

A Comparative Analysis of Consciousness in
Advaita Vedanta and Mainstream Western Concepts of Consciousness
By Wanda M. Woodward, Ph.D.

Abstract

Consciousness is understood as radically different in Advaita Vedanta from that in the West. Whereas most Eastern concepts of consciousness have posited for over three millennia a metaphysical basis, the discussion in the West has been fraught with schisms about the definition, origin and nature of consciousness between the disciplines of theology, philosophy, science and, most recently within the past century, psychology. This paper focuses on providing a beginning reader with salient differences and similarities between consciousness within Advaita Vedanta and traditional Western thought in the discipline of psychology. In-depth analyses would require copious and sophisticated discussion regarding various Western psychologists from the cognitive-behavioralists, humanistic-existentialists and transpersonalists, thus, it is outside the intent and limited scope of this essay.

Advaita Vedanta

The entire repertoire of Indian thought, including philosophical, religious, psychological, ethical and axiological, is sung in the Vedas, the earliest hymns having been written during the Vedic period from 1500 B.C. through 600 B.C. (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957). Advaita Vedanta is the oldest of the Vedanta schools of Hindu philosophies and the most widely accepted having been based upon the Triple Foundation of Vedanta: *Upanisads*, *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita* (Indich, 1980). While Sankara (ca. 788-820) is recognized as the sage who developed the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta into a coherent, systematic treatment, the philosophy is as old as the Vedas. Sankara was the first to develop the model within a systematic framework and, while others have propounded various positions within Advaita Vedanta, it is the views of Sankara which remain the most widely revered due to their coherence and logic.

Reality and Knowledge

In Advaita Vedanta, the *sine qua non* question around which the entire system of thought surrounds itself is: Who am I? All arguments, logical analyses and answers stem from this basic, essential question. To an Advaitin, absolute and ultimate truth is revealed in its answer. What is required is a definition of a number of key concepts understood through the lens of Advaita Vedanta.

There are two levels of reality and knowledge. At the lower level of knowledge, modified consciousness is understood to be without knowledge of reality and without knowledge of the ultimate truth. It is a dual consciousness that is ignorant *because it is dual*, mistaking the phenomenal world of subject-object dichotomy for ultimate reality. Said another way, relational consciousness mistakes what is real for what is not real. Thus, reality and knowledge are bifurcated.

At the higher level of knowledge, absolute consciousness manifests and this is the stage where reality and knowledge are one and inseparable. It is a higher level of knowledge *because it is non-dual*, when subject and object become one, seeing only oneness everywhere. When this plenary consciousness unfolds, the person understands that, ultimately, there is only one reality. The knowledge of that homogenous consciousness is the very knowledge of ultimate reality and the knowledge of one's true nature, one's authentic Self. Thus, in Advaitic thought, "reality," "knowledge," and "the Self" are one at the highest level of consciousness.

"Reality" for an Advaitin is metaphysical. Sankara held that there are three distinctions when defining what is true: the "real," "unreal" and "not-real"

(Sankaranarayanan, 1988; Deutsch, 1969). That which is “real” is uncaused, it exists in all three times (past, present and future) without interruption, and cannot be sublated, or subrated, that is, it cannot be cancelled (Deutsch, 1969). Something is “unreal” if it neither can, nor cannot, be sublated by other experience. It is self-contradictory. In other words, it can never exist nor can it ever be an object of thought such as a square circle, virgin prostitute or dry water. That which is “not-real” can be sublated by other experience and it exists sometimes, but not always. The material world is not real because it is caused, it changes and has a beginning and an end. Matter does exist and it can be an object of thought, but it is not eternal, therefore, it is not ultimately real. In this sense, Advaitins refer to the world of matter as being either “not-real” or “appearance.” Only reality is that which is uncaused, eternal, immutable and immediate, thus, there is only one ultimate reality and that is Brahman, pure consciousness. Since it can never be an object and only a subject, it can only be realized. Poonja, a 20th century Advaitin sage, admonished his students to stop objectifying, “You can never get it, It is not an object to get. You cannot objectify it, It is the subject” (Poonja, 2000, p. 220).

For Advaitic thought, ultimate reality is Brahman, or “the Self.” The Self is metaphysical, transpersonal, and beyond the ego consciousness, the latter being a dual consciousness. Brahman is absolute consciousness, without form, ubiquitous and eternal. It is pure awareness, pure consciousness, pure knowingness. That which is pure knowingness cannot doubt. This is the authentic Self whose essence is spiritual and reality itself.

Relating to ontological terms, we can say that Brahman is “time-less, unconditioned, undifferentiated oneness of being” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 19), whereas “the

Unreal is non-being” (Deutsch, 1969, p.25). In Advaita, the ontological levels, or orders of being, between non-being (the unreal) and being (reality) are distinguished by the process of sublation, or subration, which is radical and spontaneous. Subration cannot be gradual and “there might indeed be a considerable process of doubting and evaluating leading up to it, but the actual act of subration is integral and, by its nature, radical” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 17). This process, understood psychologically, is immediate whereby a contradiction is recognized between two kinds of judgments or two kinds of experiences and, because of this new knowledge, the prior object or prior experience is no longer valued as ultimate. The realization of absolute consciousness, for the Advaitin, is spontaneous, not developmental.

In Advaita Vedanta, there are two levels of knowledge: *apara vidya* and *para vidya*, lower and higher knowledge, respectively (Deutsch, 1969; Indich, 1980; Sankaranarayanan, 1988). Lower, or relational, knowledge requires Aristotelian logic to understand the phenomenal world of subject-object duality. At the higher level of knowledge, Heraclitean logic is necessary, and at the ultimate level of reality, both of these kinds of logic are transcended and sublated. In Advaitic thought, all is one, therefore, the underlying essence of *cit*, consciousness, is understood to be the only reality and the only eternal existent. Material objects are merely manifestations or images of this one consciousness. All difference and separation is sublated with this understanding, thus, at *para vidya*, higher knowledge, Aristotelian logic is sublated as well.

Classical Advaita Vedanta is interioristically hierarchical (Indich, 1980, p. 104) and has a radically distinct ontological and epistemological nature (Indich, 1980) between

apara vidya and *para vidya*. These two levels of consciousness are radically discontinuous, but not considered different (Indich, 1980, p. 52). Upon realization of Brahman, transcendent consciousness allows for the collapse of the distinctions and this non-dual consciousness is known to always be present as the underlying substratum even when ignorance places a veil over realizing its eternal and omnipresent existence. The ignorance of the ego vanishes when the ultimate truth of the Self luminates with bliss “like a lamp placed inside a jar” (Indich, 1980, p. 111). At the relative level of the *jiva* (ego) consciousness, subject and object are separate; at the transcendent level of consciousness of the Self, subject and object merge into one. When the truth of one’s nature is realized, an impersonal, tranquil bliss arises resulting in liberation from ignorance and from the bondage due to attachment to the material world. This transcendent awareness of truth and ultimately reality is best understood as a state of contemplation or meditational focus (Indich, 1980).

