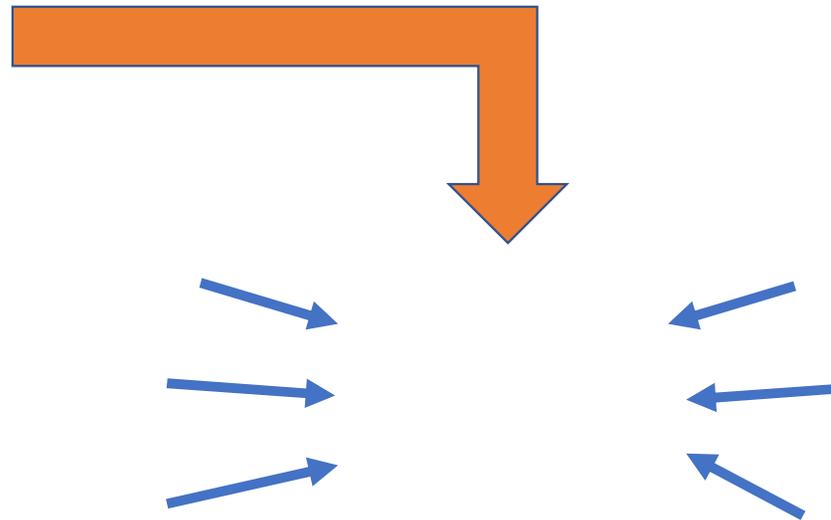


## Cognition of objects – Advaita -1

What IS is an ineffable IS-ness. *Brahman* Alone IS.  
Objects do not exist.

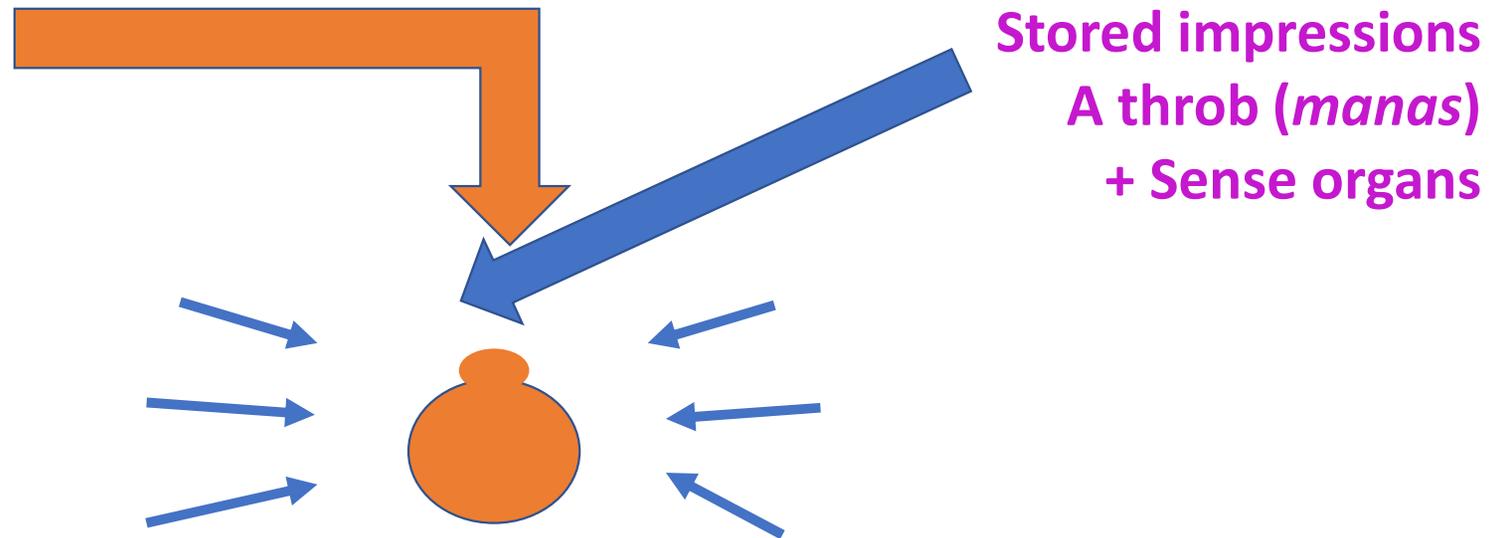
*brahman* = Awareness = Consciousness



## Cognition of objects – Advaita -2

With the first thought of 'I,' a 'me' and a world are co-created. The stored impressions project an 'object' out there. If there is no 'I' thought, there is no world. Objects appear to exist when 'seen' via intellect + senses.

