

प्रकाशक्रियास्थितिशीलं भूतन्द्रियात्मकं भोगापवर्गार्थं दृश्यम् ।१८।

II.18 prakāśa kriyā sthiti śīlām
bhūtendriyātmakam bhogāpavargārtham
dṛśyam

<i>prakāśa</i>	brightness, brilliance, clearness, splendour, elucidation, lustre
<i>kriyā</i>	action, study, investigation
<i>sthiti</i>	steadiness, firmness, steadfastness, being
<i>śīlām</i>	disposition, virtue, character, piety
<i>bhūtam</i>	elements
<i>indriya</i>	the eleven senses: mind, five senses of perception, five organs of action
<i>ātmakam</i>	the nature or essence of a thing, being composed of
<i>bhoga</i>	enjoyment of pleasures
<i>apavarga</i>	emancipation, liberation
<i>artham</i>	means, purpose
<i>dṛśyam</i>	knowable, seen

Nature, its three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas, and its evolutes, the elements, mind, senses of perception and organs of action, exist eternally to serve the seer, for enjoyment or emancipation.

The visible objective world consists of elements of nature and senses of perception comprising three qualities or attributes (*guṇas*), which are illumination, motion or action, and inertia or dormancy. All these exist eternally to serve the seer (the subject) for the purpose of experiencing the pleasures and infatuations (objects) of the world, or for emancipation.

This sūtra describes the characteristics, actions and uses of nature (*prakṛti*).

The three attributes of nature are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. When one mixes with another, it is subdivided into *sattva* in *sattva* (*sattvo-sattva*), *sattva* in *rajas* (*sattva-rajas*) and *sattva* in *tamas* (*sattva-tamas*). Similarly, *rajas* is divided into *rajo-sattva*, *rajo-rajas* and *rajo-tamas* and *tamas* into *tamo-sattva*, *tamo-rajas* and *tamo-tamas*. According to Patañjali, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* represent *prakāśa*, *kriyā* and *sthiti*. These attributes have their own virtues for example, *prakāśa* or brilliance or splendour is *sattva*; *kriyā* or study, investigation and action is *rajas*; and the essence of the being resting as *sthiti* or dormancy is *tamas*.

All these attributes and virtues are established in the elements of nature, senses, mind, intelligence and ego. Together they function harmoniously in

Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali

the form of illumination, action and inertia, allowing the seer to enjoy the world's pleasures (*bhoga*); or by divesting himself of them, to experience liberation.

The seer is clothed with five sheaths (*kośas*), by the elements of nature: earth, water, fire, air and ether. Earth represents the anatomical, water the physiological, fire the mental, air the intellectual and ether the spiritual sheaths. The organs of action and senses of perception aid the *sādhaka* in purifying the anatomical and physiological sheaths through *yama* and *niyama*. *Āsana*, *prāṇāyāma* and *pratyāhāra* divest the seer of the mental sheath; *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* cleanse the intellectual sheath. *Samādhi* brings the seer out through the prison-gates of all the sheaths to experience freedom and beatitude. (See Table 8.)

