

PHILIPP ANDRÉ MAAS

The So-called Yoga of Suppression in the *Pātañjala Yogaśāstra**

In his outstanding pioneering study “Strukturen yogischer Meditation” Oberhammer¹ shows beyond doubt that the *Pātañjala Yogaśāstra* (PYŚ) teaches four kinds of yogic meditations which differ from each other with regard to their respective objects of meditation as well as with regard to their structure, i.e. in the treatment (or development) of content of consciousness within meditation.² The present paper takes up Oberhammer’s line of thought with regard to the first two kinds of meditation which are the subject of larger parts of the PYŚ’s first chapter, the *Samādhipāda*. A fresh look at these meditations has become possible (and indeed necessary), as there has been a good deal of scientific progress within the last thirty years.

First of all, there has been a considerable advancement in yoga philology. Oberhammer had to rely on the first edition of the *Pātañjala-yogaśāstravivarāṇa* (Madras 1952), which is based on one single manuscript. The version of the basic text (i.e. the YS together with the YBh) published together with the *Vivarāṇa* is not, as the title of the edition might suggest, a critically edited text. Very probably the editors simply copied it from the edition published by Kāśīnātha Śāstrī Āgāṣe as No. 47 of the Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series in 1904.³ Every now and then the editors of the *Vivarāṇa* modified the text of their exemplar with

* Sincere thanks to Professor Eli Franco for his thought provoking comments on an earlier version of this paper. I would also like to thank Susanne Kammüller, M.A. and Dr. Elizabeth De Michelis for taking a close look at my English.

¹ Cf. the review of Oberhammer’s work by Alper 1980.

² Oberhammer 1977: 134–230. Since the publication of Oberhammer’s study, Frauwallner’s interpretation of the PYŚ as dealing with only two different kinds of meditation (1953: 427–443) is clearly outdated. Bronkhorst 1993: 68–75, who apparently is not aware of Oberhammer 1977, distinguishes two kinds of meditation in the YS leading to *saṃprajñāta samādhi* and to *asaṃprajñāta (samādhi)* respectively.

³ Cf. Maas 2006: xiii–xxv.

readings they derived from a reconstruction of the *Vivaraṇa*'s basic text.⁴

In the meantime, we have not only come into possession of a new critical edition of the *Vivaraṇa*'s first chapter (YVi), but also of a critical edition of the first chapter of the YS together with the YBh, based on 21 printed editions and 25 manuscripts (Maas 2006).⁵ According to manuscript colophons and secondary evidence, both texts taken collectively bear the common title *Pātañjala Yogaśāstra* and, as I argue in the introduction to my edition, probably have one single, common "author" named Patañjali.⁶ This author would have collected the *sūtras* from different sources and furnished them with explanations, which in later times came to be regarded as the YBh.⁷ The date of the work is still uncertain, but a time span reaching from 325 to 425 A.D. seems to be most likely.⁸

In accordance with Frauwallner (1953), Oberhammer calls the first two types of yoga as discussed in the PYŚ "yoga of suppression" (*Unterdrückungsyoga*). This, however, is an unfortunate designation, as it evokes misleading associations. "*Unterdrückung*," according to Fröhlich's *Wörterbuch der Psychologie* has a double meaning. In psychology the word designates "the complete deletion of a reaction; in contrast to 'inhibition' (*Hemmung*) which can be removed" In psychoanalysis, on the other hand, 'suppression' means a "voluntary suppression of certain impulses for action (*Handlungsimpulse*); in contrast to repression (*Verdrängung*)".⁹ In the course of this paper it should become obvious

⁴ Cf. Maas 2006: xiix.

⁵ Critically edited texts, of course, facilitate the correct understanding of passages which have been corrupted in the course of the transmission. The critical edition of PYŚ I.29 provides two striking examples for an improved text. The vulgate reads the corrupt *svarūpadarśanam* instead of the correct *svapurūṣadarśanam* in I.29,3, and instead of the correct *madīya puruṣaḥ*, it reads *yaḥ puruṣaḥ* (or simply *puruṣaḥ*) in the next line. For a more detailed discussion of these variants cf. Maas 2006: lxviii f., 104 f., and 168 f.

⁶ Bronkhorst 1985: 191–203 comes to the same conclusion, albeit for different reasons.

⁷ The identification of Patañjali's "source books" is of course impossible as no systematic expositions of pre-classical Yoga have come down to us. For the considerable influence of Buddhist terminology on Patañjali see La Valée Poussin 1936–1937.

⁸ Maas 2006: xii–xix.

