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foot , nishat = sitting down ) translates to " sitting at the foot / feet of " , referring to the student sitting down near the teacher while receiving esoteric knowledge . Monier @-@ Williams ' Sanskrit Dictionary adds that , " According to native authorities Upanishad means ' setting to rest ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the supreme spirit . ' "

Shri Adi Shankara explains in his commentary on the Ka?ha and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that the word means ?tmavidy? , that is , " knowledge of the Self " , or Brahmanavidy? " knowledge of Brahma " . Other dictionary meanings include " esoteric doctrine " and " secret doctrine " . The word appears in the verses of many Upanishads , such as the fourth verse of the 13th volume in first chapter of the Chandogya Upanishad . Max Muller as well as Paul Deussen translate the word Upanishad in these verses as " secret doctrine " , Robert Hume translates it as " mystic meaning " , while Patrick Olivelle translates it as " hidden connections " .

= = Development = =

= = = Authorship = = =

The authorship of most Upanishads is uncertain and unknown . Radhakrishnan states , " almost all the early literature of India was anonymous , we do not know the names of the authors of the Upanishads " . The various philosophical theories in the early Upanishads have been attributed to famous sages such as Yajnavalkya , Uddalaka Aruni , Shvetaketu , Shandilya , Aitareya , Balaki , Pippalada and Sanatkumara . Women , such as Maitreyi and Gargi participate in the dialogues and are also credited in the early Upanishads .

There are exceptions to the anonymous tradition of the Upanishads and other Vedic literature . The Shvetashvatara Upanishad , for example , includes closing credits to sage Shvetashvatara , and he is considered the author of the Upanishad . Scholars believe that early Upanishads , were interpolated and expanded over time , because of the differences within manuscripts of the same Upanishad discovered in different parts of South Asia , differences in non @-@ Sanskrit version of the texts that have survived , and differences within each text in terms of the meter , the style , the grammar and the structure . The texts as they exist now is believed to be the work of many authors .

= = = Chronology = = =

Scholars are uncertain about the exact centuries in which the Upanishads were composed . The chronology of the early Upanishads is difficult to resolve , states philosopher and Sanskritist Stephen Phillips , because all opinions rest on scanty evidence and analysis of archaism , style and repetitions across texts , and are driven by assumptions about likely evolution of ideas , and presumptions about which philosophy might have influenced which other Indian philosophies . Indologist Patrick Olivelle says that " in spite of claims made by some , in reality , any dating of these documents [ early Upanishads ] that attempts a precision closer than a few centuries is as stable as a house of cards " . Some scholars have sought to analyse similarities between Hindu Upanishads and Buddhist literature to establish chronology for the Upanishads .

Patrick Olivelle gives the following chronology for the early Upanishads , also called the Principal Upanishads :

The Brhadaranyaka and the Chandogya are the two earliest Upanishads . They are edited texts , some of whose sources are much older than others . The two texts are pre @-@ Buddhist ; they may be placed in the 7th to 6th centuries BCE , give or take a century or so .

The three other early prose Upanisads ? Taittiriya , Aitareya , and Kausitaki come next ; all are probably pre @-@ Buddhist and can be assigned to the 6th to 5th centuries BCE .

The Kena is the oldest of the verse Upanisads followed by probably the Katha , Isa , Svetasvatara , and Mundaka . All these Upanisads were composed probably in the last few centuries BCE .

The two late prose Upanisads , the Prasna and the Mandukya , cannot be much older than the beginning of the common era .

Stephen Phillips places the early Upanishads in the 800 to 300 BCE range . He summarizes the current Indological opinion to be that the Brhadaranyaka , Chandogya , Isha , Taittiriya , Aitareya , Kena , Katha , Mundaka , and Prasna Upanishads are all pre @-@ Buddhist and pre @-@ Jain , while Svetasvatara and Mandukya overlap with the earliest Buddhist and Jain literature .

The later Upanishads numbering about 95 , also called minor Upanishads , are dated from the late 1st @-@ millennium BCE to mid 2nd @-@ millennium CE . Gavin Flood dates many of the twenty Yoga Upanishads to be probably from the 100 BCE to 300 CE period . Patrick Olivelle and other scholars date seven of the twenty Sannyasa Upanishads to likely have been complete sometime between the last centuries of the 1st @-@ millennium BCE to 300 CE . About half of the Sannyasa Upanishads were likely composed in 14th- to 15th @-@ century CE .

