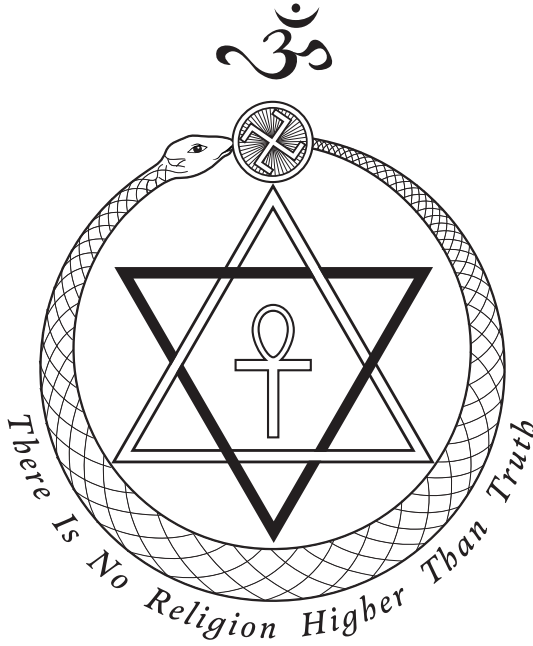


The Doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita

THE DOCTRINE OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR



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Foreword

The doctrine of Avatars holds that at the beginning of every major cycle or Yuga, the Deity Himself descends on earth and illuminates the path to salvation which is best suited for the cycle of human development being inaugurated. And that every subsequent teacher of the cycle simply expands on this keynote and clarifies one or more of its facets. For our present cycle of Kali Yuga, this keynote is the Doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita. And Pandit Bhavani Shankar is one of those rare teachers who is able to bring out the occult meaning of this seminal doctrine. As such, this book is of immense value to all who are in earnest search of pure Wisdom.

The current edition is a reprint of the 1966 publication brought out by Popular Prakashan, Bombay, albeit with a few modifications to improve the quality of the text. Obvious errors such as spelling mistakes have been silently fixed but for the more nuanced edits, we have provided an explanation in the footnotes. An exhaustive list of all changes made to the original edition can be obtained in Appendix–A. Additionally, we have included phonetic transliteration using ISO-15919 for all Devanagari content along with a pronunciation guide in Appendix–B. The spelling used in the Glossary has been made to match that in the text and the correct phonetic translitera-

tion has been provided in square brackets for all non-anglicised Indic words. It is hoped that these improvements will make the text more approachable to non-Indian readers around the world.

The entirety of this book has been made available online at **ultindia.org** in both PDF and HTML formats. No effort has been spared in ensuring that the text and every format in which it is presented are of the highest quality. This labor of devotion is in service to Humanity and all personal interest in the fruits thereof are herewith relinquished —

ॐ श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु
om śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu

EDITOR AND ASSOCIATE OF
THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

Preface¹

The following disquisition on the Bhagavad Gita by the late Pandit Bhavani Shankar comprise reprints of *Lectures on Bhagavad Gita*, first published by the Uttarpara Theosophical Society, Uttarpara (Bengal), in 1923, and *The Doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita*, first published by the late Mr. J. J. Vimadalal in Bombay, in 1928. The first eight chapters represent the *Lectures*, a series of eight talks on the Fourth Discourse of the Gita, delivered in Calcutta, in March 1914; and the last four chapters represent *The Doctrine*, a series of talks on the Seventh, Thirteenth and Fifteenth Discourses of the Gita, delivered in Madras, in 1925.

The Foreword by Upendranath Basu, and the Preface, to the *Lectures*; and the Foreword by Daljit Singh, and the Preface by the publisher, J. J. Vimadalal, to *The Doctrine* have been omitted. Occasional verbal changes and changes in punctuation, which seemed permissible, have been made in the texts. It is hoped that this would not change the author's meaning.

Since every page contained Sanskrit terms, Glossary has been added. The definitions of the terms have been drawn from the text, when these have been given by the author; from

¹ Preface to the 1966 edition by *Popular Prakashan*, Bombay. — ED.

The Theosophical Glossary by H. P. Blavatsky; and, in lesser part, from other material.

The following obituary, published in *The Theosophical Movement Magazine*, Bombay, 17 August 1936 (Vol. VI, No. 10), provides some biographical points regarding Pandit Bhavani Shankar:

With deep regret we have to chronicle the passing away of our good friend Pandit Bhavani Shankar on the Full Moon day of the Hindu month of Ashada — the 4th July. Born in August 1859, he was seventy seven years of age, active to the last in the regular performance of his Tapas and ever ready to help and instruct his fellow men. H.P.B. landed in Bombay in February 1879 and not long after Bhavani Shankar came, a young man of twenty, and put himself under her guidance. On several occasions he was among those who saw the Masters and when doubts arose in some and attacks were made against H.P.B. he had the courage to make the following public declaration.

“Many sceptics having rashly and ignorantly denied the existence of the so called ‘Himalayan Brothers’, I am provoked by a sense of duty to declare solemnly that such assertions are false. For, I have seen the Brothers not once, but numerous times in and near the headquarters in bright moonlight. I have heard them talk to our respected Madame Blavatsky, and seen them delivering important messages in connection with the

work of the Theosophical Society, whose progress they have condescended to watch. They are not disembodied spirits, as the Spiritualists would force us to believe, but living men. I was, on seeing them, neither hallucinated nor entranced; for there are other deserving fellows of our Society who had the honour to see them with me, and who could verify my statements. And this, once for all, is the answer that I, as a *Theosophist* and *Hindu Brahmin*, give to disbelievers, *viz.* that these Brothers are not mere fictions of our respectable Madame Blavatsky's imagination, but real personages, whose existence to us is not a matter of mere belief, but of actual knowledge."

BHAVANISHAKAR GANESH MULLAPOORCAR

In more than one place the Masters referred to him and below we print but two short statements, both made by Mahatma K. H. :-

"Bhavani Shanker is with O. and he is stronger and fitter in many a way more than Damodar and even our mutual 'female' friend."

"Bhavani Shanker has seen me in my own physical body and he can point out the way to others. He has been working unselfishly for his fellow-men through the T.S. and he is having his reward though he may not always notice it."

After the departure of H.P.B. and Damodar from India in 1885 he took earnestly to the study of the Gita which became his

text-book for Theosophical exposition. Up and down the vast peninsula Bhavani Shankar travelled from 1891–1909. Serious differences with the Adyar leaders resulted in his limiting his service to small groups of independent students who needed him and welcomed him.

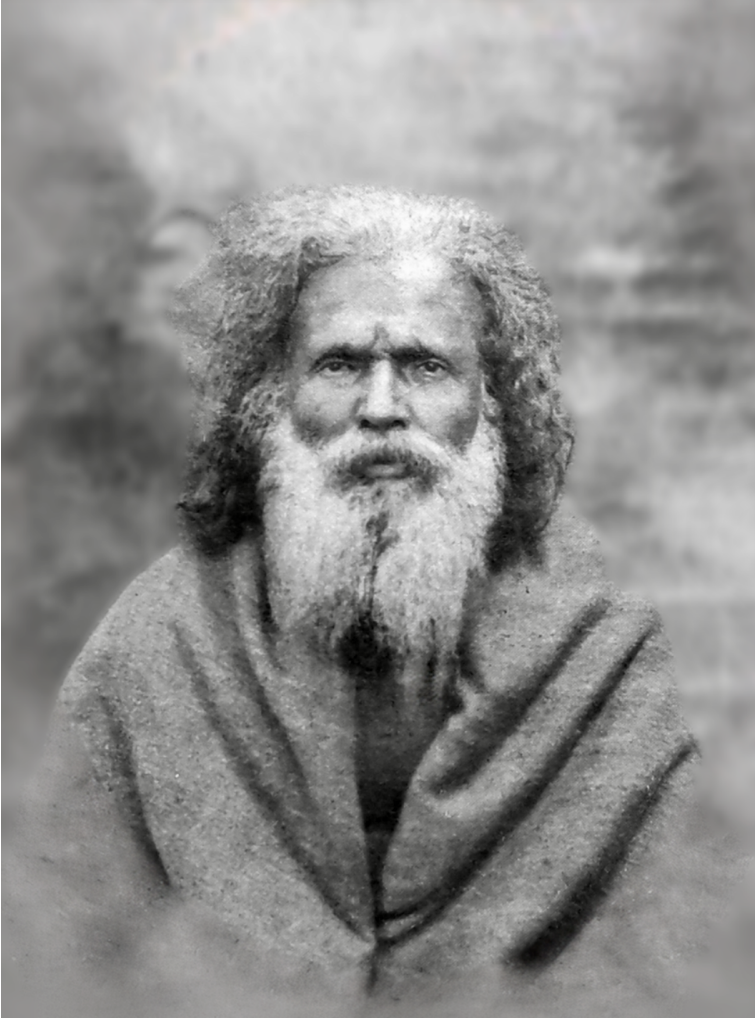
After the formation of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Bombay he very soon recognised that the real Theosophical Work was being carried on and under its auspices gave a series of talks in October 1931, September 1932 and September 1933.

He participated in White Lotus Day meetings of the Bombay United Lodge of Theosophists — the last occasion was in 1934. Soon after he went North and never returned to this city. The United Lodge of Theosophists has lost a good and valued friend in the passing away of this great Devotee.

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Pandit Bhavani Shankar
1859 – 1936

Chapter 1

The Place of Jnanayoga In The Gita²

This is an introductory discourse which dwells not only on the sequential and organic connection between the discourses of the Gita but also on the intimate connection of the Gita itself with the Mahabharata, in which Vyasa has set it in the most appropriate place. So, to understand the full teaching of the Gita, it should not be studied as detached from the Mahabharata. Now the Mahabharata is an Itihasa, that is, a record of events that actually happened, deriving all their spiritual significance from the great Avatara who is the centre and life of the Itihasa. It is an allegory as well, describing the stages of the path which the soul has to pass through on its way to emancipation. It is also called the fifth Veda, and it marks an epoch in the history of our Dharma. For, it was in Mahabharata that the great Vyasa

² The first eight chapters are based on a series of eight talks on the Fourth Discourse of the Gita, delivered in Calcutta, in March 1914. — ED.

presented the doctrine contained in the four Vedas, giving this doctrine a turn with special reference to the great Avatara, around whom the chief interest of the Mahabharata centres. So, to appreciate fully the doctrine of the Gita, all these considerations should be borne in mind and it should be studied as part of, and as having intimate relation with, the Mahabharata in the midst of which Vyasa has purposely placed it.

Looking to the fourth discourse of the Gita which deals with Jnana-Yoga, we see how appropriately it comes after the first three discourses. The first discourse treats of Vishada, which is also called Yoga, because it is not the passing despondency of the disappointed man but the deeper deadness felt in the heart, which leaves a permanent sense of unreality of the things seen and felt by the separative self, and which precedes the thirst of the soul for the real. And one of the names by which Arjuna is called is Nara. The first discourse vividly describes the position of the Jivatma as it enters the threshold of manhood after passing its stages of irresponsible childhood and of disciplined youth (the discipline imposed from outside by the Shastras and Acharyas).

Arjuna has controlled the senses and the mind and has built up a strong centre of individual consciousness. But the utter unreality of the external, he has still to learn. He has not as yet killed what in *The Voice of the Silence* is called "the Rajah of the senses", the "Slayer of the Real", and deep despondency possesses his mind when at last he has to pass through the experience. He is now called upon not only to kill the 11 Akshouhinis of kinsmen formed of his five senses and six passions (Kama, Krodha, etc.) but to slay even the Dharmacharyas to whom he was looking up hitherto for guidance. When the necessity arises

for such action his whole existence seems to Arjuna to have dissolved into nothingness, and in one line the Lord conveys to him the teaching at this critical juncture. "A Pandita, O Arjuna, neither grieves for the dead nor for the living." That is how the teaching commences in the second discourse which is called Sankhya-Yoga. A Pandita is he who knows the Atman, the real as distinguished from the false, the permanent from the fleeting.

The second discourse begins with the analysis of man. It shows that man is not his body, because though the body undergoes changes, the sense of self is untouched by them. Similarly are pleasure and pain which are neither in the senses themselves nor in the external objects but are at the points of contact of senses and their objects and are therefore impermanent and changing. Amidst this flux and change the self alone is changeless and permanent and, because it is so, it is the only reality. "For, the unreal existeth not, nor can the real ever cease to be." Thus should the aspirant dissociate himself from his body and the sensations and feelings, and, with reason so purified, realise the self within himself, the self "whom weapons cleave not, nor fire burns, nor water wets, nor wind dries, the unperceivable, the unthinkable and the unchangeable self."

If the aspirant is not capable of thus realising the self let him follow Buddhi-Yoga. Let him do his work casting off attachment, balanced in mind whether success or failure falls to his lot. By thus giving up the desire for Phalam (fruit) and balancing himself under all ups and downs of life he will attain to that disciplined and one-pointed reason by which he will realise the self. He will realise that he is distinct from his sensations and perceptions and from feelings and emotions, and that plea-

asures and pains and joys and sorrows by which he was measuring his life till now, touch not the inner serenity, the harmony of the self. Shri Shankaracharya's definition of "phalam" is specially noteworthy: "phalgutaya layam adarshanam gachchatiti phalam." Phalam (fruit) implies something that vanishes, something unsubstantial.

For such a Sankhya-Yogi, he who has realised the harmony of the inner self, Karma apparently seems to have no application. Yet it is not so. His very knowledge makes him a more responsible person. Though he has no object to gain by Karma, still to set a good example to the ignorant, he must engage himself in it. Karma includes not only bodily but mental action as well, and as there is no escape from Karma for the ignorant it should be well directed for the benefit of the world. Nor can it be said that after realising his inner self the aspirant's goal is reached. The harmony that he has attained is still of the separative self depending on the background of the not-self for its existence. He must now learn that the not-self, which he had so long discarded and flung away from himself, is not an alien to, but a manifestation, as his own self is, of the transcendent self, the fount of all reality (the light of Ishvara).

The harmony which he had gained within, must now be realised outside as well. So, in *The Voice of the Silence* it is taught: "In order to become the KNOWER of ALL SELF, thou hast first of SELF to be the knower.' To reach the knowledge of that SELF, thou hast to give up Self to Non-Self, Being to Non-Being..."³ Further, the only Mukti, worth striving for, is the mergence of the individual self into Ishvara through the light

³ *The Voice of the Silence* by H. P. Blavatsky, New York, 1893, p. 5.

of Ishvara. And when Bhagavan Himself, the Ishvara, comes down and engages Himself in action, turns the wheel of life for the good of the world, how can the aspirant follow a different course? When the aspirant has realised the inner harmony of the Jivatma in himself, which is the object of Sankhya-Yoga, and further, carried it into the outer world in action also, for which Karma-Yoga is enjoined in the 3rd discourse, he becomes fit for receiving the illumination through the light of Ishvara which unifies the self and not-self. Hence Jnana-Yoga follows the Sankhya and Karma-Yogas in the Gita.

Chapter 2

The Pedigree of Jnanayoga

We have this pedigree given in the first Shloka of the 4th discourse of the Gita. Bhagavan says: “I imparted this Yoga to Vivasvan; Vivasvan imparted it to Manu and from Manu Ikshvaku derived it.” Vivasvan is the sun, the Hiranyagarbha-Brahma, the creator of our system. What Bhagavan means is that this Hiranyagarbha-Brahma created this world through the illumination derived from this Yoga. So did Manu create the human race with its help, and it was imparted to the Rajarshis like Ikshvaku that they may rule their subjects having the spiritual welfare of the race in view, enforcing conformity to the Pravritti Dharma of Varna and Ashrama and keeping the way open to the Nivritti Dharma of renunciation.

The continuity of the tradition of this supreme Yoga suffered a break for want of proper disciples. For, when this Yoga falls into the hands of the weak who cannot control their minds and senses or of persons of Ahankara in whom the subtle desire for glory and power predominates, it decays. The Shloka does not however imply that the Kshatriyas were the special teach-

ers and preservers of the Yoga, for, far higher than the Rajarshis are the Devarshis and Brahmarshis; and there is the historical instance of Vishvamitra, a Rajarshi, who had to perform long and arduous Tapas for becoming a Brahmarshi. One important point needs to be emphasised in connection with this Shloka, and it is this: The brotherhood of adepts or Jivanmuktas is as strictly a product of Nature as a tree.

It has definite and indispensable purpose and function in the development of the human race, and this function is to keep open the upward path through which descend light and leading. If on account of increase of materialism and Adharma, this spiritual connection stops, then Bhagavan Himself takes up the work of the Brotherhood and provides for the spiritual welfare of humanity. “This ancient Yoga has today been imparted to thee by me for thou art my devotee and friend; and this is the supreme secret,” so runs the next Shloka. The qualifications of Arjuna to be the recipient of this supreme secret were that he was both a devotee and a friend of Bhagavan.

And here let us dwell on the Nava-Vidha Bhakti. This Nava-Vidha Bhakti is not the nine ways of devotion — each sufficient in itself but the nine stages of the devotee. Reference to the different Shlokas in the Gita on this point itself will show how one stage comes after the other as a natural sequence; and the Lord’s reference specially to the eighth stage of it, *viz.* of Sakh-yata or friendship, is very significant. Devotion to Bhagavan begins when a man acquires the control of his senses and mind by following the Pravritti Marga according to the injunctions of Shastras, and fired by the desire of knowing the truth he studies deeply the scriptures. Where there is this soul-hunger, comes devotion. The first stage is called **Shravana**, because the soul is

now eager to hear of Bhagavan, and in listening to his glories it rejoices; the second stage, **Kirtana**, is reached when, filled with the joy, it begins to participate in it with kindred souls, for, out of the fullness of the devotee's heart his mouth speaketh. The third stage is called the stage of **Smaranam**, brooding, when the mind always loves to dwell upon Bhagavan; and then comes the fourth stage **Padasevana**, when his love grows deeper, and not satisfied with merely brooding on the Lord he seeks to feel his solidarity with him and clings to His blessed feet from which flow peace and bliss.

Here the Bhakta feels the first thrills of the divine life, and with it grows his thirst for losing himself in that life; and the fifth stage of **Archana** is reached, when in the deep meditation of Bhagavan he forgets himself and as he continues in this stage and when Bhagavan is become enthroned in his heart more and more fully, he passes into the sixth stage of **Vandanam**, where he feels the presence of the Lord everywhere and in everything and like Arjuna begins to prostrate before all things both animate and inanimate, and when divine life is felt everywhere and in everything the seventh stage of **Dasya** naturally follows, in which whatever the Bhakta does, he does it as the servant of Bhagavan, keeping Him always as the supreme goal of his life. The distance and the dual sense implied in this stage of servant and master in course of time wears off and the eighth stage of **Sakh-yata** or friendship is reached where the oneness of the devotee with Bhagavan predominates. The tradition that Shri Krishna and Arjuna were of equal stature seems to have some allegorical significance.

At this stage the devotee grows like unto the object of his devotion, "just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first

united with the potter's mind"⁴, and the devotee becomes fit to receive the supreme Yoga, as Arjuna as Sakha and Bhakta of Bhagavan was, as stated in the Shloka. There is not still the complete unity, the thorough oneness which is reached at the ninth stage of **Atmanivedana** when the Bhakta disappears and Bhagavan becomes all in all (*vide* 73 Shloka of Chap: XVIII).

अर्जुन उवाच ।

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

Arjuna uvāca |

naṣṭō mōhaḥ smṛtirlabdhā tvatprasādānmayācyuta |
sthitō'smi gatasandēhaḥ kariṣyē vacanaṁ tava ||

Arjuna said: "Destroyed is delusion, and I have gained recognition through Thy Grace. O Achyuta, I am firm, with doubts gone. I will do Thy word." It is the final surrender of the devotee's self to Bhagavan absolutely and unconditionally. Thus is devotion the potent power that leads to and makes possible the utter self-renunciation and self-surrender which are the only means for receiving spiritual illumination.

⁴ *The Voice of the Silence*, op. cit., p.3.

Chapter 3

The Doctrine of Avataras

The Avatara is one of the most abstruse truths of Hinduism as it is of Brahma-Vidya. To have even a very faint idea of the great truth it is necessary to know what real spirituality is, to have some notion of the spiritual ideal of adeptship or Jivanmukti. It is truly said that even in this proud age of intellect very few can form a correct conception of a Jivanmukta.

I may here lightly touch upon the preparatory qualifications which the aspirant for spiritual life should acquire. By Karma-Marga, that is, disinterested performances of religious and secular duties, he should control his body, subdue his senses, and purify his mind. He should strive for the control and concentration of mind by Abhyasa, that is, by practice; for this purpose, he should have some fixed time in the morning and evening, when he should withdraw his mind from all external objects and learn to retire within himself. By following this practice regularly he gains habitual control of his mind which enables him to discharge his duties more effectually and also acquire the power of concentration which is so essential for deep

study and devotion as well. The third qualification he should acquire, is by study and deep thinking. He should regularly study the scriptures, and by deep thinking and cogitation on the profound truths dealt with therein, he should develop the penetrative intellect which can intuit the spiritual truths which lie embedded under the apparent tangle of scriptural contradictions. By following this Jnana-Marga his intellect perceives the nature of his own self, its connection with Ishvara and the important place of the Guru in the pilgrimage of the Jivatma, and as this intellectual conviction grows deeper and gains strength he begins to offer himself to his Guru-Deva and Ishta-Deva, and as he surrenders himself he begins to feel the inner peace and joy which gradually transform his conviction into faith and his intellectual perceptions into self-feeling wherewith true devotion begins.

By following this fourfold discipline inculcated in the four Margas of Karma, Abhyasa, Jnana and Bhakti, he in course of time acquires the qualifications necessary for a disciple. He has developed the physical, astral and causal centres and has learnt to surrender them to his Guru-Deva and at the proper time receives his first initiation. It takes place, as H. P. B. says in *The Voice of the Silence*, neither in the physical body which she calls the hall of ignorance, nor in the astral body which is called by her the hall of learning, but it is in the Karana-Sharira, the hall of wisdom, in his own Hridaya (heart), that the disciple sees Him for the first time whose life and peace he was so long feeling in his heart. Therefore does *The Voice of the Silence* teach the aspirant: "Seek for him who is to give thee birth, in the Hall of

Wisdom. . . .”⁵ What happens is that both the physical and astral bodies fall in trance, and the disciple is in his Karana-Sharira, that is, in his heart he sees his Guru-Deva, and in the heart of his Guru-Deva he sees his Ishtadeva, The Ishvara. The Guru-Deva transmits to him the life of Ishvara, the only true life — The Self, of which the Mandukya-Upanishad in the 7th Shloka speaks as being “shantam, shivam and advaitam . . . sa Atma,” peace, bliss and unity — The Mystic Consciousness wherein as in the words of the 29th Shloka of the 6th discourse of the Gita “he sees the self abiding in all beings and all beings abiding in the self, and sees the same everywhere.”

The unreal life of the false separative self with its triple consciousness — the seer, the seeing and the seen — falls loosened from him and he is awakened in the region of the real. The 69th verse of Chap. II. of the Gita referring to this state truly says, “when it is night to all beings the sage is awake and where all beings are awake the sage is asleep.” And Shri Shankaracharya commenting on this Shloka says, “To all beings the supreme reality, that is, the Divine life, is night, and there, the initiate is now fully awake. When all beings are said to be awake, *i.e.*, when all beings who in reality sleep in the night of ignorance, imbued with the distinct notions of perceiver and things perceived that state is night in the eye of the Sage who knows the supreme reality.” He has realised the unity of life in his Karana-Sharira and the effect of this first initiation, on his physical ego, is that it becomes a mere reflection of the Divine life; in other words, his personality has been killed. Not only has his physical centre, ego, become a reflection of the life of Ishvara, but as

⁵ *The Voice of the Silence*, op. cit., p. 8.

a result of the Yoga-fire, the gross particles of his physical body have been purified and etherealised, making that body a vehicle refined enough for the functioning of the higher consciousness (see Shvetashvatara Upanishad, part II, 12th and 13th Shlokas).⁶ He realises that both his physical centre and the physical centre of the Cosmos are essentially one, that they are expressions of the same Divine Life which, expressing itself in them, transcends both, and he begins to harmonise them. He therefore feels compassion for all beings (*vide* Gita VI. 32.): “Whoso by comparison with himself, sees the same everywhere, O Arjuna, be it pleasure or pain, he is deemed the highest Yogin.” This cosmic physical centre is called in the Upanishads, Vaishvanara, and in the Gita, Adhibhuta, and is the basis of all beings. He feels,

⁶ Shvetashvatara Upanishad, II-12–13:

पृथिव्यप्तेजोऽनिलखे समुत्थिते पञ्चात्मके योगगुणे प्रवृत्ते । न तस्य रोगो न जरा न मृत्युः प्राप्तस्य योगाग्निमयं शरीरम् ॥	pṛthivyaptējō’nilakhē samutthitē pañcātmakē yōgaguṇē pravṛttē na tasya rōgō na jarā na mṛtyuḥ prāptasya yōgāgnimayaṁ śarīram ॥
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When the five-fold qualities of Yoga arising from Earth, Water, Light, Air and Ether are obtained, his body, made of the fire of Yoga, becomes devoid of disease, old age or death.

लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं वर्णप्रसादः स्वरसौष्टवं च । गन्धः शुभो मूत्रपुरीषमल्पं योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति ॥	laghutvamārōgyamalōlupatvaṁ varṇaprasādaḥ svarasauṣṭhavaṁ ca gandhaḥ śubhō mūtrapuriṣamalpaṁ yōgapravṛttiṁ prathamāṁ vadanti ॥
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They say that the first signs of entering Yoga are etherealness of body, health, non-longingness, limpidness of colour, beauty of voice, agreeable odour and paucity of bodily excretions.

that both himself and the world outside him are but the expressions of the self-same life. He is therefore called a Parivrajaka, a wanderer, because he has now realised for the first time that his true home is Ishvara from whom he has been wandering away and on reaching whom his heart is set.

Of such an initiate does the 19th Shloka of the 12th chapter of the Gita speak “he is one to whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady minded and full of devotion.” “Such a one,” Bhagavan says, “is dear to Me.” He is silent because his heart is flowing with the peace and bliss of Bhagavan’s life, the only life he cares for. To hold forth astral peregrinations and astral lectures as objects of spiritual endeavour and as credentials of initiation, is a perversion of the teachings of Brahmagvidya. It is projecting into the higher regions the separative self of the lower, whereas, the true goal of a student of Brahmagvidya should be the killing of the false and separative self with the help of the life from on high, the life of Ishvara, the one centripetal force in the Cosmos. Not to speak of astral world and Svarga, even residence in Brahma-Loka is not desirable for a man who cares for Svasvarupa-Jnanam, the knowledge of the Self — *vide* Gita VIII, 16. The only object of the initiate is the religious enlightenment of the human race and a perfectly unselfish, self-forgetting, self-annihilating devotion to that object — a self abnegation which is not temporal and must have no end for ever, but is his only talisman of safety, as it ought to be the only object of his life. For this purpose he need not scour the Lokas, for, from his own heart always flows a current of living moral and spiritual energy for the good of the three worlds, more potent and dynamic in its purifying and elevating effect than any number of lectures

and orations whether on the physical or astral or some higher planes.

This current of spiritual energy flowing from the heart of every spiritual man increases in volume and force as he grows in devotion and self-renunciation. We are not left in doubt as to the marks of a real initiate. For, in the reply given by Bhagavan to Arjuna's query about the marks of a Sthita-Prajna we have a definite and comprehensive reply. Sthita-Prajna is one who has perceived the supreme reality (Brahman) as his self, according to Shri Shankaracharya's commentary. This description is found in Shlokas 55, 56 & 57 of Chap. II of the Gita. In the 55th Shloka we are taught the state of the initiate when he is in Karana-Sharira: "When the man is satisfied in the self alone by himself, casts off all the desires of the mind, then he is said to be Sthita-Prajna." In the next Shloka is described his condition when he is in the Sukshma centre: "He, whose mind is not distressed in calamities, in whom all longings for pleasures are lost, from whom attachment, fear and wrath have passed away, is called Sthita-Prajna." And how he departs when in physical consciousness, is told in the Shloka following the above: "He is Sthita-Prajna, who without attachment anywhere, on meeting with anything good or bad, neither exults nor hates."

In course of time, as the initiate develops in an ever-increasing measure, devotion and self-surrender to his Guru-Deva and Ishta-Deva, he receives his second initiation; and just as, after the first initiation, his physical ego becomes merely the reflection of the Divine life and his physical body purified and refined by the Yoga fire becomes a vehicle fit for higher consciousness, similarly, as a result of the second initiation, his astral body becomes a perfect mirror, reflecting merely the one life. In the

“First steps in Occultism” H. P. B. well describes his state. In him “the power of passions is dead altogether and they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will.” In him “not only all the lust and longings of the flesh are dead but also the recognition of the personal self is killed out and the astral has been reduced in consequence to a cipher.” His astral ego is now but a reflection of the Divine life and he realises that his astral centre or ego and the corresponding cosmic centre are in essence one, both reflections of the one life, and his sense of separateness between the two falls off. This astral cosmic centre is called in the Mandukya-Upanishad “*Taijasa*”, resplendent centre, and in the Gita, Adhidaiva, the substratum of all the Devatas.

