

(bhūtāni) and the perceptible world of objects, emotions and thoughts (viśva), upto the unmanifest (avyakta) – all are the not-Self (anātman). *Gītā* enumerates them as the ‘kṣetra’ and gives the following list – the great elements, the ego, the intellect and also the unmanifest; the ten senses, the mind, the five objects of the senses, desires, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, fortitude – the kṣetra with its modifications has thus been briefly described.¹

The entire world within and around, up to the vāsanās, that is, the world of matter which is other than the Self, the Ātman, is anātman. This anātman is the creation of māyā due to non-apprehension of Reality. Māyā is ‘that which is not.’ All things created out of a thing which exists not, must be unreal, entirely non-existent. Though they are all non-existent, for the time being they are perceptible to us in our own delusion hence they are mere illusions.

Though the mirage in the desert can be ‘seen’, it has no reality. Similarly, the entire range of things consisting of anātman is unreal, mere whiffs of the mind’s imagination.

In order to know the Reality, all that is unreal has to be rejected, and so transcended. The next verse onwards, Śaṅkara explains the nature of the Self, the Ātman, which is to be known and attained.

¹ *Bhagavad-gītā*-13.5 & 6