= = = Geography = = =

The general area of the composition of the early Upanishads was northern India , the region bounded on the west by the upper Indus valley , on the east by lower Ganges region , on the north by the Himalayan foothills , and on the south by the Vindhya mountain range . There is confidence about the early Upanishads being the product of the geographical center of ancient Brahmanism , comprising the regions of Kuru @-@ Panchala and Kosala @-@ Videha together with the areas immediately to the south and west of these . This region covers modern Bihar , Nepal , Uttar Pradesh , Uttarakhand , Himachal Pradesh , Haryana , eastern Rajasthan and northern Madhya Pradesh .

While significant attempts have been made recently to identify the exact locations of the individual Upanishads , the results are tentative . Witzel identifies the center of activity in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as the area of Videha , whose king , Janaka , features prominently in the Upanishad .

The Chandogya Upanishad was probably composed in a more Western than an Eastern location in Indian subcontinent , possibly somewhere in the western region of the Kuru @-@ Panchala country . Compared to the Principal Upanishads , the new Upanishads recorded in the Mukti? belong to an entirely different region , probably southern India , and are considerably relatively recent . In fourth chapter of the Kaushitaki Upanishad , a location named Kashi ( modern Varanasi ) is mentioned .

= = Classification = =

= = = Muktika canon : major and minor Upanishads = = =

There are more than 200 known Upanishads , one of which , Mukti? Upanishad , predates 1656 CE and contains a list of 108 canonical Upanishads , including itself as the last . The earliest ones such as the Brihadaranyaka and Chandogya Upanishads date to the early centuries of the 1st millennium BCE , and the latest to around the mid 2nd @-@ millennium CE during a period of Islamic invasions and political instability . Various scholars include the earliest 10 , 11 , 12 or 13 Upanishads as Mukhya ( major ) or Principal Upanishads , all composed in the 1st @-@ millennium BCE . The remainder 95 to 98 are called " minor Upanishads " , and were likely composed between the last centuries of the 1st @-@ millennium BCE and about mid 2nd @-@ millennium CE . These are further divided into Upanishads associated with Shaktism ( goddess Shakti ) , Sannyasa ( renunciation , monastic life ) , Shaivism ( god Shiva ) , Vaishnavism ( god Vishnu ) , Yoga , and S?m?nya ( general , sometimes referred to as Samanya @-@ Vedanta ) .

Some of the Upanishads are categorized as " sectarian " since they present their ideas through a particular god or goddess of a specific Hindu tradition such as Vishnu , Shiva , Shakti , or a combination of these such as the Skanda Upanishad . These traditions sought to link their texts as Vedic , by asserting their texts to be an Upanishad , thereby a ?ruti . Most of these sectarian Upanishads , for example the Rudrahridaya Upanishad and the Mahanarayana Upanishad , assert

that all the Hindu gods and goddesses are the same , all an aspect and manifestation of Brahman , the Vedic concept for metaphysical ultimate reality before and after the creation of the Universe .

= = = Mukhya Upanishads = = =

The Mukhya Upanishads can be grouped into periods . Of the early periods are the Brihadaranyaka and the Chandogya , the oldest .

The Aitareya , Kauṣītaki and Taittirīya Upanishads may date to as early as the mid 1st millennium BCE , while the remnant date from between roughly the 4th to 1st centuries BCE , roughly contemporary with the earliest portions of the Sanskrit epics . It is alleged that the Aitareya , Taittirīya , Kausitaki , Mundaka , Prasna , and Katha Upanishads show Buddha 's influence , and must have been composed after the 5th century BCE , but it could just as easily have been the other way around . It is also alleged that in the first two centuries A.D. , they were followed by the Kena , Mandukya and Isa Upanishads , but other scholars date these earlier . Not much is known about the authors except for those , like Yajñavalkya and Uddalaka , mentioned in the texts . A few women discussants , such as Gargi and Maitreyi , the wife of Yajñavalkya , also feature occasionally .