The light of Ishvara which his Gurudeva had transmitted to him at the time of the first initiation has now by his profound devotion and renunciation been transmuted into electro-spiritual force which is called the higher Kundalini and rises upwards. It now rises from the heart into the head and there brings into full functioning all the spiritual centres in the brain which up to now it was vivifying, and it passes on to what Shri Shankaracharya calls the Dhi-Guha, the cave of the intellect, the space between the brows, and there electrifies Buddhi into a dynamic power resulting in spiritual clairvoyance. It then merges in the great Goddess seated in the centre of the full-blown Sahasrara (thousand-petalled lotus). And through these higher spiritual centres the initiate subdues and controls the lower Chakras. According to Hindu books of Yoga, there is in the brain the Sahasrara Chakram. “It is an unopened bud in the ordinary mortal and just as the lotus opens its petals and expands in all its bloom and beauty when the sun rises above the horizon and

sheds his rays on the flower, so does the Sahasraram of the neophyte open and expand when Ishvara begins to pour His life into its centre. When fully expanded, it becomes the glorious seat of the Devi (Daivi-Prakriti), and sitting on this flower the great Goddess pours out the waters of life and grace for the gratification and regeneration of the human soul.”

H. P. B. refers to this spiritual process in the following passage in *The Voice of the Silence* and in her notes thereon: “Let not thy ‘Heaven-Born,’ merged in the sea of Maya, break from the Universal Parent (SOUL), but let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber, the chamber of the Heart, and the abode of the World’s Mother. Then from the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes, when it becomes the breath of the ONE-SOUL, the voice which filleth all, thy Master’s Voice.”⁷ In her note on the words “power” and the “world mother” in the above passage she says, “these are names given to *Kundalini* — one of the mystic ‘Yogi powers’. It is *Buddhi* considered as an active instead of a passive principle. . . .” Thus the electro-spiritual force called Kundalini is the result of the spiritual development of man and has nothing to do with physical and mechanical processes.

But there is the lower Kundalini also, seated in the Muladhara Chakra, at the base of the spine, which Hata-Yogis try to awaken by Pranayama (restraint of breath). It is a dangerous process and has nothing to do with spirituality. There is another set of teachers who, by external stimuli such as crystal gazing, and focusing the attention and gaze on the Chakra between the eye-brows, advocate the development of clairvoyance,

⁷ *The Voice of the Silence*, op. cit., p. 10.

psychic vision, which is quite distinct from spiritual clairvoyance. The tiny serpent seen in this Chakram by the psychic is not the real spiritual power called Kundalini. The psychic sees different objects in a finer world just as we see here the physical objects, but there is in him the sense of separateness as deep, if not deeper, as in the ordinary man and he accentuates this separateness by setting his false and petty self against the surroundings, and striving for domination over them.

This is a process, the reverse of spiritual, a projection of the lower and false into the higher and the real. Saints and sages have time and oft taught, distinguishing real spirituality from these artificial methods, which are prompted by the thirst for power and Siddhis. Thus the great sage Jnaneshvara in his Dva-dashakshari (the well-known twelve syllabled mantra) Abhanga says: “Awakening the serpent by the control of the nine gates and passing it through Sushumna, which is one of the three Nadis, such is not, say the Munis, the path. The fount of liberation is in ceaseless contemplation of Nara-Hari.” Similarly does Machchendra teach his disciple Gorakh while telling him the real qualifications of a Chela:

कुण्डलिनीको खूबचढ़ावे ब्रह्मरध्नंकू जावे ।
चलताहै पानीके ऊपर बोलता सोई होवे ।
सोहि कच्चावे कच्चावे नहि गुरुका बच्चा ॥⁸

kuṇḍalinīkō khūbacaḍhāvē brahmaradhraṅkū jāvē |
caltāhai pānīkē ūpara bōltā sōī hōvē |
sōhi kaccāvē kaccāvē nahi gurukā baccā ||

⁸ The language used here is Hindi in vernacular साधुक्कड़ी [sādhukkaḍī] dialect and not Sanskrit, although both are written using the same Devanagari script. — ED.

“Arousing the Kundalini and forcing it up to the Brahma-randhra (the crown of the head) and thus acquiring the power of walking on water and of prophecy, do not constitute a spiritual man — such is not fit to be a Chela.”

Real spiritual clairvoyance develops in the initiate as naturally as a bud at its proper time blooms into a flower. It is vision and feeling blended into one wherein the separateness of the seer, the seeing and the seen, is altogether absent. It is this spiritual clairvoyance that Shri Shankaracharya refers to in the following Shloka in the Aparokshanubhooti.

द्रष्टृदर्शनदृश्यानां विरामो यत्र वा भवेत् ।
दृष्टिस्तत्रैव कर्तव्या न नासाग्रावलोकिनी ॥

draṣṭṛdarśanadr̥śyānām virāmō yatra vā bhavēt |
dṛṣṭīstatraiva kartavyā na nāsāgrāvalōkinī ||

“Vision is to be concentrated there where the triad — the seer, the seeing and the seen, — vanishes, and not on the base of the nose (Agyeya-Chakra).”

As a result of his harmonising his astral centre with the Adhidaiva centre, the basis of all Devatas, through the higher Kundalini, he sees the hierarchies of cosmic intelligences, the Devas, and realises that they and himself are essentially one being — expressions of the one Divine life which, expressing Itself in all these and in himself, transcends all and remains itself. He has now all the great higher Siddhis which are not so much control acquired over something outside, but knowledge realised of the inwardness of cosmic processes — the expansion of his Buddhi into the cosmic Buddhi. With the possession of all these Siddhis the outstanding characteristic of the initiate now

is his utter humility. His Abhimana, thirst for individual power and glory, has vanished. He is therefore called a Kutichaka, one who resides in a humble hut of leaves. He has now that power which enables him to appear as nothing in the eyes of men. "Be humble, if thou would'st attain to Wisdom. Be humbler still, when Wisdom thou hast mastered."⁹

Then comes his third initiation, and to understand the significance of it, even faintly, it is necessary to know something about the unfolding of the Jivatma. The Jivatma is called in our scriptures Hamsa. Hamsa is a bird which is known to possess the peculiar power of separating off pure milk from a mixture of milk and water, and Jivatma is called a Hamsa, because, it, like the bird of the name, has the power of discriminating the real from the unreal in Samsara, which is a combination of both. Up till now this Hamsa, that is, Jivatma, had fed itself on the very cream of the best and noblest experience gained in innumerable lives. Even at the time of the first initiation, the initiate has realised that the real self is the Divine Life, which transcends the self of the Jivatma. But now, as a result of further spiritual progress, he realises more deeply than before the utter unreality of this individuality, that it is a thing "which he has with pain created for his own use, and by means of which he purposes ... to reach to the life beyond individuality."¹⁰

He now retires deeper within and approaches the sanctuary of the Self nearer than ever before and is realising in a greater and fuller measure the peace and bliss of the one life. This further spiritual progress that he has made and which enables him to go through the third initiation, involves the spiritual

⁹ *The Voice of the Silence*, op. cit., p. 41.

¹⁰ *Light on the Path*, written down by M. C., Bombay, 1936, p. 6.

transformation of his Karana-Sharira, which now becomes an Upadhi of pure (Sattvic) Akasha. His spiritual ego, the centre of Karana-Sharira, which, at this stage, is called Prajna in Mandukyopanishad, is seen by him to be a mere reflection of divine light and, now no more being limited by his Karana-Sharira, is realised as the cosmic centre of that plane, called Ishvara in the Mandukyopanishad and Adhiyajna in Gita; and all the rich treasure of knowledge and experience gathered by him with pain and patience through innumerable lives, and of which his Karana-Sharira was built, is now gladly sacrificed by him to Adhiyajna, and thus is increased the fund of cosmic intelligence working for the uplifting of the race. He now sees that the end and consummation of all knowledge, austerities and sacrifices is the Great Goddess, the divine light of Ishvara, at Whose Feet he now offers his individuality purified and ennobled by the virtuous Karma of a series of incarnations. At this stage he is called a Hamsa, that is, one who has realised that he and the cosmic centre of Adhiyajna are one.

Now he finds that all the six great Shaktis, which are developed in him, are but the manifestations of the one self, the Divine Life. These six Shaktis are: (1) Jnana Shakti, ability to see the past and future; (2) Ichha Shakti, the power of the will; (3) Kriya Shakti, the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external perceptible and phenomenal results by its own inherent energy; (4) Mantrika Shakti, the power of letters and mantras; (5) Para Shakti, which includes the powers of light and heat; (6) Kundalini Shakti, already mentioned. He has now to fight the final struggle against flesh that will liberate him once and for ever from the bonds of matter, and pass the 4th initiation. He has now risen above the limitations of the three

bodies, but he has still to cross the neutral barrier. He has to fasten the energies of his soul on this supreme struggle. When the human monad is completely isolated from the three bodies — physical, astral and causal, it is as it were at a neutral point of consciousness and no consciousness is experienced by it. It is the Maha Sushupti, and before the monad can be finally liberated, it should cross this neutral barrier. Bhagavan refers to this struggle when he says in the 14th Shloka of the 7th chapter of the Gita, “Hard is my Maya to surmount. Those who seek Me alone pass over this Maya.”

The result of this last struggle, that is, success or defeat in it, entirely depends upon the latent energy of the Jivatma resulting from devotion to Ishvara, its previous training and past Karma. It is the real Kurukshetra for the Jivatma where it hears in full the song of life — Mahashmashana, the great burning ground, where it hears the voice of the cosmic deep and where Ahamkara is reduced to ashes. It is Mahashmashana because it is the death of the individual man from whose ashes the regenerated man springs into existence electrified by the Song of Life. If he has emerged from this final struggle triumphant, then he is a full-blown adept, a Jivan-Mukta, who has entirely merged himself in the One Life. He is now called a Paramahansa, that is, one who has realised “That”, that is, He, the One Life and himself are one. He has become “Om” because “sa” and “ha” of “Soham” being eliminated in him, he remains only the “Om”.

Thus far we have the guidance of the Mandukyopanishad, from stage to stage, in the spiritual progress of the Jivatma, till the liberated man has triumphed over all the bonds of matter. He is now a Jivanmukta, for whom Samsara can weave no illusion, and nature holds no secret. He has crossed the ocean of

Maya and has fully entered the divine light. Even for him there stretch forth further vistas of progress. Saith the *Light on the Path*: “For within you is the light of the world — the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere. It is beyond you; because when you reach it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable, because it forever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame.”¹¹ The further stages of progress hinted at in this passage are also referred to in the Hindu scriptures which darkly hint at five further stages of spiritual height. They involve the most arduous Tapas out of all human experience and utterly beyond human perception or imagination.

In enumerating the four classes of His devotees in the 16th verse of the 7th Chapter of the Gita, Bhagavan includes the Jnanin as one of those four classes of Bhaktas, and in the following 17th and 18th verses Bhagavan says “among these four classes of Bhaktas, who are all noble, the Jnanin surpasseth all, for he is My very Self; as steadfast in mind, he resorts to Me alone as the unsurpassed goal”; and in the following verse, the 19th, Bhagavan says, “at the end of many births the Jnani comes to Me, realising that Vasudeva is the all; he is the Mahatman, very hard to find.” Again in the third verse of the same Chapter of the Gita we have the following statement. Bhagavan says, “among thousands of men one perchance strives for perfection; even among those who strive and are perfect only one perchance knows Me in truth.”

Thus the teaching of the Gita is clear. It points out that even after man has fully entered the light and become a Jivanmukta,

¹¹ *Light on the Path*, op. cit., pp. 3–4.

it is possible for him to attain further spiritual heights. He has entered the light, but he has not merged himself in the divine centre, the spiritual sun from whom this light emanates. Bhagavan says that even among Mahatmas one who has attained this condition is very hard to find. Now turn to the 50th verse of the 18th chapter of the Gita. The Lord says, “How he who has attained perfection reaches Brahman, that in brief, do thou learn from me, O son of Kunti — that supreme consummation of knowledge” and in the following five verses is treated the Parabhakti, possible only to the Jnani, by means of which he enters Bhagavan and becomes Brahman.

Thus run these verses: “Endued with pure reason, controlling the self with firmness, abandoning sound and other objects, laying aside love and hatred, resorting to a sequestered spot, eating but little, speech and body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, endued with dispassion, having abandoned egotism, violence, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, and free from the notion of ‘mine’ and being peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman. Becoming Brahman of serene self, he neither grieves nor desires; treating all beings alike, he attains supreme devotion to Me. By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then knowing Me in truth he forthwith enters into Me.” Add to this the 4th verse in Chapter XII referring to this same state: “Having restrained all senses, always equanimous, devoted to the welfare of all beings they reach Myself (the central spiritual Sun, the highest goal).”

At the fourth initiation he had become a Jivan-Mukta who has triumphed over all matter, one who has liberated himself from all bonds of Samsara. He had then fully entered the divine light, the veil of Ishvara, the veil of light through which Ish-

vara manifests Himself to the highest spiritual perception of a human being. Shri Shankaracharya in his “Saundaryalahari” addressing this light says, “Thou art the body of Shambhu.” The light is, as it were, a cloak or a mask with which Ishvara is enabled to make His appearance. But Ishvara, the real centre of light, is not visible even to the highest spiritual perception of man. Hence in the above quoted passage in the *Light on the Path* it is said, “you will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame.” The goal of Parabhakti, which is only possible for a Jnani, is the merging into this centre of light, Ishvara, the highest goal of spiritual endeavour.

This mergence of the Jivanmukta into Ishvara may be likened to what may happen in the case of the sun when a comet falls upon it; there is in the case of the sun an accession of heat and light; so also, whenever any particular individual reaches the highest state of spiritual culture, develops in himself all the virtues that alone entitle him to a union with Ishvara and finally unites his soul with Ishvara, there is, as it were, a sort of reaction emanating from Ishvara for the good of humanity; and in particular cases an impulse is generated in Ishvara to incarnate for the good of humanity. This is the highest consummation of human aspiration and endeavour.

Even in the earlier stages of his spiritual life, an aspirant for the higher life becomes a participator of the grand silent work in the spiritual enlightenment of his race — the current of the living moral and spiritual energy flowing from his heart being his humble contribution. As he progresses on the path his contribution increases till by inconceivably arduous Tapas and renunciation he succeeds in bringing down the great Ishvara Himself to do this work. This is one aspect of the doctrine about Avatara.

The subject is a profound one and touches one of the most jealously guarded secrets of Brahma-Vidya. If the latter-day Theosophical teachers had even the faintest idea of the sanctity and solemnity of the subject we would have been spared so much blasphemous talk of preparations for an Avatara and such flip-pant prattle about sacred things. We see the wisdom of the ancients in drawing the veil of secrecy on these high subjects; for, when sacred things are bandied about light-heartedly, spiritual degradation is the result.

The very word Avatara implies a coming down. Viewed from the point of view of the Jivanmukta it is a gradual ascent and the final absorption of the human soul into Ishvara, but from the stand-point of Ishvara it is a coming down of Bhagavan to the plane of Jivatma. Ishvara therefore is not a result of evolution, but One who makes evolution possible. Hence Bhagavan says, in the 6th verse of the 4th Chapter, "Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet controlling my own nature, I take birth through the instrumentality of my Maya." Bhagavan controls his Prakriti having three qualities and through the instrumentality of His light, His Yogamaya, He incarnates Himself. Further, in the 7th and 8th verses of the 4th Chapter of the Gita, we are given not only the time of his coming down but also the reason for it. "Whenever there is decay of Dharma, that is, religion, and ascendancy of irreligion, then I manifest myself. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the firm establishment of religion I am born in every Yuga." If Bhagavan appears as an Avatara at such long intervals as is implied by this verse, His Avataras will not be many, at least so far as our humanity is concerned. In fact we know only of

two previous human Avatars, *viz.*: of Parashurama, and of Shri Ramchandra. Even supposing that Bhagavan manifested Himself in lands other than our own, His Avatars cannot be many. How are we to explain then, the statement in the 5th verse — “Many births of Mine have passed as well as thine, O Arjuna, all these I know, thou knowest them not, O harasser of foes.” The many births referred to in the verse, include not only His human Avatars but also the many births of the great Jivanmukta who had absorbed himself in Bhagavan and who, owing to the infinite love and compassion he had developed in himself for humanity, had generated an impulse in Ishvara to incarnate Himself for the good of the human race.

Chapter 4

Jnanayoga

This Yoga is the only means to Moksha and has bearing on the 9th and 10th verses of the 4th Chapter of the Gita. If Moksha means immortality, immortality is not possible of attainment even if you reach Brahma-Loka, because, even Brahma-Loka dissolves at Pralaya, for in the 16th verse of the 8th Chapter, Bhagavan definitely says, “All worlds including the world of Brahma are subject to returning again, O Arjuna, but on reaching Me, O Son of Kunti, there is no birth.” Unless we reach Bhagavan there can be no immortality for us, and in the 9th and 10th verses Bhagavan indicates the necessary conditions for reaching Him, and of thus attaining Moksha. The words Raga (passion), Bhaya (fear) and Krodha (anger) in the 10th verse have very deep significance; they imply the limitations to all human endeavours at attainment of liberation, when such endeavours take no cognisance of Bhagavan.

There are schools of philosophy which ignore altogether Ishvara and His Light in their speculations and expositions of the Universe and man, and which inculcate their special meth-

ods for attaining liberation. Now this verse points out that the highest and the most serious of such philosophies can help man at the best to realise only his individuality, his Karana-Sharira-Self. By strict and rigid practice of the teaching of such a philosophy he can rise above the loves and hates, the ambitions and desires, the passions and appetites of the average man; for, the Karana-Sharira-Self, the higher man, cannot be moved by the motives and considerations which are the springs of action of the lower self, the personality. Hence the petty desires and passions moving the personality are conquered. But that does not mean that these passions, fears, likes and dislikes have been thoroughly rooted out; and they cannot be eradicated unless the sense of separateness is entirely got over.

The Karana-Sharira-Self, great as it is, compared to the personality, is still separative, and has therefore the higher equivalents of passion, fear and hate. What is then the Raga (passion) of such a philosopher? By hard struggle and exertions he has built up his individuality and he is attached to the serenity and calm which he enjoys therein. With much patience and pain he has wrought for himself a bed for repose which he does not like to quit. What then can be his Bhaya (fear)? The fears of ordinary man have no sting for him. Even death has lost its power to terrorise him. Still he has fear, and it overpowers him when he attempts to rise above his Karana-Sharira. By his thinking and reasoning he sees the necessity for transcending his Karana-Sharira, but when he makes an attempt to leave it he finds himself lost as he loses his centre; and as in the case of the ordinary man when death overtakes him he is seized with terror, so, the philosopher feels perhaps a deeper terror when he leaves his Karana-Sharira. The reason is that, when isolated from its three

bodies the Jivatma passes into Maha-Sushupti, the neutral barrier, the Great Shunyam, which can only be passed through devotion to Bhagavan. Not unless his Karana-Sharira ego is surrendered to Bhagavan with deep devotion, and the Real Self, the One Life, is realised thereby, is it possible to cross this neutral barrier. Further we have the word Krodha (hatred). Now to a philosopher it is his Not-Self that becomes his enemy. He has built up his individuality as against this Not-Self, and he feels himself secure only so long as he can keep this Not-Self in subjection. Hence there is a perpetual warfare between his Self and Not-Self.

The only way of getting over these three impediments to liberation is through devotion and self-surrender to Bhagavan. When a philosopher having realised his individuality surrenders that individuality to Bhagavan and thus develops devotion to Him, then he in course of time attains the life beyond individuality, realising that the Light of Ishvara is the One Life, the One Transcendent Self; and thus attains Wisdom, Jnana, which Shri Shankaracharya in his commentary on this verse says is in itself Tapas. Now this Wisdom-Tapas, the entering of the Light of Ishvara, the realisation of the One Life, is the only purifier, because it alone can root out the attachment, fear and hatred referred to above. His attachment goes, because when he realises the One Life he realises its peace and bliss whether he is embodied or not and amidst all sorts of surroundings which are to him mere expressions of that Life. His fear goes, because once he has attained to the Light of Ishvara, the Life above individuality, he can cross the neutral barrier, for, now he hears the Song of Life and wakes up through the Grace of Bhagavan on the other side of the Cosmos, a regenerated man, a Jivanmukta. How then

can the struggle between the Self and Not-Self remain where the very sense of separation between himself and his outside is rooted out and where Self and Not-Self are realised as expressions of the One Life, the only Reality, and in the place of his former aversion he feels divine love for all?

Chapter 5

Pravritti-Marga

The next five verses,¹² from the 11th to 15th, deal with action and inaction. If Moksha can be attained by seeking Bhagavan alone, the highest goal, how is it all men do not follow this course; how is it that we see such differences in men that, while a very few are devoted to Him, a very large majority feel no attraction to this path? Is the Lord then partial that on a very few only He bestows his very Self that is Moksha, and on few others only devotion to Him, while a very large majority do not receive even that? Such a question arises, and the 11th verse gives a satisfactory reply and removes the doubt about Bhagavan's strict impartiality.

Saith the Lord: "Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I reward them; My path do men follow in all things, O Son of Pritha." He says that whatever paths men choose, He meets them there, because all forms being filled with His life, all paths are His. But men differ in their choice according to their Guna (nature). For, as the 12th verse says, "They who long after suc-

¹² Of Chapter IV.

cess in actions sacrifice here to the gods; for soon in this world of men success accrues from action.” The path leading to Moksha referred to in the 10th verse¹³ has no attraction for the large majority, because it is an arduous path where tangible results are not secured immediately. Very few are the men who have the necessary patience and perseverance to undertake and carry on through innumerable lives the long and tedious process of self-purification and of surrendering the purified self to Bhagavan, and to cling to Him alone for evermore.

Our own observation confirms what Bhagavan says in the 3rd verse of the 7th Chapter that scarcely one in a thousand strives for perfection. The reason is that the large majority of human beings are impelled by desires and seek the immediate fruition of their desires; hence instead of turning their minds and hearts towards Bhagavan they worship the minor gods and reap according to their sowing. But Bhagavan’s divine dispensation seeks to provide even for these people, and for this purpose He says in the 13th verse¹³ that “The fourfold caste has been created by Me according to the distribution of Guna and Karma, energies and actions; though I am the Author thereof, know Me as Non-Agent and Immutable.” The Sanskrit word for caste is Varna, not the outer colour of the physical body, but the colour of the subtler bodies, and the very word Varna implies that the four-fold caste is no artificial imposition on Man by some external authority. It finds its sanction in the very constitution of human nature.

The One life is the Light of Ishvara, and when it appears through the modifications of Prakriti and its Gunas, it appears

¹³ Of Chapter IV.

as different colours, Varnas, with different Gunas and Karma, energies and consequent actions. As Bhagavan says in the 40th verse of the 18th Chapter, “There is no being on earth or among gods in heaven who is free from these three qualities of matter,” and further in the 41st verse it is explained, “Of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, O Parantapa, the duties have been distributed according to qualities born of their own natures.” Evolution itself implies different stages of growth. The duties of Brahmana, such as serenity, self-restraint, austerity, knowledge, etc., — of Kshatriyas, such as prowess, firmness, splendour, not flying from battle — of Vaishyas, such as ploughing, protection of kine and trade — of Shudras, the duty of service, fit in with the tendencies developed in them through several previous births. The scriptures in pointing out these several duties as proper for respective castes simply reveal the workings of Nature’s law, and thus giving man an insight into the workings of Nature, help on human evolution.

This four-fold caste with its specific duties attaching to each has been devised with the double view of ensuring prosperity on earth and of gradually leading man on to the path of renunciation. It is made attractive to the average man by the graduated scheme of rewards (*vide* Apastamba Dharma Sutra 22–23), while the various restraints it imposes make for the control of body and senses and the starving out of the desire-nature. Moreover, as against the modern secular conception of Society as being a body politic, the basic idea on which the system is founded is a spiritual one in which the four castes are considered as forming so many limbs of the Purusha, the spiritual Being, Prajapati, (*vide* Purusha-Sukta). The Brahmanas are His mouth, the Kshatriyas are His arms, the Vaishyas His thighs and His feet

are the Shudras. Here there is no question of great and small; all are parts of an organic whole, and all have to perform their proper functions to preserve the welfare of the whole. It made the mind familiar with the idea of all work being a sacrifice. The Brahmana does his work; so also the other castes do their works. It gave a spiritual direction to all work by holding prominently before men this idea of human solidarity and sacrifice. Strange as it may seem this institution of caste founded on the idea of a common spiritual origin pointed to an organic solidarity and spiritual unity of the race. Though the Colours (Varnas) are different from each other, the separative element was accidental and in reality they are one in their origin, the Light.

So viewed, the system induced in each a sense of duty irrespective of results and gradually paved the way for worshipping Bhagavan through devotion to one's duty referred to in the 46th verse of the 18th Chapter: "Him from Whom is the evolution of all beings, by Whom all this is pervaded — by worshipping Him with proper duty, man attains perfection." While the fostering of a sense of duty attenuates the personality and lifts motive out of personal inclination on to the impersonal idea of righteousness, the recognition of Bhagavan as the source of all Life and Dharma curbs the Ahankara involved in the separative sense of duty, and thus are laid the sure foundations for the life of renunciation, and a hankering for liberation, Mumukshutva, is aroused. For action in which attachment and Ahankara are absent does not bind.

Thus, though Bhagavan in the 13th verse¹⁴ says that the four-fold caste was created by Him, yet in the 14th verse it is said

¹⁴ Of Chapter IV.

“Actions pollute Me not, nor have I a desire for the fruit of actions. He who knows Me thus is not bound by actions.” The Lord says: “Because I have no attachment, action does not bind Me.” Similarly if men perform action dispassionately and without Ahankara, such action will not bind them. Therefore proceeds the Lord in the 15th verse: “Thus knowing, men of old performed action in the hope of liberation; therefore, do thou also perform action as did the ancients in the olden time.”

ACTION AND INACTION

Why is a reference to the ancients made in the previous verse? Because, as the following 16th verse says, “What is action? What is inaction? — As to this even the wise are deluded. I shall teach thee such action by knowing which thou shalt be liberated from evil.” Action and inaction are not so simple to understand rightly. Therefore says the 17th verse: “Thou hast to know something even of action, something of unlawful action and something of inaction; hard to understand is the nature of action.” What then is the mystery about Action and Inaction, on the right understanding of which a man is liberated from evil?

The next verse hints at this mystery. “He who can see inaction in action, who can also see action in inaction — he is wise among men, he is devout, he is the performer of all actions.” Bhagavan nowhere says that there is a short cut to liberation. He leaves us in no doubt as to the high moral and spiritual qualifications necessary for an aspirant for Moksha. So insistent is He on this point that lest He should be misunderstood, whenever He refers to the attainment of Liberation, He invariably describes the marks of such an individual — how he conducts himself and what moral equipment he should possess. Bearing

all this in mind we should not lightly pass over the above three verses about action and inaction. The ultimate right realisation of the nature of action and inaction presupposes, therefore, all the high moral and spiritual attainments which alone liberate man from the bonds of Samsara.

But the verses have application even to beginners. Thus, as soon as a man begins to free himself from the sway of desire and strives to replace personal inclination by duty as the motive of action, he sees that when the call of duty is not heeded and what ought to be done is left undone, he is bound by the very non-performance of duty, while work done in discharge of duty has no power to bind. Thus he begins to see action in inaction, and vice versa. The Mumukshu, the aspirant for liberation, sees farther than this. He sees that the only way of rising above the binding power of action is through devotion to his duty and self-surrender to Bhagavan. Duty so performed causes the development of knowledge in him which makes possible the renunciation of all Karma. In such action, as leads to knowledge culminating in renunciation of Karma, he sees inaction. And as renunciation of Karma or actionlessness can be attained through action he sees, in this actionlessness, action which made the attainment of actionlessness possible. But the sage realises the truth of action in inaction and vice versa in a still deeper sense. He sees that the cause of action is desire; and he sees further that this desire pervades the senses, the mind and the intellect (Buddhi). Knowing this he ever keeps himself above the three by rooting out desire and establishing himself in the Light of Ishvara.

In the words of the *Light on the Path* he has raised his individuality out of the shadow into the shine and has, therefore,

lifted himself out of the region in which Karma operates. He has realised the actionless Self, and in all actions he sees inaction. Further, as a result of his utter purity and rooting out of Ahankara, he has become a perfect channel of the One Life and is at perfect rest and peace. But from him continuously flow the divine influences which purify, elevate and spiritualise everything about him. His very presence vivifies and stimulates the better nature of those about him, and he draws out the best that is in them. Thus, though he seems to be doing nothing yet he does all that ought to be done. Of such a sage the 18th verse says: “He is wise among men, he is a real Yogi, he is the performer of all action.”

A short story illustrates the truth of how a sage becomes a performer of all action by virtue of his identifying himself with the One Self and how a tiny rill of individual effort could be made to embrace in its beneficent results the whole universe by identification with the One Self. Once it is said that Mahadeva, the Great God, had to perform a sacrifice (Yajna), and all 33 crores of gods had to be invited to this ceremony. So the Great God made His son Kartikeya Swami go round and invite all the gods to the sacrifice. The vehicle of Kartikeya Swami is a peacock, and bestriding this vehicle, strutted forth Kartikeya Swami on his long and tedious errand. Several days passed and the day appointed for the sacrifice was very near. But the rider of the peacock had scarcely carried the invitation to a tithe of the number of the guests, and at this rate it became evident that the invitation would not reach all the Devas in time. And it became necessary to entrust this work to some wiser person, and accordingly Ganapati was chosen for it.