Jiva, Atman and Brahman

Vedanta means “end of the Vedas” and Advaita means “non-dualism.” It is an absolute monistic system of transcendental idealism which advocates for the existence of only one substrate, *Ekam Sat*, “One Being” or “One Essence,” which is the formless, eternal, immutable, ineffable, omnipresent, self-luminous, impersonal Self. This Self is called Brahman. This substrate of all that exists, the omnipresent, eternal ground of all existence, is also referred to as *saccidananda*: *sat* (being) *cit* (consciousness) and *ananda* (bliss). These are distinct, but not separate or different. Being (*sat*) is descriptive of the unified oneness; consciousness (*cit*) refers to the silent witness that is omnipresent and aware; while bliss (*ananda*) points to the ecstasy (Deutsch, 1969), the “lone splendour”

(Sankaranarayana, 1988, p. 78), the “super-excellent, trans-sensuous...of what one always has been” (Sankaranarayanan, 1988, p. 78). This plenary consciousness is called “a state of silent being” or “fullness of being” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 13) because of the expansive epistemic effect and the concomitant sense of bliss. Being a kind of spiritual experience, “Brahman is divine and the Divine is Brahman” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 13) although not as an object or as a separate deity to be worshiped. Rejecting theism, Brahman is not an object to be worshiped as is “God” in theistic traditions, nor is Brahman anthropomorphic, rather it is the ever-present reality, an immediate awareness, pure consciousness. One need not attain it because it is beginningless and endless, eternal in its shining radiance of splendor, awaiting the person to realize it. Indian philosophers tell the story of the woman who is wearing pearls around her neck, but has forgotten they are there. She searches everywhere for them and not until her friend points them out to her does she feel with her own hands that they were there all along. In her ignorance, she was unhappy, but upon realization of what was always there, she is happy. As with the Self, one need only realize what has been there all along. It is a direct experience, an immediate awareness of ultimate reality and absolute truth. The goal of life to the Advaitin is the realization of absolute consciousness, Brahman, the Self. Hence, no true self-knowledge occurs until this supreme consciousness is realized.

The Atman is the individual soul being:

the real ‘I’ of every man, his true self...which he calls ‘my’. It is what is behind all these, in the man’s innermost being...man’s true self is deep down in his recesses and is seated inside (Sankaranarayanan, 1988, p. 25)...it is not a physical object...[it] is expansive...and is co-terminous with the Supreme Reality. Being the intelligence or *cit* which makes knowledge possible, it is all-pervasive. It abides for ever; it is *sat*, pure existence in its primary nature...so it is pure existence, pure intelligence and pure bliss” (Sankaranarayanan, 1988, p. 27).

Jiva is the individual self (ego), a state of plurality consciousness when the ego has a mistaken identity believing itself to be the body. *Jiva* is unawake until the dawning of absolute consciousness at which time ordinary consciousness is sublated.

Thus, the three fundamental levels of being in ascending order are: *jiva*, Atman and Brahman. However, when viewed from the position of absolute consciousness, *jiva* is ignorance about authentic identity while Atman is not different from Brahman. Like the drop of water in the ocean, so is Atman not different from Brahman (Deutsch, 1969; Indich, 1980). The *jiva*, or what is considered the individual person, is “a combination of reality and appearance. It is ‘reality’ so far as Atman is its ground; it is ‘appearance’ so far as it is identified as finite, conditioned, relative” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 51).

Brahman is said to be *saguna* or *nirguna* although these are not separate in reality. *Saguna* Brahman is with attributes, or qualities; *nirguna* Brahman is without attributes and transcends even *saguna* Brahman even though they are not different. *Saguna* Brahman is an “objectification of determinate spiritual experience” whereas *nirguna* Brahman is “an objectification of spiritual experience without distinction or determination” (Deutsch, 1969, p. 13). Deutsch (1969) states:

...like *nirguna* Brahman, *saguna* Brahman is a state of being. It is a state of being wherein all distinctions between subject and object are harmonized. In *nirguna* Brahman all distinctions are obliterated and are overcome; in *saguna* Brahman they are integrated: a duality in unity is present here, and consequently, the power of love. *Nirguna* Brahman is a state of mental-spiritual enlightenment; *saguna* Brahman is a state of vital loving awareness (Deutsch, 1969, p. 13)

Saguna Brahman is not the highest level of transcendent experience (Deutsch, 1969, p.14), however, it does validate the plenary nature of absolute consciousness. It is the antecedent ontological experience antecedent to the ineffable intuitive knowledge of

the ultimate, *Nirguna* Brahman. In truth, *nirguna* Brahman is without any distinctions and cannot be thought because it is trans-intellectual, therefore, Advaitins speak of Brahman, particularly *nirguna* Brahman, in terms of *via negativa* as not-this, not-this (*neti neti*) (Deutsch, 1969, p.11). When known, all other forms and types of knowledge are rendered immediately as lower and unwhole.

Maya, Karma and Moksa

Sankaranarayana (1988) states that “*maya* is the finitising principle which provides the dynamics of the One appearing as the Many...*maya* makes the One that is Brahman appear as the Many that is the world” (p. 46). Because Brahman is immutable and not active, the agency which is responsible for the phenomenal world is *maya*. Whenever the thought, “I,” “me” or “mine” arises, the power of *maya* is at work (Deutsch, 1968), the *jiva* is present, and the world is misperceived as dual in nature. The power of *maya* is the activating principle able to make Brahman appear as many and through that process of appearance, the world of difference, division and separation manifests. The plurality consciousness of the *jiva* manifests a delusion that the phenomenal world is real (Sankaranarayanan, 1988) which leads to bondage, a bifurcation between *jiva* and the phenomenal world, and a life of attachment to objects. The resulting forces of conflictual feelings surface which are joy and sorrow, love and hate, greed and anger, what is considered *dukkha*, suffering. Advaitins call this the world of *samsara* (Sankaranarayanan, 1988) and one can only escape it through liberation, or freedom, from misidentification. The classic metaphors in Indian philosophy to describe *samsara* are that of the rope that appears as the snake which establishes aversion, and the mother-of-pearl that appears as silver which manifests greed. The frightened man runs from the

rope misperceiving it as a snake; the avaricious man grabs the mother-of-pearl believing erroneously that it is silver. All sorrow and joy are at the apex of this manifesting power of *maya* which conceals what is true and projects what is false. When the material world is mistaken as ultimately real, *avidya* (ignorance) from the power of *maya* surfaces.