विशेषाविशेषलिङ्गमात्रालिङ्गानि गुणपर्वणि १९।

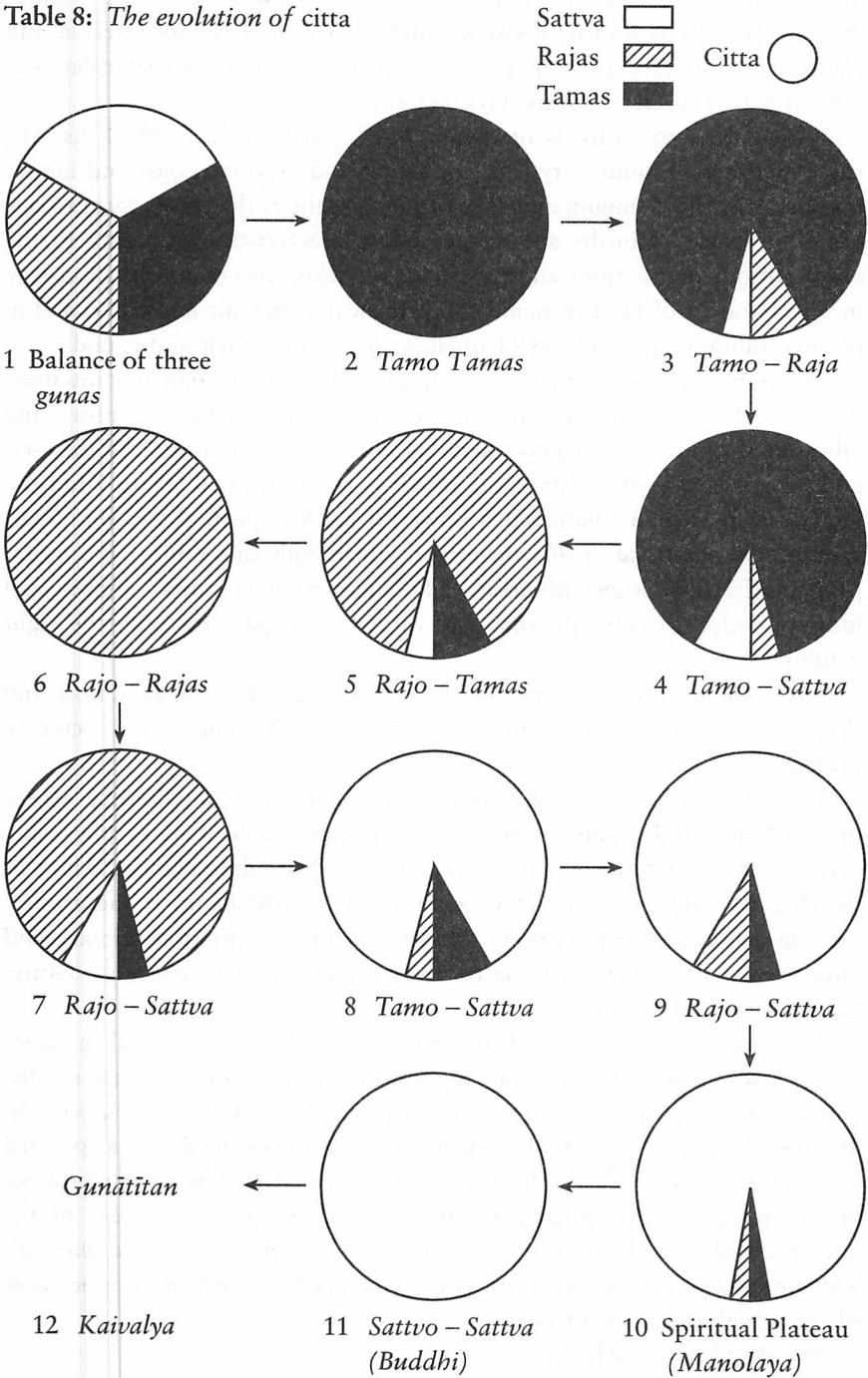
II.19 viśeṣa aviśeṣa liṅgamātra aliṅgāni guṇaparvāṇi

<i>viśeṣa</i>	the art of distinguishing or discriminating, a state of being especial, a mark
<i>aviśeṣa</i>	uniform, alike, without any difference, unspecified state
<i>liṅgamātra</i>	indicator, mark, sign (chief mark or indication of <i>prakṛti</i> , that is, the cosmic intelligence – <i>mahat</i>), phenomenal, directly apprehended, observed
<i>aliṅgāni</i>	without mark, without sign, non-primary matter or unevolved matter, unknown and unknowable substance or thing as it is in itself, the noumenal
<i>guṇaparvāṇi</i>	changes in qualities

The guṇas generate their characteristic divisions and energies in the seer. Their stages are distinguishable and non-distinguishable, differentiable and non-differentiable.

This sūtra analyses nature (*prakṛti*) by identifying the progressive layers of its manifestation, from the most specific and definable up through the non-specific and non-distinguished and back to the undifferentiated or universal.

