

This Consciousness in me is eternal and real (nitya). Never is there a time when It is not. Even in deep sleep, we are conscious of the nothingness. The Upaniṣad says, 'This great Truth is unborn, eternal.'¹

This great Reality which is the inner Self is something other than the subtle and the gross, come to apprehend It. This is the anxious exhortation of Śaṅkara to his students.



विकारिणां सर्वविकारवेत्ता
नित्योऽविकारो भवितुं समर्हति ।
मनोरथस्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु स्फुटं
पुनः पुनर्दृष्टमसत्त्वमेतयोः ॥ २९५ ॥

*vikāriṇāṃ sarvavikāravettā
nityo'vikāro bhavitum samarhati,
manorathasvapnasuṣuptiṣu sphuṭam
punaḥ punardrṣṭamasattvametaayoḥ. (295)*

295. *That which is the knower of all changes in all things which are liable to change, must doubtless be eternal and changeless. Again and again, the unreality of the gross and the subtle bodies is clearly perceived in one's fancy, dream and deep sleep.*

The knower of all changes must itself be changeless. The knowledge of all modifications must be beyond all modifications. The BMI are subject to change. The only changeless factor is the subject, who is the knower of all changes. The knowledge of the change must be something other than the changes. This changeless factor is constantly with us, even in deep sleep, hence It is eternal.

The gross and the subtle bodies are always the 'known' as they are constantly seen and experienced. Therefore, they are not real. Their unreality can be clearly understood by analysing

¹ *ajo nityaḥ śāśvato'yaṃ purāṇo – Kaṭhōpaniṣad-1.2.18*