When the *jiva*, individual self, is operative, focus is on external objects which leads to an absence of expansiveness, oneness, self-luminosity and bliss that can only be revealed upon the realization of absolute consciousness. Once absolute consciousness is realized, the notion of the individual self becomes understood as a falsity.

Karma is putatively understood in virtually all of Indian philosophy, unlike in Western philosophy, with the exception of pre-Socratic, Platonic and neo-Platonic philosophy and theology. As long as there is unliquidated karma, the *jiva* is fettered to the repeated cycles of birth and death. Karma, which relates to action, exists as long as ordinary consciousness exists, convincing one of the erroneous belief that the self is the body and the material things to which the body attaches itself (Sankaranarayanan, 1988).

This, according to Deutsch (1969),

is a process through which we come to believe in the independent self and, consequently, to deny the reality of the Self. Its root cause is *avidya*, ignorance. We are ignorant so far as we make of our physical, our biophysical, and our mental and emotional vestures something substantial, real, and ultimately valuable—without realizing that all being, reality and value are grounded in, and arise from, our true Self (p. 64).

While karma, for the most part, is not discussed critically in Indian philosophy (Deutsch, 1969), it does constitute one of the most fundamental doctrines of basis for samsara, the cycle of birth and death which is responsible for suffering. Deutsch (1969) states:

According to the doctrine of karma, everyone—as a *jiva* in bondage to the world—is conditioned and determined by his conduct, as this is enacted over a period of innumerable births, deaths, and rebirths. Every deed that one performs has its effect in the world and forms within the doer a ... (tendency) that becomes the basis for his future deeds. Karma is thus a “law” that sets forth the relation that obtains between one’s action as a *jiva* and one’s state of being (p. 67).

Liberation, or *moksa*, from *maya* is the goal of the *mumuksu*, the person longing for release from *avidya* (Sankaranarayanan, 1988). Liberation is not the result of karma (Sankaranarayanan, 1988), rather is attained through enlightenment. As Sankarayanan (1988, p. 81) states, “liberation is really being liberated from the darkness of a wrong idea; it is synonymous with the disappearance of *ajnana* [ignorance] and the dawn of true wisdom... about one’s atman and its identity with Brahman.” Once liberated, the person is free from the cycle of birth and death, therefore, incarnations are no longer necessary.

Six Pramanas

The six *pramanas*, or six valid means of knowledge, in Advaitic theory are: 1. perception, 2. comparison, 3. non-cognition, 4. inference, 5. postulation, and 6. testimony. (Deutsch, 1969, p. 69). Brief definitions, according to Advaitic theory, will be given (Deutsch, 1969, 69-75). The first three, perception, comparison and non-cognition, are considered within the locus of perceptual knowledge. Perception is the process of going out of the mind through the senses toward an object and assuming its form. Comparison is knowledge derived from judgments of similarity (a recalled object is similar to a perceived one) whereas non-cognition is knowledge derived from judgments of absence (an object is non-existent at a specific time and place). Comparison judgments are such as “A is like B” such that B is immediately perceived and is compared to A which is recalled. Non-cognition is such that “There is no A in the room” such that A would be

perceived if it existed. Inference is the attainment of knowledge due to a relation between what is inferred based on the reason or logic upon which it is based. Postulation is assuming a fact in order to make another fact intelligible. An example is seeing a man fast during the day who is overweight. It must be assumed that the man is eating at night. The last, testimony, is the garnering of knowledge by means of a reliable expert as is done through *sruti*, revelations of the Vedas where the person had direct and immediate knowledge and translated that into a poem or hymn or other writing to comprise the Vedas. The other, *smriti*, is not direct knowledge, rather it is indirect knowledge of absolute consciousness. Thus, in Advaita Vedanta, substantial weight is given to *sruti*, direct realization of plenary consciousness achieved by the sages, seers and mystics of ancient times and written down in the Vedas.

Perception and reason, to an Advaitin, are negated at ultimate states and are understood as heuristic and not ultimately real (Deutsch, 1969). Reason is accepted as a means to understand the phenomenal world, but upon realization of Brahman--the highest knowledge---reason is sublated and all knowledge other than Brahman is considered false (Deutsch, 1969). Doubt is an aspect of cognition, of *apara vidya*, but it is self-contradictory for a person to doubt the cognition that is doubting. In *Panchadasi: A Treatise on Advaita Metaphysics by Swami Vidyaranya*, the latter Advaitin sage states: “No one can doubt the fact of his own existence. Were one to do so, who could the doubter be? Only a deluded man could entertain the idea that he does not exist” (as cited in Deutsch, 1969, pp. 50-51).

Once the person attains *para vidya* through spiritual intuitive insight, all other forms are ultimately without value, but this holds only for the person who has reached the

apogee of knowledge, the absolute level of consciousness, and does not and cannot hold for the person who has not realized the Supreme Brahman (Deutsch, 1969). In other words, when operating at *apara vidya*, there is no way the mind can open to deny its own lower level knowledge, that is, to deny its own contents. Any attempt to deny the *jiva* while operating within *apara vidya* and without reference to the Absolute Brahman can only meet with failure (Deutsch, 1969) because *jiva* is co-existent with Aristotelian logic and for the *jiva* to deny itself with the use of Aristotelian logic is self-contradictory and a logical impossibility. For example, ego consciousness causes a duality consciousness, seeing A as unequal to not-A. The absolute consciousness sees A as equal to not-A, thus, for the *jiva* to see A as equal to A and not-A, it is *de facto* not modified consciousness, the *jiva*. For the *jiva*, all *pramanas* are valid means of knowledge and not until the awakening of absolute consciousness are they understood as not claiming ultimacy (Deutsch, 1969). That said, perception is the closest approximation to the nature of transcendent consciousness one can experience at the ego level of consciousness due to its immediacy (Indich, 1980).

Four States of Consciousness: Waking, Dream, Deep Sleep and Turiya

Waking, dream, deep sleep and *turiya* are the four states of consciousness recognized in Advaita Vedanta and are referred to as the four quarters of the Self (Indich, 1980) although when the fourth state, *turiya*, is reached, one rests in Samadhi, a state of complete, pure quiescence, mental equipoise and radiant bliss which is the culmination or apogee of the prior three states. In reality, *turiya* transcends all three prior states of consciousness and Brahman is realized in its state of peaceful beatitude, its resplendent, self-illuminating glory. At each successive state, something from the prior state is

sublated, cancelled out, thus, none of the three prior states is considered ultimately real. Not only are there radical hierarchical distinctions between *jivatman* and Brahman, but there are also radical distinctions between the three levels of modified consciousness: waking, dream and deep sleep. Deep sleep is not radically distinct from the fourth state, *turiya*, a state of absolute freedom, *nirguna* Brahman, *nirvikalpa Samadhi*. The person in a state of deep sleep is neither aware of internal or external objects and is said to confront ignorance, but not obliterate it (Indich, 1980; Sankaranarayanan, 1988) as occurs in *turiya*.

