

Introduction to Yoga Philosophy

7: Key Doctrines of Yoga (4)

Prof. K. S. Arjunwadkar

Synoptic Contents of *Yogasutra* Part Four

- (1) Types of miraculous powers: derived from birth, medicines, incantations, penance, and meditation. [1] The first four accrue from the flooding of elements in the same way as water flows into the farm when it is unblocked. [2-3] A Yogin can create slave minds in these types operating in many bodies. [4-5] Difference between the mind in the first four types and the last type: presence and absence of the stock of actions (*karmashaya*). [6]
- (2) Types of action-stocks: white, black, neither. The last type belongs to the Yogin. [7] Manifestations of latent impressions (*vasanas*), howsoever distant, are in keeping with the maturity of the action stock. [9] These impressions, being founded on the animal urge to live, are beginningless (*anadi*). [10] They are eliminated with the elimination of their supports: causes, results and the storehouse (mind). [11]
- (3) Things exist in typical forms according as they are past, present and future, because their properties differ with the paths of time. Only present properties are manifest. Properties are constituted of 'qualities', manifest or otherwise. [12-13]
- (4) Arguments against the idealist view (*Vijnanavada* – a Buddhist school): Objects exist apart from their visions. [14-17]
- (5) Arguments leading to the existence of self as observer apart from the mind. [18-21] Explanation of cognitive operations of mind: it is 'coloured' by the observer and the observed. [22-23] But the fact remains that, being of a composite nature, it exists for another, the observer. [24]
- (6) The discriminate ponders over his plight – past, present and future. These thoughts are resolved when he matures. The mind then clings to discrimination and liberation with occasional cognitions of other objects in the interstices of deep meditation, which too are eventually disabled and eliminated. [25-28]
- (7) When the practitioner stops to retain even the discrimination, he enters the stage of highest *samadhi* called 'the cloud of piety' (*dharma megha*), which leads to the total elimination of *kleshas* and *karmans*. [29-30] Then knowledge, bereft of all impurities, becomes all-pervading. [31] Then the qualities (*gunas*), left with nothing to do, come to the end of all sequential operations. [32-33]
- (8) This state is liberation (*kaivalya*) which is defined as the dissolution of the qualities or the repose of consciousness (*purusha*) in itself. [34]

This part of *Yogasutra*, after the first six *sutras* dealing with issues arising from the earlier part, takes up the exposition of core subjects of liberation. The first of these is the concept of action stock (accumulated past actions in invisible form). It is founded on the basic animal urge to live and operates through countless latent impressions of past lives. Actions are meritorious (white), sinful (black) or neither. They can be eliminated by attacking their supports: causes (*likedharma*, *adharma*), results (pleasure, pain) and the storehouse (mind). Incidentally, *Yogasutra* argues out the existence of objects in an unmanifest form even in the past and the future; for it is not possible to have knowledge without an object.

The next question is: who is it that is liberated? As a background for his views on this issue, *Yogasutra* discusses the nature of existence. Existence is manifest or otherwise. It is manifest in the present, unmanifest in the past and the future. That there can be no knowledge without an object justifies this view. This is in keeping with the *Sankhya* view that from nothing, nothing comes. This question leads to an examination of the Buddhist view that the self is nothing but a series of momentary consciousness; and apart from it, there is no objective world.

This cannot be accepted, because:

- (i) The same object produces different responses in different persons.
- (ii) If a thing is uncognised by a mind, it will be equally so by other minds.
- (iii) The mind is an object, and no object can be the subject.
- (iv) It is not possible for a momentary consciousness to grasp itself and the object in a single moment; and so on.

The main argument of *Sankhyas* is that what is of a composite nature (as a house, for instance), is for someone else; and all except the *purusha* is composed of three *gunas*.