Now Ganapati as his physiognomy shows is the wisest of Gods. The large elephant's head carries a big brain, and he has the skill and craft to support the weight of this bulky head and his rotund belly on the back of a tiny mouse. Such is Ganesha, the God of wisdom — He who performs the maximum work with minimum labour. What a poor insignificant creature is a mouse beside the showy, strutting peacock. Yet Ganesha was chosen to do the work. The time at his disposal was very short, and looking to the number of guests to be invited and the vehicle on which to go, it seemed all but a hopeless task. Yet Ganapati thinking himself for a while gathered himself up for doing his Father's bidding. Thrice did he go round the great God, and prostrating himself before Him, who is the God of gods, invoked all the 33 crores of gods in his name and gave them the invitation through the Great, and on the appointed day came all the guests to the sacrifice.

Chapter 6

The Characteristics of the Sage

This discourse is based on the next six verses¹⁵ from the 19th to the 24th. The 19th verse contains a general definition of a Sage: “He whose engagements are all devoid of desires and purposes, and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of wisdom, Him the wise call a sage.” When a man becomes impersonal, that is, when he has realised his Self, all desires and thoughts of the personal self depart from him. But still there is the idea of self and not-self, which is the root-ignorance, and unless this is dispelled by the Light of Ishvara, the seed of Karma is not burnt out. In a sage, even this seed of Karma has been burnt out. Hence his actions have no binding power, because they cannot sprout and grow any longer. Therefore are his actions said to be burnt by the fire of wisdom in the definition of a sage, which we are considering.

¹⁵ Of Chapter IV.

The next five verses describe the two orders among Sages defined in the 19th verse. Even after liberation, a few of them, for some reason, continue to live amongst people and mix with them in worldly vocations. They have no purpose of their own to serve. But they engage themselves in action to set an example to other men and body forth in their daily work and conduct the ideal of true sacrifice as Janaka did. There is a second order of the sage very rare to meet with. He lives a life of obscurity and seclusion, at peace with all beings, solely devoted to the religious enlightenment of his race. He lives unknown and unrecognised, radiating in all directions strong spiritual impulses that purify and ennoble. Such a sage embodies the ideal of renunciation.

In the five verses from 20th to 24th, which we are considering, the three verses 20, 23 and 24 refer to the order which embodies the ideal of sacrifice, and verses 21 and 22 to the order embodying the ideal of renunciation. Understood in this sense, the apparently meaningless repetitions in these five verses gain a deep significance and a perfect appositeness. Taking the sage embodying in his life and conduct the ideal of sacrifice we have in the 20th, 23rd and 24th verses the following statements. The 20th verse runs: "Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content, dependent on no one, though engaged in actions, nothing at all does he do." The sage has realised the One Self. He is ever established in that supreme bliss of the Self and is therefore ever content; he is dependent on none, because everything derives its reality from the One Self which he has become, and though he is engaged in actions for setting an example to men, he does not lose his hold of the consciousness of the Self, and he is not bound by what he does.

He is further described in the 23rd verse: “Of the man whose attachment is gone, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge, who acts for the sake of sacrifice (Yajna) — his whole action melts away.” Here sacrifice (Yajna) means Narayana, Bhagavan. The sage has no attachment whatsoever and he performs sacrifices to satisfy the Yajnapurusha who is Narayana. How his whole action is reduced to ashes in this fire of wisdom-sacrifice is described in the next, the 24th verse: “Brahman is the offering, Brahman the oblation, by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman, Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.” What to the ordinary man appear as the five distinct elements in a sacrifice — (1) the performer of the sacrifice; (2) the oblation; (3) the pouring of the oblation into the fire; (4) the fire; (5) the instrument by which the oblation is poured into the fire — all these are verily the Brahman to the sage. It is not by an intellectual effort that he sees in each of these elements Brahman, but there is not present to his consciousness anything but Brahman, the Self, and thus are all his actions reduced into Brahman, the Self, without any residue.

The second order of the sage embodying the ideal of renunciation is extolled in the 21st and 22nd verses thus: “Free from desire, with the mind and the self controlled, having relinquished all possessions, doing mere bodily action, he incurs no sin; satisfied with what comes to him by chance, rising above the pairs of opposites, free from envy, equanimous in success or failure, though acting he is not bound.” The only comments that can be offered on these verses are the following. He has relinquished all possessions, he is devoid of the sense of ‘mine’ness. He does mere bodily action, which means that his actions are strictly re-

stricted to keep his body living, as regards which, again, there is no idea of possession in him. His body is not his but has now become a temple of Divinity, as his Jiva has become Shiva, the Self. He is satisfied with what comes to him without effort, and is free from the pairs of opposites; he is the same amidst all changes in his environments. He is content to be obscure and is not moved by jealousy when others are extolled for their merits and attainments.

Chapter 7

Action-Sacrifice and Wisdom-Sacrifice

In the next 9 verses of the 4th Chapter, from the 25th to 33rd, are enumerated the several kinds of sacrifice which people perform with definite objects. The 25th verse refers to the sacrificial rites in devotion to the minor Devas, which Karma-Yogis perform to gain some end. In this verse reference is also made to Wisdom-Sacrifice to make the enumeration exhaustive and in order to compare it with all other Yajnas subsequently. This highest sacrifice consists in pouring the self by the Self into the fire of Brahman, so that the limitations of the conditioned self are destroyed by the fire of the Brahman, and the Self so purified and freed of limitations, is realised as Brahman itself.

The 26th verse refers to the restraint of the senses and also to the sacrifice which consists in directing the senses only to such objects as are not forbidden by Shastras and restraining them from forbidden objects. The 27th verse refers to the efforts of the student at concentrating his mind on the Self, in which

effort the functions of the senses and vital airs are suspended as a result of deep thinking. The 28th verse tells us how some give away their wealth to the deserving, some observe austerities, some practice concentration of mind, some others recite the Vedic texts according to prescribed rules, some read scriptures with the object of understanding them, while some ascetics observe particular self-imposed vows very rigidly.

All such acts are called sacrifices. Hence the word sacrifice as used here is very comprehensive. Even the practice of Pranayama (restraint and regulation of breath) and regulation of food, which are referred to in the 29th and 30th verses, are called sacrifices. The performers of all these are extolled as knowers of sacrifice, and their sacrifices have the efficacy of destroying their sins, as against the impious who cook for themselves and eat verily sin — who are referred to in the 13th verse of the 3rd Chapter.

The man who is performing even the most trivial sacrifice for gaining a trivial object is a wiser and better man than one in whom the very idea of sacrifice is absent. Because, as the following 31st verse¹⁶ puts it, “Even this world is not for the non-sacrificer; whence the other? O best of Kurus.” Further, the nature of Karma being determined by the motive inspiring it, if the above enumerated sacrifices are performed with the object of reaching Brahman, that object also is gained in course of time through the purification of the mind and intellect resulting from the performance of the sacrifices. The 31st verse says: “Eating ambrosia, the remnant of the sacrifice, they go to Eternal Brahman;” and Shri Shankaracharya commenting on

¹⁶ Of Chapter IV.

the verse says: “Performing the sacrifices mentioned above, they eat at intervals prescribed food, in a prescribed manner; food so eaten is called ambrosia, Amrita. If they wish for Moksha they go to Brahman, in course of time, not at once, as we should understand for consistency’s sake.”

Then comes the 32nd verse which runs: “Thus manifold sacrifices are revealed at the mouth of Brahman; know them all as born of action. Thus knowing, thou shalt be liberated.” This verse in one word points out the crucial difference between wisdom-sacrifice and all the other sacrifices enumerated above. The latter, says Bhagavan, are all born of action, are of the not-self, because the Self is actionless and if this actionless self is realised one becomes liberated. The transcendental superiority of wisdom-sacrifice over all the sacrifices is dwelt upon and the reason for it is given in the 33rd verse: “Superior is wisdom-sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects, O harasser of thy foes; all action without exception, O son of Pritha, is comprehended in wisdom.” Wisdom-sacrifice transcends all sacrifices with objects, because all action is comprehended in wisdom. All the good that can be done by actions is achieved by wisdom which comprehending all actions transcends them all.

Chapter 8

The Surest Way To Moksha

In the 33rd verse of the 4th Chapter wisdom was praised; and in the following verses, *i.e.*, the 34th and onwards, Bhagavan describes this wisdom and points out the surest means of attaining that wisdom. The 34th and 39th verses should be read together as having a bearing on the means of attaining wisdom. The 39th verse brings out what the 34th verse contains by implication. The 34th verse runs thus: “Know this (wisdom) by long prostration, by enquiry, by service; those men of wisdom who have realised the truth will teach thee wisdom.”

This wisdom is ultimately to be imparted to his disciple by the Guru who has realised the Truth, but what should be the equipment with which the disciple should approach his Guru? To understand the full significance of the words, “by long prostration,” “by enquiry,” “by service” in the above verse, we should ponder over what the 39th verse says. It runs: “He obtains wisdom who is full of faith, who is devoted and who has subdued the senses, and having obtained wisdom he ere long attains to the supreme peace.” Unless a man has faith

in the existence of this wisdom, Brahmagyā, and also in the existence of the Jivan-Muktas, who are its custodians, his prostration cannot be genuine and sincere. When he has such faith and also when he appreciates the greatness of this wisdom and is convinced of its being the only means of triumphing over the evil of Samsara, then only is it possible for him to approach the Guru in that spirit of sincere humility and reverence which the physical action of long prostration symbolises.

Thus faith is the first qualification that is necessary to really prostrate before the Guru and approach him. Added to faith must be the earnest devotion to wisdom, and without this longing for wisdom he cannot properly enquire.

Before this, he had read the scriptures and had tried to understand them with a view to know the self through the not-self. By prosecuting his enquiries on analytical lines he had understood what Atma and what Anatma is. But now he studies the scriptures to know the mystery of the One Life. His enquiries are deeper, they run on the lines of synthesis and are transcendental. He longs to attain to the Vidya, the wisdom that alone can remove the root ignorance of separateness — Avidya. He longs to know that which is beyond both self and not-self and of which both self and not-self alike are expressions. The deeper and more earnest are his enquiries and longings, the more clearly does he see the greatness of the Guru; for he is the embodiment of the divine wisdom and he alone, who is also the representative of Ishvara, can dispel the darkness of Avidya, the false separative knowledge, by kindling the light of true wisdom. Realising this, his devotion to the Guru increases, and out of devotion and love he entirely surrenders himself to the Guru.

The second qualification is therefore a deep longing for and devotion to Wisdom. Says the *Light on the path*: “Those that ask shall have. But though the ordinary man asks perpetually, his voice is not heard. For he asks with his mind only; and the voice of the mind is only heard on that plane on which the mind acts.... To ask is to feel the hunger within — the yearning of spiritual aspiration.”¹⁷

The third qualification is “service”. With this goes the subdual of the senses in the 39th verse. Hitherto he had controlled the senses in order to realise his self against his not-self. But now the senses must be trained and tuned to see the unity, the One Life. He must now strive to realise the One Life in his action and in his daily life which now becomes one service of his Guru. Says Bhagavan in the 27th verse of the 9th Chapter: “Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever austerity thou engagest in, do it as an offering to Me.” Out of devotion and love he meditates on and worships his Guru-Deva; and the inner spirit of surrender and worship is reduced to practice, and in that all his activities become one service of his Guru. The senses are thus trained to see and realise unity and he realises the presence of his Guru at all times and at all places and in all actions. This is real Seva which sees *Sa eva asamantat*¹⁸ — “He indeed everywhere.”

By such discipline he qualifies himself to receive the wisdom from his Guru. As the 34th verse¹⁹ says: “those men of wisdom who have realised the truth will teach thee wisdom.” For, the

¹⁷ *Light on the Path*, op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁸ This should be read स एव आ समन्तात् [sa ēva ā samantāt] — ED.

¹⁹ Of Chapter IV.

Light on the path says: “when the disciple is ready the Master is ready also.”²⁰ What this wisdom is and what its efficacy is in liberating man from all evil and ignorance, are taught in the five following Shlokas, from the 35th to 39th. “Knowing which,” says the 35th verse, “thou shalt not again thus fall into error, O Pandava; and by which thou wilt see all beings in thy self and also in Me.”

This is true Wisdom by which all beings from Brahma, the Creator, down to the tiniest blade of grass, as Shri Shankaracharya puts it in his commentary on this Shloka, are seen in one’s real Self which is the Light of Ishvara, the One Life, and which is also Ishvara Himself. Thus does he realise his identity with Brahman, the Self which, expressing itself from Brahma down to the tiniest blade of grass, remains transcendent. The significance of this profound wisdom, the supreme realisation of the self, is well brought out in the following story in the 13th and 14th Chapters of the 10th Skanda of Shrimad Bhagavata. It is said that once Brahma, the Creator, in order to test the divine powers of Bhagavan hid away the calves and cowherd-boys who were tending the calves, and kept them under his Maya; Shri Krishna out of Compassion for the mothers of the Gopas and cows, and also with a view to teach Brahma, became himself all the calves and cowherd-boys even to the minutest detail of colour and dress. About a year passed, and things went on as usual without the parents of the cowherd-boys noticing any change excepting that they felt a deeper love for their boys as did the cows also for their calves.

²⁰ *Light on the Path*, op. cit., p. 22.

Balarama, who until now believed that the Gopas were the incarnations of the gods and the cows of the Rishis, could not account for this sudden increase in the love of both human and bovine parents for their off-spring evolved from Bhagavan's Maya. So also was Brahma perplexed when he could not distinguish between the calves and cowherd-boys (whom he had concealed and kept under Maya) and their duplicates which he now found engaged as usual in the wood, until Bhagavan, out of compassion for Brahma and with a view to show how utterly unreliable outward forms are in disclosing the reality, appeared himself in His Divine form from each of the calves and cowherds which He had created. Balarama also saw the error of considering individualities however high as the final reality.

All forms, processes and individualities derive their value and interest as indicating the Self, but utterly fail as measures of the immeasurable Self whom no number of Brahmandas can exhaust and whose mystery Brahma himself cannot fathom. Such is the wisdom of the Self that the Guru imparts to his disciple, and on gaining which the disciple attains, as the 39th verse says, Supreme Peace.

It is a wise injunction handed down by Hindu tradition which says: "Seek not to trace back the origin of a Rishi and a river." The Rishi, the Jivanmukta, is par excellence the embodiment of divine wisdom, the wisdom of the self, the negation of the separative. But man's ambitious curiosity lays its blasphemous hand on the most sacred and cherished ideals and foists its limitations and imperfections on the limitless and perfect. Hence we have the sad spectacle of modern theosophical literature revelling in trivial and weird stories purporting to be

past lives of Mahatmas, which read like third rate novels. Not content with such desecration we find even Bhagavan Himself dragged down and duplicated to support new fangled theories.

The greatness of divine wisdom as the only means of attaining liberation is taught in the following three verses, of the 4th Chapter, from 36 to 38: “Even should’st thou be most sinful of all the sinfuls, thou shalt verily cross all sin by the bark of wisdom. As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does wisdom-fire reduce all actions to ashes. Verily there exists here no purifier equal to wisdom. He who is perfected by Yoga finds it in time in himself by himself.” To the man seeking Moksha even Dharma becomes a sin, because Dharma itself is separative, and the only bark of safety in which the sea of Avidya of separative life can be crossed is Wisdom which, by its innate nature, reducing everything to unity, burns out all sin.

Shri Shankaracharya, commenting on the statement in the above verses that wisdom-fire burns action to ashes as fire burns fuel, says that the simile should not be taken literally, but what is meant to be conveyed is that wisdom renders all action impotent as regards its binding power. The attainment of wisdom not only enables man to perform action without being bound by it, but it gives him the power to consume by the fire of wisdom even such of his past Karma as has not begun to work itself out.

This brings us to the subject of the records of the past lives, where they are preserved and how and to whom they become accessible. There are three records of past events. The physical memory of man is a record of past events but of this life only and is not of the events of past lives. The second record is found in the astral light which alone is accessible to the psychic. The

third record is Akash, the cosmic ether. This is the most permanent record and lasts for Kalpas and Kalpas. But this is accessible only to the initiate who is on the threshold of liberation and who has to square up all his past accounts before becoming perfect. This power of reading the past comes to him as a result of his spiritual progress and the consequent illumination.

Therefore does Bhagavan say in the 15th verse of the 15th Chapter of the Gita: "I am in the hearts of all men, and from me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both." Shri Shankaracharya commenting on this says: "Just as memory and knowledge occur in persons as a result of their good deeds, so as a result of their sins, loss of memory and knowledge occur in the sinful." Says the *Light on the Path*: "The operations of the actual laws of Karma are not to be studied until the disciple has reached the point at which they no longer affect himself. The initiate has a right to demand the secrets of nature and to know the rules which govern human life. He obtains this right by having escaped from the limits of nature and by having freed himself from the rules which govern human life. He has become a recognised portion of the divine element, and is no longer affected by that which is temporary. He then obtains a knowledge of the laws which govern temporary conditions. Therefore you who desire to understand the laws of Karma, attempt first to free yourself from these laws; and this can only be done by fixing your attention on that which is unaffected by those laws."²¹

From the above authoritative statements it should be clear that these records cannot be laid under contribution by so called occultists for writing out stories for the delectation of their fol-

²¹ *Light on the Path*, op. cit., p. 90

lowers, which are taken to substantiate their claims to occult powers. Perhaps the record in the astral light may be within their ken, but the results of such psychic visions are not at all reliable, because the psychic who has not burnt out the residue of senses, mind and individuality in the fire of wisdom, cannot but project himself and fancy that he reads external records which are nothing but his secret thoughts and desires externalised.

More reliable perhaps are the results arrived at by the unpretentious Professor Denton through psychometry published in his book called the Soul of Things than the weird tales of personal loves and hates which are now-a-days published in theosophical books as evidences of occultism and which are claimed as the results of the researches in Akashic records. This is another instance in which high names and doctrines have been dragged down to the level of modern ignorance.

It is worthy of notice that at three different places in this chapter, Chapter IV, it has been shown how wisdom lifts a man above the operations of Karma. These are not meaningless repetitions of the same teaching but are meant to show the three aspects of wisdom-sacrifice, and how the fire of wisdom, by reducing to ashes the triad — Karta the doer, Kriya the deed and Karma the object of the deed — lifts the man of wisdom above the operations of the law of Karma. In the description of wisdom-sacrifice given in the 24th verse, it is shown how the Kriya, the whole action with all its accessories, is rendered impotent as regards its power to bind; the description in the 25th verse tells us how, by the identification of the purified self, the Karta, with Brahman, the One Self, action loses its binding power; and lastly, the description in the 35th verse tells us how, by reducing the whole outside world, the Karma (not Self), into

the Self, action is burnt to ashes. There can be no vain repetitions in the Gita, seeing that it is the concentrated essence of the highest teaching and thought that is capable of appreciation by man. All that man's mind can speculate upon and man's spirit can yearn for with regard to the mystery of life is found deep embedded in the apparently simple aphorisms.

Attempts are always made to read into the Gita one's own pet theories, and partisans have sought its high authority to establish their own creeds. Some have called it the book of devotion, others as inculcating action. But the Gita is as comprehensive as life itself. It is the Book of Life and embraces in its majestic sweep of divine teaching all phases of life. It is the glory of Bhagavan's teaching that out of His infinite compassion He limits Himself to suit even the narrowest intellect, takes cognisance of lowly acts and practices and shows how even these can be turned towards Himself and be thus spiritualised. Ignoring Him and His divine teachings those who hanker after other knowledge are, as Uddhava says:

वासुदेवं परित्यज्य योऽन्यं देवमुपासते ।
तृषितो जाह्नवीतीरे कूपं वाञ्छति दुर्भगः ॥

vāsudēvaṁ parityajya yō'nyam dēvamupāsatē |
tṛṣitō jāhnavītirē kūpaṁ vāñchati durbhagaḥ ||

“He who rejecting Vasudeva goes after other gods is like the unfortunate man who feeling thirsty on the banks of Ganga, runs in search of a well.”

Chapter 9

The Doctrine of the Bhagavad-Gita²²

In studying the Bhagavad Gita it is necessary, at the outset, to remember that the eighteen discourses are intimately connected with one another and that each discourse describes a particular aspect of human life, and leads us on to the next in orderly sequence. For purposes of our study, however, it is convenient to arrange the discourses in three broad groups. Taking the first as an introductory discourse, you find that Lord Shri Krishna refers in the next five chapters, to the several schools of philosophy, that flourished at the time, namely, the Sankhya, Karma, Jnana, Sanyasa, and Abhyasa, each describing the path towards salvation.

The great Lord then examines the merits and defects of each school, and points out that there are, in nature, two im-

²² The last four chapters are based on a series of talks on the Seventh, Thirteenth and Fifteenth Discourses of the Gita, delivered in Madras, in 1925.
— ED.

portant entities or factors which the several schools have lost sight of, and without the help of which the paths recommended by those philosophers will not be of much avail. He then expounds his own doctrine or theory with regard to the goal of human life, and from this standpoint supplies the key, as it were, with which the different viewpoints could be reconciled so as to evolve them in a harmonious whole in proper setting. This doctrine is enunciated in the next group of six chapters beginning with the seventh discourse.

You remember that the Great Lord referring to Himself in another connection says this in Chapter IV-6: "Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature and though I am the Lord of beings, yet presiding over (controlling) my own nature I am born through my Maya." Now, every system of philosophy postulates the existence of a First Cause, and though there are differences of opinion as to the nature of this First Cause or its attributes, it is agreed on all hands that this First Cause (Parambrahma) is omnipresent and eternal; is not Jnata (ego), not Jnanam (consciousness), not Jneyam (non-ego). Any positive definition of this principle is impossible, and whatever description of it can be attempted is only by means of a negative definition. It is unknowable and therefore referred to as *Avyaktamurti* and only becomes knowable when manifesting itself as the *Logos* or *Ishvara*; so it is possible to know something about its manifestations. When Evolution commences, it becomes active, and at the time of cosmic activity, there starts from it what might be called a centre of Conscious Energy. This is the word made manifest, *Ishvara* or *Shabda Brahma*.

He is also described as *Sat-Chit-Ananda* in Ch. XIV-27, where *Bhagavan* says: "I am the image or the seat of the Immor-

tal and Indestructible Brahma, of the Eternal law (Dharma) and of absolute happiness.” He is Sat — सदास्थायी [sadāsthāyī] — who ever is (that is without becoming or change in past, present or future). He is Chit because in Him the eternal Dharma of Cosmos, the whole law of cosmic evolution abides. He is Anandam because he is the abode of bliss, and the highest happiness possible for man is attained when the Jivatma, the human soul, reaches Him. He is thus an object of the highest knowledge that man is capable of acquiring. You can have some little glimpse or conception of His nature in Shlokas 4 & 5 of Ch. IX where Bhagavan says: “By Me all this world is pervaded, in My form unmanifested (Avyaktamurti). All beings dwell in me and I do not dwell in them. Look at My condition when manifested as Ishvara.” “He is the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution.” (VII-6). “All beings in the manifested Cosmos as well as the whole of this universe are woven in Me as a row of gems on a string” (VII-7).

This view is again confirmed later on, in XIII-26, where Bhagavan says: “Know that all beings (unmoving or moving), have come from the union of My two Prakritis.” What are these two Prakritis which are under His control? Bhagavan says (VII-4): “earth, water, fire, air, ether, Manas, Buddhi and Ahankara this is my eightfold Prakriti.” This is Mulaprakriti, undifferentiated, giving rise to five Tanmatras, Ahankara, Buddhi and Manas. There is another Prakriti (VII-5) which is superior and which supports and sustains the whole universe. It is called the Mahachaitanya of the whole Cosmos. It is the one great power that guides the whole Course of Evolution, leading Nature towards its goal. It is the source of light, of various modes of con-

PRINCIPLES
OF
MAN, SOLAR SYSTEM, AND COSMOS

Maheshvara Parabrahm

(Shabda Brahma, Sat — Chit — Ananda)
(Paramatma)

Daiviprakriti
(Gayatri, Mahachaitanyam)
(Chichchakti)

Mulaprakriti
(Avyakta, Maya)

<i>Karana Sharira</i> (Hall of Wisdom)	—	(Prajna — Ecstatic Consciousness)	—	Svar Loka	—	Sutratma
<i>Sukshma Sharira</i> (Hall of Learning)	—	(Tajjasa — Clairvoyant Consciousness)	—	Bhuvar Loka	—	Hiranyagarbha
<i>Sthula Sharira</i> (Hall of Ignorance)	—	(Vishva — Objective Consciousness)	—	Bhu Loka	—	Vishvanara

sciousness, and of life manifested in every kind of organism that we know of in Nature.

When Evolution begins, Ishvara wakes up, so to say, with the image or conception of what is to be in the Cosmos, which Daiviprakriti or His Light catches and impresses on Cosmic matter which is already manifested. This Light may, therefore, be said to be a kind of link between objective matter and the subjective thought of Ishvara. While Mulaprakriti is the cause of bondage, Daivi-Prakriti is the cause of illumination. It is also symbolised as Gayatri in our Hindu Philosophy. It represents the life-aspect, while Mulaprakriti represents the form-aspect in Cosmos. This is further illustrated in Shlokas 8–11²³ where Bhagavan says, with reference to his Vibhutis: “In water I am sapidity, I am the light in the sun and the moon. I am the syllable Om in the Vedas, sound in ether, humanity in men, etc.”

Here Lord Shri Krishna refers to all the excellent qualities manifested in every region of phenomenal existence, as springing from Himself, and regrets that the world does not understand His real nature. For Bhagavan says: “The ignorant regard me as manifestation of Avyakta, not knowing my supreme and imperishable and best nature. I am not visible to all, veiled as I am by my Yoga Maya. The deluded world does not comprehend Me who am unborn and imperishable” (VII-24–25). This Yoga Maya is His Light, Daiviprakriti, behind which is Bhagavan unperceived. The reference is to the view held by the Sankhya school that Avyaktam (Parambrahma veiled by Mulaprakriti) takes on a kind of phenomenal differentiation on account of association with Upadhi, and in the course of such differentia-

²³ Of Chapter VII.

tion becomes the Atma of the individual, so that in tracing the path towards the goal, if you could control the action of the Upadhi and destroy the Maya it has created, the result would be the complete extinction or annihilation of man's individuality and its final absorption (Laya) in Parambrahma. This view, Lord Shri Krishna says, is wrong, because Ishvara and His Light are here entirely lost sight of.

The Sankhyas consider Mulaprakriti as the source of matter as well as of force, while Daiviprakriti is regarded as an aspect or manifestation of Mulaprakriti, and when you try to trace the source of the Upadhi to Mulaprakriti, in that attempt the individuality becomes lost in Mulaprakriti, and you cannot cross the neutral barrier without the help of Ishvara. Secondly, this view of the Sankhyas excludes the possibility of Avatars and Jivan-Muktas coming down for the sake of helping humanity. For when once man has reached the stage at which his whole individuality is completely annihilated, the existence of an Avatara would be, as a matter of simple logical inference, an impossibility. Bhagavan, therefore, controverts this theory of the Sankhyas and strikes a clear note of warning in Chapter XII verses 3, 4, 5, against following this doctrine.

The Vedantins, however, try to find the source of consciousness. They hold that it is a mode or manifestation of the Light, which is life, and that this Light permeates every kind of organism and is manifested in every one of the Upadhis as the real ego of man. Now, evolutionary progress is effected by the continual perfecting of the Upadhi or organism through which the Light works. As the Upadhis are rendered more and more pure and perfected, man's intelligence on the physical, astral, and spiritual planes will become more and more perfect, until that stage

is reached when man will be enabled to recognise and perceive Bhagavan. Mukti is, therefore, not the loss of individuality, but the perfection of individuality. The ego in the Sthula Sharira gains merely the experiences of everyday life; that is, the animal passions and emotions and ordinary thoughts connected with the physical wants of man are confined to the Sthula and Sukshma Shariras.

But the Karana Sharira is the storehouse, in which the best experiences of man are garnered in every incarnation. In fact, the germs of every quality or attribute that is noble and enduring, all the higher emotions, impulses and aspirations that go deep into the intellectual nature of man are impressed on the Karana Sharira. Its place of existence is Sutratma, and as the individual passes from incarnation to incarnation, with its fund of experiences, a higher individuality is evolved, thus keeping up the continued existence of the Jiva as an individual monad. It is the real ego of man. Bhagavan throws out a kind of feeler, as it were, of His Light into various organisms and assimilates the spiritual experiences which result from its action as it vibrates on the organism along a series of incarnations. The individuality of man thus becomes united to that of Ishvara. He who is Prajna then becomes the Sarvajna.

