element of fire, third in the series of evolution from Brahman-Ātman associated with ajñāna and commencing with ākāśa. In the primordial state it is called 'tejas' with the quality of 'rūpa' or form and is one of the five tanmātras or primordial elements. In the gross state, as

one of the pañcamahābhūtas or five basic, but compounded, elements, it comprises the other four elements also, due to pañcikaraṇa or quintuplication. Its sattva element gives rise to the organ of sight or the eyes and the rajas element to the organs of locomotion or the feet.

**ahāṅkāra** ('egoism'):

One of the four aspects of the antahkaraṇa or the internal organ. Normally translated as 'egoism,' it is that aspect of the mind which gives the sense of individuality. It is a product of the sattva-part of the five tanmātras or primordial elements.

**ahimsā** ('non-injury'):

Non-injury or non-violence to life is one of the five cardinal moral principles listed under yama (restraint), the first of the eight steps of Yoga leading to samādhi or complete absorption.

**ajahad-lakṣaṇā** ('non-giving-up-implication'):

Also spelt as 'ajahallakṣaṇā,' it is the second of a series of three lakṣaṇās or meaning by implication. Here, the direct meaning of a statement is not wholly given up but hints at something else, as in the sentence 'Red colour is running' which actually means 'Red horse is running.' See also **artha** and **lakṣaṇā**.

**ajñāna** ('nescience or ignorance'):

In Vedānta, ajñāna does not mean just ignorance or absence of knowledge but a 'positive something' responsible for conscious activities pertaining to all fields except that of the knowledge of the unity of jīva, the individual soul, with Brahman. It is the equivalent of pradhāna or prakṛti of Sāṅkhya philosophy and hence comprises the three guṇas, sattva, rajas and tamas, the permutation and combination of which give rise to this creation. However, it is destroyed by jñāna, knowledge of the ultimate unity of the individual soul with Brahman.

**ākāśa** (ether):

The tanmātra or the primordial element of ether, the first evolute of Brahman-Ātman, associated with ajñāna or nescience. Its basic quality is śabda or sound because it is the basis for the production of all sounds or vibrations. In the process of evolution of the universe, its sattva-aspect produces the organ of hearing or śrotra (the ear) and rajas-aspect gives rise to the organ of speech or vāk. The sky or space is its gross manifestation and is the product of pañcikaraṇa or quintuplication. It is also called as one of the pañcamahābhūtas (five basic, compounded, elements).

**ānandamayakośa** ('the bliss-sheath'):

One of the five sheaths, the pañcakośas, it gets its name due to the experience of joy in deep sleep or suṣupti. In content, it is identical with ajñāna or nescience. Since it makes the jīva, the individual soul, forget his nature as pure 'caitanya' or consciousness, by covering it as it were, like a kośa or sheath, it is termed as a 'kośa.' It clings to the soul till the state of liberation. See also pañcakośas.

**aṇḍaja** ('born of the egg'):

It is one of the four types of bodies of living beings produced during the evolution of the universe. Birds and reptiles belong to this group.

**anirvacanīya** ('indescribable'):

Ajñāna or nescience is said to be anirvacanīya or indescribable since it cannot be described in any way. The reason is that it cannot fit into any of the known patterns in this creation which have been successfully described, such as sat or existing and asat or non-existing.

**annamayakośa** ('the food-sheath'):

It is the physical body born out of anna or food and nourished by food. Like a kośa or sheath, it covers the self and prevents the

experience of its true nature. It is the first of the five such kośas or pañcakośas. It is destroyed at death. It is also called *sthūla-śarīra* or the gross body, the first of a series of three śarīras. See also *pañcakośas*.

**antahkaraṇa** ('the internal organ'):

The internal organ or instrument by which we experience thinking, feeling and willing and are able to remember things. Though sometimes loosely called as mind (*manas*) or intellect (*buddhi*), it is more basic, of which these two are only aspects. *Citta* (mindstuff) and *ahankāra* (egoism) are two more aspects making four in all. It is the product of the combined *sattva* aspect of the five *tanmātras* or primordial elements.

**antaryāmin** ('the inner controller'):

One of the aspects of *Īśvara* or God, as the all-pervading principle and hence the controller from within. See also *Īśvara*.

**anubandha-catusṭaya** ('four preliminaries'):

In the traditional Sanskrit treatises on any art or science (especially *Vedānta*), four preliminaries are stated in the very beginning: *adhikārin* or competent student, *viṣaya* or subject matter, *sambandha* or connection and *prayojana* or utility. See under each title for details.

**apāna** ('breathing out'):

One of the five prāṇas (pañcaprāṇas) or vital airs responsible for the functioning of the organs of excretion, and rooted in the same as well as the organs of generation. The five prāṇas are produced out of the rajas-aspect of the tanmātras or primordial elements. See also pañcaprāṇas.

**aparigraha** ('non-acceptance'):

Aparigraha or non-acceptance of gifts from others is one of the five basic moral disciplines under yama, which itself is the first of the eight steps of Yoga given by Patañjali in his *Yoga-sutras*, a treatise on Rājayoga. Vedānta has accepted these steps as aids to samādhi or total absorption in the spiritual ideal.

**āpas** ('water'):

It is the fourth of the five tanmātras or primordial elements, characterised by rasa or taste and hence known as 'rasatanmātra' also. In its gross state as one of the five bhūtas ('pañcamahābhūtās') it contains traces of the other four elements also due to undergoing the process of pañcikaraṇa or quintuplication. In the process of creation its sattva-aspect produces the organ of taste, rasanendriya or jihvā, the tongue. Its rajas-aspect generates the organs of excretion.

**apūrvatā** ('the quality of not being known before'):

This is the third of a series of six characteristic signs (ṣaḍvidha-liṅgas) by which the purport of a Vedāntic text is ascertained. The text should reveal something which has not been known before (apūrva) for the first time; for instance, the revelation of Brahman by the Vedas. The word apūrvatā is sometimes translated as 'originality' also.

**artha** ('meaning'):

In the study of Vedāntic texts, getting at the 'artha' or correct meaning and interpretation, is very essential. Three ways of determining the meaning are normally accepted: vācyārtha or direct meaning, vyaṅgyārtha or suggested meaning and laksyārtha or implied meaning. See for details under the respective head.

**arthavāda** ('eulogy'):

The fifth among the ṣaḍvidha-liṅgas or six characteristic signs which aid in determining the correct purport of Vedic sentences. Eulogy usually recommends an injunction by stating the good arising from its observance or the evil accruing by its violation. The Mīmāṁsā texts list several varieties of the same.

**āsana** ('posture'):

Third in the series of the eight limbs prescribed in the books on Yoga, āsana is the correct posture for practising meditation, the posture which can be maintained comfortably for a pretty length of time. Vedānta accepts it as a part of nididhyāsana, meditation on the Ātman or Brahman.

**asteya** ('non-stealing'):

Asteya or non-stealing means not taking anything that does not lawfully belong to one. It is a cardinal moral principle listed as the third in a series of five under yama, the first step of Yoga.

**āvaraṇa** (covering):

Ajñāna or nescience, also called ignorance, has two powers, that of āvaraṇa or covering the true nature of a thing and vikṣepa or projecting something else in its place.

**avasthā** ('state'):

In a general way, it indicates the state of consciousness, experienced by the jīva or individual soul. See **avasthātraya**.

**avasthā-traya** ('three states'):

The three states of consciousness with which the *jīva* or the individual soul is associated, in its earthly existence, *viz.*, *jāgrat* (waking state), *svapna* (dream state) and *suṣupti* (deep sleep state).

**avidyā** ('non-knowledge'):

It is another name for *ajñāna* or ignorance. Sometimes it is used to signify *aparā-vidyā* or lower knowledge comprising all arts and sciences except that of Brahman.

**avyakta** ('the unmanifest'):

*Avyakta* is one of the names used for *Īśvara* or God in the *Vedāntasāra* of *Sadānanda* though it is a common term for *pradhāna* or *prakṛti* in the *sāṅkhyan* metaphysics. It is the state of Brahman associated with *māyā*, before the manifestation of creation.

## B

**bhāga-lakṣaṇā** ('part implication'):

See *jahad-ajahad-lakṣaṇā*.

**bhāvarūpa** ('positive'):

*Ajñāna* or ignorance is not considered in Advaita Vedānta as a negative or unreal entity.

Since it is felt or experienced, as when we say, 'I do not know anything,' 'I am an ignorant person,' it is considered as 'bhāvarūpā' or positive (as opposed to 'abhāvarupā,' negative or unreal). However its reality is not given the status of 'sat' (that which exists), since it can be destroyed by knowledge.

**bodhya-bodhaka** ('propounded-propounder):

The sambandha or connection that subsists between the Vedāntic texts like the Upaniṣads and what they purport to teach, viz., the ultimate unity of the jīva and Brahman, is described as 'bodhya-bodhaka.' The Veāntic texts are 'bodhaka' or 'propounders' of that unity. The unity itself is 'bodhya,' what is propounded.

**brahmacarya** ('continence):

This is one of the five moral disciplines listed under yama, the first of the eight steps of Yoga. It signifies control of all bodily instincts, especially sex.

**Brahman** ('the Big or the Infinite'):

It is the basic Reality behind the whole creation, its origin, ground of sustenance and place of dissolution. It is described as 'sat' (pure existence), 'cit' (pure consciousness) and 'ānanda' (pure bliss). Ajñāna, avidyā or māyā is considered

as Its inscrutable power. In Advaita Vedānta the Ātman, the self at the back of the individuals, is identified with Brahman.

**Brahma Sūtras** ('aphorisms on Brahman'):

It is the famous basic treatise of Vedānta composed by Bādarāyaṇa-Vyāsa. It is considered as one of the six systems of Indian philosophy. It systematizes the philosophical tenets of the Upaniṣads which are scattered all over, and often appear to be self-contradictory. *Vedānta Sūtras*, *Śārīraka Sūtras* and *Uttara Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* are the other nomenclatures for this work.

**buddhi** ('intellect'):

buddhi is one of the four aspects of antaḥkaraṇa or internal organ. Discrimination, deliberation on the pros and cons, is its chief characteristic. Jīva or the individual soul is actually the reflection of Ātman (the pure consciousness) in the buddhi. In this case, buddhi signifies the whole of the antaḥkaraṇa.

**C**

**caitanya** ('consciousness'):

Caitanya, consciousness or knowledge, is the very essence of the Brahman-Ātman entity. It is sometimes called 'turiya,' the fourth also, since it is the 'fourth' compared to the three states

of consciousness (avasthātraya) or the three manifestations of Brahman, viz., Īśvara, Hiranya-garba and Virāt.

