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Upanishads

The **Upanishads** are Hindu scriptures that constitute the core teachings of Vedanta. The Upanishads are the end portions of the four Vedas, and there by came to be identified with "Vedanta", which literally means the end of the Vedas. They dealt with the philosophical aspects of the Vedas and were taught in ancient India to highly qualified and selected individuals. The Upanishadic texts are part of the Shruti literature and are considered to be divine in origin. They are associated with the names of several ancient seers. Prominent among these sages were Yagnavalkya, Uddalaka Aruni, Shandilya, Aitareya, Pipplapada and Sanatkumara. The **Muktika Upanishad** contains a list of 108 canonical Upanishads and lists itself as the final one. Dara Shikoh (d. 1659), son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, translated fifty Upanishads into Persian.

The Sanskrit term upanishad derives from upa- (nearby), ni- (at the proper place, down) and sad, that is "sitting down near" a teacher in order to receive instruction. Monier-Williams adds that "according to native authorities upanishad means 'setting to rest ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the supreme spirit'. A gloss of the term upanishad based on Shankara's commentary on the Ka?ha and B?hadara?yaka Upanishads equates it with Atmavidya, that is "knowledge of the Self", or Brahnavidya "knowledge of Brahma".

Philosophy

The Upanishads speak of a universal spirit (Brahman) and of an individual soul (Atman), [12] and at times assert the identity of both. Brahman is the ultimate, both transcendent and immanent, the absolute infinite existence, the sum total of all that ever is, was, or shall be. The mystical nature and intense philosophical bent of the Upanishads has led to their explication in numerous manners, giving birth to three main schools of Vedanta. Shankara's exegesis of the Upanishads does not describe Brahman as the God in a monotheistic sense. His philosophy is named advaita, "not two" as opposed to dvaita, founded by Madhvacharya, which holds that Brahman is ultimately a personal God, to be aligned with Vishnu, or Krishna. The third major school of Vedanta is Vishishtadvaita, founded by Ramanujacharya and it has some aspects in common with the other two.

The ninth chapter of the **Taittiriya Upanishad** says:

"He who knows the Bliss of Brahman (divine consciousness), does not distress himself with the thought "why did I not do what is good? why did I do what is evil?". Whoever knows this (bliss) regards both of these as Atman (self, soul), indeed he cherishes both as Atman. Such, indeed, is the Upanishad, the secret knowledge of Brahman."

The key phrase of the Upanishads "Tat Tvam Asi" (That thou art). Vedantins believe that in the end, the ultimate, formless, inconceivable Brahman is the same as our soul, Atman. We only have to realize this through discrimination.

Verses of **Isha Upanishad** say:

**"Whoever sees all beings in the soul and the soul in all beings...
What delusion or sorrow is there for one who sees unity?
It has filled all. It is radiant, incorporeal, invulnerable...
Wise, intelligent, encompassing, self-existent,
It organizes objects throughout eternity."**

The Upanishads also contain the first and most definitive explications of the divine syllable Aum or OM, the cosmic vibration that underlies all existence. The mantra "Aum Shanti Shanti Shanti" (the soundless sound, peace, peace, peace) is often found in the Upanishads. 'Devotion to God' (Sanskrit: bhakti) is foreshadowed in Upanishadic literature, and was later realized by texts such as the Bhagavad Gita.

Below is the list of Upanishads as mentioned in Muktikopanishad. They have been categorized and placed under the respective Veda to which they belong.

Rigveda (10)

* Aitareya * Atmabodha * Kaushitaki * Mudgala * Nirvana * Nadabindu * Akshamaya * Tripura * Bahvruka * Saubhagyalakshmi

Yajurveda: (50)

* Katha * Taittiriya * Isavasya * Brihadaranyaka * Akshi * Ekakshara * Garbha * Pragnihotra * Svetasvatara * Sariraka * Sukarahasya * Skanda * Sarvasara * Adhyatma * Niralamba * Paingala * Mantrika * Muktika * Subala * Avadhuta * Katharudra * Brahma * Jabala * Turiyatita * Paramahansa * Bhikshuka * Yajnavalkya * Satyayani * Amrtanada * Amrtabindu * Kshurika * Tejobindu * DhyanaBindu * Brahnavidya * Yogakundalini * Yogatattva * Yogasikha * Varaha * Advayataraka * Trisikhibrahmana * Mandalabrahmana * Hamsa * Kalisantaraaa * Narayana * Tarasara * Kalagnirudra * Dakshinamurti * Panchabrahma * Rudrahrdaya * Sarasvatirahasya

SamaVeda: (16)

* Kena * Chandogya * Mahat * Maitrayani * Vajrasuchi * Savitri * Aruneya * Kundika * Maitreyi * Samnyasa * Jabaladarsana * Yogacudaman * Avyakta * Vasudevai * Jabali * Rudrakshajabala

Atharvaveda: (32)

* Prasna * Mandukya * Mundaka * Atma * Surya * Narada-Parivrajakas * Parabrahma * Paramahansa-Parivrajakas * Pasupatha-Brahma * Mahavakya * Sandilya * Krishna * Garuda * Gopalatapani *

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