There is another great difficulty for man to understand the nature of the supreme self and it is this. Bhagavan says: "The whole world is deluded by three sorts of things composed of Gunas, and therefore does not know Me, and this Maya of the three Gunas is divine and hard to surmount." "Gunas" is a technical term. Guna is not the property or attribute of any substance, like the colour of an object. The Gunas are born of Prakriti, which is the root of Samsara. The Gunas are said to

bind Kshetrajna as it were, because they exist having Kshetrajna as the basis of their existence (XIV-5). Prakriti is the mother of all material objects. The sun, moon, stars, mountains, seas, forest, men, birds, beasts, mind, and body — all are generated from her. The Gunas are mentioned in Chap. XIV (6–7–8). As a result of past Samskaras they produce effects characteristic of the Guna with which a man is born. Guna, in that sense, is a result of Karma, and Karma in its turn determines the Guna. The Gunas pervade the whole Universe, for, “there is no being on earth or heaven who is free from the three Gunas” (XVIII-40) and this subject Bhagavan explains at great length, in the last discourse, with special reference to all activities of man, such as knowledge, action, intellect and pleasure. It is enough, for the present, to note that Tamas is connected with the gross passions and pleasures experienced in the Sthula Sharira; Rajas with the passionate and restless activity of the mind in the Sukshma Sharira; and Sattva with the noble and higher aspirations in the Karana Sharira, the essence of all this bundle of attributes being comprised in Parambrahma. Bhagavan says that “Verily this Divine illusion of Mine made of Gunas, is hard to surmount. Whoever seek Me alone, they cross over this illusion.” (VII-14.)

How to cross the illusion made of the Gunas? Perform Karma for His sake (as Yajna) and in the course of performance of duty in a proper and disinterested manner, you get rid of desires, and the mind becomes purified, when Bhakti slowly develops. So long as you identify yourself with Upadhis, there is differentiation, but when Parabhakti sets in, all ignorance and delusion are destroyed and when you go to Bhagavan with supreme devotion, you can cross the neutral barrier and reach the gateway which points towards the Goal. When the soul

has reached that stage of evolution, when it does not want anything of the world, when it has outgrown the promptings of desire and gained freedom by love, there are no more duties to be performed, and, not till then, can man give up Dharma. So Bhagavan says in Shloka 66 of the 18th Discourse: “Give up all Dharma, come to Me for shelter and I shall liberate you.”

“All beings are subject to Moha, deluded by attachment and aversion,” says Bhagavan. So when their senses, mind and intellect are all coloured, and they cannot have a perfect knowledge of things as they really are, even of the external world, how can you expect to acquire a knowledge of the Self and of Bhagavan? True, there are different kinds of devotees, the distressed, the seekers of knowledge and of wealth and the wise. From one standpoint these can be classed according to the nature of the three Gunas. But the Karta is one who has a longing to reach Bhagavan; as he seeks to know how he can satisfy this longing, he becomes a Jignasu; when he feels the peace and bliss of Bhagavan he is the real Artharthi; and lastly he becomes the real Jnani when he knows the real nature of Bhagavan. Such a Jnani who cultivates Ananya Bhakti will reach the goal after many births (VII-19). Such a one is hard to find because Bhagavan says: “Among thousands one only strives for perfection (purity), for purifying himself by Tapas and Dhyana, and even among those who become perfect scarcely one reaches me” (knows me in truth) (VII-3). The path of liberation is long and tedious, full of obstacles and dangers. Some with the object of immediate gain or impelled by a desire for Siddhis (powers), worship the Devatas, thus reaching a stage, in the course of evolution, at which you are absorbed in them and cannot reach Bhagavan (VII-23). So you must not forget the centre who is Bhagavan

(Ishvara) all along. There are those whose sin has come to an end by good deeds, who are freed from the delusion of attachment and aversion, and who worship Me with full resolve, and these also strive for liberation from birth and death. This is the Path of Light or Archiradi Marga (Self-conscious path). Those who follow this Path of Light go to Brahma Loka (VIII-24). “They realise in full the supreme Brahman, the Adhyatma (Pratyagatma or Logos), Karma (action); realise Me in the Adhibhuta (physical region), in the Adhidaiva (region of the Devatas) and in the Adhiyajna (region of sacrifice); realise Me at the time of departing, steadfast in mind” (VII-29–30). This path is also referred to in Bhagavata, Skanda VII, Chapter XV-54. This is indeed a noble object in view, but, to use the words of a Great Teacher, it is after all an exalted and glorious kind of selfishness. The other path (Atomic path) is referred to in VIII-25 and is called the Dhuma Marga or the Path of Smoke, followed by Karma Yogins, who perform different kinds of sacrifices and worshipping Me, reach Svarga (IX-20).

Lord Shri Krishna impresses on the mind of Arjuna that there is a direct path leading towards liberation. It is called Raja-Vidya and referred to in IX-2–3 thus: “Kingly Science, Kingly Secret, Supreme purifier is this; immediately comprehensible, unopposed to Dharma, very easy to perform, imperishable; but persons having no faith in this Dharma, without reaching Me, remain in the path of the mortal world.” It is the path of illumination, followed by Jivan-Muktas, who, without even caring for their own salvation, wish to be born again merely for the sake of the suffering and struggling humanity. Bhagavan therefore says to Arjuna: “He whose mind is attached to Me, who performs Yoga, who takes refuge in Me, without doubt, will know

Me in full.” In this connection you will remember what is said in the last two verses of the Sixth discourse: “One who has controlled his mind is better than a man of austerity (performer of different Vratas such as Chandrayana, etc.), better than a Jnani (teacher of Sastra), better than a Karmin (performer of Agnihotra, etc.). Among all these Yogis, he whose inner Self abides in Ishvara is the real Yogi.” Now what is this Yoga? Lord Shri Krishna sums up his teaching, in brief, in these verses: “Fix thy Manas in Me, place thy Buddhi (intellect) in Me; if you cannot fix your thought steadily on Me, then follow Abhyasa; if you cannot do this, then do Karma for My sake; and even if you are not able to do this, do thou at least abandon the fruit of any action with a pure mind” (XII-8–11).

At the initial stage of budding spiritual consciousness, the devotee voluntarily renounces the fruit of his action even though he is conscious that he is the doer of action. As he offers the fruits of every such action to Bhagavan with intensity and aspiration, he is slowly drawn towards Bhagavan, and conceives an attachment for Him which, in due course, develops into steady devotion and love. He performs Karma as Yajna and for His sake with the object of pleasing Him. Then he begins to concentrate his mind, having brought it under control and resisting all external thoughts and stimuli and meditating upon Bhagavan with one-pointed devotion reaches Him who is in the centre of the Universe. He realises that his physical centre and the Cosmos are the expression of one and the same Divine life. Such a one, Bhagavan says, “Who hates no being, is friendly and compassionate, free from attachment and egoism, steady minded, self-controlled, with Manas and Buddhi fixed on Me, devoted to me, is dear to Me” (XII-13–14). Such a one

“knowing Me hither as the Sarathi (Charioteer) now knows Me in truth, that is, as Bhagavan.”

Chapter 10

Kshetra and Kshetrajna

With the thirteenth discourse commences the third part of the Bhagavad Gita. In the second part the Great Lord, Shri Krishna, explained His doctrine with regard to the path of liberation, by pointing out the source and end of Evolution, the manifested Cosmos, His own place in Nature, His Vibhutis, the marks of the liberated, and the steps leading toward the Goal.

In studying the seventh discourse you find that the Great Lord, while enunciating His doctrine refers to Jnana as “the knowledge which being known, nothing more here remains to be known” (VII-2), and declares this knowledge as “that which, having known, thou shalt be liberated from the bondage of Samsara” (IX-1). It is that knowledge which, you will remember, Bhagavan says, only those who themselves realised the truth and reached the Goal could impart, and by which “thou shalt see all beings in thyself and also in Me” (IV-35). It is this knowledge which Bhagavan now explains at greater length in the thirteenth discourse of the Gita. You see Lord Shri Krishna starts by saying, “The knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetrajna is

deemed by Me as true knowledge” (XIII-2), and expatiates on the same subject, by first narrating what the Kshetra is, what its attributes are, what qualities it generates, its source, and the reason of its existence; what Kshetrajna is, and what powers He possesses (XIII-3), and then pointing out that the possession of this true knowledge, if properly acquired, that is, when the proper means of attaining that knowledge are adopted, leads to emancipation from the wheel of Samsara (XIII-23). He then winds up his argument by saying that “They who by the eye of wisdom perceive the distinction between Kshetra and Kshetrajna, and the liberation of all beings from Prakriti, the differentiation of Prakriti which is the cause of Avidya or ignorant delusion, reach the supreme Goal” (XIII-34).

Now what is this Supreme Goal? Bhagavan refers to it in VIII-3: “Brahman is the Imperishable (Akshara), the Supreme.” It is “that Imperishable Goal which the knowers of the Vedas declare, which the self-controlled and the passion-free enter” (VIII-11). It is called the Unmanifested, the Imperishable. That is the highest Goal which having reached, none return. That is My Supreme Abode” (VIII-21). This is described in XIII-12 as “The beginningless, Supreme Brahman,” which is “neither Sat nor Asat”; and more fully explained in the next four verses (XIII-14–17). It is, to use the language of Western philosophers, the First Cause, or Parambrahma, the existence of which Brahmanvidya, Rajavidya or Paravidya postulates. It is neither Ego, nor non-Ego, nor consciousness, and as such it is impossible for human knowledge to predicate anything about it. It is the basis of material manifestations in the Cosmos, or the basis of Evolution.

It is not ‘Sat’ because the word ‘Sat’ is generally used to denote Jati (genus), Kriya (act), Guna (quality) or Sambandha (re-

lation). Nor can it be 'Asat', for without it there could be no material phenomena. But for it, the Indriyas could not operate and the power which makes the senses work is innate in it. It is admitted by physiologists that in evolution the exercise of functions gradually developed the necessity for the organs of senses. "It is unattached, yet supports everything and is above the three Gunas. It is outside as well as inside; at the same time it is in the middle. Being very subtle it is very incomprehensible. It is far away to one who is ignorant, but very near to a man of knowledge. It is undivided, but appears to be divided in the Bhutas (sensible matter). At one time it is passive, at another time it is active. It is absolute Jyoti, the Light of Lights, which cannot be described and is beyond Prakriti." It is neither Jnata (Ego), nor Jnanam (consciousness), nor Jneyam (Non-ego). It may be symbolised as the boundless circle, the Zero (No thing). The Zero becomes a number only when one of the other nine figures precedes it and thus manifests its value and potency.

Such description, graphic as it is, of something which defies any description, would indeed dishearten any person — at the mere thought of the knowledge of Parambrahma being difficult of attainment. So in order to cheer up Arjuna, Bhagavan at once says in the 17th Shloka: "Knowledge, the knowable, and the Goal of knowledge (It) is seated especially in the heart of every one,"

Thus there can be no manifestation without the First Cause, and all the physical phenomena that you see, though due to Prakriti, have Parambrahma as their basis. Now you find in the 7th discourse reference is made by Bhagavan to two kinds of Prakriti, one inferior, divided eight-fold, and the other Superior Prakriti, the very life by which the Universe is upheld

(VII-4-5), and that “these are the womb of all creatures, I (the Ishvara) the source and the dissolution of the whole universe” (VII-6). In human life these refer or correspond to the Kshetra and Kshetrajna, respectively. Lord Shri Krishna says the true nature of Kshetra and Kshetrajna is sung by “Rishis in many ways in various chants, in Brahma Sutras which are logical and definite” (XIII-4). For you find in the Brahma Sutras a clear and consistent theory of Vedantic philosophy, with regard to the composition of man, as an entity, the nature of the three Upadhis, and their relation to the Soul, on the one hand, and their connection between themselves, on the other. The Lord says: “This, the body is called the Kshetra, that which knows it is called the Kshetrajna; do thou also know Me, Kshetrajna in all Kshetras” (XIII-1-2). The human body is called Kshetra. It is only when the human body is evolved, Jivatma enters (Aitareya Upanishad, 1-3-12.²⁴) So, when the Light of Ishvara enters the human body, it is termed the Jivatma, and the body becomes,

²⁴ Aitareya Upanishad 1-3-12:

स एतमेव सीमानं विदार्यैतया द्वारा प्रापद्यत ।
 सैषा विदृतिर्नाम द्वास्तदेतन्नानन्दनम् ।
 तस्य त्रय आवसथास्त्रयः स्वप्नाः
 अयमावसथोऽयमावसथोऽयमावसथ इति ॥

sa ētamēva sīmānaṁ vidāryaitayā dvārā prāpadyata |
 saiṣā vidṛtirnāma dvāstadētannāndanam |
 tasya traya āvasathāstrayaḥ svapnāḥ
 ayamāvasathō’yamāvasathō’yamāvasatha iti ||

It was this bound that He cleft, it was by this door that He entered. This gate is called विदृतिः [vidṛtiḥ] and here is the place of His delight. He hath three mansions, three dreams therein — saying this habitation, this habitation and this habitation.

the field where the law of Karma begins to operate, and the fruits of action reaped. Evolution begins from Ishvara, while Karma, the law of cause and effect, from Mulaprakriti. Kshetra is therefore the Upadhi, and Kshetrajna, the ego which works through the mind and senses. “The great elements, Ahankara, Buddhi, also the Avyakta; the ten senses and the one (Manas) and the five objects of sense; desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate (the combination of the body and the senses), intelligence, courage, constitute the Kshetra with its modifications” (XIII-5-6). The elements referred to here are the Mahabhutas or the five great Tanmatras, which pertain to the abstract qualities of supersensible (subtle) matter; the Pancha Bhutas refer to sensible matter in which the variations of the abstract qualities are observed. The former are generals of which the latter are particulars. Ahamkara is the sense of I-ness, the false or artificial ‘I’. In the course of evolution, Buddhi comes first and presents itself merely as consciousness without the sense of ‘I’-ness, and thereafter comes Ahamkara. Next comes the mind (Manas) the function of which is Sankalpa (selection) and Vikalpa (rejection). Then come the Indriyas, the Jnanendriyas and Karmendriyas, and the five gross elements. Desire and other qualities mentioned here refer to the qualities of the inner sense (Antahkarana). This illustrates that Prakriti is responsible for the mental and moral qualities of man. Herbert Spencer says that the physical organism has a great deal to do with the mental structure of man, and psychology therefore finds a foundation for itself in physiology.

Bhagavan therefore says “that the body is Kshetra, He is Kshetrajna, and that is the real knowledge.” Our Sages have explained three Upadhis (Sthula, Sukshma & Karana) and 16

states of consciousness, namely, three Avasthas (states) Jagrat, Svapna and Sushupti, in each of the three Upadhis, and above these nine, seven other states to which only the Jivanmuktas have access. The Light of Ishvara permeates every kind of organism, and is manifested in every one of the Upadhis as the real ego of man. If you observe a ray of light falling on a clear mirror, and make the ray reflect on a polished metallic plate, and make this reflection of it in its turn fall upon a wall, you will then see three images, one clearer than the other. Comparing for a moment, the Sun to Ishvara, and the three surfaces to the three Upadhis, Karana, Sukshma and Sthula, you will at once understand that the three reflections of the Sun, or the light will correspond to the three images (Pratibimbās), for the time being considered as the self. These Bimbās are not of the same lustre. The lustre of this Bimba may be compared to man's knowledge and it grows feebler and feebler, as the reflection of light is transferred from a clear Upadhi to one less clear, and so on till you get to the Sthula Sharira (physical body). Our knowledge of the self, therefore, depends mainly on the condition of the Upadhi.

The different states of consciousness mean simply this — that the Atma, or self, observes different (nine) classes of objects. It is the one observer of the generalisation, which the mind, that rules and guides the senses, makes from the impressions of the senses, when collected and arranged. In Jagrat Avastha (waking consciousness), when a person sees the objects with the senses and the light of the Sun, etc., and his mind draws deductions from the impressions of the senses, he is not conscious of the awareness of the self, and so “the self luminousness is for the beholder difficult to discriminate.” In Svapna Avastha (dreamy state), there is self-luminosity, for you

create things from the impressions gathered in the mind with the help of Chaitanya (Shri Shankaracharya's commentary on Brahma Sutras, Chapter III, Pada 2, Sutra 4).

In Sushupti (dreamless sleep), you become one with yourself. The Light of Ishvara is the Turiya Avastha, or the fourth state. It is the Atma . According to the ordinary Vedantic classification, there are four states of Conscious Existence, namely, Vishva, Taijasa, Prajna and Turiya. These may be described as the objective, clairvoyant, ecstatic and ultra-ecstatic states of Consciousness. The seats or Upadhis relating to these states, are the Sthula Sharira (physical body), the Sukshma Sharira (subtle body), the Karana Sharira (human monad) and Daiviprakriti (Light of the Logos). The fourth (Turiya Chaitanya, the fourth life-wave) is Daiviprakriti, which is the real Atma ; and is "realised by merging the other three in it in the order of the lower in the higher." So merge the objective consciousness into the clairvoyant consciousness, then merge this into the ecstatic consciousness, and lastly the ecstatic consciousness into the ultra-ecstatic consciousness (Mandukya Upanishad, Shloka 2).²⁵

The fourth life-wave (Maha Chaitanyam) is एकात्मप्रत्ययसारम् [ekātmapratyayasāram] or "the sole Essence of the consciousness of the self" and indicates the transcendental consciousness "of peace, bliss and unity" (शान्तं शिवमद्वैतम् [śāntam śivamadvaitam]) (Mandukya, Shloka 7).³¹

²⁵ Mandukya Upanishad Shloka 2:

सर्वं ह्येतद्ब्रह्मायमात्मा ब्रह्म सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् ॥

sarvaṁ hyētabrahmāyamātmā brahma sō'yamātmā catuspāt ||

All this is verily Brahman, this SELF is Brahman, this SELF is four-fold.

Let us now look at the activity of the Kshetrajna from a different standpoint, that is, in relation to the Upadhis, according to the Vedantic classification. In the Annamayakosha there is the life of sensation. This relates to the Sthula Sharira. In the Pranamayakosha, there is the life of desire. In the Manomaya Kosha there is concrete activity, and the mind collects all sense-impressions and turns them into perceptions and concepts, by Sankalpa (assimilation) and Vikalpa (differentiation). Here the thinking faculty is highly developed and the person is not in the world of senses. It is the life of a thinker, scholar, painter, sculptor, musician or mathematician. Both these (Pranamaya and Manomaya), however, relate to Sukshma Sharira. But in Vijnanamaya Kosha you have the life of a philosopher, where the penetrative intellect is developed by study and deep thinking as a result of which abstract ideas are formed. A western philosopher says, "I exist because I think." In the Anandamaya Kosha is the life of bliss. After the highest mental abstraction begins spiritual bliss, which is a part of the bliss of renunciation. The last two Koshas relate to the Karana Sharira, which is so to say the gateway of initiation. The highest state of Ananda is supreme love and devotion, when the real teaching of the Guru begins. It is at this stage you become serene and quiet. But there is another Kosha, which is the shining golden sheath of the Great Ones, wherein you realise the true self, the Light of Ishvara, free from Avidya. It is called the Hiranyamaya Kosha of the Jivanmuktas in which Brahman (Divine Light) ever shines and which the sun or the moon cannot illumine.

हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।
 तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः ॥
 न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं ... ।

hiraṇmayē parē kōṣē virajaṁ brahma niṣkalam |
tacchubhraṁ jyōtiṣāṁ jyōtistadyadātmavidō viduḥ ||
na tatra sūryō bhāti na candratāraḱam ... |

(Mundaka II-2, 9–10)²⁶

Real knowledge is, therefore, that which treats of the Upadhis, consciousness and self-consciousness, from the lowest Anamaya Kosha to the highest Anandamaya. How do you attain this Jnanam or knowledge? Shri Krishna says that this knowledge results from the development of certain virtues or moral qualities as a necessary means of attaining such Jnanam. These are “humility, modesty, innocence, patience, uprightness, service of teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, unflinching devotion to Me, constancy in spiritual knowledge and understanding the end of the knowledge of truth” (XIII-7–11). These attributes are also declared to be knowledge, for knowledge is their end. By this knowledge you get to know Ishvara, and the knowledge includes devotion as well. Bhagavan now says: “Kshetra and knowledge and that which has to be known have been set forth; My devotee, on knowing this, is fitted for My state” (XIII-18). So, when these virtues are developed, he becomes, by means of devotion, a Jnani. Devotion is the insatiable thirst of the human spirit for the divine, a thirst that can never

²⁶ Translation for this verse has not been provided by the author, so we have furnished one here:

In the supreme golden sheath the Brahman [abides],
stainless and pure.
Radiance is That, It is the Light of Lights, It is That which
the knowers of SELF know.
Neither the Sun, the Moon nor the Stars shine therein....

be satisfied either by the reading of scriptures or the performance of rites or ceremonies; it can be satisfied by individual experience alone. Says Kathopanishad, 1st Adhyaya, 2nd Valli, verse 23:

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूंस्वाम् ॥

nāyamātmā pravacanēna labhyō na mēdhayā na
bahunā śrutēna |
yamēvaiṣa vṛṇutē tēna labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛ-
ṇutē tanūṁsvām ||

“This Atma (Paramatma — Supreme Self) is not attainable by the study of the Vedas, nor by keen intellect (capable of understanding the meanings conveyed by Shastras), nor by great learning. It is attainable by him alone who longs to reach it and to him this self reveals its real nature.”

Just as food is necessary for sustaining physical life, even so meditation and worship are needed for keeping up the spiritual life. The physical man must be made more ethereal by taking pure food; moral man more self-denying and philosophical; mental man more penetrating and profound; and spiritual man more devotional. The first preliminary is, therefore, the purification of the Upadhis, and as man goes on evolving the Koshas, devotion to Ishvara comes (sets in). The Sthula Sharira and the Sukshma Sharira are the ‘negative pole’, while Daiviprakriti and Ishvara are the ‘positive pole’. If Karana Sharira comes under the attraction of the negative pole, it becomes subject to the passions of embodied existence, but when it comes under the

influence of the positive pole, one becomes liberated. The battle rages when you have to cross the neutral barrier — Mahash-mashana — success in crossing which depends entirely on one's past virtuous Karma and complete devotion to Bhagavan. Out of the personality is evolved the individuality, which is later on transferred to Ishvara. There can be no Mukti till the Ahankara is completely annihilated and all evil eradicated by the fire of devotion. "Sweep clean the threshold of your heart by pure life, garnish the dwelling place of the beloved with virtues; when thou departest, He enters in and shows His Face to him whose self is gone." At first the devotee starts as 'Dasoham', *i.e.*, 'I am the servant'. The next stage of devotion is when he says and feels "He is Mine." Lastly comes the stage "Soham", *i.e.*, "I am He, Thou art myself," when the devotee is in a state of perfect union and oneness with the Beloved.

In that Parabhakti, the devotee, on account of oneness, feels that what he sees, hears, etc, is Vasudeva.

Chapter 11

Mulaprakriti, Daiviprakriti and Ishvara

In the early part of this discourse²⁷ it was mentioned that the two Prakritis correspond to Kshetra and Kshetrajna and that these were the womb of all creatures. The question therefore arises: how can all beings be said to have been evolved from the two Prakritis? Bhagavan says: “Whatever is born, the un-moving or moving, know that to be from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna” (XIII-26). Now, the original Kshetra is Mulaprakriti, and the real Kshetrajna is Ishvara. What then is this union? It is not contact. It cannot be mutual inherence, for they are not related to each other as cause and effect. Their natures are different. Kshetra is object while Kshetrajna is subject. The connection, therefore, is of the nature of ‘Adhyasa’, which consists in confounding the attributes of the one with those of the other. It is a sort of illusion, due to Ajnana or ignorance, as

²⁷ Chapter XIII of Gita.

when a rope is mistaken for a snake. Shankaracharya says that if you want to realise the Kshetrajna, you must separate the ego from the body; and when you begin to realise the real Purusha, Avidya disappears and you attain knowledge.

If all beings evolve out of the Prakritis, who then is Ishvara? The two Prakritis depend on Ishvara, who is the source of evolution. “Prakriti and Purusha are both beginningless,” says the Great Lord. Here Prakriti is Mulaprakriti, while Purusha is Daiviprakriti. They are both beginningless, because Ishvara is eternal; and the two are under His control. If, as some hold, Purusha and Prakriti have a beginning, then there would be nothing left for Ishvara to rule over prior to their birth. Nor can Ishvara be held to be the cause of Samsara, because, in that case, the Muktas will be subject to the same disability of Samsara and there can be no meaning in Mukti or liberation. Ishvara, therefore, is the source of evolution, while Mulaprakriti is the cause of Samsara or bondage. That is why it is said that no Puja can be performed without first offering Puja to the Peetham (seat of the deity) while Namaskarams are to be made to both (Mulaprakriti and Daiviprakriti). Prakriti as such cannot be destroyed; what is destroyed is Avidya that she causes. Shri Krishna says: “All emanations and qualities are born of Prakriti. In the production of effect and causes (instrument), Prakriti is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain Purusha is (said to be) the cause” (XIII-19–20). In other words, Prakriti is the cause of the body, thirteen instruments (10 Indriyas, Manas, Buddhi, Ahankara) and five sense objects, and all qualities such as Sukha, Duhkha, Moha (or pleasure, pain, delusion), which are seated in the Karanas [karaṇa] or senses, are also included under the term Karana [kāraṇa].

The other interpretation is that Karyas [kārya] are sixteen, namely, 10 Indriyas, Manas and 5 sense objects, while Karana [kāraṇa]²⁸ is Mahat, Ahankara and Pancha Tanmatras. At the beginning of evolution, Mahat existed, i.e., vague consciousness, like the consciousness that comes to the waking man without the sense of 'I'; this is followed by Ahankara and Tanmatras, viz., Shabda (sound), Sparsha (touch), Rupa (colour), Rasa (taste), and Gandha (smell), as such, being abstract super-sensible generals. The Purusha, who is Bhokta, is the Jivatma in the Karana Sharira, because he identifies himself with Prakriti and enjoys and suffers. Instead of identifying yourself with Ishvara, you identify yourself with Prakriti (i.e. differentiated Prakriti, which is Avidya) and attach yourself to the qualities, and the result is Samsara. In other words, first there is Avidya, or ignorance, due to differentiation or the feeling of separateness, which causes desire or Kama, which, in its turn, produces Karma or action, resulting in pleasure and pain, thereby causing bondage. So long as you identify yourself with the body, your consciousness is in the body, but as a result of evolution, if there is purification, consciousness is transferred from Upadhi to Upadhi, until at last it is united to that of Bhagavan.

But there is another Purusha, who is Bhagavan himself. Lord Shri Krishna says: "I am the same to all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear" (IX-29). Bhagavan is, therefore, simply a disinterested witness (Upadrashta) (XIII-22), watching the career of the human monad, and not concerning Himself with its interests. But he goes on to say: "I take interest

²⁸ It is necessary to differentiate between long and short vowels to correctly comprehend these sentences and hence phonetic transliteration has been supplied in brackets. — ED.

in the welfare of those men who worship Me and think of Me alone with their attention always fixed on Me” (IX-22). Then he becomes Anumanta and Bharta (supporter); that is, where real spiritual progress is made, he takes greater interest in the welfare of the individual who is his devotee, and becomes his light and guide, watches over him, and protects him by giving him knowledge, the light of wisdom (X-11). “To them who are ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give Buddhi Yoga (Yoga of right knowledge of My essential nature) by which they come to Me. I, dwelling in them, out of My compassion for them, destroy the darkness born from ignorance by the shining light of spiritual wisdom” (X-10–11). Then he becomes the Bhokta (enjoyer), for “I am indeed the enjoyer of all sacrifices” (IX-24); “Know Me as the Enjoyer of sacrifice and of austerity” (V-29); and, as Bhokta, He takes from the Soul that portion of its individuality in the Karana Sharira (into which is garnered the best experiences of each incarnation), which is high and spiritual enough to live in His own individuality; and when the man reaches the highest spiritual development, the devotee finds that he is no more a reflection of the Paramatma, but Maheshvara and Paramatma.

Such a one, says Lord Shri Krishna, “Who thus knows Purusha and Prakriti by illumination escapes the wheel (cycle) of births and deaths, in whatever condition he may happen to be” (XIII-23). What are the means of attaining the knowledge of the Atma by which one can secure liberation? Shri Krishna says: “By meditation, some behold the self in the self by the self” (XIII-24). These are the Uttama Adhikarins. Vedantins come under this class. The Vedantin must possess “Sadhana Chatushtaya” (four qualifications), namely, ‘Nityanitya Viveka’

i.e., discrimination between the real and the unreal, the self and the non-self; 'Ihaloka Paraloka Vairagya' or indifference to the fruits of action in this world and the other world (Svarga); 'Shat Sampatti,' i.e., Shama (control of the mind), Dama (control of the five organs of knowledge, and five organs of action), Uparati (tolerance), Titiksha (endurance), Sraddha (faith in the teaching of the Vedanta and the Guru) and Samadhana (composure); and Mumukshutvam (desire for liberation).

To man, the world is a mirror to see the self, and is hence the subject of his study. The scientist studies it by observation, while the philosopher does it by contemplation, and gets to know the nature of the self. The man first observes the world around him, then recognises the relation between the sensations and the sense objects, and forms concepts by correspondences (Sankalpa) and differentiation (Vikalpa) and thus develops his faculties by analytical thinking. He separates himself from his senses, and listens to the teachings of scriptures (Shravanam), through the Acharya, regarding the nature of the self. He then studies these truths and ponders over them by cogitation (Mananam) and when, by mental abstraction and profound contemplation (Nididhyasa), he grasps the abstract truths through his penetrative intellect, he becomes convinced of the highest truth, the one reality. Even then the scripture says to him: "Atma (Paramatma) is not attainable by the study of the Vedas nor by keen intellect, etc.; to reach Ishvara there must be the quenchless thirst for Him." Now Ishvara is Shabda-Brahman, the word manifest, the Nameless Name. He is transcendental (Nirguna) but out of pure compassion for us and for the purpose of helping humanity, takes a human form (IX-11). So when, after study and deep thinking, the devotee begins to

concentrate his mind and fixes it on the image, he goes “from the circumference to the centre,” so to say. By means of Nama, Rupa and Mantra, he transcends his mind and gets within, and his centre of gravity is slowly shifted from the head to the heart which now flows towards Bhagavan, as a stream of oil, continuous and unbroken. For, Shri Krishna says in the sixth discourse that when the senses become insensitive, and the mind is serene and quiet, the Antahkarana, which is the bridge between the lower mind (head) and the higher mind (heart), becomes purified, and Atman, which is the Supreme Intelligence (Chaitanya) and the All-resplendent Light of Ishvara, is seen (VI-20).