⁹ Fröhlich 1993: 413, col. 2, s.v.: "Unterdrückung (*suppression*). [1] Bezeichnung für die vollständige *Löschung* einer Reaktion; im Unterschied zur *Hemmung*, die durch

that neither of these meanings is applicable in yoga psychology. In using the designation “yoga of suppression” Frauwallner has neither a psychological nor a psychoanalytical connotation in mind. In his view, the use of “suppression” is justified by the type of meditation which Patañjali teaches in the first chapter of his work, starting with YS I.2 *yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ* “yoga is the shutdown of the mental capacity’s processes.”¹⁰ The aim of this type of yoga, according to Frauwallner is to “suppress all mental activity, and to eliminate cognition”¹¹. The second part of this statement is not fully consonant with the text from which it is derived. If deletion of cognition as a whole were the aim of yoga, this would imply not only a deletion of mental processes, but also a deletion of the self, which is *per definitionem* pure consciousness. Paradoxical as this might seem, the aim of yoga is not the elimination of consciousness but the deletion of consciousness content.¹² Moreover, the term “suppression” should be avoided because of its use as technical term in psychology and psychoanalysis. In replacing the term, I would suggest the expression “non-theistic yogic concentration,” which would do justice to its theistic variant, as well as to *samāpatti* and to *saṃyama*, which are under discussion in later parts of the PYŚ.¹³

Before discussing “non-theistic yogic concentration,” I would like to briefly brush up our knowledge of the metaphysical and ontological foundations of Sāṅkhya Yoga, as far as they are indispensable for the following discussion of yogic states of consciousness and forms of meditation.¹⁴

Classical Sāṅkhya Yoga is known to be an ontologically dualistic philosophy. It upholds that the world is divided into two fundamentally different kinds of entities. On the one hand there exists an infinite

spontane Erholung u.ä. wieder aufgehoben werden kann. ... [2] Allgemeine psychoanalytische Bezeichnung für das *willkürliche* Unterdrücken bestimmter Handlungsimpluse bzw. Handlungsweisen; im Unterschied zur *Verdrängung*, die durch unbeußt wirksam Abwehrmechanismen erfolgen soll.”

¹⁰ Oberhammer 1977 argues convincingly that the first chapter of the PYŚ does not deal with one single kind of meditation, but with three different types.

¹¹ Frauwallner (1953: 438): “... sucht man durch den Yoga jede geistige Tätigkeit zu unterdrücken und damit auch jede Erkenntnis auszuschalten.”

¹² Cf. the immediately following summary of “the metaphysical and ontological foundations of Sāṅkhya Yoga.”

¹³ For which see Oberhammer 1977: 177–209, and 209–230.

¹⁴ Cf. Schmithausen 1968: 331.

number of transcendental “selves,” or “spirits” (*puruṣa*). The selves are pure consciousness, bare of any content. They are infinite—not only in number but also with regard to time and space—inactive, and unchangeable. Besides the selves, the world consists of the products of primordial matter (*prakṛti*) which is completely unconscious, active and changeable. The products of matter not only make up all things of the outside world, but in human beings they also fashion the sense-capacities (*buddhīndriya*) as well as the mental capacity which is most frequently called *citta*.¹⁵ These metaphysical assumptions are crucial for the view of classical Sāṅkhya Yoga on epistemological issues, as mental processes are thought to depend upon the existence—and as it were “interaction”—of both kinds of entities. The mental capacity supplies the content of a mental process to the self, which by “seeing” it “provides” the mental content with consciousness. Everyday experience, of course, does not conform to this analysis. We neither experience consciousness without content, nor do we experience content without consciousness. According to Sāṅkhya Yoga, however, the analysis of mental processes in every day experience as being of a uniform nature is wrong. It is caused by nescience (*avidyā*), which deludes the self about its own true ontological status. The self—pure consciousness—is attracted by the mental capacity like iron is attracted by a lodestone. This “attraction” is possible because of the mutual compatibility or fitness (*yogyatā*) of the self and the *citta*. The mental capacity, which consists mainly of the luminous substance *sattva*, one of three constituents of primordial matter, is often called “the visible” (*dṛṣya*). It displays its content to the self, which frequently is designated as “the seer” (*draṣṭṛ*). Their compatibility is determined by their nature and cannot—in terms of Sāṅkhya Yoga—be meaningfully questioned.

Being under attraction of the mental capacity, the self identifies with it. The self is erroneously convinced to be affected by the content of experience. It feels happiness and suffers pain, although these, as well as all other kinds of mental events, exclusively take place within the mental capacity. In reality, the self, due to its transcendental ontological status, is incapable of being anything else than it is, viz. pure, contentless, and unchanging consciousness.

¹⁵ The terms *manas* or *buddhi* are also in frequent use without any apparent difference in meaning. Cf. Frauwallner 1953: 411.

