

## Ode on Self

by Sri Sankaracharya

Translation by A.G. of the sonnet known as "*Atma-Khatak*". [Lit Poem of six slokas on Atma (Self)]  
Reprinted from "Theosophical Siftings" Volume 3

The Theosophical Publishing Society, England

[Page 20] I am not the body [Three in number – Sthula, Sukshma and Karana] nor the (fleeting) objects of the senses; and not to speak of a wife, a son, property or riches, I am not *Ahankāra* (Egoism), the *Pranas* [Vital airs — five in number — Pran, Apan, Vyan, Udyan and Aman] nor *Buddhi* (spiritual Ego); I am the everlasting, the witness (of what was, is or would be) the *Pratyagatmā*. I am the *Siva*.

2. Verily as the words of the wise dispel the delusion of mistaking the rope for the snake, the instruction of the *Guru* destroys the false notion of conceiving (oneself) as *Jiva* (embodied self). I am the *Siva*.

3. There is nothing in the cosmos but I. And it is in me the non-dual, and through *Maya* (illusion), the phenomenal world assumes reality like the reflection (of objects) in the mirror. I am the *Siva*.

4. As in the stupefaction of sleep even the unreal appears as real, *Mohā* (infatuation) causes this world (of objects) to shine out as real in *Atma* of the form of *Sat* (truth), *Chit* (consciousness) and *Anandam* (bliss). I am the untainted, the perfect, the everlasting, the non-dual. I am the *Siva*.

5. I am not born. I do not grow. I do not perish. These (birth, growth and death) are spoken of the body as but virtues of *Prakriti*. [Cf. Bhagavat Gita, Chaps 2 and 3, vs 20 and 27] The power to generate action belongs to (is with) the *Atma* — the *Chinmaya* — the all-consciousness — and not to *Ahankara* (embodied personality). I am the *Siva*.

6. I am not the body — what are births and deaths to me ? I am not the *Pranas* — what are hunger and thirst to me ? I am not *Chittam* (mind), grief and delusion. I have none; I am not the doer of liberation (*Moksha*) or bondage. I have none.