

the idea of existent truth. It only falsifies that truth; and since it is contradicted only by the absolute experience, it has

an empirical or pragmatic reality. (ibid., 222) The absolute experience is itself beyond the categories.

THE PĀTANJALA YOGA DARŚANA

SWAMI HARSHANANDA

An Indian philosophical system is termed a *darśana*, which literally means seeing or knowing. The secondary meaning, viz a philosophical system containing the way leading to the direct realization of the Truth, is derived from this primary meaning.

The Pātañjala Yoga Darśana is one such philosophical system, associated, as its very name indicates, with the great sage Patañjali.

According to the Hindu traditional view, the Yoga system is one of the most ancient sciences. Its founder is supposed to be Hiraṇyagarbha (Brahmā) himself. Sage Patañjali just followed in the footsteps of the great *yogins* who were his predecessors and systematized their philosophy in his aphorisms. Tradition also attributes two more works to this Patañjali, viz the *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini's grammatical aphorisms and a treatise on the science of medicine, as revealed by the following verse :

*Yogena cittasya padena vācam
Malam śarīrasya tu vaidyakena;
Yo' pākarot tam pravaram munīnām
Patañjalim prāñjalir ānato'smi—*

'I bow down to that Patañjali, the best among sages, who destroyed the dirt accruing to the mind, speech, and body through the sciences of Yoga, word, and medical treatment.'

However, the modern scholars do not

subscribe to this view of the identity of the two Patañjalis. They concede that the Yogī Patañjali must have flourished before the 3rd century A.D.

The earliest commentary extant on this terse and technical work of Patañjali is that of one Vyāsa. It is well known as *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* or *Yoga-bhāṣya*. This Vyāsa should not be mistaken with the famous Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana, the author of the *Mahābhārata*. He is generally placed in the 5th century A.D.

Though *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* is a little ambiguous in a few places, but for its invaluable help, the *Yoga-Sūtra* could not have been understood clearly.

The *Tattvavaiśārādī* of the famous Vācaspati (9th century A.D.) is a commentary on *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* and is of great help, especially where the latter is laconic or ambiguous.

There are a few other manuals on Yoga which are very useful: *Vṛtti* and *Yoga-maniprabhā* of Bhojarāja, *Yoga-vārttika* and *Yogasārasaṅgraha* of Vijñānabhikṣu, and the *Yogasudhākara* of Sadāśiva-brahmendra.

The *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali is divided into four *pādas* or parts: *samādhipāda*, *sādhanapāda*, *vibhūtipāda*, and *kaivalyapāda*. The first deals with the nature, aim, and forms of *yoga*, modifications of the *citta* (mind-stuff), and the different methods of attaining *yoga*. The second deals with *kriyā-yoga* as a means of attain-

ing *samādhi*, the *kleśas* or mental afflictions, *karmaphala* or fruits of actions and their painful nature, and the fourfold theme of suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the means thereof. The third gives the inward aspects of *yoga* and also deals with the supernormal powers acquired by the practice of *yoga*. The last describes the nature and forms of liberation, the reality of the transcendent self and other world, etc.

THE PHILOSOPHIC BACKGROUND

The Yoga system is very closely associated with the Sāṅkhya system, so much so that many scholars believe that the twin systems have originated from a common source. The former accepts all the categories of the latter, but substitutes its atheism with theism. The conception of God is the special contribution made by the Yoga.

The ultimate Reality is threefold: Prakṛti (Nature), Puruṣa (individual Self), and Īśvara (God). Prakṛti is insentient and is made up of the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. When associated with the Puruṣa, who is consciousness itself, it evolves into this world through the stages of *mahat* (intelligence), *ahaṅkāra* (egoism), *manas* (mind), the five sense-organs, the five motor-organs, the five subtle elements, and the five gross elements.

The Puruṣas are many in number. Though they are of the nature of pure consciousness and absolutely unattached, they become attached to and identified with Prakṛti and its modifications owing to *aviveka* or indiscrimination. This results in sorrow and suffering, and is rightly called bondage. Hence, the way to liberation lies through the separation of the Puruṣa from the Prakṛti. Looking from this angle, *yoga* is actually *viyoga* (separation).

It is this *viveka-jñāna* that ultimately brings about the sense of distinction of the Puruṣa from Prakṛti. Yoga lays down a

series of exercises aimed at achieving this. These are detailed later on.