*brahman* = Awareness = Consciousness



# Cognition as per Advaita

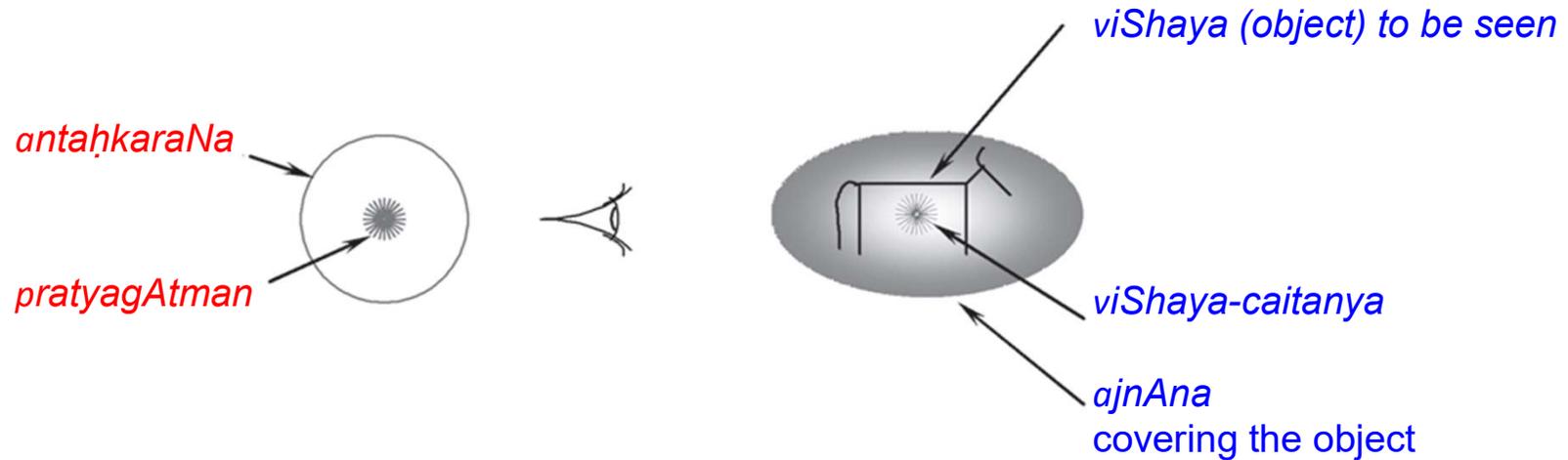
- “Awareness” (= Brahman) always functions in the “Now.” It has no history / memory. (Hence no ‘Evolution’ of cognition)
- What all ‘exists’ is only Brahman. Objects do not ‘exist.’
- An I-thought generates and is illuminated by Awareness. The illuminated ‘thought’ is the mind. It assumes subjective internalized ‘I’-ness. It projects itself via the sense organs towards external ‘others’ and assumes a form of an ‘object’.
- The ‘external object’ is then ‘cognized’ in a specific ‘form and name’ depending on ‘prior impressions’ carried in the mind.

# Cognition Happens in Ignorance Hence Always Erroneous!

- There is no subject who cognizes nor an object to be cognized. Whatever Is, is. This is Advaita.
  - Brahman is Verily One without a second (chAndogya Up 6.7.1).
- Individual (*jIva*) and the World (*jagat*) are the products of Illusion.
  - Hence they are both cognized so long as a man is in a state of ignorance (Verse 37, dRig dRisya viveka).
- Consciousness and Illusory power are beginningless (Verse 13.19, Bhavad-Gita).

# As per Vedanta Paribhasha - I

**BEFORE PERCEPTION:** The object is covered by *ajnAna* and is therefore not seen

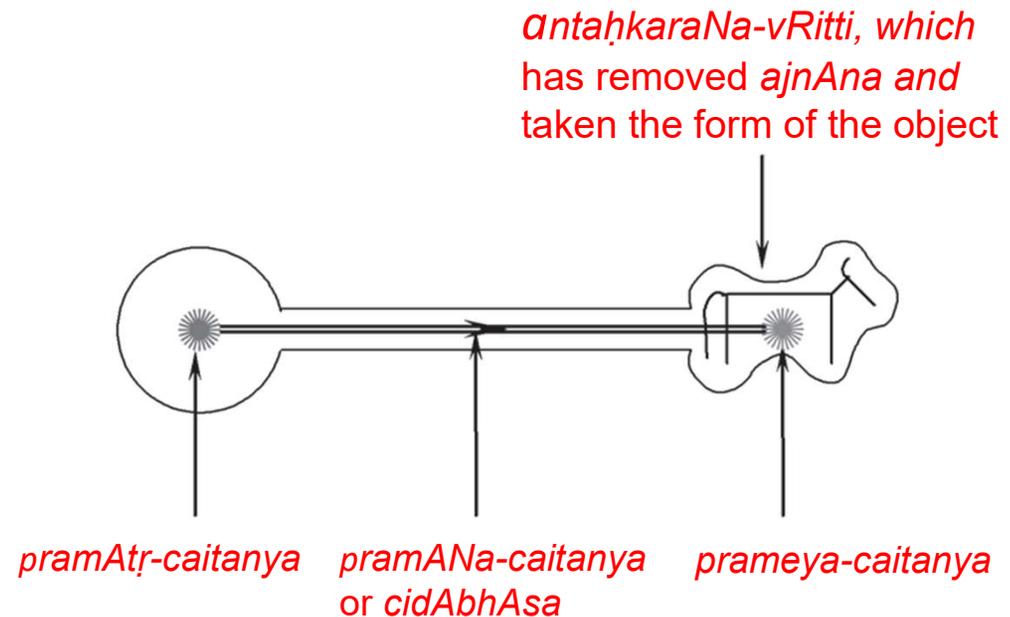


(After Swami Bhajanananda, P B, Feb 2010, p: 201)

# As per Vedanta Paribhasha - II

## DURING PERCEPTION:

The *antaḥkaraNa* goes out, removes the *ajnAna* covering the object, and takes the form of the object. Simultaneously, the light of *pratyagAtman* also goes out as *cidAbhAsa* and becomes one with the consciousness within the object



(After Swami Bhajanananda, P B, Feb 2010, p: 201)



# Vision as per Neuroscience

- Reflected light from an “existing” object reaches the eye. It is split into two paths – one path goes via amygdala for ‘reflex action’ and another through various layers of visual areas in the brain.
- If light is received from the same object without any movement, the neurons get ‘adapted’ (assume no danger to life) and stop seeing the object! Eyes view through saccades of swaths.
- Final ‘Cognition’ takes place after inputs from other senses are integrated and compared with stored information (memory).
- Brain normally lags behind (by  $\sim 0.25$  sec) in recognition and functions mostly by ‘feed forward’ and reacts to the incoming signal.

# Cognition of Objects -- Neuroscience and Advaita

## Comparison of Pathways:

