

# Gunās Or Vasana Which Comes First

Sundari (Isabella Viglietti)

2015-08-21

Robert: Another context for me is rooted in an observation made in an earlier email, which now forms a cornerstone of my practice and possibly raises a question.

Quote Sundari previous:..... So, take a good look at him in light of the knowledge. Trace every event and its effects (vasanas), to the gunas. You will see that no one was doing anything. Without minimizing the pain Robert suffered, you can let it go. ....

As a practice, is this not in a way 'dwelling on the past'? Practically what I have been doing of late is exactly this, tracing events in the past (and present as they arise) and mapping them to vasana and the gunas and then discriminating the guna as belonging to Isvara's creation and not me. I find there is no emotion in this for me, and if it does arise, it is quickly negated as object. I find I am still quite clumsy in the practice but it is getting easier J

Sundari: Yes, this is correct and an excellent grasp of the teaching.

As stated many times now, understanding the past requires that you look at all events in light of self knowledge (gunas/Isvara) so that it becomes clear that no one was doing anything. It is about negating the doer. The whole point of the exercise is to drop the story—and to drop the dropper of the story. What is not helpful is a deeply rooted (and mostly unconscious) tendency to live through the past—through wounded young Robert. The mind is in vice like rut of negative thoughts as a result. As I said to you previously, in order to discriminate the gunas one has to first identify them so as to dis-identify from them as not self. It is not about dwelling on them or meditating *about* them. All three gunas are very predictable and play out the same way for everyone. They are not rocket science but common sense. It is helpful to know the typical thoughts/emotions that arise from each guna—and they are pretty self evident once you understand the basic qualities of each guna—but only so as to discriminate them as not self.

Robert: I still get stuck on the vasana / guna relationship, and have tried to express this confusion before with little success. If an existing vasana is a tendency based on repeated karma how is it created out of the Gunas if the Gunas preceded the karma. The Guna must have then informed the karma to result in the vasana? Isvara = guna = vasana?

Sundari: There are three forces in creation that make up the dharmafield: sattva, rajas and tamas. Together these three forces make up ignorance, although it is primarily rajas and tamas that form the basis of ignorance because pure sattva is the nature of the mind. However, even sattva has a downside. In order for a vasana to arise, like any other object it has to arise from one or a combination of these three forces. Therefore it can be said that the gunas are another word for Isvara. They are impersonal, which is why we say Isvara is not a person. Everything in the apparent reality is the result of karma (action) because everything in the apparent reality is a result of these three forces. Anything created by action is karma. It can also be said that everything in the apparent reality is a vasana. We attach a story to 'our' vasanas and suffer. All vasanas are coloured by the gunas, which precede them and in turn the vasanas reinforce the gunas in the never ending karmic cycle called samsara.

To sum up: The gunas precede action because they are macrocosmic forces that cause the

world to change. But action 'creates' them too, in the sense that actions done from a particular guna reinforce the tendency (the vasana) for that guna to express itself again as karma. And all the gunas re-inforce themselves too: tamas builds more tamas, rajas more rajas and sattva more sattva. The vasanas and karma are just two ways of speaking of the same forces, i.e. the gunas. Karma is vasanas manifesting and vasanas are the unmanifest results of karma. You can't separate the vasanas from the karma in reality. You can say that ignorance (gunas) appears as vasanas and the vasanas grossify to become karma which in turn "subtlely" back into vasanas.

As long as you take yourself to be a doer, the mind is conditioned by the gunas, the vasanas belong to you and so does the karma. What we have been trying to steer you towards is this: identifying that Robert's story is a result of the gunas (Isvara) which preceded *and* created 'his' vasanas and the resulting karma. Seeing that as the vasanas and the gunas do not belong to him or to anyone else in 'his' narrative, the actions and their results do not belong to him because there is no doer. No one is to blame for anything. Your parents, your abusers and everyone else in Robert's story acted according to their nature, which was given to them by Isvara, creating the karma that ensued. If they could have been different, they would have been. But they could not be different because they did not have self knowledge. So it is only ignorance of the self that caused the suffering for everyone involved. Once you understand this, then you know the truth: There is no karma for the self.

What we are trying to steer you *away* from is this: Robert is so entrenched in the tendency of living through 'his' painful past (fear thoughts) that he has become a construct of it. And as a result, it has become very difficult to neutralize.

The prarabdha karma that is playing out for Robert is the momentum of past actions, from 'this' life and 'beyond' it, from time immemorial (Causal Body/Isvara). A powerful identification with the story has created much suffering for Robert. The way forward towards freedom is to understand the story and to create a new narrative for **adult** Robert: one that is not based in the past or in fear.

The new narrative, which is not personal, is this: I am a karma yogi, an inquirer. What I am inquiring into is my true nature, which is: I am not a person, I am the self. The person exists in me and is fine the way he is. I have no past. I am beyond time and space. I was never born and will never die. Nothing touches me. I am whole and complete, limitless and unchanging. I need nothing and embrace everything as me, always discriminating myself from the objects that appear in me. My seeking is over because I am now a finder. All I need to do is actualize this knowledge so as to live free as the self while still appearing as the jiva, with his apparent nature. I love myself unconditionally, which means I love Robert unconditionally.

Robert: Jumping ahead as I am still digesting the rest of your comments. With gratitude thank you for the input.

Quote Sundari previous: 'In addition, what is also important for the jiva is seeing to it that the jiva has noble work for the mind and not indulging in gratuitous unnecessary explorations into the past'.

[Robert] is Vedanta noble work referred to here?

Sundari: Yes. Vedanta is the noblest work there is and the highest dharma. Constantly recycling the jiva story is not. The mature thing to do is to discriminate you, the knower, from the

gunas/vasanas/karma by seeing them all as not self.

Robert: Thank you ever so much for this!