Īśvara is the supreme Person who is above all the individual selves and is free from all defects. The conception of Īśvara, being a special contribution of Yoga *vis-à-vis* the Sāṅkhya, will be dealt with in a separate section.

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

In the Sāṅkhya-Yoga system, the Puruṣa, who is pure consciousness, is associated and identified with the gross body and the subtle body, the latter being constituted of the eighteen products of Prakṛti beginning with *mahat* and ending with the five subtle elements. (*vide Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, 40) It is through this subtle body that the Puruṣa, who is essentially free, appears to know and enjoy the things of the world. What is termed *citta* in the Yoga system is very comprehensive in its scope and actually represents the subtle body. But, for all practical purposes, we can translate it as 'mind-stuff'. This *citta* or mind-stuff, though essentially unconscious, appears to be conscious because of its proximity to the Puruṣa, who is reflected in it.

The process by which the Puruṣa cognizes the external objects is like this: The *citta* gets related to the *antahkaraṇa* (the internal organ or the mind) and flows out through the respective sense-organ and envelops the object, itself assuming the shape of the object in the process. Then, the consciousness of the Puruṣa is reflected in the modified *citta*, and there is a reciprocal reflection of this in the Puruṣa himself. Then arises the knowledge of that external object, and the Puruṣa 'knows' it.

Ordinarily, the *citta* will be constantly modified in this manner, and the Puruṣa, owing to *aviveka*, appropriates to himself those states of the *citta*, thus enjoying

pleasure or suffering pain. (*Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 4) This is bondage.

The *citta-vṛttis* or modifications of the *citta* (i.e. the cognitive mental states) are many and varied. But the Yoga classifies them under five heads: *pramāṇa* (true cognition), *viparyaya* (false cognition), *vikalpa* (verbal cognition), *nidrā* (deep sleep), and *smṛti* (memory). *Pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference), and *āgama* (verbal testimony) constitute true cognition. False cognition is wrong knowledge of things as they really are not, and includes doubts or uncertain cognitions. Verbal cognition arises by hearing a word which has no corresponding reality. Sleep stands for dreamless sleep, and is due to the preponderance of *tamas* in the *citta*, which *tamas* is the cause of absence of ordinary perception at that time. Memory is the reproduction of past experiences without any alteration or innovation. All other cognitive mental states can be included under these heads.

All these *citta-vṛttis* can again be classified as *kliṣṭa* (afflicted) and *akliṣṭa* (unafflicted). *Kleśas* or sources of afflictions are five in number: (1) *avidyā* or wrong knowledge of the non-eternal as eternal, of the not-self as self, of the unpleasant as pleasant, and of the impure as pure; (2) *asmitā* or the false notion of the self as identical with the *buddhi* or the faculty of perception; (3) *rāga* or desire for pleasure and the means of its attainment; (4) *dveṣa* or aversion to pain and the causes thereof; and (5) *abhiniveśa* or the instinctive fear of death common to all creatures. (ibid., II. 3-9)

The *vṛttis*, when free from these *kleśas*, have true knowledge for their object and oppose the activity of the *guṇas* to become *akliṣṭa*.

THE NATURE AND FORMS OF YOGA

So long as there are changes and modi-

fications in the *citta*, the reflection of the Puruṣa therein, as also the identification owing to the absence of discriminative knowledge, is bound to occur. Consequently, the Puruṣa feels pleasure and pain out of the objects of the world, which generate attachment or hatred accordingly. This, as we have seen, is the bondage of the Puruṣa. If, therefore, he has to attain *kaivalya* or liberation (literally, aloofness), the activities of this *citta* have to be restrained and, finally, suppressed *in toto*. It is this restraining (*nirodha*) of the modifications of the *citta*, with a view to realizing the distinction of the self from it, that is termed as 'yoga' in the Yoga system. When the waves of the empirical consciousness (*kāryacitta*) die down and leave the *citta* in its causal state (*kāranacitta*), which is a state of perfect placidity, the Puruṣa realizes his distinction from the mind-body complex and attains freedom.