**cakṣus** ('the eye'):

It is one of the five jñānendriyas or organs of knowledge or perception. Apprehending rūpa or forms of objects is its characteristic. It is the product of agni, also called 'rūpa-tanmātra,' out of its sattva-aspect. It is the most important organ involved in pratyakṣa or direct perception.

**cāndrayaṇa** ('movement of the moon'):

It is a prāyaścitta karma or expiatory rite in which the quantity of food consumed is decreased and increased according to the phases of the moon, the full normal quantity being taken on the full-moon day and gradually reducing it to zero on the new-moon day. The adhikārin or competent student of Vedānta is said to have completed the performance of such prāyaścitta karmas to obviate the effects of the past sins.

**caturdaśa-bhuvanas** ('fourteen worlds'):

Described in the Hindu mythological literature, these worlds starting with Pātāla and ending with Satyaloka come into being at the time of creation. Bhū or the earth is in the centre of

this group of worlds.

**Caturmukha-Brahmā** ('four-faced Brahmā'):

The four-faced Brahmā of the mythological lore is the Hiranyaśagarbha aspect of Brahman, the Absolute. See **Hiranyaśagarbha**.

**caturvidha-śarīra** ('fourfold bodies')

The bodies of living beings have been classified into four groups depending upon their origin: jarāyuja (born of the womb), andaja (born of the egg), svedaja (born out of moisture) and udbhijja (born out of the soil).

**citta** ('mind stuff'):

Citta is one of the four aspects of antaḥkaraṇa or the internal organ, responsible for memory. The word is also used in a more general way to indicate the mind.

**cittaśuddhi** ('purity of mind'):

According to Vedānta, an aspirant acquires competence to practise it only after getting cittaśuddhi or purity of mind, by performing prāyaścitta-karma or expiations and discharging the nitya-naimittika-karmas or daily and occasional obligatory duties.

## D

**dama** ('restraint'):

The student of Vedānta, called 'adhikārin,' becomes competent to practise Vedāntic spiritual disciplines only when he has purified his mind and has acquired the sādhanacatuṣṭaya or the fourfold spiritual discipline. 'Dama' is the second sub-discipline listed under śamādiṣaṭka, which itself is the third of the four sādhanas. It signifies restraint of the five organs of knowledge (jñānendriyas) and the five organs of action (karmendriyas) from all activities except those conducive to the main Vedāntic sādhanas of śravaṇa (hearing), manana (reflection) and nididhyāsana (meditation.)

**devadatta** ('given by God'):

It is one of the five 'upaprāṇas' or subsidiary vital airs, responsible for the act of yawning. It is an aspect of apāna, one of the five main vital airs.

**dhanañjaya:** ('the winner of wealth'):

This also is one of the five 'upaprāṇas' or subsidiary vital airs, responsible for general maintenance of the body. It is considered as an aspect of samāna, one of the five main prāṇas or vital airs.

**dhāraṇā** ('fixing'):

Listed as the sixth of the eight limbs of Yoga, 'dhāraṇā' is fixing the mind on the object of contemplation. It is the first step of serious meditation, leading to the next step, dhyāna.

**dhyāna** ('meditation'):

It is the penultimate step in the practice of aṣṭāṅga-yoga or the eight-limbed Yoga. In this state, the mind flows freely and continuously, like the oil poured from one vessel into another, towards the object of contemplation. In it, the succeeding mental waves are absolutely identical with the preceding ones.

**G****gandha** ('smell'):

The word has been used in Vedāntic texts to indicate smell as well as the tanmātra or primordial element, possessing the exclusive characteristic of smell. Hence the appellation 'gandhatanmātra.' In the gross state it represents pṛthvī or the earth, with the quality of gandha. Its sattva-aspect evolves into the organ of smell, ghrāṇendriya or the nose.

**ghrāṇa** ('the organ of smell'):

It is one of five jñānendriyas or organs of

knowledge, the last in the series, responsible for apprehending smell. It is the product of the sattva-aspect of gandha-tanmātra, the primordial element characterised by smell.

**gurūpasadana** ('approaching the guru'):

Once the spiritual aspirant (called 'adhi-kārin') has acquired all the preliminary qualifications needed for the practice of Vedāntic disciplines (see **adhikārin**) he should approach a competent guru (a knower of śāstras or scriptures and devoted to Brahman), following the usual customs prevalent in the the society.

## H

**Hiranyaagarbha** ('of golden womb'):

He is the second aspect of Brahman, the pure consciousness, associated with ajñāna or nescience, after Īśvara. He is associated with the totality of the subtle bodies in creation, permeating them like the thread through the beads. Hence the name 'Sūtratman.' He is also called 'Praṇa,' being the subtle principle of life. The unmanifested, seed-state of creation is compared to a golden egg. Since He keeps it in his womb as it were, before manifesting it, He is called 'Hiranyaagarbha.' He is endowed with the three powers of will, knowledge and action known as icchāśakti, jñānaśakti and kriyāśakti.

## I

**icchāśakti** ('powers of will'):

It is one of the three powers of Hiranya-garbha, the other two being jñānaśakti and kriyāśakti. It is the power by which He controls the animate and inanimate aspects of creation.

**Īśvara** ('the Lord'):

When Brahman, the pure consciousness, the Absolute, becomes associated with ajñāna or māyā, It is called Īśvara. In the common parlance He is 'God.' 'Avyakta' or unmanifested, 'Jagatkāraṇa' or the cause of the world and 'Antar-yāmin' or inner controller, are the other names by which He is known. He is sarvajña (all knowing), sarveśvara (all-powerful) and sarvaniyantr (all-controller). He is the starting point of creation.

**Īśvarapraṇidhāna** ('devotion to Īśvara'):

It is the last of the disciplines listed under niyama, the second step of aṣṭāṅgayoga or eight-limbed Yoga. This devotion to Īśvara includes offering the fruits of all actions.

## J

**jagatkāraṇa** ('origin or cause of the universe'):

It is one of the appellations of Īśvara, since the evolution of the universe starts from Him. Of course, it is sustained by Him and will dissolve back in Him.

**jāgrat** ('waking'):

It is the first of the three states of consciousness known as 'avasthātraya,' associated with the jīva or individual soul. The jīva himself, in this state of consciousness is designated as 'Viśva.'

**jahad-ajahad-lakṣaṇā** ('giving up-not giving up - implication'):

This is the third of a series of three lakṣaṇās or meanings by implication wherein the direct meaning is partly given up and partly accepted. For instance, in the sentence 'This is that Devadatta,' the Devadatta who was seen in the market the previous day is recognized when he comes to our house today. In doing so, the place and time are 'given up' and only the person is 'accepted.' This is the standard method adopted in interpreting the mahāvākyas. For example, in

the mahāvākya, *tat tvam asi*, (Thou art that) 'That' refers to Īśvara and 'thou' refers to the *jīva*; and the two can never be identical. Hence the *samaṣṭi-ajñāna* (totality of *ajñānas*) of Īśvara and its effects, *viz.*, the power of creation, rulership, etc., as also the *vyaṣṭi-ajñāna* (individual *ajñāna*) of the 'jīva' and its effects, *viz.*, the three bodies, the five *kośas*, limitations of knowledge and power etc., should be set aside and only the 'caitanya' (pure consciousness) aspect which is common should be considered. Then only equality can be proved or comprehended. In proving this, a part of the direct meaning is accepted and another part is given up. This *lakṣaṇā* is also known as 'bhāgalakṣaṇā.'

### **jahad-lakṣaṇā** ('giving-up implication'):

The first of the series of three *lakṣaṇās* or meanings by implication, it totally gives up the direct meaning and accepts only the implied one. For instance, in the sentence, 'The village of cowherds is inside the river Gaṅgā,' since a village cannot exist inside a river, the direct meaning is given up in favour of the implied meaning, *viz.*, 'The village of cowherds is on the bank of the river Gaṅgā.'

### **jarāyuja** ('born of the womb'):

The first of a series of four types of bodies

of living beings, it represents the bodies of mammals born out of the womb.

**jāteṣṭi** ('sacrifice on birth):

It is one of the sixteen religious sacraments to be performed in the life of a Hindu. It is done by the father immediately after the birth of his child. It is classed under naimittika-karma or obligatory duty to be performed on special occasions. See also naimittika-karma.

**jihvā** ('the tongue'):

The organ of taste, also called 'rasanam' or 'rasanendriya,' it is the fourth of the pañca-jñānendriyas or five organs of perception. It is formed out of the sattva-aspect of the rasa-tanmātra or āpas or the primordial water.

**jīva** ('the living being'):

All the living beings in the state of bondage and undergoing transmigration are called 'jīvas.' According to the Vedānta, the jīva is a reflection of the caitanya or pure consciousness in the antahkarna or internal organ, or buddhi, the intellect. The jīva has three types of bodies ('trividhaśarīra'), five sheaths (pañcakośas) and three states of consciousness ('avasthā-traya'). His bondage is caused by ajñāna or ignorance, and he can get liberation through jñāna or spiritual knowledge.

**jīvanmukti** ('liberation while living'):

It is the state of spiritual freedom ('mukti') even while living in the body ('jīvan'). It is attained simultaneously with the rise of jñāna or spiritual knowledge. Since the body may continue for some more time till the prārabdha-karma or the karma that started the body, is exhausted, the jīvanmukta apparently lives on like others but is never affected by problems and worries or any kind. He continuously enjoys the bliss of the Ātman or the Self.

**jñānaśakti** ('power of knowledge'):

It is one of the three powers of Hiranya-garba, the other two being icchāśakti and kriyāśakti. By this power He knows everything.

**jñānavirodhi** ('anti-knowledge'):

Ajñāna, nescience or ignorance, is one of the fundamental concepts of Vedānta. It is not just the absence of knowledge but something opposed to knowledge. Hence it is called 'virodhi' or opponent of jñāna or knowledge. However, it is destroyed on the rise of knowledge.

**jñānendriyas** ('organs of knowledge or perception'):

We gain empirical knowledge through the five sense organs, *viz.*, eyes, ears, nose, tongue

and skin. Hence they are termed as indriyas or sense-organs, giving jñāna or knowledge, or jñānendriyas. They are the evolutes of the sattva-part of the five primordial elements or tanmātras as follows: ākāśa or ether—śrotra, organ of hearing or ear; vāyu or air —sparśa, organ of touch or skin; agni or fire — rūpa, organ of seeing forms, or the eyes; āpas or water — rasa, organ of taste, or tongue; pṛthvī or earth — gandha, organ of smell, or nose.

**jyotiṣṭoma** ('sacrifice to light'):

A sacrifice belonging to the group of Somayāgas, it is especially performed by those desiring to attain heaven. It is a typical kāmya-karma or desire-motivated action.

