

Definitions

Svāmī Sadānanda Dāsa

Definitionen, typewritten sheets in German

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Brahma = √bṛh = to be great and cause greatness; the Great. In the proper sense of the word, *Brahma* means the Absolute or God. In the course of time a narrowing of meaning took place and *Brahma* became synonymous with God's formless and undifferentiated aspect (the "Undifferentiated"). The form of God, as He is in Himself, is called *Bhagavān* (bhaga + van, having bhaga; bhaga = possession, share). *Bhagavān* is the One, Who owns the following six characteristics to the greatest extent:

1. *Śrī*, beauty
2. *aiśvaryam*, majesty and mastership (√iś = to rule › iśvaram)
3. *yaśas*, glory, praise
4. *vīryam*, inner power
5. *jñānam*, knowledge, insight, realisation
6. *vairāgyam*, impartiality and lack of interest (vi + √rañj = to be without colour.

Bhagavān's modes of being differ according to the predominance of one or more of these six characteristics, i.e., all are present, but certain characteristics prevail:

1 *śrī* = Kṛṣṇa

1 + 2 *śrī* + *aiśvaryam* = Rāma

2 *aiśvaryam* = Nārāyaṇa

4 + 5 *vīryam* + *jñānam* = Nṛsiṃha

5 + 6 *jñānam* + *vairāgyam* = Śiva

Śakti = potency, ability or power ($\sqrt{\text{śak}} = \text{to be able} + \text{ti}$). Bhagavān is śaktimān (having śakti). The śakti is present in Brahma, also in its non-original meaning, but does not express itself. The [undifferentiated] Brahma and Bhagavān are both *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*.

Sat = the present participle of $\sqrt{\text{as}} = \text{to be}$; the being, existing.

Cit = root substantive of $\sqrt{\text{cit}} = \text{to think, be conscious}$.

Ānanda = reinforcing prefix \bar{a} + $\sqrt{\text{nand}} = \text{rejoice, i.e., joy, happiness}$.

The undifferentiated Brahma is *sat-cit-ānanda-mātra*, i.e., mere *sat-cit-ānanda*: Being, Knowledge and Joy (without object), whereas Bhagavān is *sat-cit-ānanda-maya*, *He* consists of *sat-cit-ānanda*, i.e., He holds the super-abundance of *sat-cit-ānanda*, and is able to convey these three qualities. *Sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* have the nature of śakti, owing to the śakti that He owns.

Sat = *svayam-siddha*, is being, rooted in itself, independence, being, which does not need anyone or anything else beyond itself.

The śakti aspect of this *sat* is called *sandhinī-śakti*, or the potency to be and to convey being, to give existence to others beyond itself.

The śakti aspect of *cit* is called *saṁvid-śakti* (*saṁvetti* = he knows, and *saṁvedayati* = conveys knowledge).

The śakti aspect of *ānanda* is called *hlādinī-śakti* (*hlādati* = he experiences joy and *hlādayati* = he makes others experience joy).

Bhagavān's śakti is in a threefold position:

1. If she is associated with Him in His complete fullness, she is called *sva-rūpa-śakti* (own-nature-śakti). She originates in Him and works towards Him; thus, she is called *ākaraṣaṇa-śakti* (prefix \bar{a} + $\sqrt{\text{krṣ}} = \text{attract immensely}$). Thus, she is centripetal.
2. If the śakti comes from Him but repels from Him, she is called *vikarṣana-śakti* (prefix *vi* + $\sqrt{\text{krṣ}} = \text{drive away, repel}$). She is thus centrifugal.
3. If she is in the position of transition between 1 and 2, she is called *taṭa-stha-śakti* (*taṭa* = shore or transition, *stha* = standing or being located).

Everything that has a direct connection with Bhagavān is formed by the first śakti. Bhagavān's Self-unfoldment is called *līlā* (play without motive, out of super-abundance of joy). That is why the first śakti is also called *līlā-śakti*, and because she is connected with the inner nature of Bhagavān Himself, she is also called *antaraṅga-śakti* (antar = inner, aṅga = form).

The second śakti shapes everything that forms a contrast to Bhagavān's intrinsic nature, everything that is *a-sat or jaḍa* (inert) and *duḥkam* (suffering). Therefore, she is also called *a-cit-śakti*. A particular aspect of Bhagavān, which is generally called *Viṣṇu*, unfolds His *līlā* within the sphere of this *a-cit-śakti* without being affected by her. This is why this second śakti is also called *bahir-aṅga-śakti* (bahir = outside, outer; aṅga = form), and Viṣṇu's *līlā*, which takes place within the world that consists of her, *bahir-aṅga-līlā*.

Because the infinite number of ātmās, who are infinitesimal units of cit, come from the third śakti, they are also called *jīva-śakti* (√jīv = to give life to), because the ātmā as *jīva* gives life to the inert (*jaḍa*) psychic and physical coverings, which consist of the material provided by the second śakti.

Another term for these three śaktis is *māyā* (√mā + yā = the one, through whom [everything] is shaped, formed; and also measured, estimated). Thus, the general meaning of the word *māyā* is form and potency, and it can be used for all three śaktis. To make a distinction, the first śakti is called *yoga-māyā* (yoga from √yuj = to join, connect; thus, yoga is a way of bringing together). The second śakti is called *mahā-māyā* (the great *māyā*), and the third *jīva-māyā*. In philosophical texts, *māyā* usually means *mahāmāyā*, the second śakti.

Relatively seldom, the word *māyā* is also used for:

1. magic, power of illusion, *śabarī*
2. disguise, *dambha*
3. grace, *kṛpā or anugraha*

The full unfoldment of reality requires all three śaktis. Since eternity, all three are coexisting simultaneously. *Pūrṇam* is the fullness of reality. *Vastu* = a thing, *vāstava vastu* = the true thing or reality on the whole, which therefore consists of:

1. God
2. His contrast, the world
3. the ātmās or jīvās

The interrelation between the three śaktis and Bhagavān, and between themselves, is called acintya bheda-a-bheda [inconceivable distinction and non-distinction]. This means that mahā-māyā, for example, can be subjected to changes without God Himself being affected.