The progress in meditation starts with man's introspection about his plight. This introspection too ceases with further maturity of the practitioner. The mind develops the ability to stay longer in meditation, cognition of the worldly objects making their entry and exit in the mind between the gaps of meditation. These momentary cognitions, however, do not lead to involvement in worldly life, much the same way as roasted seeds do not reproduce. The impurities blocking knowledge progressively get removed; and the knowledge assumes so vast dimensions that the object is reduced to a tiny shape like that of a glow-worm in the sky. Qualities (*gunas*), with their purpose (giving the *purusha* worldly experience and liberation) get dissolved in their ultimate cause, the *prakriti*. This is liberation, *kaivalya*, which is the same as the lasting repose of consciousness in its own form.

***Yogasutra*: Synopsis**

The first part (*samadhi pada*) introduces the following topics:

- (1) Opening of the work and definition of Yoga: Yoga is the stopping/halting of the operations of mind. [1-2] Nature of the conscious principle (the observer, *purusha*) in Yoga (*samadhi*) and in normal (non-Yoga) states. [3-4]
- (2) Operational modes of the mind: Correct cognition, incorrect cognition, verbal cognition, sleep and memory. [5-11]
- (3) Aids to Yoga: Repetition/practice, detachment. [12-16] Meditation on God. [23]
- (4) God, and ways to meditate on him. [24-29]
- (5) Varieties of Yoga: (a) *samprajnata*, *asamprajnata*. [17-18] (b) Born, acquired. [19-20]
- (6) Obstacles in Yoga. [30-31] Ways to overcome them. [32-39] Settled mind. [40]
- (7) Classification of the practitioners of Yoga. [21-22]
- (8) *Samprajnata* (cf. 5), renamed *sabija*, defined and classified: (a) *savitarka*, *nirvitarka*; (b) *savichara*, *nirvichara*. [42-46]
- (9) Successive development of b2 into *asamprajnata* (cf. 5), renamed *nirbija*. [47-51]

Yogasutra Part Three: Synopsis

Of the eight limbs of Yoga, the last three are treated first: *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi*. [1-3] Together called '*samyama*', they are to be practiced successively, each on the perfection of the former. [4-5] They are interior (*antar anga*) aids to *sabija samadhi*, and exterior (*bahir anga*) to the *nirbija* one. [6-8]

Miraculous powers: Exposition of the modifications of mind changing in respect of properties, time and states as a prelude to the topic of miraculous powers. [9-15] Such powers, though considered achievements in worldly life, are obstacles in the development of meditation. [37] Detachment from these powers and ignoring of the temptations from divine beings leads to the annihilation of *kleshas* and eventually to *kaivalya* (liberation). [50-51]

Subject Focused

Power Accessed

Threefold modification

Knowledge of the past and the future [16]

Mutual distinction between the aspects of language

Understanding of the speech of all animals [17]

Impressions of the past lives
Knowledge

Knowledge of the past lives [18]

Knowledge of another man's mind. [19-20]

Perceptible form of body

Disappearance at will [21]

Past action

Prior knowledge of death & impending dangers [22]

Outlook of friendship etc
(*maitri, karuna, mudita*)
Strength of elephant etc
Mode of light of the mind

Sun

Moon

North Star

Navel depression

Pipe of the throat

Turtle vein/artery

Light of the skull

Pre-final vision

Heart

Subjective cognition

Loosening of bond of mind,
veins/arteries, stationing of the mind
out irrespective of the body

Udana breath

Samana breath

Contact of the space and ears

Contact of the space and the body

Elements in five aspects:

Vision of the distinction of the intellect
and the *purusha*

Strength of making others happy etc
[23]

Strength of elephant etc

Knowledge of subtle, hidden & distant
objects [25]

Knowledge of the entire world [26]
(Ancient map of the world)

System of stars [27]

Movements of stars [28]

System of the body [29]

Cessation of hunger and thirst [30]

Firmness [31]

Vision of the divine beings [32]

Omniscience [33]

Knowledge of mind [34]

Understanding of *purusha* [35]

Perception of divine sound, touch etc
[36]

Ability to enter others' bodies [38, 43]

Walking over the ground [39]

Burning/inflaming [40]

Divine ability of hearing [41]

Lightness: moving in the sky, on water
[42]