The Advaitin uses these three states of consciousness to emphasize the process of decreasing ignorance from waking to deep sleep. At each successive level of consciousness, there is something from the prior level that is sublated such that the closer one is to realizing Brahman, the more the consciousness becomes unified, intense, immediate and pure. The more subtle, internal and pervasive a consciousness is, the closer it is to being ultimately Real (Mahadevan in Indich, 1980, p. 15).

In the waking state, there are four mental functions or modes of the mind: sense-mind (*manas*); reason-intellect (*buddhi*); I-sense; and recollection-memory (*citta*). The sense-mind organizes experience through sense impressions made from contact with external objects and is best associated with doubt and indecision (Indich, 1980, p. 47). The *buddhi* mind is the discriminative mode and grants certitude. Through reasoning and assimilation, we use the I-sense mode which also manifests the ego. The fourth mode of the mind is recollection.

The order of waking, dream and deep sleep is concerned with the decreasing degrees of ignorance and bondage. In the dream state, Advaita Vedanta speaks of three

characteristics to distinguish it from waking consciousness. First, the person is more autonomous and free during dream consciousness since there is perception without sensation and the spatio-temporality of waking consciousness does not apply in the dream state. Even though the dreamer has some control over the dream contents, there still is identification with, and enjoyment of, the dream content due to the joy and fear from past good or bad deeds, thus, Advaitins refer to this as a state of being bound to karma. Second, the person is more interioristic, however, there remain objects which appear to be external. The dreamer is inwardly cognitive and perceives the objects which are carried from present waking state or from past lives. Third, dream contents are more subtle and unified than objects during waking consciousness.

In deep sleep, the individual has an experience of discontinuous external objects as well as internal mental contents. The individual is in a state of even more autonomy because all contents, conditions, sensations, perceptions, from both body and mind, are suspended and deep sleep provides freedom from limitations of both. The active mode in modified consciousness, both waking and dream states, is now sublated. All that remains is “a homogenous, unified and undifferentiated mass of consciousness” (Indich, 1980, p. 61) although this is “not freedom (*turiya*) itself, for in deep sleep there exists the absence of limitation and the force of ignorance but not the positive presence of non-duality, i.e., knowledge of Brahman” (Indich, 1980, p. 61).

There are generally six theories that Advaitins propose as it pertains to dreams and Sankara is said to have upheld at least five of the six (Indich, 1980, p. 83). The first account is called the “presentative” theory which treats dreams as a positive perception, rather than a memory. They argue dream content is a kind of perception of reality due to

its immediacy and directness. The second theory, referred to as “representative,” treats dreams as memories of prior perceived external objects. The third theory maintains the dream state as a state of wish fulfillment and fancy while the fourth theory argues that dreams can be prophetic. The fifth theory argues for telepathic dream content and the sixth is described as “dreams within dreams.”

The Advaitin considers the mind as nothing more than various modes and functions of modified consciousness which arise from an interaction between ignorance and the Self (Indich, 1980, p. 47). Sankara was ambiguous about whether the mind was a sense-organ or not referring to *sruti* (direct revelations) which argue for treating the mind as distinct from a sense organ and the *smritis* (indirect teachings) which state the mind is one among sense organs (Indich, 1980, p. 48). Mind is understood as one factor in the destruction of ignorance, but would not be the cause of Brahman. How then can Brahman, which is completely autonomous, absolute and unlimited, ever interact with ignorance? Advaitins use two metaphors, reflection and limitation, to account for this. Just like the reflection of the moon in the water is not the moon, so the individual *jiva* is not the highest Atman because of its limitations, yet neither is it different from Atman being a reflection of it. The individual *jiva* is dependent upon Atman, but Atman is wholly independent of *jiva*. Thus, modified consciousness is a product of, but not essentially different from, absolute consciousness. Non-dual reality only appears to be individualized when it is actually undifferentiated and serves as the eternal and omnipresent substratum once appearance is sublated. Higher consciousness is reality and truth; lower consciousness is appearance and falsity.

Ethics in Advaita Vedanta is clear: the supreme goal of life is realization and knowledge of Brahman, the Self (Indich, 1980, p. 19). Critics of Advaitins argue that Indian philosophy, and particularly Advaita Vedanta, shuns morality and is a-ethical (Deutsch, 1969). This is based on the fact that the Advaitin does not find any reason to surface, or debate, as in Western philosophy, problems of, and questions about, metaethics, normative judgments and axiology. To the person who has realized Brahman and transcended the ego consciousness, the only need is for each person to realize ultimate truth and absolute knowledge of Brahman, the true nature of the Self that is ever-present, shining and waiting to be known. No one, ultimately, can cure another person's ills so actions to help others, at the ultimate level of knowledge, are understood as being only of relative value. Each person has the responsibility to seek the true nature of their Self and to realize absolute consciousness. When attained, in that sense, she has attained salvation although to an Advaitin, attaining implies that something was lacking and salvation implies that one was lost. Since the Self is eternal and omnipresent, there is nothing to be gained or attained. It has always existed and is eternally present merely awaiting remembrance. Brahman, being full, whole and complete, has no need, nor was it ever lost; it is always present and one need only realize it. That said, however, the two epistemic and ontological levels imply that, at the highest level, axiological outcomes are inescapable.

While maturity in the West carries the idea of development with a mature personality and an ethical framework, for the Advaitin, ethical and axiological issues are solved once one realizes Brahman. When one sees oneness everywhere, when all is equal in this consciousness of oneness, what is not held dear and not valued? The radically

distinct epistemic, phenomenological and ontological realization of the Self has a co-existent value of equality of all things in life that simply does not exist at the lower level of modified consciousness, the egoic level. Additionally, when Brahman is realized, there is a concomitant non-attachment to pre-conceived ends. Desire for material possessions and worldly relations is extinguished and the person is *in* the world, but not *of* it, not in a nihilistic way, rather the *jivanmukti* is neither attached nor detached from the world. Moral judgments arise only when a person is attached to the world and sees it as ultimately real. From a philosophical standpoint, realizing Brahman means a transcendence beyond “good” and “evil,” however, from a psychological view, the realization of the Supreme precludes one from behaving or thinking immorally. For the person whose “end” is the highest good (which is self-realization), then all acts and thoughts are morally justified (Deutsch, 1969) although the *jivanmukti* is informed by love and compassion in all her/his actions and thoughts. Further, the *jivanmukti* is said not to act or enjoy, rather only to *be*, and this ontological state of consciousness is detached from any outcomes since there is the understanding that the phenomenal world is not real.

