



॥ विवेकचूडामणि ॥
... Vivekacūḍāmaṇi ...

AI Summary – Class 123

For Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, by Acharya Tadany Cargnin dos Santos
June 11, 2026.

Summary

śloka 121

The class focused on śloka 121 from Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, which continues Śankarācārya's definition of suṣṭi avasthā (deep sleep state). This śloka provides additional clarification and detail about the nature of deep sleep.

The Six pramāṇas (Means of Knowledge) Definition and Framework

Acharya Tadany explained that pramāṇa means "pramā-karaṇaṁ pramāṇam" - an instrument or means that generates new, accurate, and uncontradicted knowledge. He outlined the complete epistemological framework:

Term	Definition
pramatā	The knower; the one who knows
pramāṇam	The means of knowledge; the instrument
Pramiti	The process of knowing; the operation
Prameya	The object of knowledge; what is known

The Six pramāṇas in Detail

1. Pratyakṣa pramāṇa (Direct Perception)



The only direct source of knowledge among the six. It operates through sense organs (indriyāṇi) and has two types:

- **External Perception:** Perceiving the external world through eyes (seeing), ears (hearing), nose (smelling), etc.
- **Internal Perception:** Perceiving one's inner world during waking state (emotions, happiness, sadness, tiredness, energy) and dream state (manifestation of inner world based on previous direct perceptions)

2. anumāna pramāṇa (Inference)

Knowledge derived from previous experiences and perceptions through invariable relationships (vyapti). This is one-step inference.

Example: Seeing smoke and inferring the presence or previous existence of fire, based on the invariable connection between smoke and fire.

1. arthāpatti pramāṇa (Postulation/Presumption)

Two or more step inference used extensively in medical diagnosis and problem-solving. It works through:



- Gathering multiple data points (symptoms, test results)
- Analyzing evidence through experience and knowledge
- Arriving at conclusions through elimination or logical deduction

Another Example: A person claims not to eat during the day but gains weight. The logical conclusion through arthāpatti is that the person must be eating at night or when unobserved, as weight gain without food intake contradicts natural law.

1. upamāna pramāṇa (Comparison/Analogy)

Used to learn about unknown objects by comparing them to familiar ones. This method drives the mind toward something familiar to understand the unfamiliar.

Example: Explaining a zebra to someone who has never seen one: "A zebra looks like a horse but has black and white stripes throughout its body." Even without direct experience, the person can recognize a zebra when they see one.

1. Anupalabdhi pramāṇa (Non-Apprehension/Absence)

Knowledge gained through recognizing the absence or non-existence of something. This peculiar means of knowledge is used constantly in daily life.

Examples:

- In modern corporate offices with unassigned seating, recognizing an empty chair (absence of a colleague) allows you to sit there
- Finding a parking spot by looking for an empty space (absence of another car)



1. Śabda pramāṇa (Verbal Testimony/Scriptural Authority)

The most important means of knowledge for spiritual seekers. In Vedānta, it refers exclusively to:

- upaniṣads
- Prakarana Granthas
- Bhagavad Gita
- Brahma Sutra

This is the only trustworthy and reliable source that reveals knowledge of Atma (the ultimate truth).

The Limitation of Five pramāṇas

Acharya Tadany emphasized a crucial distinction:

Key Teaching: The first five pramāṇas (Pratyakṣa, anumāna, arthāpatti, upamāna, Anupalabdhi) operate exclusively within the vyāvahārika framework - the world of duality. They are tools for understanding:

- Life, relationships, emotions, and reactions
- The universe and natural world
- Governments, corporations, and international relations
- Family and social connections
- Even devotional practices (gazing at stars, invoking Bhagavan's image)

The Fundamental Limitation: All five pramāṇas require a subject-object relationship. There is always a seer (subject) perceiving, seeing, hearing, or smelling something (object). Just as you



cannot see your own eyes directly (only their reflection in a mirror), these five pramāṇas cannot objectify or reveal the ultimate reality - the seer itself.