Each of the principal Upanishads can be associated with one of the schools of exegesis of the four Vedas ( shakhas ) . Many Shakhas are said to have existed , of which only a few remain . The new Upanishads often have little relation to the Vedic corpus and have not been cited or commented upon by any great Vedānta philosopher : their language differs from that of the classic Upanishads , being less subtle and more formalized . As a result , they are not difficult to comprehend for the modern reader .

The Kauṣītaki and Maitrīya Upanishads are sometimes added to the list of the mukhya Upanishads .

= = = New Upanishads = = =

There is no fixed list of the Upanishads as newer ones , beyond the Mukṭika anthology of 108 Upanishads , have continued to be discovered and composed . In 1908 , for example , four previously unknown Upanishads were discovered in newly found manuscripts , and these were named Bashkala , Chhagaleya , Arsheya and Saunaka , by Friedrich Schrader , who attributed them to the first prose period of the Upanishads . The text of three , the Chhagaleya , Arsheya and Saunaka , were incomplete and inconsistent , likely poorly maintained or corrupted .

Ancient Upanishads have long enjoyed a revered position in Hindu traditions , and authors of numerous sectarian texts have tried to benefit from this reputation by naming their texts as Upanishads . These " new Upanishads " number in the hundreds , cover diverse range of topics from physiology to renunciation to sectarian theories . They were composed between the last centuries of the 1st millennium BCE through the early modern era ( ~ 1600 CE ) . While over two dozen of the minor Upanishads are dated to pre @-@ 3rd century CE , many of these new texts under the title of " Upanishads " originated in the first half of the 2nd millennium CE , they are not Vedic texts , and some do not deal with themes found in the Vedic Upanishads .

The main Shakta Upanishads , for example , mostly discuss doctrinal and interpretative differences between the two principal sects of a major Tantric form of Shaktism called Shri Vidya upasana . The many extant lists of authentic Shakta Upanishads vary , reflecting the sect of their compilers , so that they yield no evidence of their " location " in Tantric tradition , impeding correct interpretation . The Tantra content of these texts also weaken its identity as an Upanishad for non @-@ Tantrikas . Sectarian texts such as these do not enjoy status as shruti and thus the authority of the new Upanishads as scripture is not accepted in Hinduism .

= = Association with Vedas = =

All Upanishads are associated with one of the four Vedas ? Rigveda , Samaveda , Yajurveda ( there are two primary versions or Samhitas of the Yajurveda : Shukla Yajurveda , Krishna Yajurveda

) , and Atharvaveda . During the modern era , the ancient Upanishads that were embedded texts in the Vedas , were detached from the Brahmana and Aranyaka layers of Vedic text , compiled into separate texts and these were then gathered into anthologies of Upanishads . These lists associated each Upanishad with one of the four Vedas , many such lists exist , and these lists are inconsistent across India in terms of which Upanishads are included and how the newer Upanishads are assigned to the ancient Vedas . In south India , the collected list based on Muktika Upanishad , and published in Telugu language , became the most common by the 19th @-@ century and this is a list of 108 Upanishads . In north India , a list of 52 Upanishads has been most common .

The Muktik? Upanishad 's list of 108 Upanishads groups the first 13 as mukhya , 21 as S?m?nya Ved?nta , 20 as Sanny?sa , 14 as Vaishnava , 12 as Shaiva , 8 as Shakta , and 20 as Yoga . The 108 Upanishads as recorded in the Muktik? are shown in the table below . The mukhya Upanishads are the most important and highlighted .

= = Philosophy = =

The Upanishadic age was characterized by a pluralism of worldviews . While some Upanishads have been deemed ' monistic ' , others , including the Katha Upanishad , are dualistic . The Maitri is one of the Upanishads that inclines more toward dualism , thus grounding classical Samkhya and Yoga schools of Hinduism , in contrast to the non @-@ dualistic Upanishads at the foundation of its Vedanta school . They contain a plurality of ideas .

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan states that the Upanishads have dominated Indian philosophy , religion and life ever since their appearance . The Upanishads are respected not because they are considered revealed ( Shruti ) , but because they present spiritual ideas that are inspiring . The Upanishads are treatises on Brahman @-@ knowledge , that is knowledge of Ultimate Hidden Reality , and their presentation of philosophy presumes , " it is by a strictly personal effort that one can reach the truth " . In the Upanishads , states Radhakrishnan , knowledge is a means to freedom , and philosophy is the pursuit of wisdom by a way of life .