The next class of devotees (Madhyama Adhikarins) are those to whom Sankhya Yoga appeals. It is the Yoga of analysis, by which the aspirant builds up a strong centre of individuality, as described in the second discourse. He dissociates himself from his body, his senses, feelings and emotions and realises that he is distinct from his sensations and perceptions and that the pleasures and pains or the joys and sorrows of his life do not affect the real self, the self whom “weapons cleave not nor waters wet, nor wind drieth, the unperceivable, the unthinkable and the unchangeable self” (II-23–25). He realises the harmony of the inner Self.

There is, then, the third class of devotees who are Karmayogins. They say: “Do Karma for the sake of the Lord, and carry on the wheel of Samsara for Bhagavan’s sake.” Lord Shri Krishna says: “Surrendering all actions to Me with thy thoughts on the self, without hope and egotism and without anxiety, engage in battle. Those who constantly practice this teaching are also liberated” (III-30–31). You see, therefore, that in the devotees of the first class, there is mental abstraction and spiritual

devotion with the recognition of the Light of Ishvara; in the second class, though the Light of Ishvara is not recognised, the devotee realises the self which is the individuality in the Karana Sharira; while in the third class, the devotee does all action, such as walking, sleeping, talking, eating, etc., as an offering to Bhagavan and the mind having thus become purified, the man qualifies himself for Sankhya Yoga. Then there is also a fourth class of devotees who have no knowledge as to the true nature of the self, but learn this from the teachers and worship according to their instructions; these too cross the ocean of Samsara (XIII-25).

Samsara is due to the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna, resulting from ignorance. A person whose eyes are affected, sees many moons, while the man of true or proper vision sees only one. Even so, owing to ignorance, differences are seen, but the sage sees that all is one. You must first separate yourself from the limitations, and then eventually realise that all beings exist in Him. “He sees, who sees the Supreme Lord, remaining the same in all beings, the Undying in the dying” (XIII-27). Until and unless you see unity in diversity, there can be no real knowledge (IV-35). Remember that Lord Shri Krishna first explained the distinction between the self and non-self and then, out of love, showed to Arjuna His universal form only after giving him the divine sight, i.e., in Daivi Prakriti, the Light of Ishvara. Bhagavan says: “He who sees the Lord seated, the same everywhere, does not destroy his self.” He realises that Brahman is the source and end of evolution. He realises that Karmas are done by the attributes of Prakriti, while Atma is actionless. By the one there is difference, as a result, while with the other, there is unity. “The imperishable Paramatma, who is Anadi (having no begin-

ning) and without Gunas, though dwelling in the body, is actionless” (XIII-31). Why? The Lord of the World does not create any Karma nor the conditions for its working (V-14). He disclaims all responsibility for Karma or any of the effects produced by the three Gunas which are, so to say, the children of Mulaprakriti. Says Bhagavan in Shlokas 14, and 15 of the Fifth discourse: “The Lord of the world does not bring about or create Karana [kāraṇa] or the condition by which people attribute Karma to themselves; nor does He make people feel the effects of their Karma. It is the law of natural causation that works. He does not take upon himself the sin or the merit of anyone. Real knowledge is smothered by delusion, and hence created beings are misled.”

“Nor do these acts bind me, remaining like one unconcerned, unattached to those acts” (IX-9). The Self (Atma), seated in the body, is, like the Akasha, unpolluted, though all-pervading. Like the sun which illumines the whole world, the Atma illumines all bodies. The sun’s ray is colourless but the difference in colour is due to the matter on which the ray of the light falls. Even so, the Jivatma, owing to past experience and different attributes, assumes different characters. He who realises the whole variety of beings as resting in Him, reaches Brahman, the Supreme Goal (XIII-30). Lord Shri Krishna concludes His teaching in the last verse thus: “Those who know by the development of the inner vision that differentiated Prakriti is the cause of bondage, will know the real Lord. If you understand the difference between Kshetra and Kshetrajna by the eye of wisdom, and separate yourself from all Upadhis and limitations, you go to the Supreme Goal.”

Chapter 12

Worship Me With All Bhavas

In the fifteenth discourse, Lord Krishna enunciates, in brief, the true doctrine of the Gita with regard to the real nature of the self, the goal of humanity, and the path leading towards that goal. Shri Shankaracharya, in his commentary, says that the whole teaching of the Gita Shastra is here summed up, nay, the whole teaching of the Vedas embodied as well, for it is said that “knowing this doctrine and not otherwise — a man becomes wise and has accomplished all duties” (XV-20).

While studying the thirteenth discourse, you remember how the Great Lord explains that the dwelling of the Kshetra-jna in the Kshetra and his attachment for the Gunas form the cause of Samsara — “Attachment to qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs” (XIII-21). In the next discourse He explains what the Gunas are, how they bind him, and in what way liberation from the Gunas can be attained and concludes by saying that “He who serves Me with unflinching de-

votion, crossing beyond the Gunas, is fit to become Brahman” (XIV-26). The Great Lord now describes the nature of Samsara in figurative terms of the Ashwattha tree, and says that “he who knows it (Ashwattha) is a Veda-knower.” (XV-1). How is this described? Read Shlokas 1 to 3:

“The eternal Ashwattha with roots above and branches below, whose leaves are the Vedas; below and above spread its branches, nourished by the Gunas; the sense-objects are its buds; below in the world of men stretch forth the roots resulting in action. Its form is not perceived as such here, neither its end, nor its origin, nor its existence.”

This tree of Samsara (Mundane existence) rests on a continuous series of births which is without a beginning or an end, and is therefore eternal. The tree of Samsara is so called because it is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The root of Samsara is Mulaprakriti, which is the basis of all material manifestation in the Cosmos. While Ishvara is the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution, that which keeps up the continued existence of Samsara is Prakriti. From man to the unmoving objects down below, and from him up to the abode of Brahma, the Creator of the Universe, whatever regions are attained as the suitable reward of knowledge and action, they are nourished and fattened by three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, which form their material basis (Upadana). Mulaprakriti as such is eternal, but when she becomes differentiated, she gives rise to Avidya. The primary root is therefore differentiated Prakriti, while the secondary roots are Kama and Krodha, which give rise to Karma (III-37). As the leaves serve to protect the tree, so do the Vedas serve to protect the tree of Samsara, treating of Dharma and Adharma, and its fruits, pleasure and pain,

the results of past actions, namely, the Vasanas of attachment and aversion. Samsara is, therefore, necessary for learning the lessons of life; first, a knowledge of good and evil, which leads one on to abstain from evil and gain wisdom; and when the duties of life are discharged in a proper manner (III-8) the mind gets purified; then, by concentration, you bring it under control; and when the penetrative intellect is developed by cogitation on the eternal verities, you gain illumination through devotion and secure liberation by reaching Bhagavan. It is then that you understand the root of Samsara (Prakriti); that is to say, you take objective cognisance of it by reaching the Logos (Bhagavan) and become Sarvajna, Omniscient.

So, at the first rung of the ladder, you have the performance of Karma; Karma in thought, word and deed. Selfish Karma binds you and keeps you down, while unselfish Karma elevates you. Lord Shri Krishna says: “The world is bound by action unless performed for the sake of sacrifice; so, free from attachment, do thou perform action” (III-9). Again He says: “Do thou also perform action, as did our forefathers in the old time” (IV-15). So, Karma has to be performed as Yajna, for “this world is not for the non-sacrificer” (IV-31). In the lower world this sacrifice is demonstrated by a policy, so to say, of “give and take”; but in Karma Yajna, you give everything, without expecting anything in return. The scriptures refer to five kinds of Yajna, namely, Brahma Yajna (study of the Vedas), Daiva Yajna, Pitri Yajna, Bhuta Yajna and Nru Yajna (Manu Smriti, III-70). Shri Krishna says: “Many and various are the sacrifices spread at the doorway of Brahman” (IV-32).

But energy expended in the pursuit of knowledge is superior to ritualistic sacrifices, and above all is Jnana Yajna or wis-

dom sacrifice, for He says: “All actions in their entirety culminate in wisdom” (IV-33); and “as the burning fire reduces fuel to ashes, so does the fire of wisdom reduce all actions to ashes” (IV-37).

The constant enemy of the wise is Kama (III-39), and your enemies in Samsara are two, Kama and Krodha, pertaining to the senses (III-37) and unless and until these are vanquished, you cannot get dispassion. How will you do this? Shri Krishna says: “Do your Karma as a matter of duty, renouncing the fruits of action” (III-19). This is the negative aspect of sacrifice. The other aspect or positive aspect of sacrifice, is to do Karma for the good of all, with an altruistic motive: “Having an eye for the welfare of the world, thou should’st perform action” (III-20). This, however, is attended with some danger for it brings in its train a higher ambition, an aspiration for name or fame, glory or power; and so egoism still remains latent in a subtle form. This will only disappear when Karma is performed as an offering to Bhagavan with the fire of devotion. Shri Krishna says: “Dedicate unto Me all actions (मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि [mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi]) with thy mind fixed on the Supreme” (III-30). Thus, by means of Nishkama Karma, as well as Karma performed as Yajna or sacrifice to Bhagavan, the mind becomes purified, but Kama and Krodha (attachment and aversion), which still remain latent, can only be got rid of by concentration and meditation on Bhagavan as manifested deity (Sakara Upasana); and as the penetrative intellect is developed by deep study and profound meditation, you get to recognise the eternal verities, the truths relating to the real nature of the Self, the Paramatma, and of the Light of Ishvara. It is at this stage, that he realises the true greatness of the Guru and of Bhagavan. The brain then becomes the

generator of great spiritual energy to be used for the good of all, and He becomes His Warrior, so to say, for the emancipation of the struggling human souls by dispelling darkness and removing ignorance. Thus, having cut asunder Kama and Krodha in the senses, mind and intellect, which are the secondary roots of Samsara, the aspirant has then to seek the Tatpada (Parambrahma), “the goal whither having gone, none return.” How? Shri Krishna says: “Take refuge in the Primeval Purusha (who is Bhagavan) from whom streams forth the current of evolution” (XV-4). By self-surrender and renunciation, aided by supreme devotion, the aspirant gets illumination with the help of the Guru and the compassion of Bhagavan, and reaches the goal. In the case of Arjuna, however, Bhagavan was the Guru as well as the Lord. But remember that both are necessary, viz., the Prasada of the Guru and Divine Grace, and the one cannot be secured without the other. For, says Yoga Vasishtha:

यावन्नानुग्रहः साक्षाज्जायते परमेश्वरात् ।
तावन्न सद्गुरुः कश्चित्सच्छास्त्रं वापि नो लभेत् ॥

yāvannānugrahaḥ sāksājāyatē paramēśvarāt |
tāvanna sadguruḥ kaścitsacchāstraṁ vāpi nō labhēt ||

“So long as the compassion of Parameshvara (the great Lord) is not secured by complete devotion, one does not get the real Guru and the true Shastra (Teaching).”

That goal, Shri Krishna says, is “My Supreme Abode, which the sun, moon, or fire does not illumine” (XV-6). It is the goal already referred to by Him in the eighth discourse of the Gita as the “Eternal Brahma, the Supreme” (VIII-3), “the Unmanifested, Imperishable, the Highest Goal, which having reached,

none return. That is My Supreme Abode” (VIII-21). It is the goal eternal, which those Muktas who are “free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever contemplating the Self, with desires repelled and liberated from the pairs of opposites,” reach (XV-5).

They have annihilated the Ahankara and reduced it to ashes by burning in the “Chidagnikunda” (the heart), where dwells the Divine Fire. They are free from delusion because they have separated themselves from all Upadhis by giving up attachment. They are free from hatred towards enemies and from love towards friends. They have reached the Light of Ishvara, and yet they meditate upon the centre of that Light which is the Supreme Self. They are Jivanmuktas and having no desire even for Mukti, renounce it for the purpose of helping humanity. They reach that goal, when the Jivatma (individual soul) becomes united with, or assimilated to, Ishvara (Logos).

What is this Jivatma? Shri Krishna sayst “It is the ‘Amsa’ that emanates from Me and which is manifested from the beginning of time, that becomes the Jivatma in the world of living beings, and attracts the mind and the five senses, which have their basis in Prakriti” (XV-7). This Jivatma is the spark which hangs from Ishvara, the Flame, by the finest thread of Daiviprakriti and which is enclosed in the film of Hiranyamaya matter (which is Karana Sharira). Jivatma is the Light of the Logos, Chaitanyam, which, becoming differentiated, forms the individual Ego, in combination with Karana Sharira. Now, Karana Sharira is so called, “Karana”, because it is the father of the other two bodies, Sthula and Sukshma. It may also be said to be their child because its growth depends upon the best experiences which they hand up to it.

Its growth or development in man is brought about —

- a. (1) By renunciation of the fruits of Karma (Nishkama Karma);
(2) By altruistic Karma (Loka Sangraha);
(3) Through Karma performed as Yajna or sacrifice to Yajna Purusha, who is Bhagavan;
- b. Through virtue or the law of self-sacrifice, following which the several virtues mentioned in Shlokas 7 to 11 of the thirteenth discourse are evolved, namely, humility, sincerity, patience, &c. Because there is in man that spark of divinity, the nature of which is ever to give, to sacrifice, the law of self-sacrifice should govern his actions as opposed to the law of self-assertion, the latter leading to success or progress in the evolution of the physical universe;
- c. Through deep thinking and cogitation on the truths mentioned in the scriptures; and
- d. Through perfect devotion to Bhagavan.

It is the Karana Sharira which is the seat of human individuality. The Jivatma or the human monad is the one connecting link between the several incarnations of man. Shri Krishna says: “When the Lord, Jivatma (human monad), quits one body and enters another, he carries with him the mind and the senses as the wind carries the fragrance of flowers from their source” (XV-8). So, when the Jivatma leaves the body, it takes with it all the germs of conscious existence, the essence of five Tanmatras, Manas and Ahankara. In every stage of conscious existence,

these seven elements are always present, namely, the five senses, the mind which guides and rules the senses, and draws deductions from their impressions, when collected and arranged, and the ego (Atma) or the sense of 'I-ness', which is the observer of the generalisations deduced from the sense impressions. In dreaming, for example, objects appertaining or appealing to the senses of sight, touch, etc., pass before the dreamer; his mind classifies these impressions and the dreamer feels the sense of 'I', the observer. These seven elements exist in the Sthula as well as the Sukshma, and are latent, so to say, in Karana Sharira. So then, the Jivatma takes the essence of all these experiences and the impulses generated in connection with the seven elements of conscious existence residing in Karana Sharira, thereby forming a kind of energy, as it were, which brings about the future incarnations (the environments being those determined by the past Karma of the man) and becomes the cause of rebirth, because the impulses already generated cannot be fructified in the region of Svarga.

So, the Jivatma or individual soul, is an integral portion of Paramatma (Supreme Self); it is like the reflection of the sun in water. (The reflection is but a portion of the real sun, and on the removal of water, it returns to the original sun, and remains as that very sun.) The deluded, however, do not perceive Him, because they are under the influence of the Gunas, pleasure and pain (Sukha and Duhkha), and their mind is forcibly attracted by the enjoyment of objects, visible and invisible. But those in whom the eye of wisdom has been opened do recognise Him (XV-10). Those who strive, through deep study and deep thinking, endowed with Yoga, i.e., when the senses are subdued (when the senses are tranquil and insensitive), when the mind

is calm and serene, and when their whole being is steady, see the reflection of the Supreme Self in themselves, just as one can see the reflection of the sun on the still surface of a lake, when not disturbed by the wind. But others, who strive to study, but whose minds have not been regenerated by austerities and subjugation of the senses, who have not abandoned their evil ways, whose pride of having studied the scriptures has not been given up, do not perceive Him (XV-11).

What then are His powers? They have already been mentioned in the seventh discourse (VII-8–10), and more specifically described in the tenth discourse, where Lord Shri Krishna, after explaining His Vibhūtis, concludes by saying: “There is no end of My divine glory; whatsoever is glorious, good, beautiful or strong, know that to be a part of My splendour” (X-40–41). Shri Krishna gives now a brief summary of His powers in the following verses: “Know that the splendour which belongs to the sun and illumines the whole world, which is in the moon and in fire, is from Me; entering into the earth, I sustain all things by My energy; I am the cause of the moisture that nourishes herbs; becoming fire of digestion I enter into the bodies of all that breathe and, being united with Pranam and Apanam, I cause food of the four kinds to digest” (XV-12–14). What Bhagavan says here is that all the qualities exhibited in matter, as in fire, the sun, light, or any other object, originally emanated from Him, because it is His light and energy that gives to matter all the qualities that enable it afterwards to form the various organisms in the manifested Cosmos; the properties commonly associated with matter and all those tendencies of chemical action that we see in the chemical elements did not belong to it or them originally. Matter, which is differentiated Prakriti, be-

comes endowed with these properties by the action on it of the current of life, which emanates from Logos or Ishvara.

This is well illustrated in Kenopanishad, where the mysterious appearance of Parashakti (Daiviprakriti) in Svarga is thus referred to. It is said that when Parashakti first appeared in Svarga in a mysterious form, Indra wanted to know what it was. He first sent Agni to enquire what it was that appeared in that particular form. Then Parashakti asked Agni what functions he fulfilled or what were his latent capacities. Agni replied that he could reduce almost everything to ashes; and in order to show that this attribute did not originally belong to Agni, but was simply lent to him, Parashakti placed before him a little bit of grass, and asked him to reduce it to ashes. Agni tried his best, but failed. Vayu was next sent; he attempted to blow it away, but failed miserably. All this was done to show that Parashakti, or the Light of the Logos, endows even the Panchatanmatras with qualities that did not originally belong to Mulaprakriti. The great Lord then says: "Penetrating the earth, I support all beings by My energy." From the standpoint of Western science, it is the earth that attracts all bodies by the force of gravity. If so, how do you account for some phenomena such as levitation? What is true of the macrocosm (Brahmanda) is also true of the microcosm (Pindanda). The two great forces in nature, attraction and repulsion, are both included in 'Kundalini' which, according to our scriptures, is a manifestation of His Shakti residing or latent in the Muladhara Chakra (Sacral Plexus), which is closely connected with the earth. Another manifestation of the same Light or Energy appears as "Vaishvanara fire which is

within the human body and by which the food is digested” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5-9-1).²⁹

It is for this reason that all the food should first be offered to Bhagavan before it is eaten, so that the food may become transmuted into higher forces. Then, later on, Shri Krishna says: “I am seated in the hearts of all,” a statement once referred to while explaining His Vibhūtis to Arjuna in the tenth discourse (X-20). Here, the heart is the cavity below the Anahata Chakra, which is a plexus; and you can find Ishvara, who dwells in it, only when you go within the heart (Hridaya), or withdraw yourself within yourself, so to say, after transcending the senses, mind and intellect; and, when aided by pure devotion, you get illumination, as a result of past virtue and good Karma, you attain a knowledge of things that transcend the ordinary limits of time and space, and of visible nature; and acquire the capacity to get a glimpse of the previous lives from the Akashic records. Hence He says: “Wherefore, from Me, the Self of all sentient beings, are memory and knowledge” (XV-15). Bhagavan (Divine Voice) is the real Ishvara of the Vedantins and the saviour of mankind. Through Him alone can salvation and immortality be secured

²⁹ Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5-9-1:

अयमग्निर्वैश्वानरो योऽयमन्तः पुरुषे येनेदमन्नं पच्यते यदिदमद्यते तस्यैष घोषो भवति यमेतत्कर्णावपिधाय शृणोति स यदोत्क्रमिष्यन्भवति नैनं घोषं शृणोति ॥

ayamagnirvaiśvānarō yō'yamantaḥ puruṣē yēnēdamannaṁ pacyatē yad-idamadyatē tasyaiṣa ghōṣō bhavati yamētatkarnāvapidhāya śṛṇōti sa yadā utkramiṣyanbhavati nainaṁ ghōṣaṁ śṛṇōti ॥

This fire that is within a man and digests the food that is eaten is वैश्वानरः [vaiśvānaraḥ]. It emits that sound which one hears by stopping the ears. When a man is about to leave the body, he hears this sound no more.

by man. The aim and object of all initiation is to ascertain His attributes, His connection with humanity, and realise His sacred presence in every human heart, and discover the means of transferring man's higher individuality, purified and ennobled by the virtuous Karma of a series of incarnations, to His lotus feet as the most sacred offering which a human being can bestow. Therefore, Shri Krishna says: "I am that which is to be known through the Vedas," because He is the Divine Voice and He is the author of the Vedanta, being the Paramaguru. Through Him the teaching is imparted to the great Gurus, who form the brotherhood of Adepts; and He knows the Vedas, as He is the Shabda-Brahman from whom the Vedas proceed. "He is the Supreme Self, the eternal Lord, who pervades the three worlds and sustains them, and in the world and in the Vedas He is known as Purushottama, because He transcends both the perishable and the imperishable" (XV-17-18). Here Lord Krishna divides all existing entities in nature into two classes, those not permanent, Ksharam or perishable, by which is meant the manifested Cosmos, and Aksharam or imperishable, which is called Kutastha or undifferentiated Prakriti. This Kutastha is the Mayashakti of the Vedantins. It is the illusion-power of the Lord, the germ from which the perishable being takes its birth. It is the seat of all latent Samskaras or tendencies, of desires, actions, etc., pertaining to mortal creatures. It is the Avyakta of the Sankhyas, or Mulaprakriti, already referred to as Kutastha in the 3rd Shloka of the twelfth discourse. Although Akshara is not destroyed at the time of Cosmic Pralaya (VIII-18-19), as are all things that come out of it, yet there is something superior in nature to that of Aksharam, and it is the Uttama Purusha (Maheshvara) or Paramatma. For Ishvara is the beginning of cre-

ation and end of all evolution. He is the one means and the most effectual means of obtaining salvation. Therefore, Shri Krishna puts the whole doctrine in a nutshell in the last two Shlokas: “Knowing Me that I am Purushottama, he who worships Me with all Bhavas becomes Sarvajna” (XV-19–20). Now this सर्व भव [sarva bhāva] comprises five Bhavas, namely, Deha-Bhava, Indriya-Bhava, Mano-Bhava, Buddhi-Bhava, and Aham-Bhava. How are we to offer these Bhavas to Bhagavan?

First, take **Deha-Bhava**. The Deha or physical body must be kept pure. There is the statement in the Bhagavata which says that the acquisition of the human body is a great opportunity in nature, and that the Devas or other highly evolved beings preferred to accept it, when the choice was put before them; and as food is necessary to maintain the physical body, the food to be partaken of must be pure, so that the body may become a temple of Bhagavan, and fit for receiving His divine influence. The Pure magnetic food is to be taken not for the reason that yourself may be kept clean. For says the *Light on the path*: “The self-righteous man makes for himself a bed of mire. Abstain because it is right to abstain — not that yourself shall be kept clean.”³⁰ secondly, food must be partaken after performing one or other of the five kinds of sacrifices, namely, Brahma-Yajna, Deva-Yajna, Pitri-Yajna, Nru-Yajna and Bhuta-Yajna. Lord Shri Krishna says: “The righteous who eat the remnant of the sacrifice are freed from all sins, but the impious who cook for their own sake, eat sin.” But of all Yajnas, the best is Japa-Yajna, the silent repetition of mantra (X-25). Thirdly, we must cease from wicked ways and make the body a fit instrument, by proper dis-

³⁰ *Light on the Path*, op. cit., p. 17.

cipline and control, the object being to transmute the physical or brute energy, by steady devotion, into moral and spiritual force, through the workings of the brain and the heart. The person who is devoted to Bhagavan may be living in a palace, fed with rich and luxurious food and surrounded by all objects of gratification, and yet these do not attract him. From palace to a hovel, from luxury to penury, he moves with equal calm, through riches or poverty. He is always (सन्तुष्टः [santuṣṭaḥ]) content with what cometh to him and is homeless (XII-19), as his heart is always set on Him who is the real home.

Then there is the **Indriya-Bhava**. The world is the world of Bhagavan manifested, and affects our senses in different ways. The senses, in their origin and activity, are indicative of the one life; and the specialisation of the visual and other faculties tends to prove the existence, in the germinal state, of a principle of synthesis, i.e., the presence of a generalised and universal perceptivity. That shows that there is one Chaitanya, which the senses can perceive, if only the barrier of likes and dislikes formed between ourselves and the external world as a result of the taint of personality is removed. These do not appertain to the objects of the senses. What makes harmonious relations difficult or impossible is the personality, which is affected by our likes and dislikes. The story of the Sadhu fully illustrates this: A Sadhu once observed a cow passing in front of him. The butcher who was following it, came to the Sadhu and asked him if he had seen the cow pass by. The Sadhu was in a dilemma. He could not speak an untruth; nor could he speak the truth, that the cow did pass him by, because the butcher was sure to follow and kill her. So the Sadhu calmly said: “The eyes see, but they don’t speak; the tongue speaks but does not see.” The butcher could

not understand the parable and asked the Sadhu what it was that sees, speaks, hears, etc. The Sadhu said that there was one life — Chaitanyam — which works through all the senses and shows its powers. The butcher immediately asked if that life was present in him and in the cow as well. On hearing the Sadhu's reply that it was so, the butcher gave up his pursuit and desisted from killing the cow.

Then there is the **Mano-Bhava**. This is offered by leading a life of renunciation in the little things of life. You must strive to live and love the unity in thought, word and deed. You must not merely preach but practise it by thinking of others first, trying to supply their needs first before your own. Your mind must become free from attachment and aversion. The attachment must expand into universal love. "Bearing no ill-will to any being, friendly and compassionate, free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving, ever content, steady-minded, self-controlled, resolute, with Manas and Buddhi dedicated (fixed on) to Me, such a devotee is dear to Me" (XII-14).

As a result of this renunciation and freedom from attachment, the mind becomes pure. You must then concentrate and fix the mind and meditate upon Bhagavan in the form of a manifested deity (साकार उपासना [sākāra upāsānā]). Just as you catch the rays of the sun's light through a lens and focus them so as to burn a piece of cotton, even so through such a form you can receive the Light of Ishvara and burn up all the desires of the heart. Thus meditation aided by intense devotion, gradually brings on the longing to reach Paramatma. The devotee's attitude of mind shows a marked change. First, he begins with Shravana and shows an eagerness to listen to the glories of Bha-

gavan; then the devotee takes delight in Kirtana (सततं कीर्तयन्तः [satataṁ kīrtayantaḥ]) (IX-14), and begins to participate in it along with congenial or kindred souls (X-9). He then desires to see the form which he worships, the transcendental loveliness of which surpasses everything in the world. Then comes Sparsha (touch), when the devotee touches the lotus feet of the Lord by prostration and feels the oneness or solidarity, because all spiritual influences flow from His lotus feet; then Ghrana (घ्राण [ghrāṇa]), where the devotee smells the fragrance of the flowers which, when offered to Bhagavan, become magnetised by the Light of Ishvara. The devotee then eats his food after offering the same first to Bhagavan. This is Rasanam (taste). He also offers by Hasta (hand) flowers and fruits to Him at His feet. So the mind directs the five senses towards Bhagavan, and the devotee visits the holy places of pilgrimage which are centres of great spiritual influence charged, so to say, by great beings.

Then there is the **Buddhi-Bhava**. By study and cogitation on the truths explained in the scriptures, the devotee attains knowledge which is to be used for the service of others, so that they may be brought to His lotus feet. His intellectual conviction grows deep and strong and as he offers himself to Bhagavan, he begins to realise the inner joy and peace, which gradually changes his conviction into faith and his intellectual perception into personal experience, whence true devotion begins.

Last but not least is **Aham-Bhava**. This is entire self-renunciation or complete surrender to Bhagavan.

नमः शिवाय शान्ताय कारणत्रयहेतवे ।
निवेदयामि चात्मानं त्वं गतिः परमेश्वर ॥

namaḥ śivāya śāntāya kāraṇatrayahētavē |
nivēdayāmi cātmanāṁ tvaṁ gatiḥ paramēśvara ||

“Salutation to Lord Shiva, the tranquil, the cause of the three causes (material, instrumental and efficient). O Supreme Lord, Thou art the goal, I offer myself to Thee.”

In this connection, compare the Sufi couplet: “If you want to float on water, you must die.” Even so, if you wish to float in the ocean of Samsara, the personal self of your personality must die. Lord Gouranga says: “Be more humble than grass, more enduring than a tree as regards heat and cold, and respect others without respecting yourself. In this way the Lord has to be praised.” So Shri Krishna says: “He who worships Me with all Bhavas becomes Sarvajna” (XV-19). That is the true doctrine of the Gita; and the man who knows this and lives up to it becomes wise and happy, for he may be said to have accomplished all his duties in life.