Śabda pramāṇa: The Unique Means

Śabda pramāṇa stands apart because:

- It is the only valid means of knowledge to learn, assimilate, and manifest one's own truth
- Only the upaniṣads contain the Mahāvākyas that reveal one's true nature
- Unlike textbooks on mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, law, or astronomy that describe external subjects, Vedānta works like a mirror
-

The Mirror Analogy: The Guru handles the entire oral tradition (paramparā) with its methodology, structure, and pedagogical framework. The Śāstra removes the strong identification with manuṣya (human frame), all the costumes we wear and identify with. When you hear Mahāvākyas like "Tat Tvam Asi" (That Thou Art) or "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman), they work as a mirror, directly leading to enlightenment without requiring perception because it is self-evident. (Acharya Tadany)

Deep Sleep State (suṣupti avasthā) Analysis The Suspension of All pramāṇas

Śankarācārya explains in śloka 121 that during deep sleep:

"sarva prakāra pramiti praśāntiḥ" - All types of cognitive processes are suspended

This means:

- All six means of knowledge (pramāṇas) are suspended
- All operations of knowing (Pramiti) are suspended
- The knower (pramatā/Buddhi) continues in a dormant, non-functional, non-responding condition
- All knowing capabilities and perception capabilities are dissolved

Suspended vs. Destroyed

Acharya Tadany carefully distinguished between "suspended" and "destroyed" using a government employment analogy:

Suspension: Like a police officer or public servant who is temporarily suspended - the role is maintained, but the person is not acting in that capacity. After some time, they may return to their original position.



Destruction/Dismissal: The person is completely out of the job, permanently removed from the role.

In deep sleep, all faculties are very much present but in a dormant, "as though absent" condition. They are not destroyed, merely suspended temporarily.

The Seed State (Bija avasthā)

The śloka states: "bījātmanāvasthitirēva buddhēḥ" - The Buddhi (mind of the knower/pramatā) continues in a seed state during suṣupti.

The Universal Experience

Śankarācārya emphasizes: "kimcinna vēdmīti jagatprasiddhēḥ" - The feeling of deep sleep is universal:

"I did not know anything. I slept like a log. I dropped dead. I didn't experience anything. I didn't see anything. I didn't hear anything."

This is Pramiti - the operational aspect, the feeling of suṣupti avasthā. Śankarācārya notes this doesn't need to be taught because it is "agatprasiddhēḥ" - every human being experiences deep sleep several times every day and is already aware of it.

The Hibernation Analogy

Acharya Tadany provided an extended explanation using polar animals as an example:

Natural Hibernation in Extreme Climates

Animals inhabiting the North and South Poles (polar bears, polar turtles, snails) possess a peculiar survival mechanism:



- During winter, their metabolism, blood circulation, and normal activities drop to almost zero
- Heartbeats become almost non-existent
- If measured by ECG or EEG, they appear "as good as dead" but are still living
- This state continues for months without any food intake
- Their metabolism is naturally programmed for this survival mechanism

Connection to Nirvikalpa samādhi

Vedāntic Perspective: Acharya Tadany explained that this natural hibernation is similar to Nirvikalpa samādhi (a deep meditative state). He emphasized not to consider Nirvikalpa samādhi as something extraordinary, since "any polar bear practices that for months in a row during winter time naturally."

Human beings learn to achieve this state through yoga, but technically, hibernating animals are all in a form of Nirvikalpa samādhi - all physical activities brought down to almost zero.

Hibernation as Extended suṣupti

Acharya Tadany clarified the relationship:

Normal suṣupti	Couple of hours of deep sleep for humans (typically 30 minutes to 2 hours of actual deep sleep)
Hibernation	Extended suṣupti - intensive (very deep) and extensive (continuous for months)

The Complete Framework During Deep Sleep

During suṣupti avasthā, the entire epistemological structure is suspended:

1. pramatā (the knower) - suspended in dormant condition
2. pramāṇam (means of knowledge) - all six suspended
3. Pramiti (process of knowing) - all operations suspended
4. Prameya (object of knowledge) - absent



All are "as though absent" for the Jiva (individual self), yet they remain in seed form, ready to manifest again upon waking.

Key Takeaways

Essential Understanding:

1. The six pramāṇas form a complete epistemological framework in Vedānta
2. Five pramāṇas operate in duality and cannot reveal the ultimate reality (Atma)
3. Only Śabda pramāṇa (scriptural authority) can reveal one's true nature
4. Deep sleep demonstrates the suspension (not destruction) of all cognitive processes
5. The experience of deep sleep is universal and needs no teaching
6. Hibernation in nature parallels yogic states, showing these are natural phenomena
7. The Śāstra works as a mirror, not as a descriptive textbook