## K

**kāmya-karma** ('desire-motivated action'):

Those who have unfulfilled desires, desires which cannot be fulfilled through normal human endeavours, are advised to perform certain religious rites and rituals, prescribed by the scriptures for their fulfillment through divine intervention. Such actions are called 'kāmya-karmas.' Jāteṣṭi and Jyotiṣṭoma belong to this category.

**kāraṇaśarīra** ('causal body'):

The jīva, the individual soul in bondage, is said to have three types of śarīras or bodies: sthūla, sūkṣma and kāraṇa. Kāraṇa śarīra or causal body is nothing but ajñāna or ignorance. Since it is the root-cause for embodiment, it is designated as such.

**karmendriyas** ('organs of action'):

The five organs of vāk (speech), pāṇi (hands), pāda (feet), pāyu (excretory organ), and upastha (organ of reproduction) are called 'karmendriyas,' 'indriyas' or sense organs responsible for 'karma' or action. They are the products of the rajas aspect of the five tanmātras or primordial elements, as follows: ākāśa gives rise to vāk, vāyu to pāṇi, agni to pāda, āpas to pāyu and prthvī to upastha.

**kāṣāya** ('attachment'):

When an aspirant is practising Vedāntic disciplines to attain the state of samādhi or complete absorption on the Ātman, he is bedevilled by four kinds of obstacles of which kāṣāya forms the third. It is the failure to rest on the Ātman due to attachment to sense-objects enjoyed previously.

### **kevala-lakṣaṇā** ('simple implication'):

Lakṣaṇā or implication is of two kinds: kevala-lakṣaṇā and lakṣita-lakṣaṇā. In the sentence, 'The cowherd village is in the Gaṅgā river,' by simple implication— since accepting the direct meaning is ruled out— we understand that the village is on the bank of the river, so near as if it is inside the river itself. The example for lakṣita- lakṣaṇā (implied implication) is that the word 'dvirepha' means a bee. How? Literally, it represents a word with two 'rephas' or the letter 'ra.' The word 'bhramara' has two 'ra's in it and means a bee. Hence the word 'dvirepha' by 'lakṣita-lakṣaṇā' means a bee.

### **kośa** ('sheath'):

Just as a sheath covers a sword and hides it, the physical body, mind, etc., cover the Ātman. Hence they are called 'kośa' or sheath. There are five such kośas. See pañcakośas for details.

### **kṛcchra** ('that which is difficult'):

'Kṛcchra' is the general name for a certain class of expiatory rites (prāyaścitta-karmas) prescribed to ward off the effects of evil deeds committed knowingly. Several varieties of the same are described in the Dharmasāstras.

**kriyāśakti** ('power of action'):

The third power of Hiranyagarbha which enables Him to create the world and also to act unhindered. The other two powers are: icchāśakti and jñānaśakti.

**kṛkala** ('pertaining to the throat'):

It is one of the five upaprāṇas or minor vital airs responsible for sneezing and is said to be an aspect of samāna, the last of the pañcaprāṇas or five vital airs.

**kūrma** ('the tortoise'):

One of the five subsidiary vital airs (upaprāṇas) responsible for opening and closing the eyelids. It is included in vyāna, one of the five major prāṇas.

## L

**lakṣita-lakṣaṇā** ('implied implication'):

See **kevala-lakṣaṇā**.

**lakṣyārtha** ('implied meaning'):

'Lakṣyārtha' is one of the three ways of arriving at the 'artha' or meaning of a sentence, the other two being *vācyārtha* (direct meaning) and *vyaṅgyārtha* (suggested meaning). It is the meaning that is implied when the direct meaning

is obviously unacceptable. For instance, in the sentence 'The Kaliṅga is adventurous,' it is the denizen of the country of Kaliṅga that is meant, though the word 'Kaliṅga' refers to only the country.

**laya** ('dissolution'):

Though normally the word means dissolution of the created world at the end of the cycle, in the context of Vedāntic sādhanā, it signifies the state of torpidity or sleep into which the mind lapses when it is unable to rest on the absolute. It is the first of a series of four vighnas or obstacles, to samādhi or absorption in Brahman.

**M**

**maḥābhūtas** ('the great elements'):

They are the five gross elements, viz., pṛthvī, āpas, tejas or agni, vāyu, and ākāśa (earth, water, fire, air and ether respectively), born out of the five tanmātras (primordial elements) by the process of pañcikarana or quintuplication. hence each of the elements has a part of the other four.

**maḥāvākyas** ('great sentences'):

The post-Śaṅkara writers on Advaita Vedānta have mentioned four sentences, taken

from four *Upaniṣads* and belonging to the four *Vedās*, which teach the unity of the Ātman and Brahman, as four ‘mahāvākyas’ or great sentences. They are: *prajñanam brahma* ('Consciousness is Brahman') from the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (5.3) of the *Rgveda*; *aham brahmāsmi* ('I am Brahman') from the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upaniṣad* of the *Yajurveda* (1.4.10); *tat tvam asi* ('you are That') from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6. 8. 7.) of the *Sāmaveda* and *ayamātmā Brahma* ('This Ātman is Brahman') from the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (2) of the *Atharvaveda*.

**manana** ('reflection'):

This is the second of the three direct disciplines prescribed for getting the knowledge of the Ātman and its oneness with Brahman. It is defined as constant thinking of Brahman, already heard from the spiritual preceptor, strengthening it by logic which is in consonance with the purport of Vedānta.

**manas** ('mind'):

It is an aspect of the *antahkaraṇa* or internal organ, responsible for *saṅkalpa* or general thinking, including willing and *vikalpa* or doubting. It is an evolute of the combined *sattva*-aspect of all the five *tanmātras* or primordial elements.

**manomayakośa** ('the mind-sheath'):

The manas or mind, along with the pañca-jñānendriyas or the five organs of knowledge, forms the 'manomayakośa' or the sheath of mind. Like a sheath, it covers and hides the real nature of the Ātman or the self. It is a part of the sūkṣma-śarīra (also called liṅga-śarīra), the subtle body, the other two parts being prāṇamayakośa (sheath of vital airs) and vijñānamayakośa (sheath of intellect).

**māyā** ('illusory power'):

Also called as ajñāna or avidyā (ignorance or nescience), it is the power of Brahman responsible for the illusory projection of this world. Āvaraṇa (covering or hiding) and vikṣepa (projection) are the two aspects of this power.

**mokṣa** ('liberation'):

See **mukti**.

**mukti** ('liberation'):

The state of freedom or liberation from all bonds created by ajñāna (ignorance) or māyā (illusory power), it is characterized by bliss and cessation of rebirth. 'Mokṣa,' 'kaivalya,' and 'nirvāṇa' are some of the other names normally used to describe this state.

**mumukṣutva** ('desire for liberation'):

This is the last of the four sādhanās or spiritual practices called 'sādhana- catuṣṭaya' and the most important qualification needed by the student of Vedānta.

**N****nāga** ('that which does not move'):

It is one of the five upaprāṇas or minor vital airs responsible for bringing about eructation and vomiting. It is classed as an aspect of udāna, one of the five main vital airs.

**naimittika-karma** ('occasional duties'):

Obligatory duties to be performed on special occasions like birth and death in a family are called 'naimittika-karmas.' Jāteṣṭi and śrāddha are two examples. Their performance will not produce any special merit, but their non-performance will entail sin.

**nididhyāsana** ('meditation'):

This is the term specially used in Vedānta to signify meditation. It has been defined as the stream of ideas of the same kind as Brahman to the exclusion of all other ideas like those of the body. Ultimately it leads to samādhi or total absorption in Brahman.

**nirvikalpaka** ('without distinctions'):

Samādhi or total absorption in Brahman is of two kinds: savikalpaka and nirvikalpaka. Vikalpa means distinctions, the consciousness of the many, like 'me' and 'Brahman' and the world. In the savikalpaka samādhi the consciousness of one's own personality as distinct from Brahman, persists, however attenuated it may be. In the nirvikalpaka state, however, all awareness of multiplicity including that of oneself as distinct from Brahman, is completely dissolved.

**niṣiddha-karma** ('prohibited actions'):

Sinful deeds, since they make the mind impure and hence unfit for spiritual enlightenment, have been prohibited by the scriptures. Hence the name (niṣiddha = prohibited). For example, telling lies, stealing, killing and so on.

**nitya-karma** ('daily duties'):

Certain duties like daily worship (sandhyā) have been ordained in the scriptures as compulsory and to be performed daily (nitya = daily). They are called 'nitya-karmas.'

**niyama** ('restraint'):

Second step of the eightfold Yoga, niyama comprises śauca (cleanliness), santosa (contentment) tapas (austerity), svādhyāya (self-study of

scriptures) and īśvarapraṇidhāna (devotion to God). They help to restrain the mind from evil deeds and engage it in spiritually good pursuits.

## P

### **pāda** ('the foot'):

It is one of the five karmendriyas or organs of action formed by the rajas-aspect of all the five tanmātras or primordial elements.

### **pañcakośas** ('the five sheaths'):

Those factors of our personality which cover or hide — like a sheath covering a sword — the Ātman, are called 'kośas.' They are five in number: annamayakośa (sheath of food, the physical body), prāṇamayakośa, (sheath of vital airs), manomayakośa (sheath of mind), vijñānamayakośa (sheath of intellect) and ānandamayakośa (sheath of bliss). (See under the individual kośas for details.) Kośas 2 to 4 form the sūkṣmaśarīra or the subtle body, responsible for transmigration.

### **pañcamahābhūtas** ('the five great elements'):

See **mahābhūtas**.

### **pañcaprāṇas** ('the five vital airs'):

The five vital airs are: prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna and samāna. (See under each for details.)

**pañcikaraṇa** ('process of quintuplication'):

The process by which each of the pañcamahābhūtas (five great elements) is formed out of the pañcatanmātras (five primordial elements) is called 'pañcikaraṇa.' Each former element — because of this — contains half of the corresponding tanmātra and one-eighth of each of the other four. For instance, one unit of the mahābhūta pṛthvī =  $1/2$  pṛthvī tanmātra +  $1/8$  of ap tanmātra +  $1/8$  of agni tanmātra +  $1/8$  of vāyu tanmātra +  $1/8$  of ākāśa tanmātra. Because of this pañcikaraṇa, each of the mahābhūtas contains a part of the other four bhūtas and hence their characteristics.

**pāṇi** ('the hand'):

One of the five karmendriyas or organs of action pāṇi (the hands) is formed out of the rajas-aspect of the tanmātras or primordial elements.

**pāyu** ('organ of excretion'):

The excretory organs called 'pāyu' are one of the five karmendriyas or organs of action and are evolved out of the rajas-aspect of the five tanmātras or primordial elements.