Patañjali defines *yoga* as *citta-vṛtti-nirodha*. (ibid., I. 2) Hence, *yoga*, according to him, is cessation of all mental modifications and not any kind of union or contact between an individual self and God or the Absolute. (*vide* Vācaspati on *Vyāsa-bhāṣya*, *Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 1)

The *citta*, which is constituted by the elements of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, has five states, viz *kṣipta* (restless), *mūḍha* (dull), *vikṣipta* (distracted), *ekāgra* (concentrated), and *niruddha* (restrained). In each of these states, there exists some kind of repression of mental modifications, and each state excludes all the other states. Though there is repression of mental modifications in all these states, *yoga* is possible only in the last two states. (*vide* *Vyāsa-bhāṣya* on *Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 1)

In the first state, viz *kṣipta*, the mind is under the sway of *rajas* and *tamas*. Hence it jumps from one object to another without resting on anything in particular. This being the case, *yoga* is impossible in this

state. In the second, viz *mūḍha*, there is an excess of *tamas*, and hence the tendency is towards vice, sleep, ignorance, etc. Obviously, *yoga* is not possible in this state also. In the third state, viz *vikṣipta*, the mind is distracted, being free from *tamas* and having only a trace of *rajas*. This state has the capacity to manifest all objects, and makes for knowledge, virtue, etc. It is thus a temporary stage of concentration followed by distraction. This also is not *yoga*, since it does not permanently stop all the modifications of the mind-stuff or put an end to *avidyā*.

The fifth state is *ekāgra* (concentrated). Here the *citta* is purged of all impurity of *rajas* and there is the perfect manifestation of *sattva*. It marks the beginning of prolonged concentration of the *citta* on any object so as to reveal its true nature, and paves the way for the final cessation of all mental modifications. The *citta* which was being modified in hundreds of ways before is now modified in only one way, viz flowing towards the object of concentration. Thus, in this state, all mental modifications, except one, are restrained. Hence, *yoga* is very near to achievement.

At the last stage called *niruddha*, there is the cessation of all mental modifications, including even that of concentration, which marks the previous stage. Here the succession of mental states and processes is completely checked, and the *citta* is left in its original unmodified state of tranquillity. This state, when well established, is itself *yoga*.

Actually, in the language of Yoga, the last two stages of *ekāgra* and *niruddha*, when well established, are called *samprajñāta samādhi* and *asamprajñāta samādhi* respectively. In the *samprajñāta samādhi*, also called *samāpatti*, there is perfect concentration on the object of contemplation, with a clear and distinct consciousness of the same. In the *asamprajñāta samādhi*,

all mental modifications are stopped and, consequently, nothing is known or thought of by the mind. Both these states of *samādhi* are known by the common name of *samādhi-yoga*, since both are conducive to self-realization.

Samprajñāta samādhi is of four kinds, the distinction being made according to the object of contemplation. They are *savitarka*, *savicāra*, *sānanda*, and *sāsmīta*. (*Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 17) The *samādhi* is said to be *savitarka* when the mind is perfectly concentrated on any external gross object, like the image of a god or goddess. When the object of contemplation is subtle like the *tanmātras* (the subtle elements), the *samādhi* is called *savicāra*. It is termed as *sānanda* when the object of concentration is still subtler like the senses. It becomes *sāsmīta* when the concentration is upon *asmīta* or ego-sense.

Thus, the mind realizes the nature of different objects within or without the body and leaves them, one after another, till it becomes completely free from thoughts of all objects and attains what is called *asamprajñāta samādhi*. This puts a stop to all mental modifications and does not rest on any object. This being the final stage of *samādhi*, the whole world of objects ceases to affect and to exist for the *yogin*. He then abides in his own essence as pure consciousness enjoying the still vision of isolated self-shining existence. He is liberated.

OBSTACLES TO YOGA

There are nine obstacles to *yoga*. They are: *vyādhi* (sickness), *styāna* (languor), *saṁśaya* (doubt), *pramāda* (heedlessness), *ālasya* (sloth), *avirati* (absence of non-attachment), *bhrāntidarśana* (mistaken notion), *alabdhabhūmikatva* (non-attainment of the stage of communion), and *anavasthitatva* (instability). (*ibid.*, I. 30)

Vyādhi is physical sickness brought about

by disturbance of the equilibrium of the humours. *Styāna* is the inability of the mind to work, resulting in the lack of will and drive. *Samśaya* is vacillation, lack of definiteness. *Pramāda* is the lack of reflection upon the means of attaining concentration. *Ālasya* is the inactivity of body and mind. *Avirati* is the yearning of the mind in the form of hankering after contact with the external objects. *Bhrānti-darśana* is misconception. *Alabdha-bhūmikatva* means not reaching the stage of communion. *Anavasthitatva* is the failure of the mind to remain steady in the stage attained.