Table 8: *The evolution of citta*



Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali

To release ourselves from the confines of nature, we have to be familiar with its geography and its divisions, and with how these are affected and changed by the *guṇas*, so that we can understand the internal rules that govern nature in all its forms, however subtle.

Nature (*prakṛti*) consists of cosmic intelligence (*mahat*), which has the three qualities of luminosity (*sattva*), action and motion (*rajas*) and inertia (*tamas*). It is the changing influence of these qualities that gives form to our life in its cycle of births and shapes our characteristics according to the nature of our past actions and experiences. *Prakṛti* also manifests its energy in the character of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether; and in the five subtle manifestations of smell, taste, shape, touch and sound.

The individual counterpart of cosmic intelligence (*mahat*) is consciousness, or *citta*. *Citta* consists of mind (*manas*), which reviews sensory and vibrational stimuli; intelligence (*buddhi*), which is the discriminative faculty; and ego or small self (*ahaṁkāra*) which is the individual 'I'. In addition, hidden deep in man's nature is a powerful hidden spiritual weapon: 'conscience' (*antaḥkaraṇa* or *dharmendriya*) which embodies ethical and moral principles. *Antaḥkaraṇa* observes right and wrong in one's conduct and motives, helps to cultivate *citta* and directs it to perform only the right actions.

There are also the five senses of perception – ears, tongue, eyes, nose and skin, and five organs of action – legs, arms, speech, genital and excretory organs.

These are the principles of *prakṛti*. The five elements, intelligence, senses of perception and organs of action are distinguishable, that is, physically manifest in concrete form. The other parts, the five subtle manifestations of the elements and the 'I' consciousness (*ahaṁkāra*, *antaḥkaraṇa* and *asmitā*) exist in a non-distinguishable or vibrational form, being non-primary and unevolved matter. Yet, all these revolve around the three *guṇas* of nature: *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*.

The principles (*tattvas*) of distinguishable elements (*viśeṣa*) produce changes which may be pleasant, unpleasant or stuporous (a state of suspended or deadened sensibility). The unspecified principles (*aviśeṣa tattvas*) are unevolved matter, and when such matter is transformed into a specified state, creation takes place. This is called *pravṛttimārga*. The reverse process, *nivṛtti mārga*, is the merging of the specified in the unspecified, of the non-specified in and of nature (see I.45) into the universal spirit (*puruṣa*). The merging of nature into spirit is a divine marriage, which becomes possible through the work of yoga.

(See III.13 and Table 9.)

द्रष्टा दृशिमात्रः शुद्धोऽपि प्रत्ययानुपश्यः ।२०।

II.20 draṣṭā dṛṣimātraḥ śuddhaḥ api
pratyayānupaśyaḥ

<i>draṣṭā</i>	seer, <i>puruṣa</i> , one who sees
<i>dṛṣimātraḥ</i>	awareness only, consciousness only
<i>śuddhaḥ</i>	pure
<i>api</i>	even though
<i>pratyayaḥ</i>	conviction, trust, reliance, faith, cognition, confidence
<i>anupaśyaḥ</i>	one who sees, seeing along with, cognizing ideas

The seer is pure consciousness. He witnesses nature without being reliant on it.

This sūtra moves on from nature to soul, the Supreme Seer, the absolute knower. It is the pure essence of consciousness beyond words. Though the soul is pure, it tends to see through its agent, the intelligence (*buddhi*) and being carried away by the influence of nature, it loses its identity.

The previous sūtra dealt with nature (*prakṛti*) and discernible objects. Here, the nature of the seer, the soul (*puruṣa*) is described. *Ātmā*, *draṣṭa* and *dṛṣimātraḥ* are terms which show the innate nature of the seer.

Intelligence clouds consciousness in such a way that it comes to identify itself as the true seer and forgets the soul. But if intelligence can keep its power of discernment, consciousness too will remain uncoloured. If consciousness is clear, the seer is unobscured.

Intelligence, belonging as it does to manifest nature, is constantly changing, sometimes conscious and often unconscious. It is subject to *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, whereas the seer, *puruṣa*, is beyond all these, immutable and ever-conscious (see I.3, IV.22).