**phala** ('the fruit'):

It is a technical term indicating one of the

ṣaḍvidha-līṅgas (six characteristic signs) by which the real purport of Vedāntic texts can be determined. It signifies the fruit or utility of the subject matter (viśaya) of a section. In Vedānta it is Brahmajñāna or knowledge of Brahman, giving liberation.

**prajāpati** ('Lord of beings'):

One of the epithets of Hiranyagarbha, since He is the lord of beings in creation.

**prājña** ('one who is unaware'):

It is the name of the jīva or individual soul in the state of deep-sleep. In this state the jīva remains temporarily in unison with Brahman.

**prāṇa** ('the life'):

Hiranyagarbha, the second aspect of Brahman associated with ajñāna (ignorance) is also known as prāṇa because He is the very life of the universe.

**prāṇa** ('vital air'):

It is one of the five vital airs centred in the nose and responsible for respiration. It is a product of the rajas aspect of the five tanmātras or primordial elements.

**prāṇamayakośa** ('the life-sheath'):

It is the pañcaprāṇas or the five vital airs, along with the karmendriyas or organs of action, that constitute the prāṇamayakośa. They cover the soul like a sheath, hiding its real nature, which is caitanya or consciousness.

**prāṇayāma** ('regulation of breath'):

The fourth of the eight steps of Yoga, it is concerned with the control of the prāṇic energy and hence the mind, by regulating breathing. Recaka (exhalation), pūraka (inhalation) and kumbhaka (retention) are its three steps.

**pratyāhāra** ('withdrawal'):

Withdrawal of the mind which is going out through the sense organs, in order to fix it on the object of meditation, is pratyāhāra. It is the fifth step of the eight-limbed Yoga.

**prāyaścitta-karma** ('expiatory action'):

'Prāyas' is austerity and 'citta' is determination. Hence it signifies the determination to destroy sins through austerity. Many such expiatory rites like kṛcchra, cāndrāyaṇa, govrata etc., have been prescribed in the secondary scriptures called Dharmasāstras.

**prayojana** ('utility'):

Listed as the fourth of the anubandha catuṣṭaya, the four preliminaries to the study of Vedānta, prayojana tells us about the utility of this study. It ultimately leads to the attainment of bliss through the realization of the unity of the individual self with Brahman. This is the prayojana we reap.

**pr̥thvī** ('the earth'):

The element pr̥thvī or earth, one of the five mahābhūtas or compounded elements, is the gross aspect of the gandhatanmātra or pr̥thvī-tanmātra, formed after pañcikarana (quintuplication). It is evolved out of the tamas-aspect of the tanmātras or primordial elements.

**R****rajas** ('the active one'):

The second of the three guṇas that comprise ajñāna (avidyā, māyā) or nescience, it is the active component that is responsible for movement, passion and unrest.

**rasa** ('taste'):

Though the word means taste in the ordinary parlance, it is a technical term standing for the 'rasatanmātra' or 'ap-tanmātra,' the primordial

element of water. In the gross state it is the mahābhūta (compounded element) water, formed out of pañcikaraṇa (quintuplication). Its sattva-aspect gives rise to rasana, the organ of taste, *viz.*, the tongue and the palate.

**rasana** ('the organ of taste'):

See **rasa**. It is one of the five jñānendriyas or organs of knowledge.

**rasāsvāda** ('enjoying the taste'):

The last of a series of four vighnas or obstacles to samādhi (total absorption), it is defined as enjoying the taste of bliss that one gets in savikalpaka-samādhi. It is an obstacle in so much as it prevents the aspirant from rising to the next and last step of nirvikalpaka-samādhi. (see **samādhi**.)

**rūpa** ('form'):

It represents the subtle agni or tejas, a tanmātra or primordial element with the characteristic of comprehending rūpa or form. The mahābhūta (compounded element) agni (fire) or tejas (light) is its gross evolute formed after pañcikaraṇa or quintuplication. Its sattva-aspect gives rise to the organ of sight, the eyes.

## S

**śabda** ('sound'):

The tanmātra of śabda or sound is none other than ākāśa, the primordial element ether, one of the five such tanmātras. The gross ākāśa is its product after undergoing the process of pañcīkarna or quintuplication. The organ of hearing, the śrotra or the ears, is its evolute out of its sattva-aspect.

**sādhanā** ('means of spiritual enlightenment'):

These sādhanās are four. See **sādhana-catuṣṭaya**.

**sādhana-catuṣṭaya** ('the four means of spiritual enlightenment'):

The aspirant for the study and practice of Vedānta is expected to acquire these four sādhanās, viz., viveka or discrimination, vairāgya or renunciation, śamādi- ṣaṭka or the group of six spiritual attributes beginning with śama or peace and ending with samādhāna or concentration, and mumukṣutva or desire for liberation. For details, see under each title.

**ṣaḍvidha-liṅgas** ('six characteristic signs'):

Once the student of Vedānta acquires the

necessary competence to practice the Vedāntic disciplines, he is to approach a teacher well-versed in the Vedās and established in Brahman. From him he should first hear (śravana) about the truth. This hearing involves determining the correct import of the scriptures by applying the ṣadvidha-liṅgas or six characteristic signs. They are: upakrama-upasamhāra (beginning and conclusion), apūrvatā (originality), phala (fruit or result), arthavāda (eulogy), abhyāsa (repetition) and upapatti (reasoning, demonstration). See under each for details.

**śama** ('tranquillity'):

It is one of the six disciplines listed under śamādi-ṣaṭka, which itself is the third sādhanā under sādhana-catuṣṭya. It is keeping the mind away from pursuing the worldly pleasures which are inimical to sādhanas like śravaṇa (hearing the Vedāntic scriptures).

**śamādhāna** ('concentration'):

Listed as the fifth of the śamādi-ṣaṭka, it means concentrating the mind on śravaṇa (hearing) of the scriptural passages and other subjects conducive to the same.

**śamādhi** ('the total absorption'):

Nididhyāsana or meditation ultimately leads

to samādhi, perfect concentration and total absorption in the object of concentration. In Vedānta the object is the unity of Ātman with Brahman. Samādhi is of two kinds: savikalpaka and nirvikalpaka. See **nirvikalpaka** for details.

**śamādi-śatka** ('the group of six beginning with śama'):

It consists of śama (tranquillity), dama (self-control), uparathi (cessation of external organs from the pursuit of sense-objects), titīksā (endurance), samādhāna (concentration), and śraddhā (faith). It forms the third limb of the sādhana-catuṣṭaya, the four sādhanās.

**śamāna** ('the equal or uniform'):

The last of the pañcaprāṇas or five vital airs, samāna situated in the central region of the body, is responsible for digestion and assimilation of food. Like the other prāṇas, it is also an evolute of the tanmātras or primordial elements out of their rajas-aspect.

**samaṣṭi** ('the totality'):

Vyaṣṭi (the individual) and samaṣṭi (the total) are two words often used in Vedānta in connection with ajñāna (ignorance). The caitanya (pure consciousness) associated with samaṣṭi ajñāna gets the name Īśvara and so on, depending

upon the stage of evolution. Similarly when it is associated with *vyaṣṭi ajñāna*, it is called *prājña* and so on.

**sambandha** ('the connection or relation'):

The third of the four anubandhas or preliminaries, *sambandha* indicates the relationship between the Ātman-Brahman identity that is to be realized and the treatises like the *Upaniṣads* which purport to teach about it. It is *bodhya-bodhaka* (propounded and propounder) *sambandha* that subsists between them. See also *bodhya-bodhaka*.

**saṁyama** ('control or mastery'):

As a technical word used in the *Yoga-sutras* of Patañjali, it signifies *dhāraṇā*, *dhyānā* and *saṁādhi* together, when the object of concentration is the same for all the three stages of yoga. By practising *saṁyama* on different objects, various psychic powers can be obtained.

**sandhyā** ('junction'):

'Sandhyā' literally means the junction of day and night, i.e. dawn and dusk. However in Vedic scriptures it stands for the ritual to be performed at such periods. Worship of God the Creator through the symbol of the sun is the essence of this ritual. It is obligatory and is to be performed daily.

**santosa** ('contentment'):

Santosa or contentment is the second of the five disciplines mentioned under niyama (restraint), the second step of *asṭāṅgayoga* or eight-limbed Yoga of Patañjali.

**Śarīra** ('the body'):

Vedāntic texts mention three kinds of śarīras or bodies for the soul: kāraṇaśarīra or causal body, sūkṣmaśarīra or subtle body and sthūlaśarīra or gross body. In another context they mention the bodies of created beings as of four types: jarāyuja, aṇḍaja, svedaja and udbhijja, born respectively of the womb, egg, moisture and earth.

**Śarīraka-sūtras** ('the sutras pertaining to the soul'):

'Śarīra' is body and 'śarīra' is that which has the body, *viz.*, the Ātman. Hence the word applies to the sūtra work whose subject matter is the Ātman. It is the same as the *Brahma Sūtras*.

**sarvajñatva** ('omniscience'):

It is one of the qualities of Īśvara or God.

**sarvaniyantrtva** ('power to control everything'):

This is another power of Īśvara or God.

**sarveśvaratva** ('omnipotence'):

The quality of lordship over all, predicated of Īśvara or God.

**sattva** ('the true, the good'):

It is the first of the three guṇas that comprise ajñāna or avidyā or māyā (nescience) and is the quality of goodness, light, knowledge and peace.

**satya** ('truth'):

The word is used in texts like the *Vedāntasāra* to indicate Satyaloka or Brahmaloka, the highest of the fourteen worlds. It is the abode of the four-faced Brahmā. According to some Vedāntic texts, that is the final goal of life.

**śauca** ('purity'):

Cleanliness or purity is the first aspect of the discipline called niyama (restraint), the second step of the eight-limbed Yoga. It refers to bodily and mental purity.

**savikalpaka** ('with distinctions'):

See *nirvikalpaka*.

**sparśa** ('touch'):

The sūkṣmabhūta vāyu (air) also called 'sparśa-tanmātra' has the special characteristic of touch (sparśa). The gross vāyu is the product of sparśa-tanmātra after pañcikarṇa or quintuplication. The organ of touch, the skin, is its evolute from the sattva-aspect.

**śraddhā** ('faith'):

It is the strong belief in the Vedāntic texts as taught by the guru or spiritual teacher. It is one of the six disciplines listed under śamādisaṭka.

**śrāddha** ('that which is performed with śraddhā or faith'):

The obligatory religious rites to be performed in honour of the departed ancestors are called 'śrāddha.' Śrāddha is listed under naimittika-karma or occasional duties.

**śravaṇa** ('hearing'):

The first of the three practices concerning meditation on the unity of Ātman and Brahman, śravaṇa implies not only hearing the Vedāntic texts from the teacher but also determining their correct meaning by applying the ṣaḍvidhalingas or the six characteristic signs.