The Upanishads include sections on philosophical theories that have been at the foundation of Indian traditions . For example , the Chandogya Upanishad includes one of the earliest known declaration of Ahimsa ( non @-@ violence ) as an ethical precept . Discussion of other ethical premises such as Damah ( temperance , self @-@ restraint ) , Satya ( truthfulness ) , D?na ( charity ) , ?rjava ( non @-@ hypocrisy ) , Daya ( compassion ) and others are found in the oldest Upanishads and many later Upanishads . Similarly , the Karma doctrine is presented in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad , which is the oldest Upanishad .

= = Development of thought = = =

While the hymns of the Vedas emphasize rituals and the Brahmanas serve as a liturgical manual for those Vedic rituals , the spirit of the Upanishads is inherently opposed to ritual . The older Upanishads launch attacks of increasing intensity on the ritual . Anyone who worships a divinity other than the Self is called a domestic animal of the gods in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad . The Ch?ndogya Upanishad parodies those who indulge in the acts of sacrifice by comparing them with a procession of dogs chanting Om ! Let 's eat . Om ! Let 's drink .

The Kaushitaki Upanishad asserts that " external rituals such as Agnihotram offered in the morning and in the evening , must be replaced with inner Agnihotram , the ritual of introspection " , and that " not rituals , but knowledge should be one 's pursuit " . The Mundaka Upanishad declares how man has been called upon , promised benefits for , scared unto and misled into performing sacrifices , oblations and pious works . Mundaka thereafter asserts this is foolish and frail , by those who encourage it and those who follow it , because it makes no difference to man 's current life and after @-@ life , it is like blind men leading the blind , it is a mark of conceit and vain knowledge , ignorant inertia like that of children , a futile useless practice . The Maitri Upanishad states ,

The performance of all the sacrifices , described in the Maitrayana @-@ Brahmana , is to lead up in the end to a knowledge of Brahman , to prepare a man for meditation . Therefore , let such man ,

after he has laid those fires , meditate on the Self , to become complete and perfect .

The opposition to the ritual is not explicit in the oldest Upanishads . On occasions , the Upanishads extend the task of the Aranyakas by making the ritual allegorical and giving it a philosophical meaning . For example , the Brihadaranyaka interprets the practice of horse sacrifice or ashvamedha allegorically . It states that the overlordship of the earth may be acquired by sacrificing a horse . It then goes on to say that spiritual autonomy can only be achieved by renouncing the universe which is conceived in the image of a horse .

In similar fashion , Vedic gods such as the Agni , Aditya , Indra , Rudra , Visnu , Brahma and others become equated in the Upanishads to the supreme , immortal and incorporeal Brahman or Atman of the Upanishads , god becomes synonymous with Self , and is declared to be everywhere , inmost being of each human being and within every living creature . The one reality or ekam sat of the Vedas becomes the ekam eva advitiam or " the one and only and sans a second " in the Upanishads . Brahman or Atman and Self realization develops , in the Upanishad , as the means to moksha ( liberation , freedom in this life or after life ) .

According to Jayatilke , the thinkers of Upanishadic texts can be grouped into two categories . One group , which includes Early Upanishads along with some Middle and Late Upanishads , were composed by metaphysicians who used rational arguments and empirical experience to formulate their speculations and philosophical premises . The second group includes many middle and later Upanishads , where their authors professed theories based on yoga and personal experiences . Yoga philosophy and practice , adds Jayatilke , is " not entirely absent in the Early Upanishads " . The development of thought in these Upanishadic theories contrasted with Buddhism , since the Upanishadic inquiry assumed there is a soul ( Atman ) , while Buddhism assumed there is no soul ( Anatta ) , states Jayatilke .