Comparisons between Consciousness in Advaita Vedanta and Western concepts of Consciousness

Any discussion of the primary differences between consciousness in Advaita Vedanta versus Western concepts of consciousness hinges on the definitions of “reality” and “knowledge.” All comparisons between the two systems of thought can be viewed through these fundamental and radical differences.

In the West, there is only one kind of knowledge that is esteemed and that is intellectual knowledge which requires Aristotelian logic: $A = A$ and $A \neq \text{not-A}$. In Advaita Vedanta, there are three levels of logic:

1. Aristotelian logic: A equals A and cannot equal not-A (*apara vidya*)
2. Heraclitean logic: A equals A and not-A (*Saguna* Brahman)
3. Anti-logic: A neither does nor does not equal not-A (*Nirguna* Brahman)

For the Advaitin, it is understood that the only way to comprehend the lower relative world is through Aristotelian logic, however, since this lower consciousness is not ultimately real, the logic does not have ultimate value. It is the means whereby modified consciousness makes sense of world that is not ultimately real and becomes irrelevant upon realization of Brahman.

At the level of *jiva*, ego consciousness, Aristotelian logic is the only means whereby the individual perceives, comprehends and finds meaning in a dual world. At the level of *saguna* Brahman, Heraclitean logic is the only means of understanding the paradoxical nature of reality. At the level of *nirguna* Brahman, both Aristotelian and Heraclitean logic are obliterated as the individual sees even beyond non-duality itself.

The concept of “truth” in the West is predicated only on observable, factual, empirical data. In Advaita Vedanta, sublation is the criteria for truth and, since modified

consciousness is sublated upon realization of Brahman, absolute consciousness is ultimately real and relational consciousness is not real. Only that which is non-sublatable is ultimately real. The Advaitin argues that Brahman is autonomous while modified consciousness is dependent upon Brahman. In other words, *jiva* is dependent upon Brahman, but Brahman is not dependent upon *jiva*.

Those Western thinkers who have not realized their true nature, Brahman, the Self, cannot comprehend or understand paradoxical logic. So for Western scientists, most of whom have never realized this transcendent state of consciousness, it is understandable that they study the various states of waking state, or what Advaitins refer to as relational or modified consciousness, the world of the ego, the individual self, and believe this is the only reality.

Advaita Vedanta explains “ignorance” through the power of maya, as stated above. Because the *jiva* mistakes what is not real for what is real, the Advaitin refers to Western lower level, modified consciousness as ignorant. Westerners explain ignorance as lack of data or facts and would also refer to the Advaitin as delusional, believing in an invisible world that is not real. Hence, the person who has realized Brahman perceives the Westerner as ignorant and delusional and the Westerner, functioning at the lower level modified consciousness, is convinced of the delusional thinking of someone who has realized Brahman! For the person who has reached absolute consciousness, the search to locate reality in the phenomenal world is not only ignorant, but fruitless and inane just as the woman who was searching frantically for her pearl necklace only to be shown that it was around her neck all the time! When referring to the Westerner who

insists on searching for consciousness through matter, Indich (1980) refers to this process, as seen through the eyes of an Advaitin, as “running around in circles” (p. 8).

Overall, the system of thought in Advaita Vedanta is parsimonious and simple whereas the Western system of thought as it pertains to consciousness is varied, discrepant, controversial, undecided, divisive and complex. Indeed, in the West, with all of its internal disagreements, one thing that is consistently agreed upon is that it is impossible to explain consciousness by means of a simple system since consciousness is perceived to be complex.

The Advaitins find the only meaningful way to designate *Nirguna* Brahman is with the via negative, *neti neti* (not this, not that), but the Western way of describing consciousness are through positive attributes. The logic for the two is totally different because the consciousness at the modified level is dual and the consciousness at the absolute level is non-dual, completely unified and homogenous. How can that which sees only oneness use a logic which is dual?

The idea of “development” so pervasive in Western psychology is not a feature of consciousness in Advaita Vedanta. The latter posits a radical, discontinuity between lower and higher consciousness, whereas the former argues for a developmental framework of consciousness, without even recognizing absolute consciousness at all.

There is a plurality of reasons for the meaning of life for a Westerner depending upon the cultural, ethnic, religious and familial environment in which the person was raised. For the Advaitin, the only meaning for life is to realize Brahman and to rid one’s self of the bondage of repeated incarnations that bring its subsequent and unavoidable pain, suffering, sorrow and death.

The nature of the universe, for a Westerner, is material and can be explained fully through the laws of nature; for the Advaitin, it is pure consciousness. Again, for the latter, all things roll up into one upon the realization of the true nature of the Self. No differences exist upon the manifestation of absolute consciousness. The “Many” are enveloped within “the One,” although they are not ultimately different or distinct. For a Westerner, since the person is functioning in the lower level of consciousness, they are unable to comprehend the oneness of everything because they do not have the spiritual intuition to grasp the true nature of Brahman.

The primary concern in Advaita Vedanta is transcendent reality and to a much lesser degree cosmology, logic and psychology. It is the opposite in the West where there is no acknowledgement of absolute consciousness, thus, focus is on the scientific validation of all things material.

Epistemology, phenomenology and ontology are all different and separate to a person of traditional Western thought. “Knowing,” “feeling,” and “being” are different concepts and require different definitions. For the Advaitin, this merely appears to be so at the lower, relative modified consciousness level, but upon realization of absolute consciousness, knowledge (*cit*, or consciousness) and feeling (*ananda*, or bliss) and being (*sat*) are all one and the same. Epistemology implies ontology which also implies phenomenology. *Saccidananda* (being, consciousness, bliss) is one. Since the awakening of Brahman allows for the non-duality of knower and known, epistemology, phenomenology, ontology, metaphysics, ethics, axiology, philosophy, psychology and science all roll up into oneness. There is no difference. All is one. This merging experience is precluded in mainstream Western thought.

In the West, there is an epidemic of attachment to material objects. In Advaitic thought, the person relinquishes attachment to the phenomenal world (Indich, 1980, p. 8) which, in turn, results in a complete re-evaluation of priorities and meaning at the relative level of existence. One might say that the Advaitin sees the phenomenal world as having only relative value since there is a certain amount of basic maintenance is required in order to sustain life. However, only minimal maintenance of the body is necessary. The West is replete with theological, philosophical and psychological theories which argue for an inherent value to be placed on the body and material things. An outline of the various Christian thinkers and Western philosophers who have argued for the divine nature of the body or the intrinsic value of the human body, respectively, is outside the scope of this article although it is important to elucidate.

