



॥ विवेकचूडामणि ॥  
... Vivekacūḍāmaṇi ...

## AI Summary – Class 125

For Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, by Acharya Tadany Cargnin dos Santos  
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### Summary

Acharya Tadany led a comprehensive discussion on philosophical concepts from Śaṅkarācārya's Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, focusing on the interpretation of Śloka 122, which presents a systematic analysis of anātmā (non-self). The verse under study was:

*dehēndriyaprāṇamano'hamādayaḥ  
sarvē vikārā viṣayāḥ sukhādayaḥ |  
vyomādibhūtānyakhilam ca viśvaṁ  
avyaktaparyantamidam hyanātmā ||122||*

The body, the senses, the vital energy, the mind, the intellect, and the ego; all modifications, all objects of perception, and emotional experiences like pleasure and pain; the gross elements starting with space, and indeed the entire universe right up to the unmanifest causal seed-state, all of this, being an object of experience (idam), is verily the Not-Self (anātmā).

### Hierarchical Framework of Anātmā

The discussion explored Śaṅkarācārya's systematic categorization of the entire manifest universe as anātmā (non-self). This framework provides a complete ontological map distinguishing the self (ātmā) from everything that is not-self.

### Primary Division:

- **Kāraṇa prapañca** (Causal realm) — The unmanifest seed-state (avyakta) from which the manifest universe emerges
- **Kārya prapañca** (Effect/Product realm) — The entire manifest universe of names and forms

### Subdivisions of Kārya Prapañca:

Within the product realm, Śaṅkarācārya identifies two fundamental categories:

1. **Bhūta prapañca** (Elemental realm) — The five basic elements (pañca mahābhūta):
  - Ākāśa (space/ether)
  - Vāyu (air)



- Agni (fire)
- Āpaḥ/Jalam (water)
- Pṛthvī (earth)

2. **Bhautika prapañca** (Realm of elementals) — All products formed by the combination and mixing of the five elements

### Further Subdivision of Bhautika Prapañca:

The bhautika prapañca (elementals) is further divided into two domains:

1. **Antara bhautika prapañca** (Internal/Subjective elementals) — The body-mind-sense complex:
  - **Deha** (physical body) — corresponding to annamaya kośa
  - **Indriya** (sense organs) — the instruments of perception and action
  - **Prāṇa** (vital energies) — corresponding to prāṇamaya kośa
  - **Manas** (mind) — corresponding to manomaya kośa
  - **Ahaṁkāra** (ego/I-sense) — corresponding to vijñānamaya kośa
  - **Ādayaḥ** (et cetera) — all other internal phenomena of similar nature
2. **Bāhya bhautika prapañca** (External/Objective elementals) — The sense objects and external world:
  - **Śabda** (sound) — object of hearing
  - **Sparśa** (touch/tactile sensation) — object of touch
  - **Rūpa** (form/color) — object of sight
  - **Rasa** (taste) — object of taste
  - **Gandha** (smell) — object of olfaction

### The Significance of Vikāra

Acharya Tadany emphasized the contextual interpretation of the term *vikāra*. In Tattvabodha, *vikāra* refers to the six modifications (ṣaḍvikāra) that the physical body undergoes: asti (existence), jāyate (birth), vardhate (growth), vipariṇamate (transformation), apakṣīyate (decay), and vinaśyati (death).

However, in the context of Vivekacūḍāmaṇi śloka 122, *vikāra* means "product" or "effect" — anything that has been produced or manifested. This includes all ornaments (products of gold), all furniture (products of wood), and indeed the entire manifest universe.

### The Interactive Field: Sukhādayaḥ

The verse mentions *sukhādayaḥ* (pleasure and so forth), referring to all emotional and sensory experiences that arise from the constant interaction between the subjective and objective



elementals. This interaction is described in Bhagavad Gītā (3.28) as *guṇāḥ guṇeṣu vartante* — the senses move among sense objects. The physical body responds to external stimuli (sweating in heat, shivering in cold), and these interactions produce the entire spectrum of human experience:

- **Icchā** (desire, longing)
- **Dveṣa** (aversion, dislike)
- **Sukha** (pleasure, happiness)
- **Duḥkha** (pain, sorrow)
- **Dhṛti** (courage, willpower)
- **Moha** (delusion)
- **Rāga** (attachment)

In Bhagavad Gītā 13.6-7, Krishna refers to this entire field as *kṣetra* (the field of experience), which encompasses all modifications (*śavikāra*) of matter and mind.