== Brahman and Atman ==

Two concepts that are of paramount importance in the Upanishads are Brahman and Atman . The Brahman is the ultimate reality and the Atman is individual self ( soul ) . Brahman is the material , efficient , formal and final cause of all that exists . It is the pervasive , genderless , infinite , eternal truth and bliss which does not change , yet is the cause of all changes . Brahman is " the infinite source , fabric , core and destiny of all existence , both manifested and unmanifested , the formless infinite substratum and from which the universe has grown " . Brahman in Hinduism , states Paul Deussen , as the " creative principle which lies realized in the whole world " .

The word Atman means the inner self , the soul , the immortal spirit in an individual , and all living beings including animals and trees . Atman is a central idea in all the Upanishads , and " Know your Atman " their thematic focus . These texts state that the inmost core of every person is not the body , nor the mind , nor the ego , but Atman or " Soul " or " Self " . Atman is the spiritual essence in all creatures , their real innermost essential being . It is eternal , it is ageless . Atman is that which one is at the deepest level of one's existence .

Atman is the predominantly discussed topic in the Upanishads , but they express two distinct , somewhat divergent themes . Some state that Brahman ( Highest Reality , Universal Principle , Being or Consciousness or Bliss ) is identical with Atman , while others state Atman is part of Brahman but not identical . This ancient debate flowered into various dual , non-dual theories in Hinduism . The Brahmasutra by Badarayana ( ~ 100 BCE ) synthesized and unified these somewhat conflicting theories , stating that Atman and Brahman are different in some respects particularly during the state of ignorance , but at the deepest level and in the state of Self realization , Atman and Brahman are identical , non-different .

The idea put forth by the Upanishadic seers that Atman and Brahman are One and the same is one of the greatest contributions made to the thought of the world .

== Illusion ==

Two different types of the non-dual Brahman or Atman are presented in the Upanishads ,

according to Mahadevan . The one in which the non @-@ dual Brahman @-@ Atman is the all inclusive ground of the universe and another in which empirical , changing universe is a form of Maya , often translated as " illusion " .

The Upanishads describe the universe , and the human experience , as an interplay of Purusha ( the eternal , unchanging principles , consciousness ) and Prakṛti ( the temporary , changing material world , nature ) . The former manifests itself as Ātman ( Soul , Self ) , and the latter as Māyā . The Upanishads refer to the knowledge of Atman as " true knowledge " ( Vidya ) , and the knowledge of Maya as " not true knowledge " ( Avidya , Nescience , lack of awareness , lack of true knowledge ) .

Hendrick Vroom explains , " the term Maya [ in the Upanishads ] has been translated as ' illusion , ' but then it does not concern normal illusion . Here ' illusion ' does not mean that the world is not real and simply a figment of the human imagination . Maya means that the world is not as it seems ; the world that one experiences is misleading as far as its true nature is concerned . " According to Wendy Doniger , " to say that the universe is an illusion ( māyā ) is not to say that it is unreal ; it is to say , instead , that it is not what it seems to be , that it is something constantly being made . Māyā not only deceives people about the things they think they know ; more basically , it limits their knowledge . "

In the Upanishads , Māyā is the perceived changing reality and it co @-@ exists with Brahman which is the hidden true reality . Maya , or " illusion " , is an important idea in the Upanishads , because the texts assert that in the human pursuit of blissful and liberating Self @-@ knowledge , it is Maya which obscures , confuses and distracts an individual .

= = Schools of Vedanta = =

The Upanishads form one of the three main sources for all schools of Vedanta , together with the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahmasutras . Due to the wide variety of philosophical teachings contained in the Upanishads , various interpretations could be grounded on the Upanishads . The schools of Vedānta seek to answer questions about the relation between atman and Brahman , and the relation between Brahman and the world . The schools of Vedanta are named after the relation they see between atman and Brahman :

According to Advaita Vedanta , there is no difference .

According to Vishishtadvaita the jīvatman is a part of Brahman , and hence is similar , but not identical .

According to Dvaita , all individual souls ( jīvatmans ) and matter as eternal and mutually separate entities .

Other schools of Vedanta include Nimbarka 's Dvaitadvaita , Vallabha 's Suddhadvaita and Chaitanya 's Acintya Bhedabheda . The philosopher Adi Sankara has provided commentaries on 11 mukhya Upanishads .

