In our previous chapters we have seen that man is a social being and also an individual, he has his dual personality, one is the earthly, temporal and phenomenal and the other one is the heavenly, infinite, eternal and noumenal. The former part is the material, the earthly part and the latter part is the divine. The earthly part is the phenomenal "ego" the everchanging, affected by causality, time and space. But another self is the true self, which is not affected by ordinary happenings and which gives him a sense of identity through numerous bodily and mental transformations. It does not change in the slow changes of the organism, in the flux or sensations, in the dissipation of ideas, or in the fading of memories. This true self, Hinduism calls it the Atman. The Atman is immortal, constant, and unchanging and is not bound by space-time. It is not only an individual self, it also has a universal quality. It is "That by which the universe is pervaded, which nothing pervades, which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine" (Pseudo San-kara: The Great Jewel of Wisdom). In this nature moreover, this true or greater Self is divine "The knowledge that Brahma and Atman are one and the same" wrote Pseudo San-kara "is true knowledge" (ibid).

Our life on the earth as human beings is a life of causality, bounded by time and space and so far we think
ourselves as separate entities the "ego" then death is our end. But we have the urge to strive; the divine spark in us which makes us aware of some which we feel as if it is not phenomenal, temporal, it is because basically we are the sons of that which is eternal, the omniscient, omnipresent. And that is the Ultimate Reality. The Taoist writer Lieh-tzu says "The source of life is death, but that which produces life never comes to an end. The origin of form is matter, but that which imparts forms has no material existence. The genesis of sound lies in the sense of hearing; but that which causes sound is never audible. The source of colour is vision; but that which produces colour never manifests itself to the eye. The origin of taste lies in the palate; but that which causes taste is never perceived by that sense". 16

Thus the Ultimate Reality the Chinese term "Tao" is the basis for the creation of the phenomenal universe. In ancient Chinese philosophy the primal meaning and undivided unity behind everything by the pulling asunder of polar opposites, out of "Tao" sprang the principles of phenomenal reality, the two poles of "yang" (light) and "yin" (darkness) which are evident throughout the whole of the universe as it appears to us. We cannot conceive of light except as the opposite of darkness, of above except as the opposite of below, of before except as the opposite of after, of goodness except as the opposite of...
evil. Our perception is conditioned by the existence of these polar opposites. Yet though yang and yin have their origin in the undivided unity, they are only active in the realm of phenomena.

In this search of polar opposites man is imprisoned. He is conscious, therefore, of a division in his soul. His deepest spiritual instinct is "to break through the polar opposites" and find again the Primal meaning (the Ultimate Reality) so that he may once again be restored to the Undivided Unity which he has lost.

According to Indian Philosophy Brahman the Supreme Self, - the Ultimate Reality - is not graspable by ordinary knowledge. Because it is above the knowledge grasped by the all sense organs "Whence all words together with the mind turn away, unable to reach It" (Taittiriya Upanishad II 4.1). The Kenah Upanishad says that Brahman cannot be expressed by speech, but by Brahman speech is expressed; that which cannot be perceived by the eye, but by which the eye is perceived; that alone known as Brahman. The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor the mind. We do not know it; we do not understand how anyone can teach it. It is different from the known. It is above the unknown. That he, who thinks that he knows Brahman, does not know because it is not known by those who know it (Kenah Upanishad I & II parts). It means Brahman is not an object of knowledge, if anybody knows Brahman as an object of knowledge, he knows only the artificial nature of Brahman and does not know the
The real nature of it. The real nature of Brahman is covered by Hiranmaya pātra (golden disc) - Isha Up. 15. Again the Katha says - "This Atman cannot be attained by the study of the Vedas or by intelligence, or by hearing of sacred books" - Katha Up. 1.2.23.

"This knowledge cannot be attained by reasoning"

(Katha Up. 1.2.9.)