The Advaitin believes there are no necessary conditions such as religious rituals, ethical conducts, scholarly books or erudition as antecedents to realizing the Self. One is liberated upon the recognition of the true nature of Brahman. Sankara did say that there are three (3) steps to realization: 1. hearing Advaitin metaphysics, 2. reflecting upon them, and 3. constant contemplation of them (Indich, 1980, p. 10), however, Sri Ramana Maharshi, the great Advaitin in the 20th century, taught, “Only the quest ‘Who am I?’ is necessary” (Maharshi, 2000, p.91) until realization dawns. A traditional Westerner is taught that only through erudition, religious rituals or adhering to religious dogma and doctrine, or seeking some external source can a person obtain “knowledge”. The Advaitin considers this a waste of time and, as mentioned prior, “running in circles” and getting nowhere. Ultimately, it is foolish and ignorant.

Concepts are central to any understanding of consciousness in traditional Western thought. To the Advaitin, concepts simply disappear like fine mist upon the beautiful vision of Brahman.

Further Comparisons of Advaita Vedanta with Traditional Western Psychology

In mainstream Western thought, there is one level of reality and one type, or level, of knowledge. Fechner (1860/1966) and Bergson (1889/1960) were amongst the first in the West to posit a metaphysical ultimacy to consciousness. Fechner, the founder of psychophysics, argued for a consciousness, a sentience, within the mineral kingdom up to the human realm. His panpsychist view of the world was comprised of a hierarchical structure of reality that culminated in God, the Absolute Reality, thus, his work to quantify the physiology of sensation was an attempt to link mental and physical phenomena. For Fechner, matter and consciousness were simply two expressions of one reality. Bergson criticized Fechner's attempts to quantify consciousness and, instead, portrayed consciousness as durable, successive, qualitative and unmeasurable. He rejected the scientific determinism of spatio-temporal consciousness along with the concept of discrete, discontinuous aspects of consciousness stating that consciousness was a continuous, unmeasurable flow. Consciousness, according to Bergson, was predicated on the ability of an organism to move freely (in Hunt, 1995, p. 98).

Fechner was overshadowed by Wundt and Titchener who were dualists arguing for a brain based consciousness that ends at physical death and a reality derived solely from the phenomenal world. Wundt (1874), considered the founder of experimental and cognitive psychology, bifurcated consciousness into various aspects such as perception, senses, feelings, volitions and studied consciousness as an objective construct. Titchener, a follower of Wundt's experimental psychology, attempted to classify the structures of the mind, studying various components of the mind and mental processes, further cementing into Western psychology the mind-body dualism.

William James was the early 20th century Western psychologist who coined the phrase “stream of consciousness” (James, 1890) to denote its continuous, moment-to-moment nature. He argued that consciousness cannot be a separate object of analysis since the observer and observed are identical and cannot be segregated without the observer impacting the outcome of the analysis. James (1902) is additionally well known for his pragmatic approach to the phenomenology of religious experience stating that the epistemology of “truth” is predicated on its usefulness to the individual. As it pertains to religion and a belief in God, he believed that, since religion serves its function as being a lived inner experience which provides ethical and moral value for a large swathe of humanity, then its usefulness is sufficient to qualify it as true. He also posited that emotion followed physiological changes and the latter was, in turn, preceded by perception (James, 1884).

Freud (1961) was the founder of modern psychology and posited a systematic theory of the tripartite “self”: ego, id and superego. In his view, the psyche is a construct that is brain centered and develops in parallel with the universal innate, biological urges of sex and aggression. Although consciousness and unconsciousness had been understood in Eastern thought for centuries, Freud was the first major Western thinker in the field of psychology to plumb these constructs and develop a model that placed primary emphasis on the power of the unconsciousness. He posited that the unconsciousness was a vast psychic realm where fears and unfulfilled wishes lie. In the dream state, consciousness is sublimated and the unconscious realm is where the person acts out their fears and desires that would otherwise be unacceptable to do so during waking consciousness in a civilized society. Clear parallels between the third type of

dream in Advaita Vedanta are apparent. Deeply atheistic, Freud denounced metaphysical beliefs of consciousness.

It would be Carl Jung who posited “the Self” which carries some parallels to absolute consciousness. Both of these constructs, like Brahman, are the apogee of human experience. In addition, they carry transpersonal aspects, moving beyond limited self-perceptions based on the phenomenal world. Jung argued that “the Self” is the unconscious total psyche around which each person constellates. It is the archetype of wholeness, order and unification (Hall & Nordby, 1973) and is central to Jungian psychology. However, unlike the Advaitin, Jung’s “Self” is not spontaneously realized (Edinger, 1973). Instead, it is a developmental process fraught with travails, does not manifest until middle age and it is rare for anyone to integrate this transcendent archetype into their consciousness while alive. For Advaitins, Brahman can be realized by anyone at any time upon realization of the nature of one’s Self, through the understanding of Ultimate Reality. In Western psychology, it is virtually impossible to become fully mature without intense introspection. In that sense, it shares similarity with Advaita Vedanta. However, unlike Western psychology which places substantial emphasis on seeking assistance toward maturation through the mediation of a psychotherapist, the Advaitin would consider this illogical, impractical and unnecessary as it pertains to attaining Self-realization. How does talking persistently about one’s problems, at the lower level of existence, create conditions to know Brahman since Brahman cannot be known by Aristotelian logic nor can it be known other than through intense meditation or introspection upon the true nature of Being? If Brahman is the realization of pure, silent awareness, how could an external verbal conversation with a psychotherapist create the

necessary conditions for Self-realization? No therapist is necessary in realizing it although meditation or the guru, in classical Advaita Vedanta, was the mediator for realizing Brahman. For Sri Ramana Maharshi, a realized Advaitin sage, no one, not even a guru, is necessary to realize Ultimate Truth. No scriptures, books or other external sources are necessary to negotiate the task. One need only ask, Where is the Self?, repeatedly until the Truth is realized.

There is a similarity between Jungian thought and Advaita Vedanta in that, once the higher consciousness is known, the ego is sublated, in other words, both Jung's "Self" and Brahman, are supraordinate to the lower level ego consciousness (Edinger, 1973). Individuation is a process of greater levels and stages of integration, according to Jung, whereas Advaita Vedanta speaks of a spontaneous awakening. Jung would say that the ego is less mature (implying a spectrum) while the Advaitin would refer to the ignorance of modified consciousness (implying a radical epistemic and ontological shift).

The dream state, for Jung, was a far richer psychic content than was for Freud. The former saw dream consciousness as the realm of the archetypal world and, hence, replete with archetypal symbols from the collective unconscious. Archetypes are unknown and unknowable, but express themselves through primordial images or symbols and carry psychic energy with them (Hall & Nordby, 1973). As such, they are imbued with various phenomenological contents. The Mother archetype, for instance, carries a nurturing, loving, compassionate emotional content and the Hero archetype exemplifies courage and noble action. Parallel with Advaita Vedanta are the attributes of Brahman which, in its religious aspect, denotes the various aspects of the deity and where all the different gods of the Hindu religion come into play. They are not separate gods as many

try to mistakenly portray the Hindu religion as polytheistic, rather they are the plurality of attributes of plenary consciousness, of Brahman, the consciousness of Oneness. Jungian thought and Advaita Vedanta both would say that the dream state is not ultimately real, but Jung would place far more value upon it believing that analysis of the contents of one's dreams allows access to the collective unconscious which is attempting to convey some meaning to the dreamer (Hall & Nordby, 1973).