The Yoga system lists five more obstacles and calls them *vikṣepasahabhavaḥ* (companions of distraction). They are: *duḥkha* (pain), *daurmanasya* (irritation), *aṅgamejayatva* (trembling), *śvāsa* (in-breathing), and *praśvāsa* (out-breathing). (ibid., I. 31)

Duḥkha is the pain caused by internal, external, and supernatural causes. *Daurmanasya* is the irritation caused by the failure of a cherished wish. *Aṅgamejayatva* is trembling of the body. The last two refer to the involuntary breathing.

These have to be checked by *abhyāsa* (practice) and *vairāgya* (dispassion) in general, and each of them has to be met by an antidote of its own. By fixing the mind on *Īśvara*, the one Principle, these distractions can be obstructed. (ibid., I. 32) By the cultivation of *maitrī* (friendliness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (joy), and *upekṣā* (indifference) towards people who are happy, unhappy, righteous, and unrighteous respectively, composure of mind is gained. (ibid., I. 33) Controlling of the *prāṇa* through *prāṇāyāma* will also help in the achievement of concentration. (ibid., I. 34)

THE EIGHTFOLD DISCIPLINE

None can realize the spiritual truths as

long as one's mind is tainted with impurities and one's intellect is vitiated by evil thoughts. It is in the pure heart and clear understanding that the truth of the spirit is revealed and directly experienced. The Sāṅkhya-Yoga system maintains that liberation is to be attained by means of *prajñā*, spiritual insight into the reality of the self as the pure immortal spirit which is quite distinct from the body and mind. But spiritual insight can be got only when the mind is purged of all the impurities and consequently rendered perfectly calm and serene. In order to achieve this, Yoga prescribes the eightfold discipline to the aspirant: (1) *yama* (restraint); (2) *niyama* (culture); (3) *āsana* (posture); (4) *prāṇāyāma* (control of the psychic *prāṇa* through breath-control); (5) *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses); (6) *dhāraṇā* (fixed attention); (7) *dhyāna* (meditation); (8) *samādhi* (perfect concentration). (ibid., II. 29)

Yama is a moral discipline and consists of: (1) *ahimsā* (abstention from all kinds of injury to life); (2) *satya* (truthfulness in thought and speech); (3) *asteya* (non-stealing); (4) *brahmacarya* (control of carnal desires and passions); (5) *aparigraha* (non-acceptance of unnecessary gifts). The *yogin* must scrupulously follow them. (ibid., II. 30)

Niyama consists in cultivating the following good habits: (1) *śauca* (purification of body and mind); (2) *santoṣa* (contentment); (3) *tapas* (penances) (4) *svādhyāya* (study of religious books); and (5) *Īśvarapranidhāna* (meditation on and resignation to God). (ibid., II. 32)

Āsana is a discipline of the body, and consists in the adoption of steady and comfortable postures for the sake of meditation. This is achieved through relaxing the physical and mental exertions and through the contemplation on Ananta (the earth-bearing serpent or the infinite sky).

The steadiness of the body thus achieved is conducive to the steady flow of the mind towards the ideal.

Prāṇāyāma is to be practised after attaining steadiness in posture. It aims at controlling the psychic *prāṇa* (nervous energy) through the control of breath, which is closely linked with it. The process of breath regulation consists of *recaḥa* (exhalation), *pūraḥa* (inhalation), and *kumbhaka* (retention), the last one being external or internal.

It is interesting to note that the great sage Patañjali has finished all about the *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma*, about which so much fuss is often made, in only eight aphorisms (ibid., II. 46-53). It must be remembered that the object of practising these two disciplines as also the others is to obtain *samādhi* and that one gets a right to practise them only after scrupulously following moral disciplines and culture as enjoined by *yama* and *niyama*.