**śrotra** ('the ear'):

One of the five organs of knowledge, the jñānendriyas, śrotra is the evolute of the śabda-tanmātra or the primordial ether out of its sattva-aspect.

**śruti-anugṛhīta-tarka** ('reasoning in consonance with the śrutis'):

Vedānta does not recognize tarka or logic and reasoning as an independent source of spiritual knowledge since it can always be controverted by more powerful logic. However, when it is not in conflict with, but is in consonance with, the śrutis or Vedas, its validity is accepted.

**sthūlaśarīra** ('gross body'):

It is the physical body given by the parents and nourished by food. It is identical with annamayakośa. It is the first of the three bodies that bind the jīva or individual soul.

**sūkṣmabhūtas** ('subtle elements'):

They are the five primordial elements, same as the 'tanmātras,' the originals of the five mahābhūtas. See **tanmātras**.

**sūkṣmaśasrīra** ('subtle body'):

The second of a series of three bodies that

bind the jīva or individual soul, it consists of the three kośas or sheaths of prāṇa (vital airs), manas (mind) and vijñāna (intellect). The seventeen elements that constitute the subtle body are: the five jñānendriyas (organs of knowledge), the five karmendriyas (organs of action), the five prāṇas (vital airs), the mind and the intellect. This is also called liṅgaśarīra. It is this body that transmigrates and persists till mokṣa or liberation.

**suṣupti** ('deep sleep'):

The third of the three states of consciousness of the jīva, the individual soul, called 'avasthātraya,' it is the state of deep-sleep. The jīva in this state is called 'prājña.'

**sūtrātman** ('the thread-self'):

As a thread holds together the gems or flowers of a necklace or a garland, the Hiraṇyagarbha supports this universe. Hence this appellation for Him.

**svādhyāya** ('self-study'):

Study of the scriptures is the fourth discipline listed under yama, the second step of the eight-limbed Yoga of Patañjali. Repetition of Om and other mantras is also included in it.

**svapna** ('dream'):

The second of the three states of consciousness (avasthātraya), svapna is dream. The subtle body 'liṅgaśarīra' or 'sūkṣmaśarīra' is active in this state. The jīva associated with this state is called 'taijasa.'

**svedaja** ('born of perspiration'):

It refers to the living beings, more specially to their bodies, born out of moisture. It is the third of a series of four kinds of bodies produced in creation.

**T****taijasa** ('the bright one'):

The jīva or the individual soul, associated with the state of dream, svapna, is called 'taijasa.' In this state, the sūkṣmaśarīra or subtle body is active.

**tamas** ('the dark one'):

The last of the three guṇas comprising ajñāna or ignorance. Its main characteristics are sleep, indolence, darkness and inclination towards evil.

**tanmātras** ('that only'):

The five primordial elements that manifest from the Ātman associated with ajñāna or

ignorance are called 'tan-mātras' since each of them contains one quality and is only *that* quality. For instance, the primordial element ākāśa has only śabda (sound or vibration) as its characteristics and hence called 'śabda-tanmātra.' The other elements are: sparśa-tanmātra or vāyu (air), rūpa-tanmātra or agni (fire), rasa-tanmātra or āpas (water), and gandha-tanmātra or pṛthvī (earth). These tanmātras are also called 'sūkṣma-bhūtas' (subtle elements) or 'apañcīkṛta-bhūtas' (uncompounded elements). Further creation takes place out of them, associated, of course, with the Ātman.

**tapas** ('that which burns'):

Tapas or austerity is the third of the five disciplines listed under yama which itself is the second limb of the aṣṭāṅgayoga of Patañjali. The austerity pertains to body, speech and mind.

**titikṣā** ('forbearance'):

Titikṣā or forbearance of all pairs of opposites, of all sufferings, without reaction or murmur, is the fourth discipline listed under śamādiṣaṭka.

**triguṇātmaka** ('comprising the three guṇas'):

Ajñāna or ignorance or nescience is said to be 'triguṇatmaka' since it consists of the three guṇas: sattva, rajas, and tamas.

**trividhaśarīra** ('three kinds of bodies'):

It refers to the *sthūla*, *sūkṣma* and *kāraṇa* *śarīras* or the gross, subtle and causal bodies that cover and bind the *jīva*, the individual soul.

**Turiya** ('the fourth'):

Since the Ātman/Brahman, the pure caitanya or consciousness, is beyond the three states of consciousness experienced by the *jīva*, the bound individual soul, it is called the 'Turiya' or the fourth.

**tvak** ('the skin'):

It is the organ of touch, the skin, one of the five *jñānendriyas* or organs of knowledge, born of the sattva-aspect of *vāyu-tanmātra*.

## U

**udāna** ('breathing upwards'):

It is the fourth of a series of five *prāṇas* (the five vital airs). It is situated in the throat with its movement poised upwards. It is this vital air that helps the *jīva* leave the body at the time of death.

**udbhijja** ('shooting forth'):

The last of the four kinds of bodies produced in creation, it represents the plant kingdom since

the seeds while germinating 'shoot up' breaking the earth above them.

**upakrama-upasamhāra** ('introduction and conclusion'):

The first of the ṣadvidha-liṅgas or six characteristic signs by which the true import of the scriptures is determined. It means presentation of the subject matter of a section at its beginning and its end.

**upapatti** ('reasoning'):

Last of the ṣadvidha-liṅgas or six characteristic signs by which the correct import of the scriptures is determined, upapatti is logic and reasoning in support of the subject matter.

**upa-prāṇas** ('subsidiary prāṇas'):

The five subsidiary prāṇas or vital airs are: nāga, kūrma, kṛkala, devadatta and dhanañjaya. See under each for details.

**uparati** ('cessation'):

It is the cessation of the external organs (eye etc.) restrained earlier, from the pursuit of objects inimical to śravaṇa (hearing) etc.

**upāsanā** ('sitting near' or 'meditation'):

It is defined as meditation on Saguṇa

Brahman, Brahman with attributes, as prescribed in the scriptures. It is one of the means of purifying one's mind.

**upastha** ('that which is near' or 'the organ of generation'):

Organs of reproduction are called 'upastha' and are one of the five karmendriyas or organs of action. They are products of the rajas-aspect of the *prthivī-tanmātra* or the primordial element, earth.

## V

**vācyārtha** ('direct meaning'):

It is the direct meaning of a sentence, the first of a series of three meanings possible. For example, 'Bring the cow.' In this sentence there is only a simple direct meaning and no suggestions or implications are involved.

**vairāgya** ('detachment'):

Vairāgya or renunciation or the spirit of detachment is the second of the four sādhanās listed under sādhana-catusṭaya. It is a natural consequence of viveka or discrimination. It pertains to all objects of pleasure whether of this world or of the next.

**vaiśvānara** ('the Universal in human beings'):

The pure caitanya when associated with the totality of gross bodies of creation (samaṣṭi-sthūla-śarīra) is called 'Vaiśvānara' or 'Virāt.'

**vāk** ('the speech'):

The organ of speech or vāgindriya is one of the five karmendriyas or organs of action. It is the product of the rajas-aspect of the tanmātra, ākāśa or ether.

**vāyu** ('the wind or air'):

At the subtle level, it is the sparśa-tanmātra. At the gross level, it is the mahābhūta vāyu or air, produced by pañcikaraṇa or quintuplication. As tanmātra, it gives rise to the organ of touch, the skin.

**Vedānta** ('the end or essence of Veda'):

The Upaniṣads (and allied literature) are called Vedānta because they come at the end of the Vedas and contain the essence of Vedic teachings. They also point towards the goal of life.

**Vedānta-sūtras** ('Aphorisms on Vedānta'):

See **Brahma Sūtras** and **Śārīrika Sūtras**.

**videha-mukti** ('liberation after death'):

Even after obtaining the knowledge of the Ātman, the body may continue due to the past momentum of actions. When the body dies, it gets resolved into the original causes. The subtle body also gets disintegrated. Then the soul attains final liberation. This is known as 'videha-mukti.'

**vijñānamayakośa** ('sheath of intellect'):

The buddhi or intellect along with the five jñānendriyas or organs of knowledge forms the vijñānamayakośa or the sheath or intellect. It is called a kośa or the sheath since it covers and hides the knowledge of the Ātman.

**vikṣepa** ('throwing up'):

It is the second power of ajñāna or ignorance, the first one being āvaraṇa or covering. It projects the object, upon which it acts, as something other than what it is. Like semi-darkness making a rope appear as a snake, this power makes the universe appear in Brahman.

**virāṭ** ('the big'):

See **Vaiśvānara**.

**viśaya** ('subject'):

The subject matter of a Vedāntic treatise,

**viṣaya** is the second of the anubandha-catuṣṭaya or the four preliminaries. See also anubandha-catuṣṭaya.

**viśva** ('one who has entered'):

The caitanya or pure consciousness when identified with the individual gross body and in the waking state, is called 'viśva.' To put in another way, it is the jīva in the jāgrat or waking state.

**viveka** ('discrimination'):

Viveka or discrimination between the real and the unreal, is the first of the four sādhanās called 'sādhana-catuṣṭaya.' It leads to vairāgya or renunciation.

**vyaṅgyārtha** ('suggested meaning'):

When a word has several meanings but other words used along with it help us to fix it, it is called 'vyaṅgyārtha.' For instance, in the sentence 'Hari is with śaṅkha and cakra (conch and discus)' it is Lord Nārāyaṇa that is understood as the meaning of the word Hari even though the word has several other meanings like monkey, lion, etc., because the words 'śaṅkha' and 'cakra' help us to fix it, by suggesting it.

**vyaṣṭi** ('the individual aspect'):

The word has been used with respect to *ajñāna* or ignorance. *Ajñāna* is many when looked at from the standpoint of the individuals.

**vyutthāna** ('risen'):

It is the normal state of consciousness to which the yogi returns after having risen from *samādhi* or total absorption.

## Y

**yama** ('restraint'):

*Yama* is the first step of the eight-limbed *Yoga*. It consists of *ahimsā* (non-injury), *satya* (truth), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (continence or celibacy) and *aparigraha* (non-acceptance of gifts). See under each for details.

## PART THREE

## CHARTS

Table 1: Vedānta

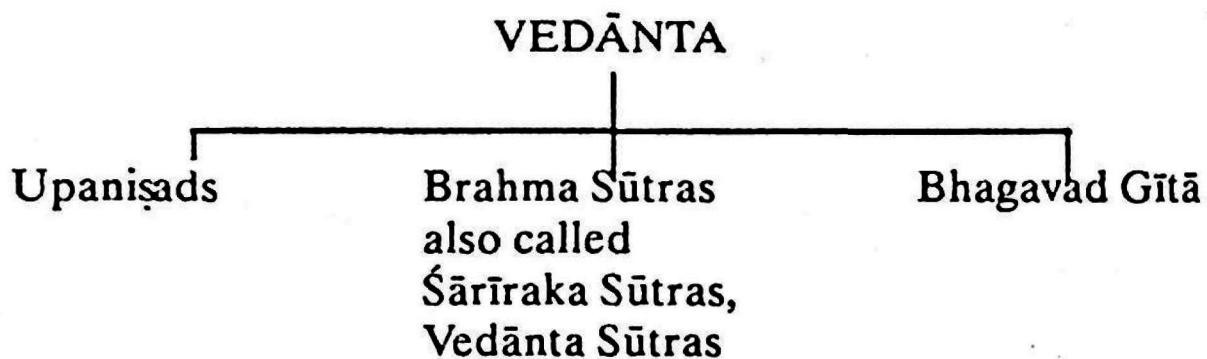
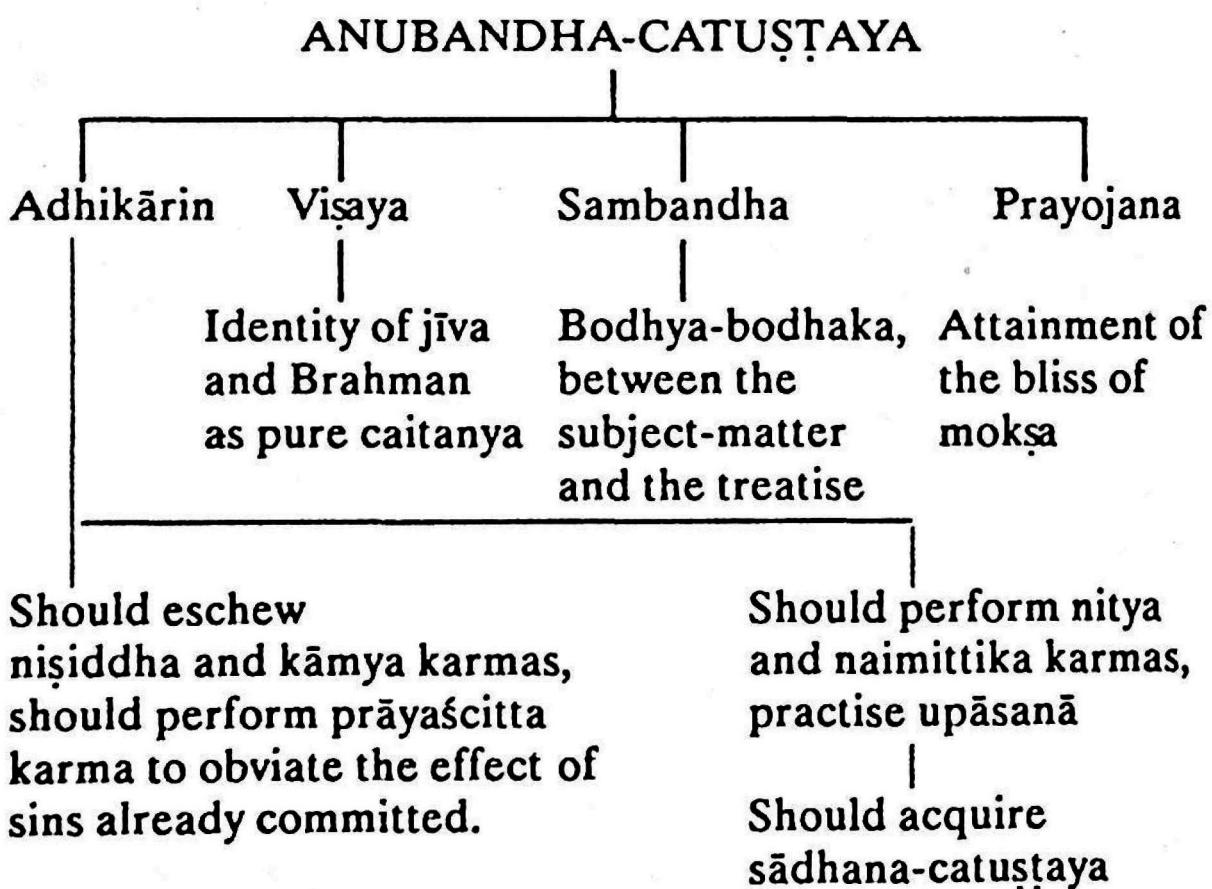
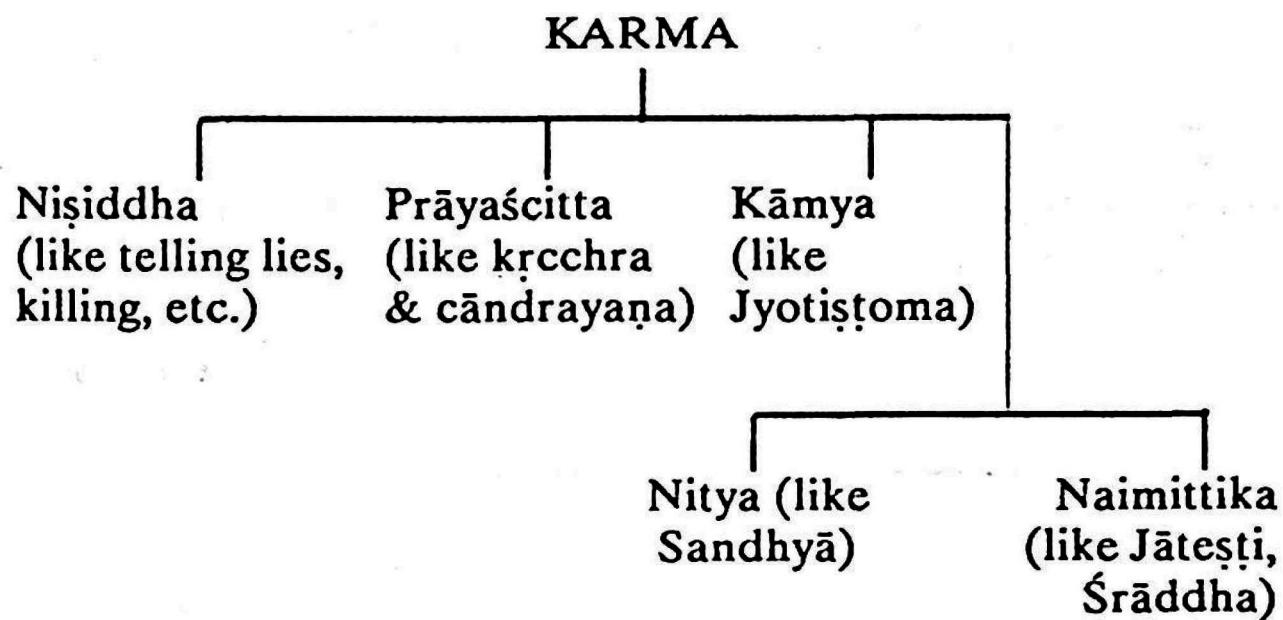
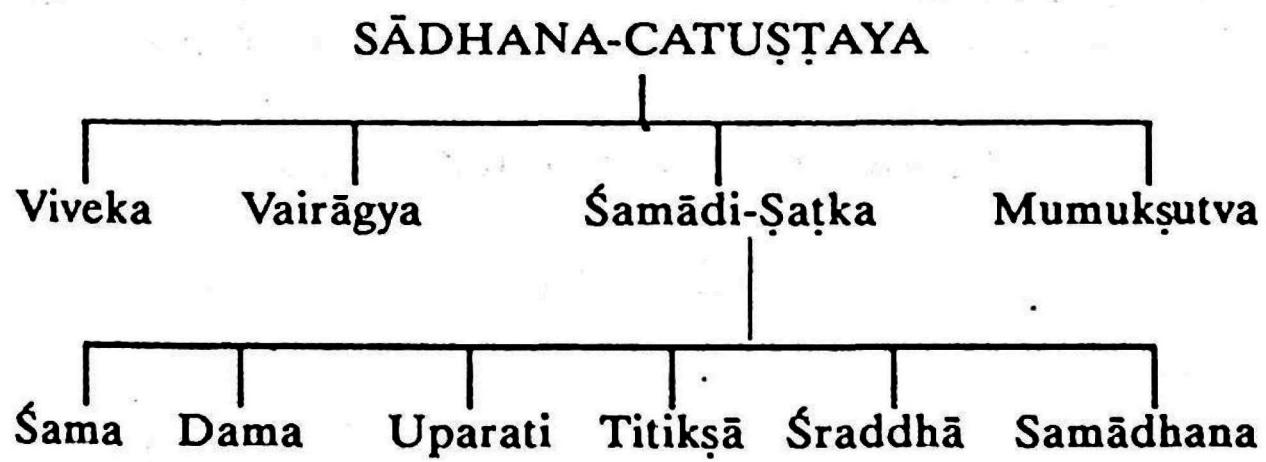
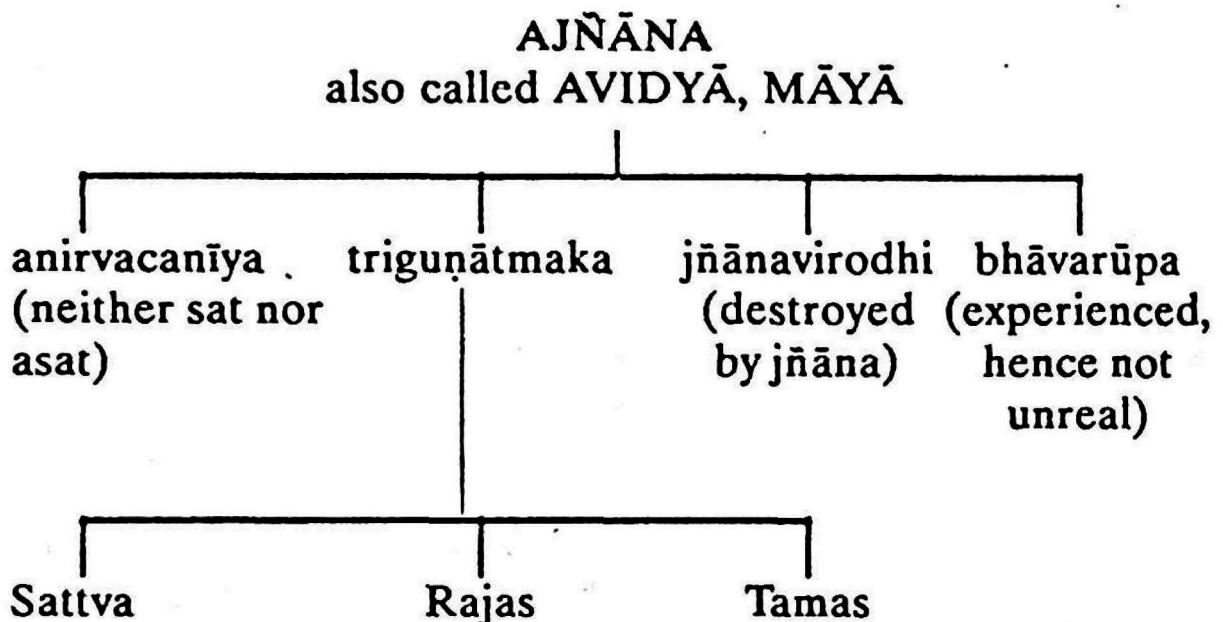
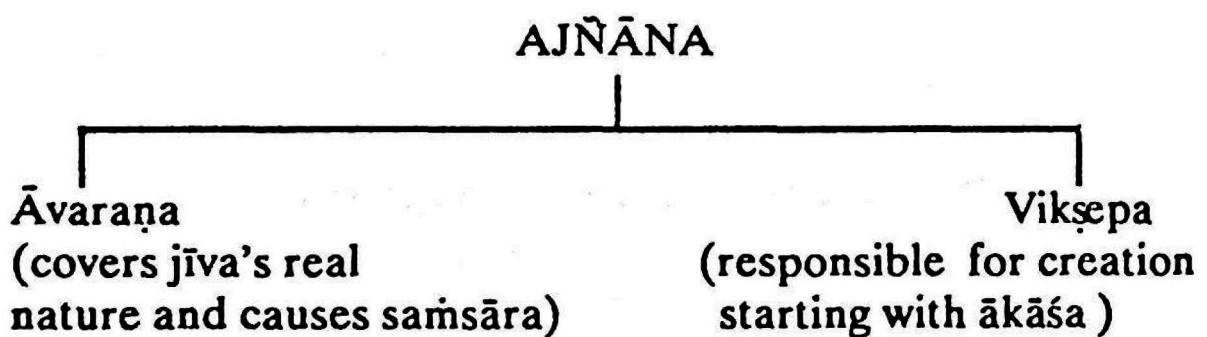
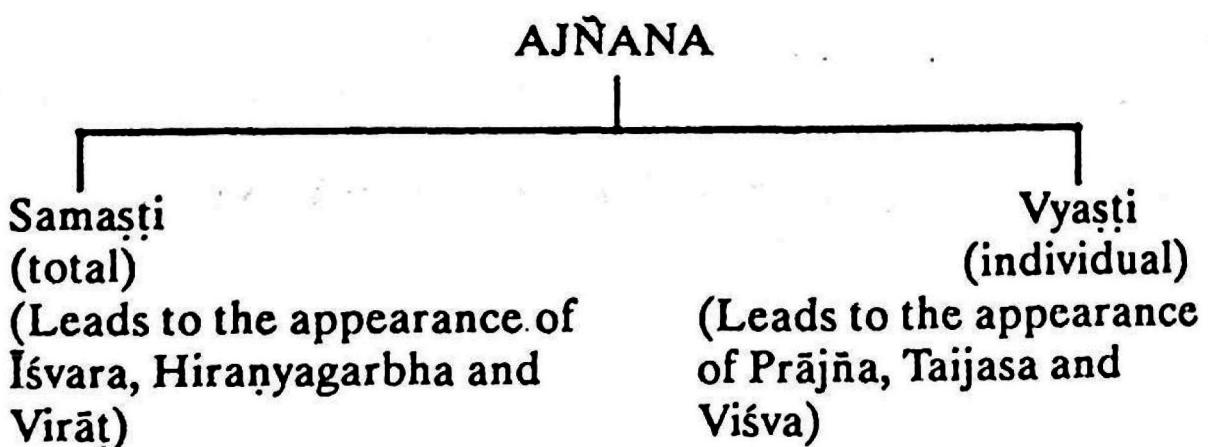