This then is the true doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita expounded in the second part of the book. Yet we find in the earlier chapters indirect references to it, when the Great Lord critically examines the theories put forward by the different philosophers with regard to the path leading towards the Goal. The Bhagavad Gita should not be looked upon merely as a dialogue between Arjuna and Shri Krishna just before the Great War, but is intended by the author to be a treatise dealing with the origin, trials and destiny of man. Arjuna, who is also called by the name “Nara” in the Gita, is the real monad in man, while Shri Krishna is the Logos or the spirit that comes to save man; and the discourses in the first part of the book will be found to be in orderly sequence and closely interconnected as pointing out the steps on the path leading the disciple towards the

Goal. The first discourse treats of Vishada, which is also called Yoga, because it is not the passing despondency of the disappointed man but the deeper sadness felt in the heart, caused by the blankness of his existence and the unreality of things seen and felt by the separative self in man. It describes the position of the Jivatma or monad in man as it enters the threshold of manhood after passing its stages of irresponsible childhood and of disciplined youth.

At this stage the Great Lord commences the teaching of the Sankhya Yoga in the second discourse. It begins with the analysis of man and shows that man is not his body, that pleasure and pain are fleeting, that the self is “not born, nor doth he die, nor, having been, ceaseth he any more to be, unborn, eternal, unchangeable” (II-20). “Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on others which are new, so the embodied (self) casts off worn-out bodies and enters others that are new” (II-22). So the aspirant should, by analysis, dissociate himself from his body, sensations and feelings, emotions and thoughts and realise the self. If the aspirant is not thus capable of realising the self, he should follow Buddhi-Yoga. Let him do his work casting off attachment and giving up the desire for Phalam (fruit) balanced in mind, whether success or failure falls to his lot (II-47-48). Shri Krishna says: “Be free from the triad of the Gunas, free from pairs of opposites, ever remaining in the Sattva, self-possessed” (II-45). He will then attain to the disciplined and one-pointed reason by which he will realise the self which is the centre of individuality in the Karana Sharira. Having realised the harmony of the self, the Sankhya Yogi begins to trace the Upadhis to their source which is Avyaktam. The theory of the Sankhya school is that Avyaktam is the basis

of the differentiated Prakriti, with all its Gunas; that Purusha is merely a kind of passive substratum of the Cosmos, while Prakriti is responsible for all that is done in the Cosmos, and for all the results of Karma due to Upadhi. Now as you rise from Upadhi to Upadhi in gradual succession and when you try to rise from the last Upadhi (Karana) to the Avyaktam, your consciousness is lost and there is no connection that will enable your consciousness to bridge the interval. This Avyaktam is Mulaprakriti which produces all the organisms or Upadhis that constitute the whole Cosmos, and the consciousness manifested in every Upadhi is traceable to the Light of the Logos and not to Avyaktam. It is, therefore, easier for a man to follow his own consciousness further and further into the depths of his innermost Being and ultimately reach Logos, than to try to follow Upadhi to its source which is Avyaktam or Mulaprakriti. Shri Krishna therefore says: "The difficulty of those whose minds are set on Avyaktam is great. The path towards Avyaktam is travelled by embodied souls under very great difficulties" (XII-5). So even for him who follows the Sankhya doctrine, the true path when the Karana Sharira is reached is to lose sight of the Upadhi altogether and to fix his attention solely upon the energy of the Light of the Logos that is working within it; and, in trying to trace its origin, he will reach its source which is the Logos, through the Divine Light (Daiviprakriti) and, from the standpoint of the Logos, try to reach Parabrahma, where he will be able to take objective cognisance of Avyaktam.

So when the aspirant has, by Nishkama Karma, purified the mind and by dissociation or analysis realised the self and gained the harmony of the self, he has still to realise the harmony of the non-self in relation to the outer world; and for this reason the

next step of Karma Yoga is explained in the third discourse. The theory of Karma Yogis is that Karma is not due to Upadhi alone, but due to the effects produced by the two elements, Upadhi and Chaitanyam, that Karma cannot be entirely given up, and that if you perform the rituals prescribed in the Vedas, you will receive the assistance of the Devatas to reach Svarga and in the end you will attain supreme happiness. Lord Shri Krishna controverts this doctrine by saying that the Devatas are beings on the plane of the Karana Sharira and can never give you immortality because the Devatas themselves are not immortal. The happiness in Svarga is not eternal and you will have to return to objective existence in a new incarnation. He says: "They who worship the shining ones go to the shining ones, but My worshippers come to Me" (IX-25, VII-23). So the Great Lord says that Karma cannot be given up but must be performed as Yajna, or offering to Yajna Purusha, who is Ishvara. "The world is bound by action unless performed for the sake of sacrifice, for that sake perform action free from attachment" (III-9). "With an eye to the welfare of the world thou should'st perform action" (III-20).

So, for the Sankhya Yogi, the only method by which he can harmonise his self with the non-self (the outer world) is the performance of Karma as Yajna (sacrifice). How? By Bhuta Yajna, the aspirant develops the virtues of compassion and kindness towards the animal world; by Nru Yajna, he will maintain and establish harmony and goodwill in his relations towards men in their social and religious life, in as much as his thoughts and actions affect his fellows as members of the body politic, either for good or evil; by Pitri Yajna, he will be enabled to have better bodies from the Pitris whose function it is to provide necessary

instruments for his evolution; by Deva Yajna, the powers of his consciousness are harmonised to their sources in the macro-cosm and the centre (the self) is thus harmonised with the Tattvas and their presiding intelligences; by Brahma Yajna, that is, study of the scriptures, which deal with the (great) truths revealed by the Great Rishis and by meditating on them for the purpose of helping humanity, he becomes an instrument in their hands for its evolution. Thus, with the help of the Yajnas a dim realisation of the one life dawns on the aspirant as a result of the desire for establishing the harmony of the non-self; and he who was a spectator (द्रष्टा [draṣṭā]) now becomes a co-worker with Nature. The Yajna Purusha is Ishvara who is the enjoyer of sacrifices (V-29) and so the Great Lord says this to the Karma Yogi: “Surrendering all actions to Me with thy thoughts resting on the Supreme Self, from hope and egoism freed, devoid of fear, do thou fight” (III-30). So, when the aspirant has realised the harmony of the inner self according to Sankhya, and maintained the harmony of the non-self in relation to the outer world by means of Karma done as Yajna (sacrifice) and for the welfare of the world as enjoined in the third discourse, he becomes fit to receive Jnana as a necessary consequence which is now explained in the fourth discourse. Here the Lord first describes the manifold sacrifices born of action and says: “Manifold sacrifices are spread at the mouth of Brahman. Know them all as born of action. But superior is wisdom sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects. All action without exception is comprehended in wisdom” (IV-32–33).

The theory of the Jnana Marga philosophers is that all Karma is merely symbolical and intended as a stepping stone to gain knowledge; that there is a deep meaning underlying

the whole ritual that deals with real entities, with the secrets of nature and all the faculties embedded in Man's Prajna; that the knowledge of intellectual elements underlying the ritual would be more important for man's salvation than any physical act could be; and so these philosophers recommended Japam, Pranagnihotram and other methods as substitutes for external rituals. Now Lord Shri Krishna says that even this knowledge will not bring the aspirant any nearer the Goal, for Jnanam is not directed towards its proper source. There must be some definite aim before you in your search after truth, a complete view of the path to be traversed and the ultimate goal to be reached in order that the knowledge gained may bear fruit. The men of science who investigate into the secrets of nature for the advancement of knowledge are working almost on the lines of these philosophers but that kind of investigation and knowledge will not by itself enable a man to attain immortality or Mukti. Such knowledge is not enough, for Shri Krishna says: "He whose engagements are all devoid of desires and purposes, and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of wisdom, him the wise call a sage" (IV-19). He becomes fit for receiving illumination through the Light of Ishvara, with the help of the Guru. The true knowledge is that "by which thou wilt see all beings in thyself and also in Me" (IV-35) — the knowledge by which all beings from Brahma the Creator down to the blade of grass are seen in one's real self which is the Light of Ishvara. It can be imparted by Jivanmuktas forming the hierarchy of adepts who awaken in the disciple the divine vision (spiritual clairvoyance) and transmit to him the Light of the Logos. They form the Guruparampara, the highest of whom is described thus:

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्युवा ।
गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु च्छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

citram vaṭatarōrmūlē vṛddhāḥ śiṣyā gururyuvā ।
gurōstu maunaṁ vyākhyānaṁ śiṣyāstu cchinnaśaṁśayāḥ ॥

Dakshinamurti-Stotra 12

“Ah! the wonder under the Banyan tree, there sits the Guru Deva, a youth, the disciples, elders; the teaching is silence, and the disciples’ doubts are dispelled.”

It is the Light of the Logos (Daiviprakriti) which keeps up the Guruparampara; for it is the spiritual light that is transmitted from Guru to the disciple when the time for real initiation comes. It is the bond of union and brotherhood which maintains and preserves the chain of spiritual intercourse through all the Great Jivanmuktas of the world, and to enter into any such brotherhood, one should bring oneself within the influence of that spiritual Light of the Logos.

Jnana is followed by Sanyasa Yoga in the fifth discourse. What is Sanyasa? It is not renunciation of action (Karma Sanyasa) at all. The Lord says between Karma Sanyasa and Karma Yoga, the latter is certainly superior, for you gain all the advantages of Sanyasa by doing Karma as a matter of duty. Shri Krishna says: “He should be known as a perpetual renouncer who neither hates nor desires; for free from the pairs of opposites, he is easily set free from bondage” (V-3).

“He who, without depending on the fruits of action, performs the bounden duty, he is a Sanyasi — not he who is without fire and without action” (VI-1).

“He who does actions offering them to Brahman abandoning attachment, is not tainted by sin, as a lotus leaf by water”

(V-10). But the true Paramartha Sanyasa is that which is based upon Jnana (true knowledge) and not merely renunciation of action. When the aspirant becomes fit to receive illumination, he attains Jnana with the help of Gurudeva and sees the oneness of life through the Light of the Logos. This Light (Daiviprakriti) impregnates the body, senses, mind and intellect with the powers of automatic activity, so that these (the body and senses, mind and intellect) may work without his aid.

Shri Krishna says: “By the body, by the mind, by the intellect, by mere senses also, Yogis perform action, without attachment, for the purification of the self” (V-11). The Sanyasi who has subdued his senses, renounces all action, in speech, thought and deed, by discrimination, rests happily in the body — a nine-gated city, with the self for its monarch, inhabited by the citizens of the senses, mind and intellect, all working for the sole benefit of the Lord who is the real self (V-13). Such a one, self-controlled and intent on the welfare of all beings, rests in Brahma (V-19), which is Turiya Chaitanyam and which is the real Atma (Mandukya Upanishad, Shloka 7³¹); and in the

³¹ Mandukya Upanishad Shloka 7:

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
 अदृश्यम् अव्यवहार्यम् अग्राह्यम् अलक्षणम् अचिन्त्यम् अव्यपदेश्यम् एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं
 प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवम् अद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

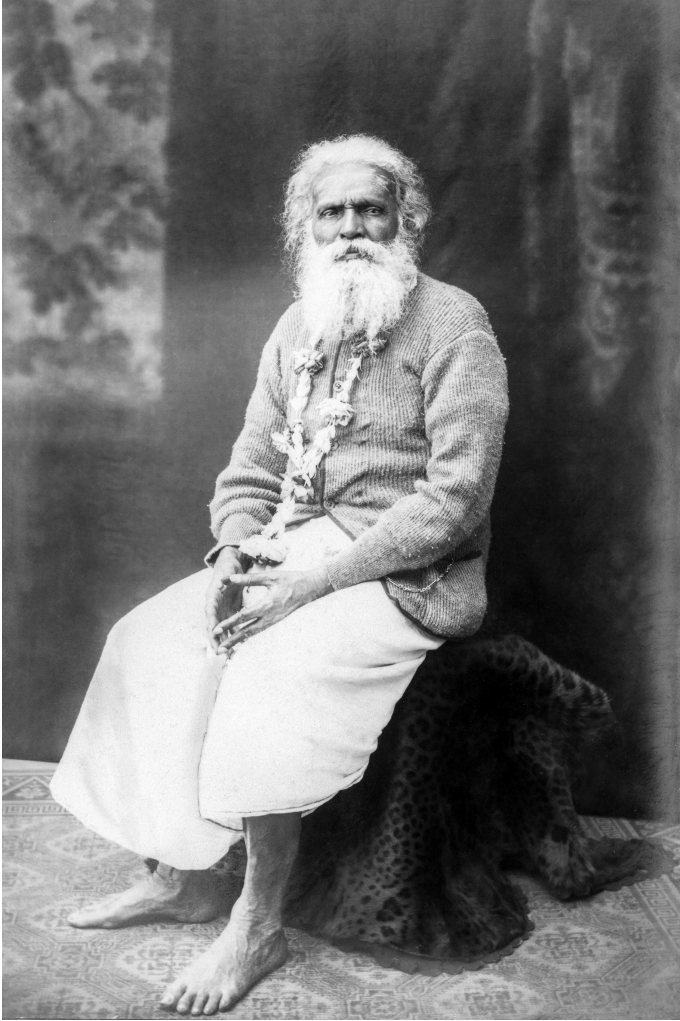
nāntaḥprajñāṁ na bahiḥprajñāṁ nōbhayataḥprajñāṁ na prajñānaghanaṁ
 na prajñāṁ nāprajñāṁ |
 adṛśyam avyavahāryam agrāhyam alakṣaṇam acintyam avyapadēśyam ēka
 ātmapratyayasāraṁ prapañcōpaśamaṁ śāntaṁ śivamadvaitaṁ caturthaṁ
 manyantē sa ātmā sa vijñēyah ||

The fourth (Turiya) is not that which is conscious of the internal (subjective) world, nor that which is conscious of the external (objective) world, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is a mass of conscious-

steady contemplation of Brahman attains Brahman's bliss (V-24). Such a Sanyasi "on knowing Me, the Lord of all sacrifices and austerities and the Great Lord of all worlds, attains Peace" (V-29). Now, whether for the Sankhya Yogi, the Karmin, the Jnani or even for the Sanyasi (the sage who wishes to attain Yoga), the control of the mind is an important factor to be reckoned with; and it was the votaries of this school of philosophy (Abhyasa Yoga) that recommended different methods by which the mind could be controlled by man. Shri Krishna says: "The mind is hard to restrain and restless; but by practice (Abhyasa) and by indifference (Vairagya) it may be restrained" (VI-35). How? "When a man renouncing all thoughts is not attached to sense objects and actions, then he is said to have attained Yoga" (VI-4). So, "Little by little, let him withdraw, by reason (Buddhi) held in firmness; keeping the mind established in the self, let him not think of anything" (VI-25). The Great Lord then gives other directions with regard to the practice of Yoga and emphasises the fact that these methods are useful for training in one's birth and likely to leave permanent traces on a man's soul in future incarnations, so that, in the course of many births he acquires facility in Yoga, little by little, and thereafter reaches the Supreme Goal. But of such Yogis, Shri Krishna says: "Who, full of faith, worships Me, with his inner self abiding in Me, he is deemed by Me as most devout" (VI-47).

ness, nor that which is consciousness nor unconsciousness. [It is] imperceptible, unrelatable, incomprehensible, indescribable, unthinkable, ineffable, sole essence of consciousness of the self, noumenal, peaceful, blissful and non-dual. It is the Atma that ought to be realised.

So Lord Shri Krishna, in recommending his own doctrine, combines all that is good in the different systems of philosophy and adds to each the necessary means of obtaining salvation, which follow as logical inferences from the existence of the Logos and its Light, and its right relationship to man and to the principles that operate in the Cosmos. His own doctrine, as stated above, is enunciated in the following six discourses and the whole teaching is summed up in brief in the fifteenth discourse.



Pandit Bhavani Shankar

1859 – 1936

Appendix A

Change Log

The following is a comprehensive list of all changes made to the original publication (Popular Prakashan, 1966). Trivial changes in punctuation or corrections of obvious spelling mistakes have not been included. All page numbers refer to the original publication with current pagination provided in brackets.

- 1) We have preferred modern fonts and elegant typesetting over preserving pagination. Hence, page numbers don't match.
- 2) Footnote numbers increase monotonically throughout the document rather than reset on every page.
- 3) All footnotes signed “— ED.” are new.
- 4) Foreword to the new edition has been added.
- 5) ISO-15919 transliteration for all Devanagari text has been added. Transliterations are always in lowercase and in square brackets when not in verse format.

- 6) All Indic words used outside of quotations and transliterations have been consistently capitalised. If an Indic word is hyphenated then both words are capitalised unless hyphenation was done to break-up a long word for alignment purposes.
- 7) Section summary has been provided in the header of all recto (odd numbered) pages and the chapter details on the verso (even numbered) pages.
- 8) All quotations have been made to exactly match the quoted source, including capitalisation and punctuations. For example, the quote on pp. 6–7 has been made to exactly match the text in *The Voice of the Silence*, New York, 1893.
- 9) Spelling of all Indic words has been modernised and standardised. The spelling for Indic letters ś and ṣ has been consistently made ‘sh’, that for ū changed from ‘oo’ to ‘u’, ‘th’ to only refer to Mahaprana th or ṭh consonants, ‘jn’ used consistently for jñ rather than interchangeably with ‘gn’ and finally, ‘v’ used consistently rather than interchangeably with ‘w’. For example, “Sthoola Sarira” is now spelt “Sthula Sharira” and “Vishwa” is spelt “Vishva”.
- 10) On p. 14 (14), “Swethashwetara Upanishad” has been corrected to “Shvetashvatara Upanishad”. Also see Glossary for the correct phonetic pronunciation.
- 11) On p. 14 (14), the reference to Shvetashvatara Upanishad II-12–13 has been expanded in the footnote in both Devanagari and ISO-15919 along with English translation.

- 12) On p. 32 (31), the gap in “because [] alone can root out attachment” has been filled in with the word “it”.
- 13) On p. 51 (51), the pronunciation of “Sa eva asamantat” has been clarified in the footnote because conflation of long and short vowels can end up implying the opposite meaning in this case.
- 14) On p. 67 (68), “Archaradi Marga” has been changed to “Archiradi Marga”, and also the corresponding Glossary entry. The word अर्चिः [arciḥ] means flame, fire or light which in conjunction with आदि [ādi], meaning starting with, by the rules of Sanskrit Grammar becomes अर्चिरादि [archirādi].
- 15) On p. 69 (69), “Vritas” has been corrected to “Vratas”. Because, from Apte’s The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary: वृत [vr̥ta] is -1 Chosen, selected. -2 Covered, screened. -3 Hidden etc. While व्रत [vrata] is a religious act of devotion or austerity. Clearly, the author intends the latter meaning. The same correction has also been made to corresponding Glossary entries.
- 16) On p.73 (74), the reference to Aitareya Upanishad 1-3-12 has been expanded in the footnote.
- 17) On p.76 (77), the reference to Mandukya Upanishad Shloka II has been expanded in the footnotes.
- 18) On p.78 (79), the author has not given an English translation for the verse from Mundaka Upanishad. Hence, we have provided a translation of our own in the footnotes.
- 19) On p. 82 (84), the word is hyphenated as “Daivipraprakriti” which we have replaced with “Daiviprakriti” assuming the original edition had inadvertently doubled

“pra” during hyphenation. We are specifically noting this here because Daivi-pra-prakriti, while very likely a mistake, is still a grammatically valid word in Sanskrit.

- 20) On p. 82 (85), the line which reads “which are seated in the Karanas or senses, are also included under the term Karana” only makes sense when long and short vowels are correctly delineated. Hence, phonetic transliteration has been supplied in parentheses both in the text and in the corresponding entries of the Glossary.
- 21) On p.83 (85), the word “Upadristha” has been corrected to “Upadrashta”. See glossary for the correct pronunciation.
- 22) All occurrences of “Nra Yajna” starting with p.92 (93) have been corrected to “Nru Yajna”. See glossary for the correct pronunciation.
- 23) On p.93 (109), “Nishkarma Karma” has been corrected to “Nishkama Karma”. While Nishkarma is a valid word in Sanskrit, it is never really used anywhere. On the other hand, Nishkama is used extensively in commentaries and makes sense in context.
- 24) On p.100 (101), the reference to Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad 5-9-1 has been expanded in the footnotes.
- 25) On p.115 (114), the reference to Mandukya Upanishad Shloka VII has been expanded in the footnotes.
- 26) All references to Bhagavad Gita chapter and verse have been cross-checked and the following corrections made:
 - p.35 (34) footnote: XVIII => IV
 - p.68 (68): VII-24 => VIII-24

- p.73 (74): XIII-2 => XIII-4
 - p.108 (108): II-21 => II-22
 - p.110 (110): III-10 => III-20
- 27) A new portrait photo of Pandit Bhavani Shankar, obtained from United Lodge of Theosophists, Bengaluru, has been added.
 - 28) Spelling of all words in the Glossary have been made to match that in the text. The confused attempt in the original edition to distinguish between long and short vowels in the spelling of Glossary entries has been reversed.
 - 29) Correct phonetic transliteration has been provided in square brackets for all Indic words in the Glossary that are not anglicised.
 - 30) Page number index for all Glossary entries have been updated to the new pagination. The entire book has been made available online at **ultindia.org**. We believe the reader would be better served by electronically searching through the digital text.
 - 31) All use of the initials BS has been replaced with PBS while referring to Pandit Bhavani Shankar in the Glossary.
 - 32) Replaced various uses of “Cf.”, “See” and “see” in the Glossary with “See” consistently.
 - 33) On p. 117 (130), “Aadarshanam [ādarśaṇam]” corrected to “Adarshanam [adarśaṇam]” as the former conveys the opposite meaning of what is intended.
 - 34) On p. 117 (130), “Aadibhuta [ādibhūta]” was corrected to “Adhibhuta [adhibhūta]” since the former, while a

valid word and concept, was never used in the text. Additionally, the editor seems to have conflated these two disparate words. Consequently, we have removed those parts of the explanation that pertained to “Aadibhuta” and added “the basis of all beings” as an additional explanation for “Adhibhuta” which PBS gives in the text.

- 35) Earlier edition had made a spurious distinction between ‘Gnana’ and ‘Jnana’, along with other variations of the word such as ‘Gnata’. This has been corrected and glossary entries have been de-duplicated.
 - 36) Added missing Glossary entries for Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Japa-Yajna, Kenopanishad, Moha and Parameshvara.
 - 37) All variations of each Glossary entry that occur in the text are now provided in parentheses except for their anglicised plural form.
 - 38) The entry for Yuga has been simplified as the chronological calculations are not relevant to the text. The reader can always refer to The Theosophical Glossary for full details.
 - 39) Appendix A and B have been added.
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Appendix B

Pronunciation Guide

The text contains many verses and phrases in Sanskrit language and one verse in Hindi, all of which are written using the Devanagari script. For those unfamiliar with Devanagari, we have augmented the text with phonetic transliteration in ISO-15919 which uses latin characters with diacritics where necessary. The table below offers a pronunciation³² guide to all such symbols that are used in the text.

VOWELS					
अ	a	short a ³³ like cut	आ	ā	long a like car
इ	i	short i like kit	ई	ī	long i like peel
उ	u	short u like look	ऊ	ū	long u like mood

³² Standard American accent is assumed.

³³ The other 'a' sounds in English such as in 'apple'(ă), 'many'(ā) and 'ball'(ô) are not native to Indic languages.

ऋ	r̄	almost like pretty	ए	ē	long e like made
ऐ	ai	a+i like eye	ओ	ō	long o like load
औ	au	a+u like proud	अं	m̄	like hum
अः	ḥ	hard exhalation in the shape of previous vowel			

SECTIONAL CONSONANTS					
क	k	like car	ख	kh	stressed ³⁴ k
ग	g	like garden	घ	gh	stressed g
ङ	ṅ	nasal sound like sing			
च	c	like chart	छ	ch	stressed c
ज	j	like jive	झ	jh	stressed j
ञ	ñ	nasal sound like canyon			
त	t	like thanks	थ	th	stressed t
द	d	like the movie	ध	dh	stressed d
न	n	nasal sound like nice			
ट	ṭ	retroflex ³⁵ t like tart	ठ	ṭh	stressed ṭ
ड	ḍ	retroflex d like darn	ढ	ḍh	stressed ḍ

³⁴ Accompanied by greater volume of air [mahāprāṇa]. These sounds don't exist in the Standard American accent.

³⁵ Tongue curved backwards, tip touching the palate.

ण	ṅ	retroflex n like ant			
प	p	like par	फ	ph	stressed p ³⁶
ब	b	like bar	भ	bh	stressed b
म	m	nasal sound like maroon			

NON-SECTIONAL CONSONANTS					
य	y	like yard	र	r	like roof
ल	l	like lard	व	v	like victor ³⁷
श	ś	like sheesh ³⁸	ष	ṣ	retroflex like shine
स	s	like soap	ह	h	like hard

³⁶ Some Hindi speakers mispronounce this as the ‘f’ sound, like in ‘father’. But there is no ‘f’ or ‘z’ sound in native Indic languages. Both are an import from Persian into modern Hindi.

³⁷ Unlike English, no distinction is made between ‘v’ and ‘w’ sounds.

³⁸ This sound does not exist in the Standard American accent. In phonetics it is called voiceless alveolo-palatal fricative.

Glossary

This Glossary serves two purposes. First, it provides a definition for all Indic words used in the text. Second, it provides the correct phonetic transliteration in square brackets for all non-anglicised Indic words. The pronunciation is for either the root form (prātipadika) or the singular, nominative case declension (prathamā vibhaktirēka vacanam) of the word — whichever is closest to that used in the text. Consistency in this regard is not to be obtained in the text, and so we don't try to force it here.

— ED.

A

Abhanga [abhaṅga] Lit., Unbreakable, of permanent value; a term applied to certain poetical compositions of Divine Wisdom by the saints of Maharashtra; psalm. 19

Abhimana [abhimāna] Thirst for individual power and glory; pride. 21

Abhyasa [abhyāsa] Practice (PBS)³⁹. Systematic exercise in Meditation. 11, 12, 59, 69, 115

Abhyasa Yoga [abhyāsa yōga] Yoga of Meditation. See Abhyasa and Yoga. 115

³⁹ Initials PBS, in brackets, indicate that the definitions are from the text as given by the author.

- Acharya** [ācārya] Spiritual teacher, Guru; as Shankar-acharya, lit., “a teacher of ethics.” A name generally given to Initiates, etc., and meaning “Master” (HPB).⁴⁰ 2, 87
- Achyuta** [acyuta] That which is not subject to change or fall; the opposite to Chyuta, “fallen”. A title of Vishnu (HPB). 10
- Adarshanam** [adarśanam] Invisible. 4
- Adharma** [adharma] Unrighteousness, vice, the opposite of Dharma (HPB). 8, 92
- Adhibhuta** [adhibhūta⁴¹] Physical region; the basis of all beings (PBS). 14, 68
- Adhidaiva** [adhidaiva] Substratum of all Devatas (PBS). 17, 20, 68
- Adhiyajna** [adhiyajña] Region of sacrifice (PBS). 22, 68
- Adhyasa** [adhyāsa] Confounding the attributes of the one with those of the other (PBS). 83
- Adhyatma** [adhyātma] Pratyagatma [pratyagātmā] or Logos (PBS). Individual or universal living soul. 68
- Adhyaya** [adhyāya] Discourse; chapter. 80
- Advaita(m)** [advaita] Unity (PBS). See Shantam. 13, 77
- Agneya-Chakra** [ājñeya cakra] Base of the nose (PBS). The plexus at the base of the nose. 20
- Agni** [agni] The God of Fire in the Veda; the oldest and the most revered of Gods in India. He is one of the three great deities: Agni, Vayu and Surya, and also all the three, as he is the triple aspect of fire; in heaven as the Sun; in the atmosphere or air (Vayu), as Lightning; on earth, as ordinary Fire. Agni belonged to the earlier Vedic Trimurti before Vishnu was given

⁴⁰ Initials HPB, in brackets, indicate that the definitions have been taken from H. P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, London, 1892.