= = = Advaita Vedanta = = =

Advaita literally means non @-@ duality , and it is a monistic system of thought . It deals with the non @-@ dual nature of Brahman and Atman . Advaita is considered the most influential sub @-@ school of the Vedanta school of Hindu philosophy . Gaudapada was the first person to expound the basic principles of the Advaita philosophy in a commentary on the conflicting statements of the Upanishads . Gaudapada 's Advaita ideas were further developed by Shankara . King states that Gaudapada 's main work , Māṇḍūkya Kārikā , is infused with philosophical terminology of Buddhism , and uses Buddhist arguments and analogies . King also suggests that there are clear differences between Shankara 's writings and the Brahmasutra , and many ideas of Shankara are at odds with those in the Upanishads . Radhakrishnan , on the other hand , suggests that Shankara 's views of Advaita were straightforward developments of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutra , and many ideas of Shankara derive from the Upanishads .

Shankara in his discussions of the Advaita Vedanta philosophy referred to the early Upanishads to explain the key difference between Hinduism and Buddhism , stating that Hinduism asserts " Atman

( Soul , Self ) exists " , while Buddhism asserts that there is " no Soul , no Self " .

The Upanishads contain four sentences , the Mahāvākyas ( Great Sayings ) , which were used by Shankara to establish the identity of Atman and Brahman as scriptural truth :

" Prajñānam brahma " - " Consciousness is Brahman " ( Aitareya Upanishad )

" Aham brahmāsmi " - " I am Brahman " ( Brihadaranyaka Upanishad )

" Tat tvam asi " - " That Thou art " ( Chandogya Upanishad )

" Ayam ātmā brahma " - " This Atman is Brahman " ( Mandukya Upanishad )

Although there are a wide variety of philosophical positions propounded in the Upanishads , commentators since Adi Shankara have usually followed him in seeing idealist monism as the dominant force .

== Dvaita ==

The Dvaita school was founded by Madhvacharya . Dvaita is regarded as the best philosophic exposition of theism . Madhva , much like Adi Shankara claims for Advaita , states that his theistic Dvaita Vedanta is grounded in the Upanishads .

== Vishishtadvaita ==

The third school of Vedanta is the Vishishtadvaita , which was founded by Ramanuja . Ramanuja strenuously refuted Shankara 's works . Visishtadvaita is a synthetic philosophy bridging the monistic Advaita and theistic Dvaita systems of Vedanta . Ramanuja , just as Madhva claims for Dvaita sub @-@ school , states that Vishishtadvaita is grounded in the Upanishads .

== Similarities with Platonic thought ==

Several scholars have recognised parallels between the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato and that of the Upanishads , including their ideas on sources of knowledge , concept of justice and path to salvation , and Plato 's allegory of the cave . Platonic psychology with its divisions of reason , spirit and appetite , also bears resemblance to the three gunas in the Indian philosophy of Samkhya .

Based on these common features some scholars , most notably E.J. Urwick and M.L. West , have argued that the Ancient Greek philosophy was influenced by , and borrowed some core concepts from , the Upanishads . Various mechanisms for such a transmission of knowledge have been conjectured including Pythagoras traveling as far as India ; Indian philosophers visiting Athens and meeting Socrates ; Plato encountering the ideas when in exile in Syracuse ; or , intermediated through Persia .

However other scholars , such as Arthur Berriedale Keith , J. Burnet and A.R. Wadia , believe that the two systems developed independently . They note that there is no historical evidence of the philosophers of the two schools meeting , and point out significant differences in the stage of development , orientation and goals of the two philosophical systems . Wadia writes that Plato 's metaphysics were rooted in this life and his primary aim was to develop an ideal state . In contrast , Upanishadic focus was the individual , the self ( atman , soul ) , self @-@ knowledge , and the means of an individual 's moksha ( freedom , liberation in this life or after @-@ life ) .

== Translations ==

The Upanishads have been translated into various languages including Persian , Italian , Urdu , French , Latin , German , English , Dutch , Polish , Japanese , Spanish and Russian . The Moghul Emperor Akbar 's reign ( 1556 ? 1586 ) saw the first translations of the Upanishads into Persian . His great @-@ grandson , Sultan Mohammed Dara Shikoh , produced a collection called Oupanekhat in 1656 , wherein 50 Upanishads were translated from Sanskrit into Persian .