1. Control over the elements [44]

2. Powers such as becoming
atomic, light (eight super
powers); immunity from the
normal effects of the elements,
physical excellences [45]

3. Excellences defined [46]

4. Movement of the body with the
speed of mind unrestricted
operations of the organs [47]

5. Control over the entire domain
of the [48]

Ability of unrestricted knowledge and
action [49]

Discriminatory knowledge arises when the Yogin focuses on the fact of the moment and its sequence. Present moment is the reality. [52] This knowledge is untainted by such distinctions as genus, characteristics, position. [53] It is, therefore, spontaneous, all-covering, all-time, and unsequential. [54] It results in total purity of the *purusha* and consequently in liberation. [55]

Analysis of Topics Treated in Part Two:

- (1) Means to achieve purity of mind as well as reduction of *kleshas*, called *Kriya Yoga* -- preparation for Yoga. [1-2]
- (2) The five *kleshas* defined: *avidya, asmita, raga, dvesha, abhinivesha*. [3-9]
Process of their end. [10-11]
- (3) *Kleshas* cause the store of good and bad deeds resulting in birth, life and worldly experience, pleasurable and painful. [12-14] For the discreet, all worldly experience is painful. [15]
- (4) (Fourfold scheme of the treatment of the subject of *Yogasutra*: suffering, its cause, liberation, its means. Taken up for detailed exposition.)
Suffering. [16] Cause of suffering: union of the observer (*purusha*) and the observed (worldly objects). [17] 'Observed' defined and detailed. [18-19, 21-22] 'Observer' defined. [20] 'Union' defined. Its cause. [23-24]
- (5) 'Liberation' defined: end of contact. [25] 'Means of liberation' defined: discrimination. [26] Seven heads of discrimination. [27]
- (6) Contributory factors: the eight 'limbs' of Yoga (*yama, niyama* etc.).
Introduction and enumeration: [28-29] *yamas*. [30-31] *Niyamas*. [32]. Aids to *yamas* and *niyamas*. [33-34]. Indications of perfection of *yamas* and *niyamas*. [35-45] *Asana*. Its perfection. [46-47] *Pranayama*. Its types and perfection. [48-53] *Pratyahara* and its perfection. [54-55]

An Overview: *Yogasutra* Part One

(*Sutra* numbers in square brackets)

- 0 Opening [1]
- 1 Definition of Yoga [2]
Position of *purusha* in the normal and blocked states of mind [3-4]

The definition of Yoga gives us two broad topics:

- A Mental states
- B Inhibition/blocking thereof.
A
- 1 Five mental states: *pramana, viparyaya, vikalpa, nidra, smrti* [5-6]
- 2 Definitions [7-11]
B
- 1 Varieties of *samadhi* 1: *samprajnata, asamprajnata* [17-18]; range [40]
Alternative names: *sabija (samprajnata)* [46], *nirbija (asamprajnata)* [51]
Types of *Samprajnata*: *vitarkanata, vicaranata, anandanata, asmitanata* [41-50]
- 2 Varieties of *Samadhi* 2: *bhavapratyaya, upayapratyaya* [19]
Upayapratyaya: Subject of *Yogasutra*.

- Upayas: sraddha, virya, smrti, samadhi, prajna* [20]
- 3 Kinds of practitioners based on their intensity (9):
mrdu, madhya, adhimatra [21-22] (3)
Mrdu upaya: mrdu samvega, Madhya samvega, tivra samvega (3)
Mrdu-samvega: Madhya samvega, adhimatra samvega (3)
- 4 Means - 1 (of *nirodha*): *abhyasa, vairagya* [12-16]
- 5 Means - 2 (of *citta prasdana*): [23-39]
Ishvara-pranidhana [23], *Ishvara (God)* [24-29]
Maitri, karuna, mudita, upeksha [33]
Pranayama [34]
Visayavati pravrtti [35]
Jyotismati [36]
Vita-raga-visaya citta [37]
Svapna-nidra-jnana [38]
Yathabhimata-dhyana [39]
- 6 *Antaraya* (Obstacles), ways to overcome them [30-32]