Table 2: (a) Anubandha-catuṣṭaya



**Table 2 (b): Varieties of Karma:****Table 2 (c): Sādhana-catuṣṭaya**

**Table 3 (a): Description of Ajñāna****Table 3 (b): Power of Ajñāna****Table 3 (c): Forms of Ajñāna**

### Table 4: Brahman and Its Aspects

**BRAHMAN**  
(pure caitanya, also called  
Turiya)

|                                                  |                                                                                         |            |                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| in association with<br>samaṣṭi ajñāna<br>or Māyā | ĪŚVARA<br>also called<br>AVYAKTA,<br>ANTARYĀMIN<br>and<br>JAGATKĀRANA                   | possessing | sarvajñatva<br>sarveśvaratva<br>sarvaniyan-<br>trītya |
|                                                  |                                                                                         |            | jñāna-<br>śakti                                       |
|                                                  | HIRANYAGARBHA.....<br>also called<br>SŪTRĀTMAN,<br>PRĀNA, CATURMUKHABRAHMĀ<br>PRAJĀPATI |            | icchā-<br>śakti                                       |
|                                                  |                                                                                         |            | kriyā-<br>śakti                                       |
| with samaṣṭi<br>sthūlaśarīra                     |                                                                                         |            |                                                       |
|                                                  | VIRĀT<br>(also called VAIŚVĀNARA)                                                       |            |                                                       |

## Table 5: The Jīva

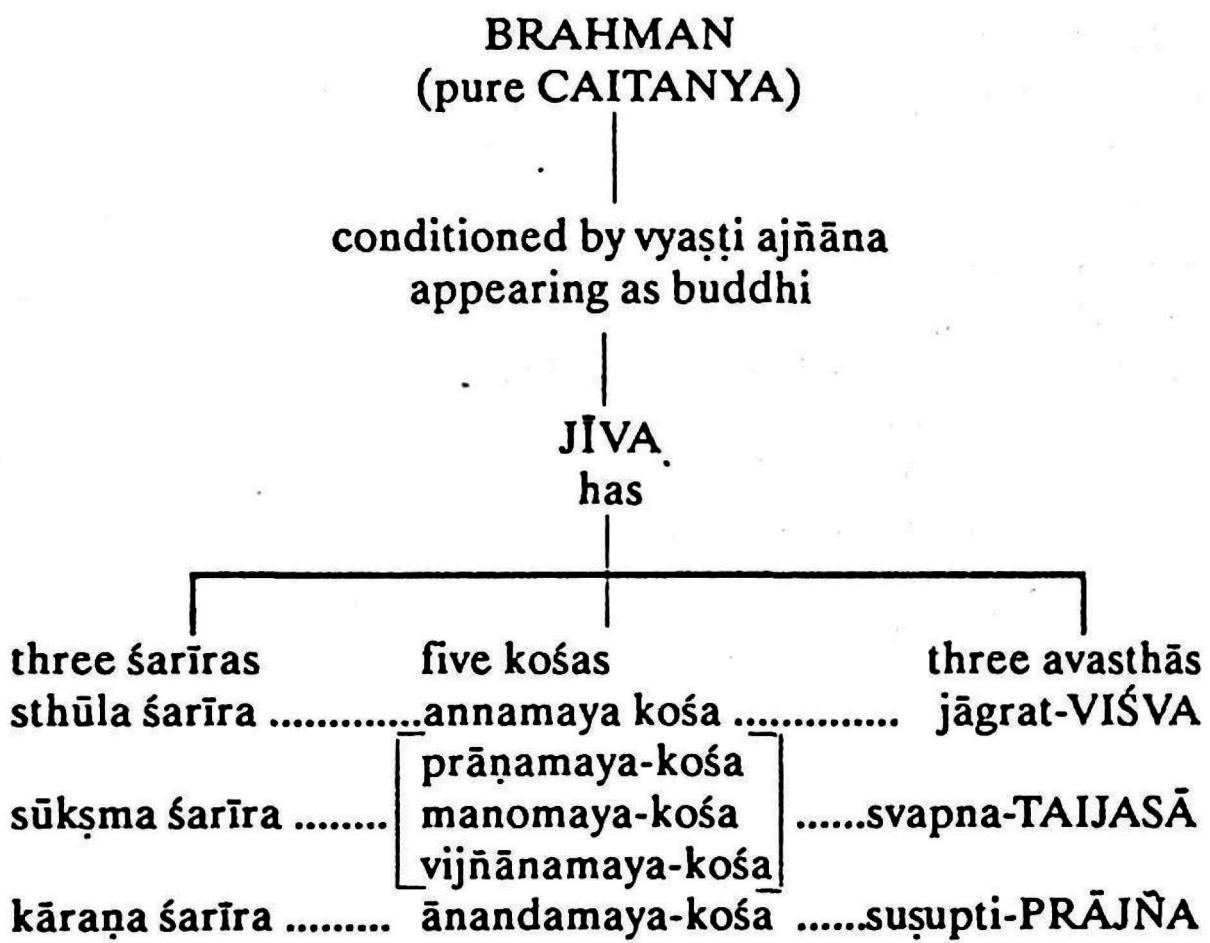


Table No. 6 (a) CREATION  
BRAHMAN (CAITANYA)

AJÑĀNA

(with preponderance of Tamas and  
manifestation of Vikṣepaśakti

ākāśa (śabda) -----  
vāyu (sparśa) -----  
|  
agni (rūpa) -----  
|  
āpas (rasa) -----  
|  
pr̥thvī (gandha) -----

also called  
TANMĀTRAS  
and  
SŪKṢMA-  
BHŪTAS

with prepon-  
derance of  
TAMAS  
through  
pañcikaraṇa  
|  
pañca-mahā-  
bhūtas

from sāttvika part of each,  
the five jñānendriyas

caturdša-bhuvanas,  
containing beings with  
four kinds of bodies

→ 1. śrotra  
2. tvag  
3. cakṣus  
4. jihvā or rasana  
5. ghrāṇa

from sattva of all the five  
Antahkaraṇa  
citta, ahaṅkāra  
manas, buddhi

from the rājasic part of  
each, the five karmendriyas

from the rajas of all the  
five, the pañca-prāṇas  
and upaprāṇas

1. vāk  
2. pāṇi  
3. pāda  
4. pāyu  
5. upastha

prāṇa apāna vyāna udāna samāna  
| | | | |  
devadatta kūrma naga ↓  
dhanañjaya  
kṛkala

**Table 6 (b) Pañcikaraṇa**

Each mahābhūta =  $\frac{1}{2}$  respective tanmātra +  $\frac{1}{8}$   
 or four tanmātras  
 sthūlabhūta

e. g., pṛthvī-bhūta =  $\frac{1}{2}$  gandha-tanmātra or  
 sūkṣma-pṛthvī  
 +  $\frac{1}{8}$  sūkṣma ākāśa +  $\frac{1}{8}$   
 sūkṣma vāyu +  $\frac{1}{8}$  sūkṣma agni  
 +  $\frac{1}{8}$  sūkṣma āpas