⁴¹ The editors of the original publication seem to have conflated आदिभूत [ādibhūta] and अधिभूत [adhibhūta]. This error has been advisedly corrected. — ED.

a place of honour and before Brahma and Siva were invented (HPB). 100

Agnihotra [agnihōtra] (Worship by) The act of offering oblation to Fire God. 69

Aham-Bhava [ahaṁbhāva] (Worship by) Entire self-renunciation; complete self-surrender (of Aham Bhava, or Egoism) to Bhagavan (PBS). 103, 106

Ahankara (Ahamkara) [ahaṅkāra] The sense of ‘I’-ness, the false or artificial ‘I’ (PBS). The conception of ‘I’, Self-consciousness or Self-identity; the ‘I’, the egotistical and Mayavic principle in man, due to our ignorance which separates our ‘I’ from the Universal ONE-SELF Personality, Egoism (HPB). 7, 23, 36, 37, 39, 61, 75, 81, 84, 85, 96, 97

Aitareya Upanishad [aitarēya upaniṣad] The name of an Upanishad of Rig Veda. 74

Ajnana [ajñāna] Non-knowledge; absence of knowledge rather than “ignorance” as generally translated. An Ajnani, means a “profane” (HPB). See Avidya. 83

Akasha (Akash) [ākāśa] The subtle, supersensuous spiritual essence which pervades all space; the primordial substance erroneously identified with Ether (HPB). See Mulaprakriti. 22, 55, 90

Akashic Pertaining to the above. 56, 101

Akshara(m) [akṣara] Imperishable (PBS). Supreme Deity; lit., “indestructible”, ever perfect (HPB). 72, 102

Akshouhini [akṣauhiṇī] A military unit. 2

Amrita [amṛta] Ambrosia (PBS). The ambrosial drink or food of the gods; the food giving immortality. The elixir of life churned out of the ocean of milk (HPB). 47

Amsa [amśa] A portion; fragment. 96

Anadi [anādi] Having no beginning (PBS). 89

- Anahata Chakra** [anāhata⁴² cakra] The plexus above the cavity of the heart. 101
- Ananda(m)** [ānanda] Bliss, joy, felicity, happiness (HPB). 61, 78
- Anandamaya (Kosha)** [ānandamaya kōśa] “The illusive Sheath of Bliss”, i.e., the Mayavic or illusory form, the appearance of that which is formless (HPB). 78, 79
- Ananya Bhakti** [ananya bhakti] Exclusive devotion to Ishvara, the Supreme Self. 67
- Anatma** [anātmā] Non-Atma. 50
- Annamayakosha (Annamaya Kosha)** [annamaya kōśa] A Vedantic term. The same as Sthula Sharira or the physical body. It is the first “sheath” of the five sheaths accepted by the Vedantins, a sheath being the same as that which is called “principle” in Theosophy (HPB). 78, 79
- Antahkarana** [antaḥkaraṇa] The bridge between the lower mind (head) and the higher mind (heart) (PBS). The bridge between the divine Ego, and the personal Soul of man (HPB). 75, 88
- Anumanta** [anumantā] One who consents or decides. 86
- Apana(m)** [apāna] “Inspirational breath”; a practice in Yoga. Prana and Apana are the “expirational” and the “inspirational” breaths. It is called “vital wind” in Anugita (HPB). 99
- Aparokshanubhooti** [aparōkṣānubhūti] Lit., Direct perception. One of the treatises of Shankara. 20
- Apastamba Dharma Sutra** [āpastamba dharma sūtra] Apastamba is a branch of Krishna Yajurveda. Lit., Dharma Sutra belonging to that branch. 35
- Archana** [arcanā] Self-forgetfulness in Meditation. The fifth of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9

⁴² Lit. Unbeaten, unwounded, intact. — ED.

- Archiradi Marga** [arcirādi mārga] Path of Light; self-conscious path (PBS). 68
- Arjuna** [arjuna] Lit., the “white”. The third of the five Brothers Pandu or the reputed Sons of Indra (esoterically the same as Orpheus). A disciple of Krishna, who visited him and married Subhadra, his sister, beside many other wives, according to the allegory. During the fratricidal war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, Krishna instructed him in the highest philosophy, while serving as his charioteer (HPB). 2, 3, 8–10, 14, 16, 28, 29, 54, 68, 73, 89, 95, 101, 107
- Artharthi** [arthārthī] One desirous of the wealth of spiritual wisdom. See Shat Sampathi. 67
- Asat** [asat] A philosophical term meaning “non-being”, the “Incomprehensible nothingness”. The unreal, or Prakriti, objective nature regarded as an illusion (HPB). 72, 73
- Ashrama** [āśrama] (Four) Stages of life. 7
- Ashwattha** [āśvattha] The Bo-tree, the tree of knowledge, *Ficus Religiosa*. (HPB). 92
- Atma(n)** [ātmā (ātman)] The Universal Spirit, the divine Monad, the 7th Principle, so-called, in the septenary constitution of man. The Supreme Soul (HPB). 3, 50, 64, 76, 77, 80, 86–90, 114
- Atmanivedana** [ātmanivēdana] State of self surrender devoid of any duality or sense of separateness. The ninth of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti), in which the devotee “disappears and Bhagavan is all in all” (PBS). 10
- Avastha** [avasthā] States of consciousness. 76
- Avatara** [avatāra] Divine incarnation. The descent of a god or some exalted Being, who has progressed beyond the necessity of Rebirths, into the body of a simple mortal. Krishna was an Avatar of Vishnu (HPB). 1, 2, 11, 26–28, 64

- Avidya** [avidyā] Opposed to Vidya, Knowledge. Ignorance which proceeds from, and is produced by, the illusion of the Senses (HPB). See Ajnana. 50, 54, 72, 78, 84, 85, 92
- Avyakta(m)** [avyakta] The unrevealed cause; indiscrete or undifferentiated; the opposite of vyakta, the differentiated. The former is used of the unmanifested, and the latter of the manifested Deity, or of Brahma and Brahmā (HPB). 62, 63, 75, 102, 108, 109
- Avyaktamurti** [avyaktamūrti] The Unknowable (PBS), Parabrahma, the First Cause or the Causeless Cause. It becomes knowable only when manifesting as Logos or Ishvara. See Brahma. 60, 61

B

- Balarama** [balarāma] Shri Krishna's elder brother. 53
- Bhagavad Gita (Bhagavad-Gita)** [bhagavad gītā] Lit., "The Lord's Song". A portion in the "Bhisma Parva" of the "Mahabharata", the great epic poem of India. It contains a dialogue wherein Krishna the "charioteer" and Arjuna, his Chela, have a discussion upon the highest spiritual philosophy. The work is pre-eminently occult or esoteric (HPB). 59, 71, 107
- Bhagavan** [bhagavān] Lit., Blessed Lord. Shri Krishna. 5, 7–10, 15, 16, 23–25, 27–29, 31, 33–38, 43, 47, 49, 51–55, 57, 60, 61, 63–73, 75, 79, 81, 83, 85, 88–90, 93–95, 97, 99, 101, 103–106
- Bhagavata, (Shrimad)** [sṛīmad bhāgavata] One of the Puranas, giving the events of the life of Shri Krishna. 52, 68, 103
- Bhakta** [bhakta] Devotee. 9, 10, 24
- Bhakti** [bhakti] Devotion. 8, 12, 66
- Bharta** [bhartā] Supporter (PBS). 86

- Bhava** [bhāva] (Five) States of being, pertaining severally to the body, senses, Manas, Buddhi and 'I'-ness. 103, 107
- Bhaya** [bhaya] Fear (PBS). 29, 30
- Bhokta** [bhōktā] Enjoyer (PBS). 85, 86
- Bhu Loka** [bhū lōka] Physical world. 62
- Bhuta** [bhūta] Sensible matter (PBS). 73
- Bhuta Yajna (Bhuta-Yajna)** [bhūta yajña] Service or sacrifice by beneficent thoughts and actions to all living beings. 93, 103, 110
- Bhuvar Loka** [bhuvan lōka] Astral world. 62
- Bimba** [bhimba] Reflection. 76
- Brahma Sutra** [brahma sūtra] A treatise by Veda Vyas on Vedanta philosophy. 74, 77
- Brahma Yajna (Brahma-Yajna)** [brahma yajña] Study of the Vedas and other scriptures (PBS). 93, 103, 111
- Brahma(n)** [brahma (brahman)] The student must distinguish between Brahma the neuter, and Brahmā, the male creator of the Indian Pantheon. The former, Brahma or Brahman, is the impersonal, supreme and uncognizable Principle of the Universe from the essence of which all emanates, and into which all returns, which is incorporeal, immaterial, unborn, eternal, beginningless and endless. It is all-pervading, animating the highest god as well as the smallest mineral atom. Brahmā, on the other hand, the male and the alleged Creator, exists periodically in his manifestation only, and then again goes into pralaya, i.e., disappears and is annihilated (HPB). See Avyaktamurti. 29, 52, 53, 61, 92, 95, 112, 114
- Brahma-Loka** [brahma lōka] Region of Brahmā. 15, 29, 68
- Brahma-Vidya (Brahmavidya)** [brahma vidyā] Spiritual wisdom, the esoteric science about the two Brahmas and their true nature. See Brahma. 11, 15, 27, 50, 72

- Brahman** [brahman] See Brahma above. 16, 25, 43, 45–47, 52, 56, 68, 72, 78, 79, 89, 90, 92, 93, 111, 113, 115
- Brahmana** [brāhmaṇa] The highest of the four castes in India, one supposed or rather fancying himself, as high among men, as Brahman, the ABSOLUTE of the Vedantins, is high among, or above the gods (HPB). 35, 36
- Brahmanda** [brahmāṇḍa] Macrocosm. 53, 100
- Brahmarandhra** [brahmarandhra] A spot on the crown of the head connected by Sushumna, a cord in the spinal column, with the heart. A mystic term having its significance only in mysticism. (HPB). 20
- Brahmarshi** [brahmarṣi] The Brahminical Rishis (HPB). See Rishi. 8
- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad** [bṛhadāranyaka upaniṣad] a celebrated Upaniṣad, forming the last six chapters of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. — ED. 101
- Buddhi** [buddhi] Universal Soul or Mind. The spiritual Soul in man (the sixth principle), the vehicle of Atma, esoterically the seventh (HPB). 17, 18, 20, 38, 61, 69, 75, 84, 105, 115
- Buddhi-Bhava** [buddhi bhāva] (Worship by) By study and cogitation on eternal truths, explained in scriptures, the devotee attains knowledge and transmits it to others as a Yajna. 103, 106
- Buddhi-Yoga** [buddhi yōga] Yoga of right knowledge (PBS); spiritual discernment, mental devotion. 3, 86, 108

C

- Chaitanya(m)** [caitanya] Supreme Intelligence, the All-resplendent Light of Ishvara (PBS). 77, 88, 96, 104, 105, 110
- Chakra(m)** [cakra] Plexus. Nerve centre. 17–19
- Chandrayana (Vrata)** [cāndrayāna vrata] One of the (ritualistic) austerities. 69

Chela [cēlā⁴³] Disciple. 19, 20

Chichchakti [cicchakti] The power which generates thought. 62

Chidagnikunda [cidāgnikuṇḍa] The heart, where the Divine Fire dwells and in which Ahankara, the I-ness, is burnt by the Initiates to become Jivanmuktas. 96

Chit [cit] Abstract consciousness. 61

D

Daiva Yajna (Deva Yajna) [daiva yajña] Sacrifice to obtain the Grace of the Divine hierarchy. 93, 103, 111

Daivi-Prakriti (Daiviprakriti) [daiviprakṛti] Light of the Logos; Light of Ishvara; Divine Light Mahachaitanya of the whole Cosmos (PBS). Primordial, homogeneous light. See Chaitanya(m). 18, 62–64, 77, 80, 84, 89, 96, 100, 109, 113, 114

Dakshinamurti Stotra [dakṣiṇāmūrti stōtra] One of the compositions of Shankara. 113

Dama [dama] Control of five organs of knowledge and five organs of action (PBS). 87

Dasoham [dāsōham] I am the servant (PBS). 81

Dasya [dāsya] Servant-Master relationship. The seventh of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9

Deha-Bhava [dēhabhāva] (Worship by) Performing bodily actions as a Yajna for the magnetic purification of the body, so that it may become a fitting shrine for divine sensations. 103

Deva (Devata) [dēva (dēvatā)] Hierarchies of cosmic intelligences (PBS). A god, a “resplendent” deity (HPB). 17, 20, 39, 45, 67, 68, 103, 110

Devarshi [dēvaṛṣi] Lit., “God’s rishis”; the divine or godlike saints, those sages who attain a fully divine nature on earth (HPB). 8

⁴³ This is a Hindi not a Sanskrit word. — ED.

- Devi** [dēvī] Goddess. Short form of Daivi-Prakriti. 18
- Dharma** [dharma] Religion; Eternal law (PBS). The sacred law. 1, 27, 36, 54, 61, 67, 68, 92
- Dharmacharya** [dharmacarya] Instructors of Dharma. 2
- Dhi-Guha** [dhī guha] Cave of the intellect, the space between the brows (PBS). 17
- Dhuma Marga** [dhūma mārga] Path of Smoke, followed by Karma Yogins, who perform different kinds of sacrifices (PBS). 68
- Dhyana** [dhyāna] Lit., contemplation; meditation; a state of abstraction which carries the ascetic practising it far above the planes of sensuous perception and material world (HPB). 67
- Duhkha** [duḥkha] Sorrow. 84, 98
- Dvadeshakshari Abhanga** [dvādaśākṣarī abhaṅga] Twelve syllabled Abhanga (PBS). See Abhanga. 19
- E**
- Ekatma-Pratyaya-Saram** [ēkātmapratyayasāram] The sole essence of consciousness of the self (PBS). 77, 114
- G**
- Gachchatiti** [gacchatīti] Going; evanescent; perishable. 4
- Ganapati** [gaṇapati] God of Wisdom; an elephant headed god; son of Shiva. Lit., Lord of hierarchies. 39, 40
- Gandha** [gandha] Smell (PBS). 85
- Ganesha** [gaṇēśa] Same as Ganapati. 40
- Ganga** [gaṅgā] The Ganges; the principal sacred river of India. 57
- Gayatri** [gāyatrī] A most sacred verse addressed to the Sun, in the Rig Veda, which the Brahmans have to repeat mentally every morn and eve during their devotions (HPB). 62, 63
- Ghrana** [ghrāṇa] To smell the fragrance of flowers magnetised by the Light of Ishvara (PBS). 106

- Gita** [gītā] See Bhagavad Gita. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 13–17, 22–25, 27, 29, 55, 57, 59, 71, 83, 91, 95, 107
- Gita Shastra** [gītā śāstra] Science of Bhagavad Gita. 91
- Gopa** [gōpa] Cowherds. 52, 53
- Gorakh** [gōrakṣanātha] Gorakshanatha, a great Yogi of Hathayoga school. 19
- Gouranga** [gaurāṅga⁴⁴] Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, a sage of Bengal. 107
- Guna(s)** [guṇa] Satva, Rajas and Tamas; a combination of these three Gunas. 33–35, 65–67, 72, 73, 90–92, 98, 108, 109
- Guru (Guru-Deva, Gurudeva)** [guru dēva] Masters of Wisdom. 12, 49–51, 53, 78, 87, 94, 95, 112, 113
- Guruparampara** [guruparamparā] The Hierarchy and Brotherhood of Gurus, preceptors and teachers of Wisdom, at whose apex is Shiva, the Maha-Yogi, the “great ascetic”, also called Mahadeva, the “great god”. 112, 113

H

- Hamsa** [haṁsa] A bird (swan) believed to possess the power of separating pure milk from a mixture of milk and water (PBS). 21, 22
- Hasta** [hasta] Hand (PBS). 106
- Hata-Yogi** [haṭa yōgī] Practitioners of the lower form of Yoga practice; in which physical means for purposes of spiritual development are used. The opposite of Raja-Yoga (HPB). 18
- Hinduism** Religion of the Hindus. 11
- Hiranyagarbha** [hiraṇyagarbha] The radiant or golden egg or womb. Esoterically the luminous “fire mist” or ethereal stuff from which the universe was formed (HPB). 62

⁴⁴ गौर [gaura] (beautiful, brilliant) + अङ्ग [aṅga] (body, limbs) = गौराङ्ग [gaurāṅga], also an epithet of Vishnu or Krishna. — ED.

- Hiranyagarbha-Brahma** [hiranyagarbha brahma] Brahma, who, “having emerged out of his golden egg (Hiranyagarbha), creates and fashions the material world (being simply the fertilising and creative force in Nature).” Thereafter (i.e., following Brahma’s Day, a period of 2,160,000,000 years), “the worlds being destroyed in turn, by fire and water, he vanishes with objective nature, and then comes Brahma’s Night” (HPB). See Brahma. 7
- Hiranyamaya Kosha** [hiranyamaya kōśa] The shining, golden, Hiranyamaya body of the Great Ones (PBS). 78
- Hiranyamaya matter** [hiranyamaya] Golden Radiant Matter from which Karana Sharira is built. 96
- Hridaya** [hr̥daya] Heart (PBS). 12, 101

I

- Ichha Shakti** [icchā śakti] The power of the will (PBS). 22
- Ihaloka Paraloka Vairagya** [iha pralōka vairāgya] Indifference to the fruits of action in this world and the next world (Svarga) (PBS). 87
- Ikshvaku** [ikṣvāku] The progenitor of solar tribe (the Surya Vansa) in India and the son of Vaivasvata Manu, the progenitor of the present human race (HPB). 7
- Indra** [indra] The god of Firmament, the king of sidereal gods. A Vedic Deity (HPB). 100
- Indriya** [indriya] These are the ten external agents; the five senses which are used for perception are called Jnana-Indriyas, and the five used for action — Karma-Indriyas. 73, 75, 84, 85
- Indriya-Bhava** [indriya bhāva] (Worship by) Striving at spiritual perception, through the senses, of the one Chaitanya which ensues when the personality, which creates a barrier between ourselves and the external world, is destroyed. 103, 104

- Ishta-Deva (Ishtadeva)** [iṣṭa dēva] The favourite Deity worshiped by the devotee. 12, 16
- Ishvara** [īśvara] The “Lord” or the personal god-divine spirit in man Lit., sovereign (independent) existence. A title given to Shiva and other gods in India. Shiva is also called Ishvara-Deva, or sovereign Deva (HPB). 4, 5, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25–29, 31, 34, 38, 41, 50, 52, 60, 61, 63–65, 68, 69, 74–77, 79–81, 83–85, 87–89, 92, 94, 96, 100–102, 105, 106, 110–112
- Itihasa** [itihāsa] History. A record of events that actually happened (PBS). 1

J

- Jagrat (Jagrat Avastha)** [jāgradavasthā] Waking state of three states of consciousness, the other two being Svapna and Sushupti. 76
- Janaka** [janaka] One of the Kings of Mithila of the Solar race. He was a great royal sage, and lived twenty generations before Janaka the father of Sita who was King of Videha (HPB). 42
- Japa(m)** [japa] Silent repetition of sacred texts. 112
- Japa-Yajna** [japa yajña] Sacrifice through muttering or silent repetition of sacred texts. — ED. 103
- Jati** [jāti] Genus (PBS). 72
- Jignasu** [jijñāsu] Enquirer (PBS). 67
- Jiva** [jīva] The monad or Atma-Buddhi, Life, as the Absolute (HPB). 44, 65
- Jivanmukta (Jivan-Mukta)** [jīvanmukta] An adept or Yogi who has reached the ultimate state of holiness, and separated himself from matter; a Mahatma, or Nirvaneer, a “dweller in bliss” and emancipation. Virtually one who has reached Nirvana during life (HPB). 23, 25, 50, 64, 68

- Jivanmukti** [jīvanmuktiḥ] State of the Jivanmukta. 11
- Jivatma** [jīvātma] The ONE universal life, generally; but also the divine Spirit in Man (HPB). 2, 5, 12, 21, 23, 27, 31, 61, 74, 85, 90, 96–98, 108
- Jnana Shakti** [jñāna śakti] Ability to see the past and future (PBS). 22
- Jnana Yajna** [jñāna yajña] Wisdom sacrifice (PBS). 93
- Jnana Yoga (Jnanayoga)** [jñāna yōga] One of the schools of philosophy (PBS). Yoga of Occult Wisdom. 2, 5
- Jnana(m)** [jñāna] Occult Wisdom; Knowledge (HPB). Consciousness (PBS). 12, 31, 59, 60, 71, 73, 79, 111–114
- Jnana-Marga (Jnana Marga)** [jñāna mārga] The path of Occult Wisdom. 12, 111
- Jnanendriya** [jñānēndriya] See Indriya. 75
- Jnanesvara** [jñānēśvara] A young Yogi; author of the mystic work, Dnayaneshvari, a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. 19
- Jnani (Jnanin)** [jñānī (jñānin)] One who has acquired Jnana. Teacher of Shastra (PBS). One who knows the real nature of Bhagavan (PBS). 24–26, 67, 69, 79, 115
- Jnata** [jñātā] Ego; knower. 60, 73
- Jneyam** [jñēyam] Non-ego; that which is to be realised. 60, 73
- Jyoti** [jyōtiḥ (jyōtis)] Light of Lights (PBS). 73

K

- Kalpa** [kalpa] The period of a mundane revolution, generally a cycle of time, but usually, it represents a “day” and “night” of Brahman, a period of 4,320,000,000 years (HPB). 55
- Kama** [kāma] Evil desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence Kama is generally identified with Mara, the tempter (HPB). 2, 85, 92, 94, 95
- Karana-Sharira (Karana Sharira)** [kāraṇa śarīra] Causal body, corresponding to Buddhi and the Higher “Manas”, or Spiritual

Soul (HPB). The Hall of Wisdom (PBS). 12, 13, 16, 22, 30, 31, 62, 65, 66, 77, 78, 80, 85, 86, 89, 96–98, 108–110

Karana-Sharira-Self The higher man. 30

Karaṇa [karaṇa] Senses. Ten Indriyas, Manas and five sense objects (PBS). 84

Karma [karma] Physically, action; metaphysically, the Law of Retribution, the Law of cause and effect or Ethical Causation (HPB). 4, 12, 22, 23, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, 46, 54–56, 59, 66, 68, 69, 75, 81, 85, 88–90, 92–94, 97, 98, 101, 102, 109–111, 113

Karma Sanyasa [karma sanyāsa] Renunciation of action; non-performance of the duties of life. See Sanyasa and Karma-Yoga. 113

Karma Yajna [karma yajña] Attachment to the fruits of action. 93

Karma-Marga [karma mārga] Disinterested performance of religious and secular duties (PBS). 11

Karma-Yoga [karma yōga] Yoga by renunciation of the fruits of action. 5, 110, 113

Karma-Yogi (Karma-Yogin) [karma yōgī (karma yōgin)] Persons engaged in Karma-Yoga. The third of four classes of devotees. 45, 68, 111

Karmani [karmāṇi] Actions (PBS). 94

Karmendriya [karmēndriya] Senses pertaining to action. See Indriya. 75

Karmin [karmin] Performer of Agnihotra (offering oblations into fire), etc. (PBS). See Dhuma Marga. 69, 115

Karta [kartā] The doer (PBS). 56, 67

Kartikēya Swami [kārtikēya svāmī] The Indian God of war, son of Shiva. He is also the personification of the power of Logos. The Planet Mars. He is a very occult personage (HPB). 39

Karya [kārya] Ten Indriyas, Manas and five sense objects (PBS). See Karanas. 85

- Kathopanishad** [kaṭhōpaniṣad] An Upanishad dealing principally with the philosophy of life after death. 80
- Kāraṇa** [kāraṇa] Cause (metaphysically) (HPB). Mahat (or Manas), Ahankara and Pancha Tanmatras (PBS). 75, 76, 84, 85, 90, 96, 109
- Kenopanishad** [kēnōpaniṣad] Literally means “by what?” One of the old principal Upanishads. — ED. 100
- Kirtana** [kīrtanā] Singing devotional songs together with kindred souls. The second of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9, 106
- Kosha** [kōśa] Sheaths; body. 78, 80
- Krishna, (Shri)** [śrī kṛṣṇa] The eighth Avatar of Vishnu (HPB). 9, 52, 59, 63, 64, 68, 69, 71, 74, 79, 84–86, 88–91, 93–97, 99, 101–103, 107–110, 112–116
- Kriya** [kriyā] The deed (PBS). 56, 72
- Kriya Shakti** [kriyā śakti] The mysterious power of thought which enables an individual to produce external, perceptible and phenomenal results by its own inherent energy (PBS). One of the seven forces of Nature. Creative potency of the Siddhis (powers) of the full Yogis (HPB). 22
- Krodha** [krōdha] Anger, hatred, aversion (PBS). 2, 29, 31, 92, 94, 95
- Ksharam** [kṣaram] Perishable (PBS). See Aksharam. 102
- Kshatriya (Kshatriya)** [kṣatriya] The second of the four castes into which the Hindus were originally divided (HPB). 7, 35
- Kshetra** [kṣētra] The human body, the temple of the divine man. 71, 72, 74, 75, 79, 83, 89–91
- Kshetraja** [kṣētrajña] Embodied spirit; the Conscious Ego in its highest manifestations; the reincarnating Principle; the “Lord” in us (HPB). 66, 71, 72, 74, 75, 78, 83, 84, 89–91
- Kundalini (Shakti)** [kuṇḍalinī śakti] The power of life; one of the forces of Nature; that power that generates a certain light in those who sit for spiritual and clairvoyant development. It

is a power known only to those who practice concentration and Yoga (HPB). 17–20, 22, 100

Kunti [kuntī] The wife of Pandu and the mother of the Pandavas. 25, 29

Kuru [kuru] The foes of the Pandavas in the Bhagavad Gita, on the plain of Kurukshetra (HPB). 46

Kurukshetra [kurukṣētra] The battlefield near Delhi, where the Mahabharata war was fought and where the Lord gave discourses of Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna. 23

Kutastha [kūṭastha] Undifferentiated Prakriti. It is the illusion power of the Lord, the germ from which the perishable being takes its birth. (PBS). 102

Kutichaka [kuṭīcaka] One who resides in a humble hut of leaves (PBS). 21

L

Laya(m) [laya] Absorption (PBS). 4, 64

Loka [lōka] A region or circumscribed place. In metaphysics a world or sphere or plane. The Puranas in India speak incessantly of seven and fourteen Lokas, above, and below our earth; of heavens and hells (HPB). 15

Loka Sangraha [lōka saṅgraha] For the welfare of the world; for the benefit of mankind. 97

M

Machchendra [matsyēndranātha] Matsyendranatha, a great Hathayogin. 19

Madhyama Adhikarin [madhyama adhikārin] The second of four classes of devotees, or claimants to Esoteric Wisdom; those to whom Sankhya Yoga appeals come under this category (PBS). 88

- Maha Sushupti (Maha-Sushupti)** [mahā suṣupti] The neutral barrier which the initiate has to overcome before qualifying for the Fourth Initiation. When isolated from its three bodies, the Jivatma passes into Mahasushupti, the neutral barrier, the Great Shunyam, which strikes terror even in the philosopher who may have perfected his individuality; and which may be overcome only through devotion to Bhagavan. It is also called the Mahashmashana, the great cremation ground, as it is here that the Initiate cremates his individuality and Ahankara (I-ness) and emerges a full Master of Wisdom. 23, 31
- Mahabharata** [mahābhārata] The celebrated epic poem of India; Lit. the “great war” (HPB). 1, 2
- Mahabhuta** [mahābhūta] the five great Tanmatras, i.e., earth, fire, air, water and ether. 75
- Mahachaitanya(m) (Maha Chaitanya)** [mahācāitanya] Daiviprakriti, fourth life-wave; the sole Essence of the consciousness of the self (PBS). See Turiya Chaitanyam. 61, 62
- Mahadeva** [mahādēva] Lit., “great god”; a title of Siva (HPB). 39
- Mahashmashana** [mahāśmaśāna] The great burning ground where Ahankara is burnt to ashes and the full-blown adept, a Jivanmukta, emerges. 23, 81
- Mahat** [mahat] Lit., “The great one”. The first principle of Universal Intelligence and Consciousness (HPB). 85
- Mahatma (Mahatman)** [mahātmā (mahātman)] Lit., “great soul”. An adept of the highest order. Exalted beings who, having attained to the mastery over their lower principles are thus living unimpeded by the “man of flesh”, and are in possession of knowledge and power commensurate with the stage they have reached in their spiritual evolution called in Pali Rahats and Arhats. (HPB). 24, 25, 54
- Maheshvara** [mahēśvara] The Great Lord. 86, 102

- Maheshvara, Parambrahm** [mahēśvara parabrahma] The Great Lord, the Causeless Cause or the Supreme Spirit. 62
- Mananam** [mananam] Cogitation (PBS); Meditation. 87
- Manas** [manas] Mind. 61, 69, 75, 84, 85, 97, 105
- Mandukya** [māṇḍūkya] Mandukya Upanishad. 77
- Mandukya-Upanishad (Mandukyopanishad)** [māṇḍūkyōpaniṣad] This Upanishad belongs to Atharva-Veda and speaks of the entire range of human consciousness. 13, 17, 22, 23, 77, 114
- Mano-Bhava** [manōbhāva] (Worship by) leading a life of renunciation in the little things of life (PBS). 103, 105
- Manomaya (Kosha)** [manōmaya kōśa] A vedantic term, meaning the Sheath (Kosha) of the Manomaya, an equivalent for fourth and fifth “principles” in man. In esoteric philosophy this “Kosha” corresponds to the dual Manas. (HPB). 78
- Mantra** [mantra] Verses from the Vedic works, used as incantations and charms. By Mantras are meant all those portions of the Vedas which are distinct from the Brahmanas, or their interpretation. (HPB). 88
- Mantrika Shakti** [mantrikā śakti] The power, or the occult potency of mystic words, sounds, numbers or letters in these Mantras (HPB). 22
- Manu** [manu] The great Indian legislator, the progenitor of mankind, almost a Divine Being (HPB). 7
- Manu Smriti** [manu smṛti] The laws and injunctions of Manu. 93
- Marga** [mārga] The “Paths”, leading to Nirvana. 12
- Maya** [māyā] Illusion; the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence and the perceptions thereof possible. In Hindu philosophy that alone which is changeless and eternal is called reality; all that which is subject to change through decay and differentiation and which has therefore a beginning and an end is regarded as Maya-illusion (HPB). 18, 23, 24, 27, 52, 53, 60, 62, 64, 65