Broadly interpreted, dreams in Jungian psychology share similarities between all but perhaps the sixth type of dream in Advaita Vedanta. Jung would say some dreams are the third type, wish fulfillment or fear based, but the archetypal dreams could as well be a kind of prophetic or telepathic dream, as in the fourth and fifth types listed. It would be difficult to imagine Jung denying that dreams could be the first or second type as well, presenting as a positive perception of the present or representative of memories of the past. It is unknown how Jungian theory would respond to the sixth type of "dreams within dreams."

Although not psychologists, Kierkegaard (1946) and Heidegger (1959) are Western philosophers who both argued, albeit expressed differently, for the supremacy of inner phenomenological experience which comprises ultimate ontological essence. Heidegger urged for "meditative thinking" (in Hunt, 1995, p. 231) while Kierkegaard believed passionately that transcendent consciousness, his third and final stage of consciousness called the "religious stage," is "realized in existence" and is "not a philosophical doctrine which desires to be intellectually grasped and speculatively understood" (in Jolivet, 1946, p. 172). This primacy of subjective experience may be interpreted as closer to the immediacy of the "isness," or the immediate presence of

absolute consciousness, as written about in Advaita Vedanta. While Kierkegaard referred to the religious stage as the realm of “facing” God, the Advaitin would refer to this as the realization of Brahman, the Self. Some Hindus would, however, refer to Brahman as God, although not as anthropomorphic or as an individual entity. Knowledge, awe and bliss would be aspects of both experiences.

Today, psychology remains a strongly divided field between those such as Sperry, Pribram and Dennett (in Hunt, 1995, pp. 52-61) who advocate for the computational basis of the brain and a neural basis for consciousness versus those who believe consciousness has a metaphysical basis (Wilber, 1977, 1981, 2000; Goleman, Tart, Kornfield, Walsh & Vaughan, all in Walsh & Vaughan, 1980; Cook-Greuter, 1994) whose work is substantially informed by their knowledge of Eastern psychology and philosophy, but also by Westerners in the humanistic-existentialist tradition, Maslow, Rogers, May and Frankl, and implicitly or explicitly by the transpersonalist, Assagioli. As such, the current thinkers in the field of psychology are more closely aligned with consciousness as understood by the Advaitin, with ultimate states of consciousness as existing beyond the relational consciousness of the ego.

In the Western camp, the computational theorists of the mind and the cognitive-behavioralists believe that consciousness, knowledge and reality are all different and separate. Western thinkers in the field of psychology hold two radically different and distinct definitions of “reality” and “knowledge.” In Western thought, reality is based on the empirical validity of the phenomenal world. This results in a pervasive Western axiological system whereby objectivity, certainty, predictability, consistency and quantity vastly overshadow the value of subjectivity, mystery, uncertainty, spontaneity and quality.

Western epistemology is based upon the notion that only the material world, the visible world, is real and all else is unreal. Therefore, in Western mainstream thought, consciousness is brain centered and, simplistically speaking, the mind and all its mental processes are caused by a neural network in the brain. Only the waking state of consciousness is real, what Heinz (1988) calls “consensus reality” to connote the paradigm decided upon by the majority of people. All other forms are invalidated, i.e., not “real,” such as psychosis, intuition, dreams, shamanism, ESP, near death phenomenon and out-of-body consciousness. Traditional Western scientific thought does not acknowledge absolute consciousness and evolutionary consciousness. Even though the brain evolves, although mental processes and even the personality develops and matures across the life span, consciousness itself is not acknowledged as evolving.

There are four great sayings Vedantins rely on when comparing relative and absolute consciousness: Brahman is consciousness (*prajnanam Brahma*); I am Brahman (*aham Brahmasmi*); Thou Art That (*tat tvam asi*); and this Atman is Brahman (*aham Atma Brahma*). Because this blissful consciousness is understood as One without Many, it is without distinctions or limitations. That which is without limitations is also full and whole. This consciousness creates a system where there is a psyche of well-being. The consciousness also is transcendent, blissful and in a state of awe, so it is religious. It encompasses a system of thought and a way of life, therefore, it is a philosophical system. Because it is an actual experience, it is understood to be scientifically validated through its phenomenological truth. Last, it is ethical and axiological because the result of the realization of Brahman places equal value on all that exists from minerals to plants to animals and the entire world. If the only thing that is eternal is this substratum of

consciousness, then all that exists emanates from that, thus, all is equally precious and valued. Since Brahman is ubiquitous, each person is equally that consciousness. Thus, the egalitarian epistemic foundation that results from awakening to its realization automatically creates a metaethical and normative ethical stance that has little tension with the phenomenal world. Advaita Vedanta philosophy sees no necessary schism between philosophy, psychology, religion, ethics, axiology and science. All are linked in an interdependent system of coherent thought. When the definition of reality is predicated on matter as exists in the Western scientific world, however, consciousness results in a bifurcation, a mind-body dualism, where the ego is understood to be the body. All division, separation and difference arise from this premise. This split evidences itself in the schism between Western concepts of cognition, affect and conation and also in the overall irreconcilable division between science and religion.

For the Advaitin, transcendent consciousness is an *experience* of reality, a phenomenological and epistemological eternal truth resulting in a radically distinct ontological outcome. This is understood as: 1. a state of consciousness that is trans-intellectual (Sankaranarayanan, 1988), 2. ultimate Truth and Reality, 3. complete knowledge where nothing else of value remains to be known (Deutsch, 1969), 4. a state of plenary bliss (Sankaranarayanan, 1988), 5. an experience of oneness, of expansive consciousness, without a second (Deutsch, 1969; Indich, 1980). One who has realized Ultimate Reality, the Self, embodies *ekatvam anupasyatah*, oneness everywhere seen. It is pure and simple, a “witness consciousness” where “all differences disappear in a unitive integral consciousness...a condition of *being*, not of *knowing*” (Sankaranarayanan, 1988, p. 34). This first person account of subject merging with object into a unified

consciousness is an epistemic framework radically distinct from Western concepts of consciousness. The consciousness studied, understood and validated for Westerners is modified, or relational, consciousness, what Advaitins refer to as *apara vidya*.

Consciousness in the West is studied as a separate object from the person who is studying it and results oftentimes in an understanding where consciousness is nothing more than what Dennett (1991) refers to as an “incidental by-product of computational capacity” (in Hunt, 1995). As such, consciousness is limited and dissipates upon physical death.