### The Significance of "Idam"

A crucial philosophical point discussed was Śaṅkarācārya's use of the word *idam* (this). In Vedāntic terminology, the entire universe consists of only two categories:

- **Aham** (I) — the subject, the consciousness principle, the seer (*dṛk*), the sentient (*śetana*)
- **Idam** (this) — the object, the seen (*dṛśya*), the insentient (*śaḍa/śetana*)

By using *idam* to describe the entire universe from the grossest element to the subtlest causal state, Śaṅkarācārya is explicitly excluding *aham* (the self) from this categorization. The term *idam* in Bhagavad Gītā 13.1 appears as *idam śarīram* (this body), referring to the entire *kṣetra*.

Everything that can be objectified, everything that can be pointed to as "this," belongs to the realm of *anātmā*.

The class also reviewed the five sense objects (*śabda*, *śparśa*, *rūpa*, *śara*, *śandha*) and discussed the nature of *idam* as non-sentient (*śaḍa*), excluding *aham* (the self) from the universe's description. This distinction forms the foundation for the discrimination (*śiveka*) between *ātmā* and *anātmā*, which is the central theme of *Śivekaśūḍāmaṇi*.

**Questions after class****Consciousness and Sentience Discussion**

Dipti raised a profound philosophical question about the nature of sentience, referencing an earlier discussion about whether stones possess consciousness. This led to an important clarification about the relationship between consciousness and matter.

**The Fundamental Inertness of Matter**

Acharya Tadany explained that the entire universe, in its essential nature, is *jaḍa* (inert) and *acetana* (non-sentient). Everything in the manifest realm — from gross elements to subtle mind — is inherently inert. This is the fundamental premise of *anātmā*. The question then arises: How does apparent sentience arise in living beings?

**The Consciousness Principle as Illuminator**

The answer lies in understanding the role of the Consciousness Principle (*Ātmā/Brahman*). Acharya Tadany employed a powerful analogy: Just as a room and all its contents remain in darkness until illuminated by light, the entire universe remains inert until enlivened by Consciousness. The light itself doesn't change the objects in the room; it merely reveals them and allows them to be known. Similarly, Consciousness doesn't transform inert matter into sentient matter; rather, it pervades (*vyāpti*), illuminates (*prakāśa*), and enlivens (*cetayati*) matter, creating the appearance of sentience.

**The Dead Body Illustration**

A stark illustration of this principle is the difference between a living body and a dead body. Both possess the same physical structure — the same elements, organs, and biological components. The crucial difference is the presence or absence of the Consciousness Principle. When Consciousness departs (at death), the body immediately becomes inert (*jaḍa*), unresponsive, and begins to decompose. This demonstrates that apparent sentience is not an inherent property of matter but is borrowed from Consciousness.

**Degrees of Response: The Tāmasic Nature**

Addressing the specific question about stones, Acharya Tadany referred to an earlier discussion about varying degrees of responsiveness in matter. A stone appears completely inert because it is predominantly *tāmasic* (dominated by the quality of inertia/*tamas*). The presence of the Consciousness Principle is less evident in predominantly *tāmasic* objects. By contrast, living beings with more *sattva* (clarity) and *rajas* (activity) show greater responsiveness, creating a more apparent manifestation of consciousness.

However — and this is crucial — this is a matter of degree of manifestation, not a difference in the essential nature of matter itself. All matter is fundamentally inert; the variation lies in how



much the Consciousness Principle is reflected or manifested through different material configurations.

### Context-Dependent Understanding

Acharya Tadany emphasized the importance of context (prakaraṇa) in Vedāntic discussions. When the question "Is Ātmā present in a stone?" is asked, the answer depends on the level of inquiry:

- **From the absolute standpoint (pāramārthika):** Consciousness pervades everything, including stones. Nothing exists apart from Brahman.
- **From the empirical standpoint (vyāvahārika):** Stones are classified as inert matter (anātmā) because they show minimal responsiveness and are predominantly tamasic.

In the context of śloka 122, Śaṅkarācārya is establishing the empirical distinction between ātmā (consciousness) and anātmā (everything else) as a pedagogical tool for discrimination (viveka). This discrimination is essential for the spiritual seeker to distinguish the eternal subject (I/aham) from the changing objects (this/idam).

### Implications for Spiritual Practice

This teaching has profound implications for sādhanā (spiritual practice). The entire universe of experience — body, senses, mind, emotions, and external objects — is to be recognized as anātmā. The practitioner must learn to dis-identify from these changing, inert phenomena and recognize their true nature as the unchanging Consciousness that illuminates all experience. This is the essence of *ātma-anātmā viveka* (discrimination between Self and not-Self), which Śaṅkarācārya identifies as the primary qualification for spiritual inquiry.