- Maya Shakti** [māyā śakti] The power of Maya. 102
- Mayi (Sarvani Karmani)** [mayi (sarvāṇi karmāṇi)] Unto me (Dedicate unto me all actions). 94
- Moha** [mōha] Delusion, perplexity or insensibility. — ED. 67, 84
- Moksha** [mōkṣa] Liberation. The same as Nirvana; a post-mortem state of rest and bliss of the “Soul-Pilgrim” (HPB). 29, 33, 34, 37, 47, 54
- Mukta** [mukta] Those who have attained Moksha. 84, 96
- Mukti** [mukti] Same as Moksha; perfection of individuality (PBS). 4, 65, 81, 84, 96, 112
- Muladhara Chakra** [mūlādhāra cakra] Sacral plexus at the base of the spine. 18, 100
- Mulaprakṛiti** [mūlaprakṛiti] Lit., The “root of Nature “ (Prakṛiti) or Matter. The Parabrahmic root, the abstract deific feminine principle — undifferentiated substance. Akasha (HPB). 61–64, 75, 83, 84, 90, 92, 100, 102, 109
- Mumukshu** [mumukṣu] The aspirant for liberation (Moksha) (PBS). 38
- Mumukshutva(m)** [mumukṣutva] Desire for liberation (from reincarnation and thralldom of matter) (HPB). 36, 87
- Mundaka (Upanishad)** [muṇḍaka] An Upanishad called Mundakopanishad of Atharva Veda. 79
- Muni** [munih] Saints, or Sages (HPB). 19

N

- Nadi** [nāḍi] The human artery or vein; also nerves. 19
- Nama** [nāma] Name. 88
- Namaskaram** [namaskāram] Reverence, obeisance, salutations. 84
- Nara** [nara] Man, the original, eternal man (HPB). 2, 107
- Nara-Hari** [nara hari] One of the names of the manifested Deity. 19
- Narayana** [nārāyaṇa] The “mover on the Waters” of space: a title of Vishnu, in his aspects of the Holy Spirit, moving on the

Waters of Creation. In esoteric symbology it stands for the primeval manifestation of the life-principle, spreading in infinite Space (HPB). 43

Nava-Vidha Bhakti [nava vidha bhakti] Nine stages of Devotion through which the devotee ascends. 8

Nididhyasa [nididhyāsa] Mental abstraction and profound contemplation (PBS). 87

Nirguna [nirguṇa] Transcendental (PBS); without attributes. 87

Nishkama Karma [niṣkāma karma] Performance of the duties of life without selfishness, as a sacrifice. 97, 109

Nityanitya Viveka [nityānitya vivēka] Discrimination between real and unreal (PBS). 86

Nivritti Dharma [nivṛtti dharma] Duties of life for attaining liberation (Moksha). 7

Nru-Yajna (Nru Yajna) [nṛ yajña] Service of humanity as a sacrifice. 93, 103, 110

O

Om [ōm (ॐ)] A mystic syllable, the most solemn of all words in India (HPB). 23, 63

P

Pada [pāda] Feet. 77

Padasevana [pādasēvanā] Service of the (holy) feet. The fourth of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9

Pancha Bhuta [pañca bhūta] Five elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air and Akasha. 75

Pancha Tanmatra (Panchatanmantras) [pañca taṇmātra] The types or rudiments of the five Elements; the subtle essence of these, devoid of all qualities and identical with the properties of the five basic Elements — earth, water, fire, air and

- ether; i.e., the tanmatras are in one of their aspects smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing (HPB). 85, 100
- Pandava** [pāṇḍava] Descendant of Pandu (HPB). 52
- Pandita** [paṇḍita] A learned or wise man. 3
- Para Shakti (Parashakti)** [parā śakti] “The great Force” — one of the six Forces of Nature; that of light and heat (HPB). Daiviprakriti, Light of the Logos (PBS). 22, 100
- Parabhakti** [parābhakti] Supreme devotion, by means of which the devotee enters Bhagavan and becomes Brahman (PBS). 25, 26, 66, 81
- Paramaguru** [paramaguru] Supreme Teacher. 102
- Paramahansa** [paramahaṁsa] One who has realised THAT, i.e., that He, the One Life, and himself are one (PBS). 23
- Paramartha Sanyasa** [paramārtha sanyāsa] Renunciation informed by Wisdom (Jnana) (PBS). 114
- Paramatma** [paramātma] The Supreme Soul of the Universe (HPB). 62, 80, 86, 87, 89, 94, 98, 102, 105
- Parambrahma** [parabrahma] “Beyond Brahma”, literally. The Supreme Infinite Brahma, “Absolute” — the attributeless, the secondless reality as the end and goal of existence. The impersonal and nameless universal Principle (HPB). 60, 63, 64, 66, 72, 73, 95
- Parameshvara** [paramēśvara] the great lord (PBS). Relating, belonging or coming from the supreme god. — ED. 95
- Parantapa** [parantapa] One who harasses his foes, a name of Arjuna. 35
- Parashurama** [paraśurāma] A Puranic Sage, an Avatar. 28
- Paravidya** [parāvidyā] Supreme knowledge. 72
- Parivrajaka** [parivrajaka] A wanderer (PBS). 15
- Peetham** [pīṭham] The seat of the deity (PBS), the idol of worship. 84
- Phalam** [phalam] Fruit (PBS). 3, 4, 108

- Phalgotaya** [phalgotayā] Lit., The nature of “phalam” itself — something that vanishes, something unsubstantial (PBS) (layam adarśanam jacchaīti phalam). 4
- Pindanda** [piṇḍāṇḍa] Microcosm (PBS). 100
- Pitri** [pitṛ] The ancestors, or creators of mankind. They are of seven classes, three of which are incorporeal, Arupa, and four corporeal (HPB). 110
- Pitri Yajna (Pitri-Yajna)** [pitṛ yajña] Sacrifice to Ancestors (Pitris). 93, 103, 110
- Prajapati** [prajāpati] Progenitor; the givers of life to all on this Earth. They are seven and then ten. Brahma, the creator, is called Prajapati as the synthesis of the Lords of Being (HPB). 35
- Prajna** [prājña] One of the four states of Conscious Existence of the Vedantic classification; ecstatic consciousness (PBS). The description, given in the Mandukyopanishad, of the spiritual ego (consciousness) of the Initiate upon his receiving the Third Initiation. 22, 62, 65, 77, 112
- Prakriti** [prakṛti] Same as Mulaprakriti. Mother Nature (PBS). Nature in general; nature as opposed to Purusha — spiritual nature and Spirit, which together are the “two Primeval aspects of the One Unknown Deity” (HPB). 65, 66, 72, 73, 75, 83–86, 89, 90, 92, 93, 96, 99, 102, 109
- Pralaya** [pralaya] A period of obscuration or repose — planetary, cosmic or universal — the opposite of Manvantara. (HBP). 29, 102
- Prana(m)** [prāṇa] Life Principle; the breath of Life. 99
- Pranagnihotram** [prāṇāgnihōtram] Offering the fire of life as an oblation to the Spiritual Self. 112
- Pranamaya Kosha (Pranamayakosha)** [prāṇamaya kōśa] The vehicle of Prana, life, or the Linga Sharira: a Vedantic term (HPB). 78

- Pranayama** [prāṇāyāma] Restraint of breath (PBS), a Hatha Yoga practice. 18, 46
- Prasada** [prasāda] Grace. 95
- Pratibimba** [pratibimba] Images (PBS), reflections. 76
- Pratyagatma** [pratyagātma] The same as Jivatma, or the one living Universal Soul — Alaya (HPB). 68
- Pravritti Dharma (Pravritti Marga)** [pravṛtti dharma] Duties of the four Castes (Varnas) and of the four stages (Ashramas) of life. 7, 8
- Pritha** [pr̥thā] A name of the mother of Arjuna (of Pandavas). 33, 47
- Puja** [pūjā] An offering; worship and divine honours offered to an idol or something sacred (HPB). 84
- Purusha** [puruṣa] Same as Daiviprakriti. “Man”, heavenly man. Spirit, the same as Narayana in another aspect. “The Spiritual Self” (HBP). 35, 84–86, 95, 109
- Purusha-Sukta** [puruṣa sūkta] A text used in Vedic rituals. 35
- Purushottama** [puruṣōttama] Lit., “best of men”; metaphysically, however, it is spirit, the Supreme Soul of the Universe; a title of Vishnu (HPB). 102, 103
- R**
- Raga** [rāga] The “obstruction” called love and desire in the physical or terrestrial sense (HPB). 29, 30
- Raja** [rājā] King. 2
- Raja Vidya (Rajavidya)** [rāja vidyā] Kingly Science (PBS). 68, 72
- Rajarshi** [rājarṣi] Kingly Adepts. 7, 8
- Rajas** [rajas] The “quality of foulness” (i.e., differentiation), and activity in the Puranas. One of the three Gunas or divisions in the correlations of matter and nature, representing form and change (HPB). 66, 92
- Ramchandra, (Shri)** [srī rāmachandra] Seventh Avatar or incarnation of Vishnu (HPB). 28

Rasa (Rasanam) [rasa (rasanam)] Taste (PBS). 85, 106

Rishi [ṛṣi] Adepts; the inspired ones. In Vedic literature the term is employed to denote those persons through whom the various Mantras were revealed (HPB). 53, 74, 111

Rupa [rūpā] Colour (PBS); form. 85, 88

S

Sa Atma [sa ātmā] Lit., This is the self. See Shantam. 13, 114

Sa eva asamantat [sa ēva ā samantāt] He indeed is everywhere (PBS).
51

Sada-Sthayi [sadā sthāyī] Who ever IS, being without change in the past, present or future (PBS). 61

Sadhana Chatushtaya [sādāna catuṣṭaya] Four qualifications (PBS) of the Vedantin (given in the text). 86

Sadhu [sādhu] Sage, holy man. 104, 105

Sahasrara(m) (Sahasrara Chakram) [sahasrāra cakram] Thousand petalled lotus (PBS); the sacral plexus in the human brain. 17, 18

Sakara Upasana [sākāra upāsānā] Worship of concentration and meditation on the manifested deity. 94

Sakha [sakhā] Friend. 10

Sakhyata [sākhyatā] The feeling of Friendship (PBS), the eighth of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 8, 9

Sama [sama] Control of the mind (PBS). One of the Bhava Pushpas, or “flowers of sanctity”. Sama is the fifth, or “resignation” (HBP). 87

Samadhana [samādhāna] Composure (PBS). That state in which a Yogi can no longer diverge from the path of spiritual progress; when everything terrestrial, except the visible body, has ceased to exist for him (HPB). 87

Sambandha [sambandha] Relation (PBS). 72

- Samsara** [samsāra] Mundane existence (PBS); the inconstant world. 21, 23, 25, 38, 50, 65, 71, 72, 84, 85, 88, 89, 91–95, 107
- Samskara** [samskāra] Lit., from Sam and Kri, to improve, refine, impress. In Hindu philosophy the term is used to denote the impressions left upon the mind by individual actions or external circumstances, and capable of being developed on any future favourable occasion even in a future birth. The Samaskara denotes, therefore, the germs of propensities and impulses from previous births to be developed in this, or the coming Janmas or reincarnations. In Tibet, Samskara is called Doodyed, and in China is defined as, or at least connected with, action or Karma. It is, strictly speaking, a metaphysical term, which in exoteric philosophies is variously defined; e.g., in Nepal as illusion, in Tibet as notion, and in Ceylon as discrimination. The true meaning is as given above, and as such is connected with Karma and its working (HPB). 66, 102
- Sankalpa** [saṅkalpa] Selection, assimilation, correspondences (PBS). 75, 78, 87
- Sankhya** [sāṅkhya] The system of philosophy founded by Kapila Rishi, a system of analytical metaphysics, and one of the six Darshanas or schools of philosophy. It discourses on numerical categories and the meaning of the twenty-five Tatvas (the forces of nature in various degrees) (HPB). Also called “atomistic school”. 5, 59, 63, 64, 102, 108, 109, 111
- Sankhya-Yoga** [sāṅkhya yōga] A system of Yoga as set forth by above school. 3, 5, 88, 89, 108
- Sankhya-Yogi** [sāṅkhya yōgī] A Yogi of Sankhya School. 4, 108, 110, 115
- Santushtaha** [santuṣṭaḥ] Contented (PBS). 104
- Sanyasa** [sanyāsa] Life of renunciation of an ascetic or Sanyasi. See Sanyasi. 59, 113

- Sanyasi** [sanyāsī] A Hindu ascetic who has reached the highest mystic knowledge; whose mind is fixed only upon the supreme truth, and who has entirely renounced everything terrestrial and worldly (HPB). 113–115
- Sarathi** [sārathi] Charioteer (PBS). 70
- Sarva-Bhava** [sarva bhāva] (Worship with) All five Bhavas. See Bhavas. 103
- Sarvajna** [sarvajña] Omniscient (PBS). The stage above Prajna. See Prajna. 65, 93, 103, 107
- Sarvani** [sarvāṇi] All (PBS). See Mayi. 94
- Sat** [sat] The one ever present Reality in the infinite world; the divine essence which IS but cannot be said to exist, as it is absolute-ness. Be-ness itself (HPB). Also used to denote Jati (genus), Kriya (act), Guna (quality) or Sambandha (relation) (PBS). 61, 72
- Sat-Chit-Ananda** [saccidānanda] Be-ness, abstract consciousness, Bliss. 60, 62
- Satatam (Satatam Kirtayantah)** [satataṁ kīrtayantaḥ] Always (Takes delight in always singing devotional songs). 106
- Sattva** [sattva] Goodness; purity; one of the three Gunas or three divisions of nature. See Guna. 66, 92, 108
- Sattvic** Pure (PBS); of the quality of Sattva, goodness or purity. 22
- Saundaryalahari** [saundaryalaharī] A hymn to Daiviprakriti by Shri Shankaracharya. 26
- Seva** [sēvā] Service. 51
- Shabda** [śabda] Sound (PBS). 85
- Shabda Brahma (Shabda-Brahman)** [śabda brahma] “The Unmanifested Logos”; The Vedas; “Ethereal Vibrations diffused throughout Space” (HPB). 60, 62, 87, 102
- Shakti** [śakti] The active female energy of the gods; in popular Hinduism, their wives and goddesses; in Occultism, the crown

of the astral light. Force and the six forces of nature synthesised. Universal Energy (HPB). 22, 100

Shambhu [śambhu] One of the names of Shiva. See Shiva. 26

Shankaracharya, (Shri) [srī śaṅkarācārya] The great religious reformer of India, and teacher of the Vedanta philosophy — the greatest of all such teachers, regarded by the Advaitas (Non-dualists) as an incarnation of Siva and a worker of miracles. He established many Mathams (monasteries), and founded the most learned sect among Brahmans, called the Smartava. The legends about him are as numerous as his philosophical writings. At the age of thirty-two he went to Kashmir, and reaching Kedaranath in the Himalayas, entered a cave alone, whence he never returned. His followers claim that he did not die, but only retired from the world (HPB). 4, 13, 16, 17, 20, 26, 31, 46, 54, 55, 77, 84, 91

Shantam Shivam Advaitam ... sa Atma [śāntam śivam advaitam ... sa ātmā] The Supreme Spirit in man is Peace, Bliss and Unity. 13, 77, 114

Shastra [śāstra] Teaching or science. 2, 8, 45, 80, 95

Shat Sampatti [ṣaṭ saṃpatti] Lit., six (spiritual) assets or acquisitions. See Artharthi. 87

Shiva [śiva] The third person of the Hindu Trinity (the Trimurti). He is a god of the first order, and in his character of Destroyer, Mightier than Vishnu, the Preserver, as he destroys only to regenerate on a higher plane (HPB). 44, 107

Shivam [śivam] Bliss. See Shantam. 13

Shloka [ślōka] The Sanskrit epic metre formed of thirty-two syllables; verses in four half lines of eight, or in two lines of sixteen syllables each (HPB). 7, 8, 10, 13–16, 20, 23, 52, 61, 63, 67, 73, 77, 90, 92, 97, 102, 103, 114

- Shravana(m)** [śravaṇam] The first of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti); in listening to the teachings of the scriptures and the glories of Bhagavan he rejoices. 8, 87, 105
- Shudra** [śūdra] The last of the four castes that sprang from Brahma's body. The "servile caste" that issued from the foot of the deity (HPB). 35, 36
- Shunyam, (Great)** [śūnyam] The neutral barrier. See Maha-Sushupti. 31
- Shvetashvatara Upanishad** [śvētāśvatara upaniṣad] An Upanishad belonging to Krishna Yajur Veda, named after the sage Shvetashvatara or one who has purified his senses. 14
- Siddhi** [siddhi] Lit., "attributes of perfection", phenomenal powers acquired through holiness by Yogis (HPB). 19, 20, 67
- Skanda** [skanda] Part (of a book). 52, 68
- Smaranam** [smaṇam] Brooding (PBS); Meditation. The third of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9
- Soham** [sōham] I am He; Thou art myself (PBS). 23, 81
- Sparsha** [sprśa] Touch (PBS). 85, 106
- Sraddha** [śraddhā] Faith in the teaching of the Vedanta and the Guru (PBS); respect, reverence. 87
- Sthita-Prajna** [sthitaprajña] One who has perceived the Supreme Reality (Brahman) in his Self (PBS). See Prajna. 16
- Sthula Sharira** [sthūla śarīra] In metaphysics, the physical body (HPB). 62, 65, 66, 75–78, 80, 96, 98
- Sukha** [sukha] Pleasure (PBS). 84, 98
- Sukshma Sharira** [sūkṣma śarīra] The dreamlike, illusive body akin to Manasarupa or "thought-body". It is the vesture of the gods, or the Dhyanis and the Devas (HPB). 16, 62, 65, 66, 75–78, 80, 96, 98
- Sushumna** [suṣumna] The solar ray — the first of the seven rays. Also the name of a spinal nerve which connects the heart with the

Brahmarandhra, and plays a most important part in Yoga practices (HPB). 19

Sushupti [suṣṭi] Deep sleep; one of the four aspects of Pranava (HPB). 76, 77

Sutratma [sūtrātmā] Lit., “the thread of spirit”; the immortal Ego, the Individuality which incarnates in men one life after the other, and upon which are strung, his countless Personalities, like beads on a string. The universal life-supporting air, Samashti Prana; universal energy (HPB). 62, 65

Svapna [svapna] Dream. 76

Svapna Avastha [svapnāvastha] Dream state of consciousness. 76

Svar Loka (Svarga) [svar lōka (svarga)] A heavenly abode, the same as Indra-Loka; the paradise on Mount Meru (HPB). 15, 62, 68, 87, 98, 100, 110

Svasvarupa-Jnanam [svasvarūpa jñānam] Knowledge of the self (PBS). 15

T

Taijasa [taijasa] Resplendent centre (PBS). The same as the Adidaiva of Bhagavad Gita, the substratum of all Devatas. Clairvoyant consciousness (PBS), one of the four states of Conscious Existence of the Vedantic classification. 17, 62, 77

Tamas [tamas] The quality of darkness, “foulness” and inertia; also of ignorance, as matter is blind. A term used in metaphysical philosophy. It is the lowest of the three gunas or fundamental qualities (HPB). 66, 92

Tanmatra [tanmātra] The types or rudiments of the five Elements; the subtle essence of these, devoid of all qualities and identical with the properties of the five basic Elements — earth, water, fire, air and ether; i.e., the tanmatras are, in one of their aspects, smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing (HPB). 61, 75, 85, 97

- Tapas** [tapas] “Abstraction”, “meditation”. “To perform tapas” is to sit for contemplation. Therefore ascetics are often called Tapasas (HPB). 8, 24, 26, 31, 67
- Tatpada** [tatpada] Parambrahma, the goal which having reached none return (PBS). 95
- Tattva** [tattva] The abstract principles of existence or categories, physical and metaphysical. Eternally existing “That”; also the different principles in Nature, in their occult meaning. Tattva Samasa is a work of Sankhya philosophy attributed to Kapila himself (HPB). 111
- THAT** The One Life. 23
- Titiksha** [titikṣā] Endurance (PBS). 87
- Turiya (Turya)** [turīya (turya)] A state of the deepest trance — the fourth state of the Taraka Raja Yoga, one that corresponds with Atma, and on this earth with dreamless sleep — a causal condition (HPB). 77
- Turiya Avastha** [turīyāvasthā] Almost Nirvanic state in Samadhi, which is itself a beatific state of the contemplative Yoga beyond this plane. A condition of the higher Triad, quite distinct (though still inseparable) from the condition of Jagrat (waking), Svapna (dreaming), and Sushupti (sleeping) (HPB). 77
- Turiya Chaitanya(m)** [turīya caitanya] The fourth life-wave, Daiviprakriti, which is the real Atma (PBS). See Maha Chaitanyam. 77, 114

U

- Uddhava** [uddhava] A devotee of Shri Krishna. 57
- Upadana** [upādāna] Material Cause; as flax is the cause of linen (HPB). 92
- Upadhi** [upādhi] Basis; the vehicle, carrier or bearer of something less material than itself; as the human body is the upadhi of its

spirit; ether the upadhi of light, etc, etc.; a mould; a defining or limiting substance (HPB). 22, 63, 64, 66, 74–80, 85, 90, 96, 108–110

Upadrashtha [upadraṣṭā] Disinterested witness (PBS). 85

Upanishad [upaniṣad] “Esoteric doctrines”, interpretations of the Vedas by the Vedanta methods (HPB). 14

Uparati [uparati] Tolerance (PBS). 87

Uttama Adhikarin [uttama adhikārin] The best of four classes of devotees, or claimants to Esoteric Wisdom; Vedantins come under this category. 86

Uttama Purusha [uttama puruṣa] Maheshvara (PBS), Supreme Spirit. 102

V

Vairagya [vairāgya] Indifference or non-attachment to worldly affairs. 115

Vaishvanara [vaiśvānara] The fire which is within the human body and by which food is digested (PBS). 14

Vaishya [vaiśya] The third of four castes whose natural duties include ploughing, protection of kine and trade. 35

Valli [valli] Lit., Creeper; in scriptures, topical compositions denoted as such. 80

Vandanam [vandanam] Obeisance to the Deity which the devotee sees in everything and everywhere. The sixth of nine stages of Devotion (Nava-Vidha Bhakti). 9

Varna [varṇa] Colour of the subtler bodies (PBS). The four chief castes named by Manu — Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra are called Chaturvarna (HPB). 7, 34–36

Vasana [vāsana] Impressions . See Samskara. 93

Vasudeva [vāsudēva] A name of Krishna, son of Vasudeva. 24, 57, 81

Vayu [vāyu] Air; the god and sovereign of the air (HPB). 100

- Veda** [vēda] The “revelation”, the scriptures of the Hindus, from the root vid “to know”, or “divine knowledge”. They are the most ancient as well as the most sacred of the Sanskrit works. To each hymn of the Rig Veda, the name of the Seer or Rishi to whom it was revealed is prefixed (HPB). 1, 2, 63, 72, 80, 87, 91–93, 102, 110
- Vedanta** [vēdānta] A mystic system of Philosophy which has developed from efforts of generations of sages to interpret the secret meanings of the Upanishads. Shankaracharya, who was the populariser of the Vedantic system, and founder of the Advaita philosophy, is sometimes called the founder of the modern school of the Vedanta (HPB). 87, 102
- Vedantic** Pertaining to Vedanta. 74, 77, 78
- Vedantin** [vēdāntin] Practitioners and philosophers of Vedanta. 64, 86, 101, 102
- Vedic** Pertaining to or, belonging to, the Vedas. 46
- Vibhuti** [vibhūti] Attributes or manifestations of the Deity. 63, 71, 99, 101
- Vidya** [vidyā] Occult Science (HPB). 50
- Vijnanamaya Kosha** [vijñānamaya kōśa] The sheath of intellect and corresponds to the faculties of the Higher Manas (HPB). 78
- Vikalpa** [vikalpa] Rejection; differentiation (PBS). 75, 78, 87
- Vishada** [viśāda] Despondency, the deeper feeling of deadness arising from the recognition of the unreality of phenomenal existence (PBS). 2, 108
- Vishva** [viśva] Objective consciousness, one of four states of Conscious Existence of the Vedantic classification. 62, 77
- Vishvamitra** [viśvāmītra] A Brahmarishi; a Vedic sage. See Rishi. 8
- Vishvanara** [viśvanara] Universal Being. 62
- Vivasvan** [vivasvān] The same as Vivasvat; the “bright One”; the Sun (HPB); the Hiranyagarbha-Brahma, the creator of our system (PBS). 7

Vrata [vrata] (Ritualistic) Austerities. 69

Vyasa [vyāsa] Revealer (Lit., amplifier) of mysteries. There were many Vyasas in Aryavarta; one was the compiler and arranger of the Vedas; another, the author of the Mahabharata. The latter was the twenty-eighth Vyasa in the order of succession (HPB). 1, 2

Y

Yajna [yajña] Sacrifice (PBS). 39, 43, 45, 66, 69, 93, 94, 97, 110, 111

Yajna Purusha (Yajnapurusha) [yajña puruṣa] He to whom Yajna is performed as a sacrifice; Bhagavan, Ishvara (PBS). 43, 97, 110, 111

Yoga [yōga] (1) One of the six Darshanas or schools of India; a school of philosophy founded by Patanjali, though the real Yoga doctrine, the one that is said to have helped to prepare the world for the preaching of Buddha, is attributed with good reasons to the more ancient sage Yajñawalkya, the writer of the Shatapatha Brahmana, of Yajur Veda, the Brihad Aranyaka, and other famous works. (2) The practice of meditation as a means of leading to spiritual liberation. Psycho-spiritual powers are obtained thereby, and induced ecstatic states lead to the clear and correct perception of the eternal truths, in both the visible and invisible universe (HPB). 2, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, 29, 54, 68, 69, 86, 88, 98, 108, 113, 115

Yoga Vasishtha [yōga vasiṣṭa] A treatise on Yoga, being the teachings on seventh Avatar of Vishnu. Yoga communicated by Sage Vasishtha to Shri Rama, the seventh Avatar of Vishnu. 95

Yoga-fire The purifying spiritual fire generated by Yoga. 14

Yogamaya (Yoga Maya) [yōgamāyā] The Light of Ishvara, Daiviprakriti, behind which Bhagavan remains unperceived. 27, 63

Yogi (Yogin) [yōgī (yōgin)] (1) One who has full control, owing to his knowledge of SELF and Self, over his bodily, intellectual and mental states, which, unable any longer to interfere with, or act upon, his Higher Ego, leave it free to exist in its original pure, and divine state. (2) Also the name of the devotee who practices Yoga (HPB). 14, 18, 39, 69, 110, 114, 115

Yuga [yuga⁴⁵] A Maha-Yuga consists of 4 Yugas, namely, Krita or Satya, Treta, Dwapara and Kali. Krita Yuga comprises 4 Charanas, Treta 3, Dwapara 2 and Kali 1. One Charana lasts 432,000 years. 71 such Maha-Yugas make up one Manvantara and 14 such Manvantaras (plus 15 Sandhyas of 4 Charanas each) make up one Kalpa or day of Brahma. We are in the 5,125th year of 432,000 years of Kali Yuga of the 28th of 71 Maha-Yugas of the 7th of 14 Manvantaras called Vaivashvata Manvantara of the 1st day of 360 days called Varaha Kalpa of the 51st year of 100 years of Brahma. 27

⁴⁵ The definition for this entry has been simplified by removing all chronological calculations. — ED.

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This book was created with $\text{\LaTeX} 2_{\epsilon}$ using *memoir* document class and compiled using XeLaTeX engine. The main text along with ISO-15919 diacritics were rendered using 12pt EB Garamond font with Lining Numbers and Semi Bold configuration, while the Devanagari text uses Noto Devanagari font.

The Theosophy emblem used on the title page was sourced from the United Lodge of Theosophists, London (theosophy-ult.org.uk) and used without any modifications. We are grateful to the London Lodge for providing a fount of online resources pertaining to all aspects of Theosophy pure and simple.

The first portrait photo of Pandit Bhavani Shankar was obtained from *Lectures on Bhagavad Gita by Pandit Bhavani Shankar, Uttarpara Theosophical Society, 1923*. It has been digitally enhanced for clarity. The second portrait photo included towards the end of the book is a digital scan of a photo framed in Maitri Bhavan, United Lodge of Theosophists, Bengaluru. A label at the back of the photo frame indi-

cates that it was taken by a P. N. Mitter in the city of Benares (modern Varanasi).

Thanks to G.K. Vale, Basavanagudi for accommodating our request to have us be the only ones to handle the photo of Pandit Bhavani Shankar during the scanning process. Given the age of the photo and its uniqueness, we minimised its exposure to the elements and handled it with surgical gloves.

While expanding the reference to Shvetashvatara Upanishad II-12-13 on p.14, Aitareya Upanishad 1-3-12 on p.74, Mandukya Upanishad Shloka 2 on p.77, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 5-9-1 on p.101 and Mandukya Upanishad Shloka 7 on p.114, we consulted various sources including advaitasharada.sringeri.net, an excellent initiative by Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri.

Thanks to Dr. Anamika Srivastava, Programme Executive, Akashvani, Lucknow for identifying the verse by Matsyendranatha quoted on p.19 as being in Sadhukkadi dialect and part of a larger corpus collectively called Sabar Mantra.

The correct phonetic pronunciation of words in the Glossary was created by cross-checking each word with *Apte, Vaman Shivaram. Revised and Enlarged Edition of Prin. V. S. Apte's The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1959.*