**Table 6 (c): Caturdaśa Bhuvanas  
 (14 worlds)**

atala, vitala, sutala, rasātala, talātala,  
 mahātala, pātala — BELOW the earth.

bhū — earth

bhuvar, svar, mahar, jana, tapas, satyam —  
 ABOVE the earth

**Table 6 (d): Bodies****FOUR KINDS OF BODIES**

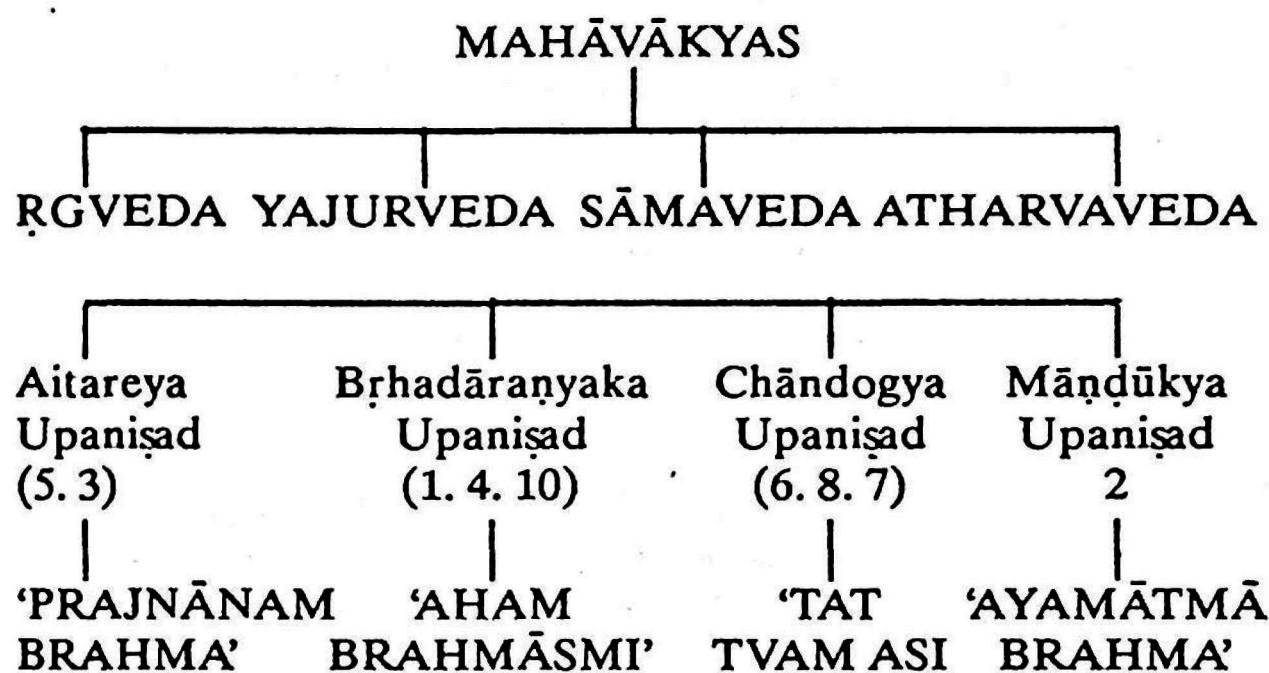
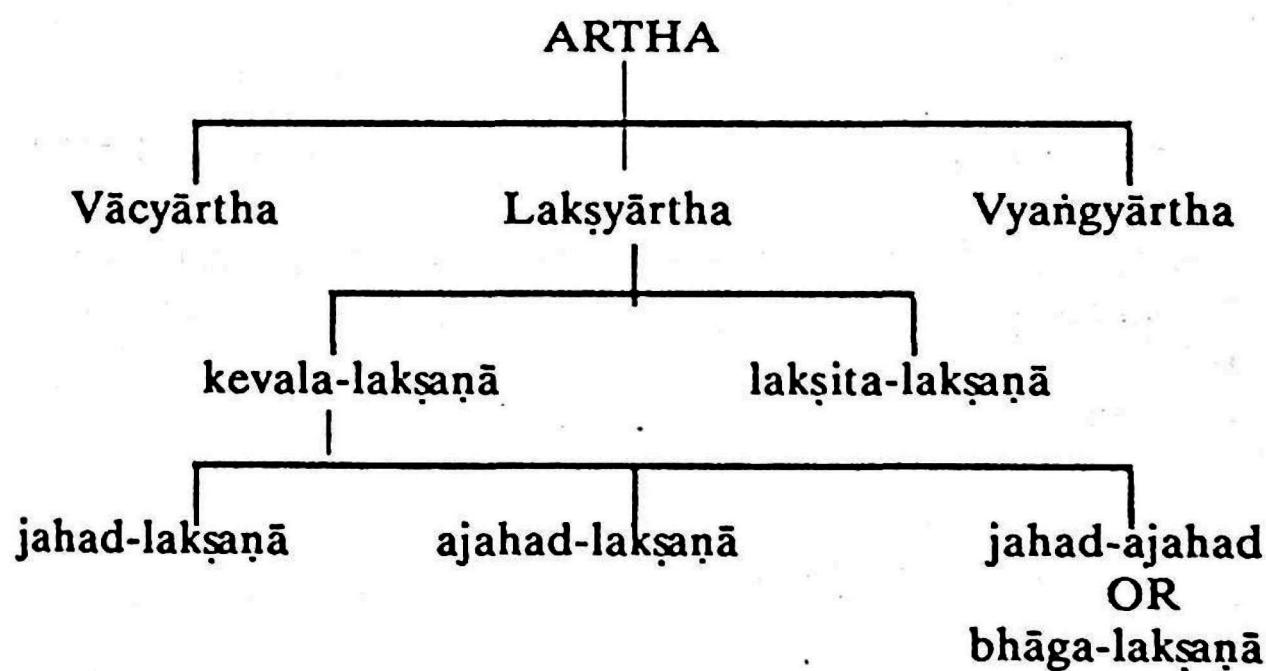
Table 7: *Mahāvākyas*

Table 8: Meaning of Sentence



## Table 9: Sādhanās

## SĀDHANĀS

Cittaśuddhi by avoiding niśiddha and kāmya karmas, performing prāyaśitas and nitya-naimittika karmas and acquiring

## SĀDHANA-CATUṢTAYA

gurūpasadana, upadeśa

śravaṇa

determining the meaning of śrutis through sādvidha liṅgas, viz., upakrama-upasamhāra, ābhyaśa, apūrvatā, phala, arthavāda, upapatti.

manana

(through śruti-anugṛhīta-tarka)

nididhyāsana

SAMĀDHİ

SAVIKALPAKA

NIRVIKALPAKA

āṅgas

1. yama — ahimsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, aparigraha
2. niyama — śauca, santosa, tapas, svādhyāya, īśvarapraṇidhāna
3. āsana
4. prāṇāyāma
5. pratyāhāra
6. dhāraṇā
7. dhyāna
8. samādhi

— samyama

### VIGHNAS FOR SAMĀDH

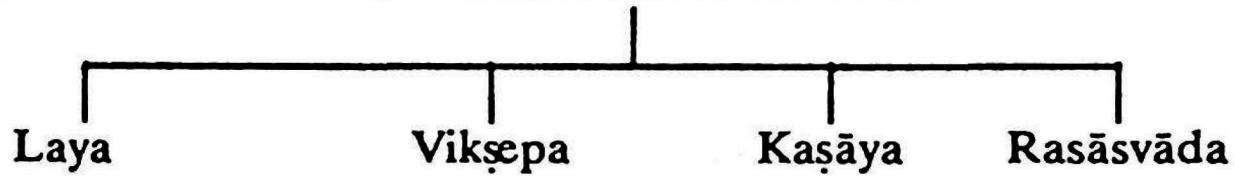
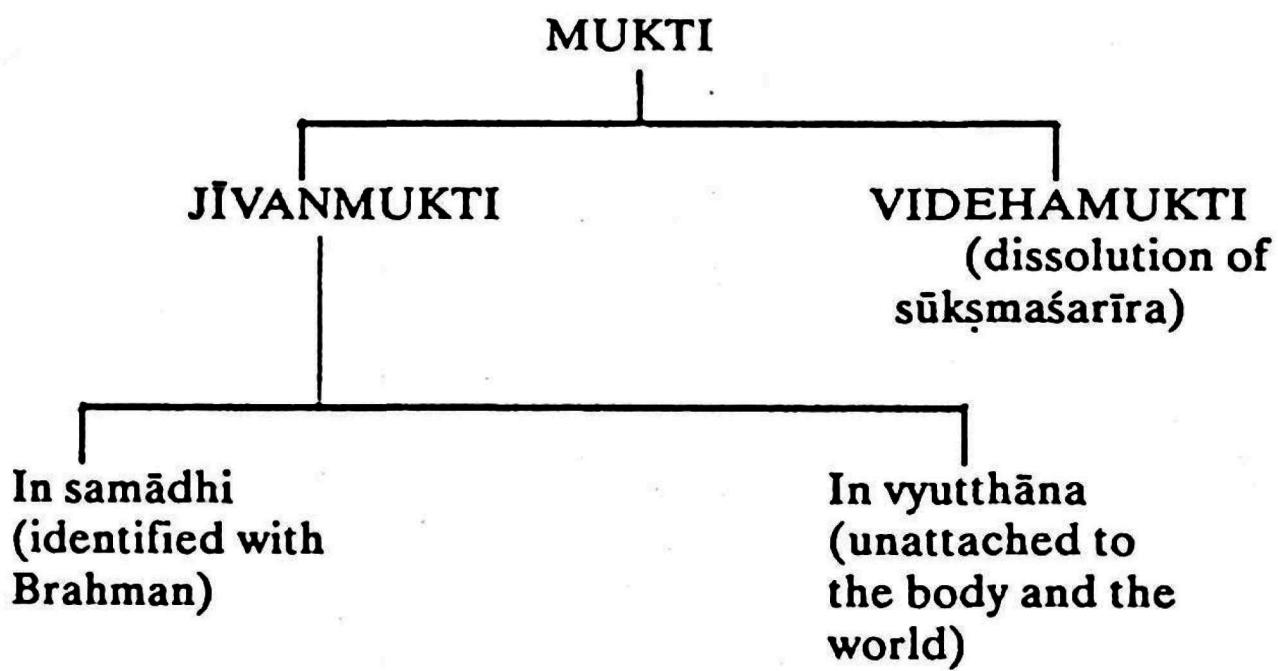


Table 10: Mukti



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