Thus Brahman is declared to be indescribable in words and unknowable to the mind. To be known, a thing must be made an object. Brahman as Pure Consciousness is the eternal subject. It cannot be made an object. One must presuppose Brahman in order to know objects, therefore one cannot know it as an object. Brahman, the Substratum of all experience, cannot Itself be an object of experience. Prof. Paul Deussen says - "The descriptions of Brahman as the knowing subject with us are usually accompanied by the assertion that this knowing subject, the "knower of knowing", remains himself always unknowable, the intention being merely to deny thereby of Brahman all objective existence" -(The philosophy of the Upanishads p. 146). One cannot even say that Brahman is a subject; for a subject must have an object that it perceives.

There are the ways of acquiring knowledge namely, sense experience; reasoning and intuitive apprehension. Through senses we know the outer characters of objects, such as colour, shape, heaviness, etc. The data supplied
by the senses are then worked upon by the reason which by
process of analysis and synthesis, gives us the concep-
tual picture of the external world. Obviously, the
knowledge thus gained through mind by the application of
logic is indirect and symbolic in character. It depends
for its accuracy in the correctness of perceptions as
well as on the growth and experience of human mind. It
is useful knowledge, no doubt, as it enables us to con-
trol the working of our physical environment. But it is
not enough to give us an adequate apprehension of the
real nature of things. It is of the type of opinion,
and as such its soundness depends on the mental capacity
and interests of the individual who holds that opinion.
While all men may, therefore, have more or less the same
knowledge about the density, the colour the shape and
other outer characters of an object as perceived by the
senses. They may not have the same mental picture of it.

Besides, the sense perception gives us a direct in-
formation, however, inadequate and superficial of the
object as a whole, while the picture presented by the
reasoning faculty is one not of the whole but of its
different aspects which however wide and comprehensive
they may be, cannot in the very nature of things be as
comprehensive symbolic character of the mental picture
and is also a factor which stands in the way of its
right and adequate apprehension. We understand a thing
when we can explain its action or appearance in terms
with which we are already familiar. These terms serve as symbols and cannot in their very nature take the place of the object, however efficiently they may approach it in analogy and actual working. A rainbow may be conceived the bow of a god, it may also be conceived as a series of spectrum colours produced by the rays of the sun passing through water drops, but either of the pictures is a matter of opinion and a mental reflection of the reality without being a reality itself. Thus it is only the outer character of the external world that our senses help us to see and it is only an incomplete view of the reality which our intellects and minds enable us to conceive. While the senses supply us with the knowledge of visible qualities of objects, the logic by the processes of analysis and synthesis systematises this knowledge and helps us to handle and control the working of these objects. The senses supply us with the data, intellect gives us the explanations of what the senses perceive. Both, however, are confused to the external appearance of the objects and fail to take us to their very heart; while the data supplied by the senses are superficial, the explanations given by the mental faculties are only symbolic in character. As symbols used by intellect to explain the perceived reality are anything but the reality, it is obvious that knowledge gained through intellect cannot be true knowledge. Besides, man is not mind alone. He is feeling, emotions and will as well. And the use of mental and intellectual faculties alone for the apprehension of reality is not, therefore, adequate for
the attainment of the aim in view. The Ultimate Reality is thus something which cannot be logically proved. The Katha Upanishad, therefore says: "The Self existent Supreme Lord inflicted an injury upon the sense organs in creating them with outgoing tendencies, therefore, a man perceived only outer objects with them and not the inner Self" - Katha Up. II 1.1). The Upanishads never try to grasp the Reality or Ātman through the intellect.

