

A clear comprehension of what has been just said is hardly possible without direct instruction from an adept. But it may give some idea of the line of progress and of the goal aimed at by the Sāṃkhya-yogin, if taken along with the following observations about the higher principles that have to be visualised.

The Ego is particularised when, owing to association with different aspects of the non-ego, it acquires a definite and, therefore, limited character in keeping with them or regards any of them as belonging to itself. Particularisation of this sort is present, for instance, whenever the Ego is given a local habitation like the body or is regarded as the initiator of any kind of mental or physical activity or as the knower of any form of cognition. The pure Ego has no such attachments and is transformed, therefore, by being related to the psycho-physical apparatus and its various mutations. When, on the other hand, will and effort and also the consequent physical movements are inhibited, the faculty that controls the organs of activity is resolved into the principle that is the passive recipient of impressions, the Ego losing thus some of those accretions which adhere to it in ordinary empirical existence. When, again, its connection is cut off from all sorts of impression including those that originate in the body, it becomes pure self-consciousness or consciousness of the self by the self because everything that is obviously a part of the non-Ego has disappeared from the field of vision. But after the Ego has been simplified in this manner by successive steps of discrimination, it stands out clearly as an object of experience itself. We have, indeed, a vague notion always of the combination of heterogeneous elements in it. But we imagine that they are compatible somehow. This Avidyā is the plague-spot in empirical consciousness. But as our insight into reality develops with the aid of the process just described, we clearly discern their incompatibility. And then it becomes impossible to find intellectual or spiritual repose in this complex and shifting principle of pure I-sense. So the earnest seeker after ultimate truth advances necessarily beyond the Ego and finds the ineffable bliss of the Absolute in the subject to which I-sense must be traced or of which it is an imperfect copy.

It has to be observed that the full-fledged mind or organ of empirical consciousness is present in the analytical process up to the apprehension of the pure Ego, and that it visualises the successive stages reached through this analysis. But when the Ego comes to be focussed in its simplicity, the psychical modifications like the perceptive faculty and the will are reduced to their simplest forms, as they