Pratyāhāra is the withdrawal of the senses from their respective external objects and keeping them under the control of the mind. (ibid., II. 54) When the senses are effectively controlled, they follow not their objects, but the mind itself. So, in this state, the mind is not disturbed by sights and sounds coming through the eye and the ear, but makes these senses follow itself and see and hear its own object.

These five disciplines are regarded as *bahirāṅga-sādhanā* (external aids) of *yoga*.

Dhāraṇā is the fixing of the mind on a definite locus, such as the lotus of the heart, the light in the brain, the tip of the nose or the tongue, or on an external object like the moon or the image of gods, etc. (Vyāsa and Vācaspati on *Yoga-Sūtra*, III. 1)

When *dhāraṇā* ripens so that the flow of the thought current becomes unbroken, it becomes *dhyāna*. (*Yoga-Sūtra*, III. 2) Here the mind hovers round the object of

meditation. There is still the consciousness of the trio—the ego-sense, the object of meditation, and the process of meditation.

When *dhyāna* becomes perfect and the mind is so deeply absorbed in the object that it loses itself and has no awareness of itself, then the state attained is called *samādhi*. (ibid., III. 3) So, here only the object of meditation will be shining in the mind and the *yogin* is not even aware of the thought process involved in it. It should be observed here that this *samādhi* as a discipline is different from the *samādhi-yoga* previously defined as *citta-vṛtti-nirodha*. The former is the *means*, and the latter is the *end*. A long and continuous practice of the one with devotion leads to the other.

These last three steps in the practice of *yoga* are called *antarāṅgasādhanā*, the internal means. They should have the same object, i.e. the same object should first be attended to, then meditated upon, resulting in perfect concentration. When thus combined, the three constitute *saṁyama* (ibid., III. 4), which is very necessary for the attainment of *samādhi-yoga*.

THE YOGIC POWERS

Patañjali says that the *yogin*, during the different stages of his practice attains a number of extraordinary powers. For instance, the practice of *ahimsā* leads to the creation of such an atmosphere about him that the tame as well as the ferocious animals will live in harmony there. (ibid., II. 35) Practice of truth gives him the power to grant boons. (ibid., II. 36) Steady establishment in *aparigraha* leads to the knowledge of previous lives. (ibid., II. 39, III. 18) By making *saṁyama* on the sun, he gains the knowledge of the celestial regions. (ibid., III. 26) If he does *saṁyama* on the throat pit, he becomes free from the pangs of hunger and thirst.

(ibid., III. 31) Similarly, by making *saṁnyama* on other corresponding things, he can also gain the perception of supernatural sights, sounds, etc., get mastery over the material substances, the eight *siddhis* like *animā* (the power to become atomic) etc., become omniscient, fly in the sky, etc. (ibid., III. 36, 44, 45, 49, and 42)

But Patañjali severely warns the aspirant against running after them, saying that these are obstacles to *samādhi*. (ibid., III. 39) *Yoga* is meant for attaining liberation, and hence the *yogin* must not get himself entangled in the quagmire of these powers.

THE PLACE OF GOD IN YOGA

As distinguished from the Sāṅkhya, the Yoga is theistic. It admits of Īśvara or God on both practical and theoretical grounds. To Patañjali, God has more a practical than a theoretical value. Devotion to God is *one* of the means for the final attainment of *samādhi-yoga*. But the subsequent commentators evince also a theoretical interest in God and discuss more fully the speculative problems regarding the nature of God and the proofs for His existence.

According to the Yoga, God is a *Puruṣa-viśeṣa*, the supreme Person above all the individual selves, and is eternally free from all defects like *kleśa* (afflictions), *karma* (work), *vipāka* (result of work), and *āśaya* (latent impressions of past actions) which invariably accrue to the individual souls. (ibid., I. 24) He is omniscient. (ibid., I. 25) He is the teacher of all teachers, since He is unaffected by time. (ibid., I. 26) The *praṇava* (the syllable *Om*) indicates Him, and hence the *yogin* can repeat it, meditating on its meaning. If he continues like this without break for a long time with sufficient devotion, then he realizes his real nature. (ibid., I. 29) This shows that the *samādhi-yoga*, which has to be achieved

through the eightfold discipline can also be achieved independently through meditation upon Īśvara. (ibid., I. 23)