The Upanishads use a term, Sākṣāt aparokṣāt (Katha Up. 1.2.23) to express truly the nature of the absolute knowledge. This is not an ordinary Pratyakṣa or perception, because there is no duality of the knower and the known in Sākṣāt aparokṣāt. Its immediacy surpasses all mediacy of the senses. We can say that here the soul perceives the soul without anything to intervene between the two. But the duality ceases to be here. It surpasses even intellectual intuition in this, that here the distinction between the subject and the object stands to be nothing. To say truly, the term, 'knowing' should not be used to the knowledge of the self, because all knowledge depends on this self-luminous light of Consciousness and act only through it. As Brahman is only chit or the pure consciousness, so nothing can be known except in and through Brahman. Yājñavalkya points out that the final source of all lights or illuminations is the Ātman. While all other lights have their setting, this light of the Ātman knows no rising or setting. It is
the Eternal Self-Luminous light of lights. All other lights fail to reveal the Atman which is the very source of them all. Hence in the attempt to reveal the Atman they can do nothing but merge in that original light and allow it to reveal itself by its own light. In other cases, the object revealed is inconscient and material and hence it is lighted by the reflected light of the mental mode, but here what is sought as the object is the original light itself and so instead of lighting it up, the reflected light simply merges itself in the original. Hence it is said that the act of mental mode applies to remove the ajñāna, but the effect does not follow from it in the terms of the Vedanta, there is Vrittivyāpti in this case, but no phalavyāpti. Some of the Advaitins say that the Sakshatkara or Sakshat sparoksha produces the vritti of "aham Brahmasmi" to the ajñāna by which Brahman seems to be covered. And the vritti removes the cover of the ajñāna, it merges in Brahman. There remains only one. No duality can be there. The Self-manifest (Svayamprakāsha) Atman then shines in its own light.

Thus Brahman cannot be comprehended in the ordinary sense of knowing. Who can know the knower of all? So we can say that Brahman knows Itself. And also we can say that Brahman does not know anything, because where there is nothing except pure Brahman, nobody would be the knower and nothing would be the known there. In this sense one can say that Brahman is unknowable. In the stage of
oneness, when duality has ceased to exist, when the individual and Brahman are found to be one and the same thing, no question of knowing arises, because the knower and that which is to be known to have coalesced. The one alone remains there. We learn the same idea of unknowability of the reality from the philosophy of Kant. He also says that we cannot know the Noumena. When we try to know the Noumena our process of knowing stops within the limitations of space, time and causality. Hence we can know only the phenomena and not the Noumena. According to him, our intellect cannot surpass the limitations of the categories and time and space. Therefore the thing-in-itself is unknowable.

The impossibility of knowing Brahman by any means has been most emphatically expressed in the famous formula employed by Yājñavalkya: "neti-neti"—not this, not this. Therefore, it is said in the Kena Upanishad that "nedam yadidamupasate" (Kena Up. 1.1.8). i.e. Brahman is not that which people worship here. Thus, it is understood that it is the phenomenal aspects of Brahman which are referred to by the word "iti" and the word "na" the phenomenal aspects of Brahman are denied. Brahman is independent of causality. Causality is nothing else than the universal rule according to which all changes in the world proceed. Where there is no change, there is no causality. No characterisation of Brahman is possible otherwise than by the denial to Him of all empirical
attributes, definitions and relations, neti, neti "not this, not this". Ārahaman is independent, as we have shown, of all limitations of space, time and cause which rule all that is objectively presented, and therefore, the entire empirical universe.

Describing the negative method, Sankara narrates a story for example, "Scriptures also tell us, how, questioned by Bāshkali, Badhva explained Ārahaman to him merely by his silence, thus - "He (Bāshkali) said, Oh Badhva, teach me (what Ārahaman is) but he (Badhva) remained silent and when he was thus questioned a second and a third time, replied - "Indeed have I told you (by my silence), but of course, you do not understand. This Self (Atman) is one from which duality has been swept away (upashanta) - Āraham Sutra-Sankara Bhashya - III 2.17).

Thus one can say that Ārahaman is unknowable, because all knowing process ceases to be there. When one thinks that he is knower, then he cannot know Ārahaman. If we are eager to use the term 'knowing' we must say that "Āraham Veda Ārahamāiva bhavati" who knows Ārahaman becomes Ārahaman. This knowing or becoming Ārahaman is not a knowledge in the ordinary sense. Here the knower, the knowing process, and the known become identified. Therefore, Ārahaman is not known by any knower but Ārahaman is knowledge itself. So Ārahaman is known to this sense.
Here we can say that Brahma knows itself. We have pointed that the nature of the Atman is self-shining (Svayamprakasha), and it is the pre-supposition of all forms of knowledge. Hence knowing means simply the removal of the illusion which makes the Atman or Brahma appear as an (other) object which is to be realized or apprehended. Here knowledge means the identity of the knower and the known.