Anquetil Duperron , a French Orientalist received a manuscript of the Oupanekhat and translated

the Persian version into French and Latin , publishing the Latin translation in two volumes in 1801 ? 1802 as Oupneck 'hat . The French translation was never published . The Latin version was the initial introduction of Upanishadic thought to Western scholars . However , according to Deussen , the Persian translators took great liberties in translating the text and at times changed the meaning .

The first Sanskrit to English translation of the Aitareya Upanishad was made by Colebrooke , in 1805 and the first English translation of the Kena Upanishad was made by Rammohun Roy in 1816 . Colebrooke was aware of 170 Upanishads . Sadhale 's catalog from 1985 , the Upani?ad @-@ v?kya @-@ mah? @-@ ko?a lists 223 Upanishads .

The first German translation appeared in 1832 and Roer 's English version appeared in 1853 . However , Max Mueller 's 1879 and 1884 editions were the first systematic English treatment to include the 12 Principal Upanishads . Other major translations of the Upanishads have been by Robert Ernest Hume ( 13 Principal Upanishads ) , Paul Deussen ( 60 Upanishads ) , Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan ( 18 Upanishads ) , and Patrick Olivelle ( 32 Upanishads in two books ) .

= = Reception in the West = =

The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer read the Latin translation and praised the Upanishads in his main work , The World as Will and Representation ( 1819 ) , as well as in his Parerga and Paralipomena ( 1851 ) . He found his own philosophy was in accord with the Upanishads , which taught that the individual is a manifestation of the one basis of reality . For Schopenhauer , that fundamentally real underlying unity is what we know in ourselves as " will " . Schopenhauer used to keep a copy of the Latin Oupnekhet by his side and commented , It has been the solace of my life , it will be the solace of my death .

Another German philosopher , Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling , praised the mystical and spiritual aspects of the Upanishads . Schelling and other philosophers associated with German idealism were dissatisfied with Christianity as propagated by churches . They were fascinated with the Vedas and the Upanishads . In the United States , the group known as the Transcendentalists were influenced by the German idealists . These Americans , such as Emerson and Thoreau , were not satisfied with traditional Christian mythology and therefore embraced Schelling 's interpretation of Kant 's Transcendental idealism , as well as his celebration of the romantic , exotic , mystical aspect of the Upanishads . As a result of the influence of these writers , the Upanishads gained renown in Western countries .

One of the great English @-@ language poets of the 20th century , T. S. Eliot , inspired by his reading of the Upanishads , based the final portion of his famous poem The Waste Land ( 1922 ) upon one of its verses . Erwin Schrödinger , the great quantum physicist said ,

The multiplicity is only apparent . This is the doctrine of the Upanishads . And not of the Upanishads only . The mystical experience of the union with God regularly leads to this view , unless strong prejudices stand in the West .

Eknath Easwaran , in translating the Upanishads , articulates how they ... form snapshots of towering peaks of consciousness taken at various times by different observers and dispatched with just the barest kind of explanation .

Juan Mascaró states that the Upanishads represents for the Hindu approximately what the New Testament represents for the Christian , and that the message of the Upanishads can be summarized in the words , " the kingdom of God is within you " .

Paul Deussen in his review of the Upanishads , states that the texts emphasize Brahman @-@ Atman as something that can experienced , but not defined . This view of the soul and self are similar , states Deussen , to those found in the dialogues of Plato and elsewhere . The Upanishads insisted on oneness of soul , excluded all plurality , and therefore , all proximity in space , all succession in time , all interdependence as cause and effect , and all opposition as subject and object . Max Muller , in his review of the Upanishads , summarizes the lack of systematic philosophy and the central theme in the Upanishads as follows ,

There is not what could be called a philosophical system in these Upanishads . They are , in the



true sense of the word , guesses at truth , frequently contradicting each other , yet all tending in one direction . The key @-@ note of the old Upanishads is " know thyself , " but with a much deeper meaning than that of the ?????? ???????? of the Delphic Oracle . The " know thyself " of the Upanishads means , know thy true self , that which underlines thine Ego , and find it and know it in the highest , the eternal Self , the One without a second , which underlies the whole world .