Advaitins would say that Westerners are not studying consciousness *per se*, rather they are studying the mind and its lower level of knowledge *from the consciousness of the lower level of knowledge*. In other words, to “study” consciousness is an oxymoron to a person who has realized Brahman since, upon realization of the Self, the One, there is no object separate from the subject to study! The experience and realization of Brahman, the Self, the Supreme knowledge, precludes that person who has realized Brahman from studying consciousness. To “study,” as is understood in the Western academic sense, implies three things: 1. there is a knower and a known, 2. there is something lacking, and 3. there is something waiting to be known or revealed. This is inane and unreal to one who has realized absolute consciousness, the Self. Upon realization of the Supreme Truth and Reality, Brahman, the knower and known have merged into One; there is nothing lacking and no need since Brahman is full, whole and complete; and all that is ultimately valuable is revealed and known, shining brilliantly in all its self-effulgence and bliss. Thus, *only one who has not realized Brahman is “studying” consciousness!*

Advaitic theory does not discount that various aspects of the mind such as intellect, perception and intention exist *per se*, but since the mind is merely one mode or

function of consciousness (Indich, 1980), then the theory would not consider it as ultimately real, nor as having ultimate value. Cognition, desire and conation are all modes of the mind which arise when the Self interfaces with ignorance. This process of interface, where the *jivatman* is ignorant of Brahman, is understood as superimposition. It is the consciousness of falsity and error due to *maya*, illusion. Just as we see a rope and are fooled into thinking it is a snake, so does ignorance prevent us from transcending the power of *maya* which keeps the mind attached to the dichotomous world of objects, the world of appearance.

In conclusion, while the consciousness of the Western theorists and scientists is radically different from consciousness of Advaitins, the most salient disagreement lies in the fact that the West argues for the primacy and ultimacy of ordinary waking consciousness and denies the reality of all other states or levels while Advaitins reject this, stating that relational consciousness is not ultimately real nor has ultimate value and the only reality and only truth is absolute consciousness, Brahman, the Self.

It reveals to whoever it chooses, you do not make the choice to know the Self.
 You must be so beautiful that the Self falls in love with you and reveals itself.
 That is how I express these things, you are not to do anything. You must be so
 beautiful that It attracts Itself to Itself and in doing so reveals itSelf to ItSelf.

----Sri H.W.L. Poonja, *The Truth Is*

The lover is the beloved.
 The subject of your search is the object,
 And so you will never find it.
 The only way to love Self
 Is to Be It!

----Sri H.W.L. Poonja, *The Truth Is*

The Self is only one. If limited, it is the ego. If unlimited, it is Infinite and
 is the Reality.

----Sri Ramana Maharshi, *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*

The Heart is not physical; it is spiritual....The Heart is the center of all....Brahman is the Heart. The Self is the Heart. The Heart is none other than Brahman.

---Sri Ramana Maharshi, *Talks with Ramana Maharshi*

References

- Bergson, H. (1960). *Time and free will: An essay on the immediate data of consciousness*. New York: Harpers & Brothers. (Original published in 1889).
- Cook-Greuter, S. (1994). Rare forms of self-understanding in mature adults. In M.E. Miller & S.R. Cook-Greuter (Eds.), *Transcendence and mature thought in adulthood: The further reaches of adult development* (pp. 119-146). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Dennett, D. (1991). *Consciousness explained*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Deutsch, E. (1969). *Advaita Vedanta: A philosophical reconstruction*. Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Edinger, E. (1973). *Ego and archetype*. Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books.
- Fechner, G. (1966). *Elements of psychophysics*. (H.E. Adler, Trans.; D.H. Howes & E.G. Boring, Eds.). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston. (Original published in 1860).
- Freud, S. (1961). The ego and the id. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (Vol. 19, 3-66). London: Hogarth Press. (Original work published 1923).
- Goleman, D. (1980). Perspectives on psychology, reality, and the study of consciousness. In R.N. Walsh & F. Vaughan (Eds.), *Beyond ego: Transpersonal dimensions in psychology* (pp. 29-35). Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher.
- Hall, C.S. & Nordby, V.J. (1973). *A primer of Jungian psychology*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Heinze, R.I. (1988). *Trance and healing in Southeast Asia today*. Bangkok, Thailand:

- White Lotus.
- Hunt, H.T. (1995). *On the nature of consciousness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Indich, W. M. (1980). *Consciousness in Advaita Vedanta*. Delhi, India: Indological.
- James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology* (Vols. 1 & 2). New York: Dover.
- James, W. (1902). *The varieties of religious experience*. Garden City, NJ: Dolphin Books.
- James, W. (1884). What is an emotion? *Mind*, (9), 188-205.
- Jolivet, R. (1946). *Introduction to Kierkegaard*. (W.H. Barber, Trans.). New York: E. P. Dutton.
- Kornfield, J. (1980). Meditation: Aspects of theory and practice. In R.N. Walsh & F. Vaughan (Eds.), *Beyond ego: Transpersonal dimensions in psychology* (pp. 150-153). Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher
- Maharshi, Sri R. (2000). *Talks with Ramana Maharshi: On realizing abiding peace and happiness*. Carlsbad, CA: Inner Directions Foundation.
- Poonja, Sri H.W.L. (2000). *The truth is*. York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser.
- Radhakrishnan, S. & Moore, C. A. (Eds.) (1957). *A sourcebook in Indian philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Sankaranarayanan, P. (1988). *What is Advaita?* Bombay, India: Associated Advertisers & Printers.
- Shastri, H.P. (Trans.). (1956). *Panchadasi: A treatise on Advaita metaphysics of Swami Vidyananda*. London: Shanti Sadan, 1956.
- Tart, C. (1980). The systems approach to states of consciousness. In R.N. Walsh & F.

- Vaughan (Eds.), *Beyond ego: Transpersonal dimensions in psychology* (pp. 115-118). Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher.
- Titchener, E. B. (1909). *Lectures on the experimental psychology of the thought-processes*. New York: MacMillan Company.
- Walsh R.N. & Vaughan, F. (1980). What is a person? In R.N. Walsh & F. Vaughan (Eds.), *Beyond ego: Transpersonal dimensions in psychology* (pp. 53-62). Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher.
- Wilber, Ken. (1977). *The spectrum of consciousness*. Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House.
- Wilber, Ken. (1981). *Up From Eden: A transpersonal view of human evolution*. New York: Shambhala.
- Wilber, Ken. (2000). *Integral psychology*. New York: Shambhala.
- Wundt, W. M. (1874). *Grundzuge der physiologischen psychologie*. [Principles of physiological psychology]. (R.H. Wozniak, Ed.). Leipzig, Germany: Verlag Von Wilhelm Englemann.