Yoga adduces the following arguments to prove the existence of God: (1) The Śāstra, viz Śruti (the Vedas), *Smṛti* (of Manu and others), *Itihāsa* (the epics), *Purāṇa* (like the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*), declares the existence of God or the supreme Self; (2) According to the law of continuity, whatever has degrees must have a lower and an upper limit. Since there are different degrees of knowledge and power in the selves, there must be a self in whom there is perfect knowledge and perfect power. Such a supreme Self is God; (3) The creation and dissolution of this world is due respectively to the association of the *Puruṣa* with the *Prakṛti* and his dissociation therefrom. Since neither of them is capable of bringing this about, one has to assume the existence of an intelligent, efficient cause which brings about this association and dissociation in accordance with the *adṛṣṭa* (unseen moral desert) of the individual selves. Therefore, there must be such a perfect and omniscient Being.

Devotion to God is not only a part of the practice of *yoga*, but is the best means for the attainment of concentration and restraint of the mind (*samādhi-yoga*). The reason is that God is not only an object of *dhyāna*, like other objects, but is the supreme Lord, who, by His grace, purges away the sins and evils in the life of His devotee and makes the attainment of *yoga* easier for him. (*vide* Vyāsa on *Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 23) But the *yogin* has to do *saṁnyama* on Him to obtain His grace.

CONCLUSION

Though the philosophical tenets of the Yoga system have been criticized (*vide* *Vedānta-Sūtra*, II. ii. 37-41), its practical approach has been largely appreciated and accepted. A substance of the criticism

may be summed up as follows : The presence of superior and inferior types of beings in this world will give rise to the doubt that Īśvara has *rāga* and *dveṣa*. Since it is well known that it is *rāga* and *dveṣa* that instigate men into action (*vide Nyāya-Sūtra*, I. i. 18), Īśvara also must be considered to be subject to the same since He is engaged in action. If selfishness is admitted to be the motive force behind human actions, then, by extending that principle, it is to be admitted that Īśvara also is selfish. Again, by the very nature of the definitions given, it is impossible to conceive of any kind of relationship or connexion between Him and the other Puruṣas as also the Prakṛti. Logical difficulties will also arise with respect to His eternity and omniscience, since Yoga admits of

three eternal entities.

To an unsympathetic eye, this system may appear to be not so much a system of philosophy as a school of mysticism and magic. It has been abused by charlatans, half-baked psychic people, and quacks, so much so that the common man has come to think of it as synonymous with magic. But to a discerning eye, the fact of its being a philosophy and religion does not go unnoticed.

It must not be forgotten that the Yoga is essentially a *darśana*, a way leading to the realization of Truth. It is well grounded in the powerful Sāṅkhyan metaphysics, and the way it recommends for the purification and discipline of the mind is highly efficacious. That is why its eightfold discipline is universally acknowledged.

KATĪHA UPANIṢAD SĀṅKHYA POINT OF VIEW—2

DR. ANIMA SEN GUPTA

*Anyatra dharmād anyatra adharmād
anyatrāsmāt kṛtākṛtāt ;
Anyatra bhūtācca bhavyācca
yattat paśyasi tadvada—*

(Naciketas said) 'That which thou beholdest as different from *dharmā* and *adharma*, as different from cause and effect, as different from what had been and what shall be, please tell (me) that.' (I. ii. 14)

Adhyātmayoga has already been described as the means to be adopted in the path of spiritual *sādhanā* for attaining the highest end of human life. This path has also been described as *modanīya*. Now, Yama has to give instructions to Naciketas regarding the nature of that highest principle which is different from *dharmā* and *adharma*, from cause and effect, and is also

unrelated to past, present, and future.

According to the Sāṅkhya, Puruṣa is pure, revealing consciousness. As mere revealing consciousness, Puruṣa is unrelated to *dharmā*, *adharma*, and time. It is also neither the cause nor the effect. It is only due to *aviveka* that the unchangeable, ever free soul appears to be associated with *dharmā*, *adharma*, etc., which are the products of Prakṛti. The object about which Naciketas is making an earnest enquiry is this pure revealing consciousness (*prakāśātmaka caitanya*). He seeks to know the Self because, in the opinion of the Sāṅkhya Darśana, liberation is to be gained through Self-knowledge (*Ātmajñāna*). That the Puruṣa is neither the cause nor the effect has been clearly stated in the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* (*na prakṛtirna vikṛtiḥ*).