The aim of Sāṅkhya Yoga in its soteriological dimension is to end the wrong identification of the self with its mental capacity once and for all, which amounts to the final liberation from the cycle of rebirths and its innate suffering. The means to this end is the realization of the ontological difference between the self and matter in meditative concentration, which is therefore called “knowledge of the difference” (*vivekakhyāti*). This knowledge is the final content of consciousness, the last involvement of the self with its mental capacity. When the *citta* is no longer interested in such “knowledge of the difference,” even this content ceases to exist and gives room for the un-eclipsed self perception of the self. The mental capacity continues to exist as long as the liberated yogi lives, due to mental impressions (*saṃskāras*) which it has stored. Finally, after the physical death of the yogi, the mental capacity dissolves in matter (*prakṛti*). The self, on the other hand, continues to exist in isolation (*kaivalya*), freed from the bonds of the cycle of rebirths.

Right at the beginning of his work, Patañjali (PYŚ I.1,2 f.) defines yoga in a very general way:

yogaḥ samādhiḥ; sa ca sārvaabhaumaś cittasya dharmah. kṣiptaṃ mūḍhaṃ vikṣiptam ekāgraṃ niruddham iti cittabhūmayah. tatra vikṣipte cetasi vikṣepopasarjanībhūtaḥ samādhir na yogapakṣe vartate. yas tv ekāgre cetasi sadbhūtam arthaṃ dyotayati, kṣiṇoti kleśān, karmabandhanāni ślathayati, nirodham āmukhīkaroti, sa samprajñāto yoga ity ākhyāyate. sarvavṛttinirodhe tv asaṃprajñātaḥ. tasya lakṣaṇābhidhītsayedam sūtram pravavṛte—yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ (YS I.2).

Yoga is awareness / concentration; and this is the quality of the mental capacity in all its states (literally: levels). Fixed, dull, distracted, one-pointed, and shut down [these] are the states of the mental capacity. Of these, awareness / concentration which exists in [the first three states including] the distracted one, as they are under the influence of distractive factors (like disease, lethargy etc.¹⁶), do not belong to the part of [the enumeration which makes up] yoga [proper]. On the other hand (*tu*), [concentration being] conscious [of an object] (*saṃprajñāta*) is called yoga, which [occurring] in a one-pointed mental capacity, makes the really true object appear,¹⁷ destroys the defilements, loosens the bonds of *karman*, [and] brings about the shutdown [of mental processes]. When all mental processes are shut down, however, [concentration] is not conscious [of any object]. With the intention to give a definition of this [concentration not conscious of an object], the [following]

¹⁶ The whole group of distractive factors is listed in YS I.30.

¹⁷ I take the expression *sadbhūtam artham* to refer to the self (*puruṣa*).

sūtra (YS I.2) has been composed: Yoga is the shutdown of the processes of the mental capacity.

Patañjali uses the word “yoga” in a number of related meanings. In its broadest sense “yoga” designates awareness as a characteristic of mental processes in general. There are, however, different kinds of awareness, which qualify five states of the mental capacity. Three states are not specifically yogic, and this is the reason why Patañjali excludes them from his exposition. Nevertheless, as Wezler convincingly shows on the backdrop of information provided by the *Vivarāṇa*, the arrangement not only of those states specific to yoga, but also of the first three ones is “quite consistent[ly] ... determined by the final goal” of yoga, viz. stopping the mental processes in general.¹⁸ The first state, called “fixed,” is characterised by a strong and involuntary connection between the mental capacity and its object.¹⁹ The mental capacity, completely attached to its object, is incapable of becoming aware of any different object. It is quite obvious that an involuntary fixation to a single object completely rules out the possibility of mental training, and this is the reason why Patañjali places this state at the beginning of his enumeration.

The second place is held by the “dull” mental capacity, which is equally involuntarily connected to a single object. Its connection to the object, however, is very weak. Although the explanations of the YVi are not comprehensive, one can quite safely regard the dull mental capacity as having a very basic and limited awareness of its object only.²⁰ The mental capacity is not able to perceive the object distinctly. This weakness is the reason why the dull state in terms of yoga psychology is superior to the state called “fixed.” The lack of firmness seems to provide the condition for an awareness of different objects, which leads to a possible transition of the mental capacity to the next higher state, called distracted.

¹⁸ Wezler 1983: 23. Wezler is not aware of Oberhammer 1977 and clings to Frauwallner’s differentiation of *nirodha-* and *aśtāṅgayoga*.

¹⁹ YVi 150,2 f.: *kṣiptam aṇiṣṭaviṣayaśāṇjanena stimitam*. “The attached [mental capacity] is paralysed by clinging to a not deliberately chosen object.” Cf. Wezler 1983: 20. Oberhammer (1977: 136, n. 6) translates as “... das durch die Färbung durch nicht angestrebte Gegenstände gebannte [psychische Organ].” I do not see any necessity to emend °*sañjanena* to °*rañjanena*. Moreover, the grammatical number of °*viṣaya*° is singular; cf. the following interpretation of this passage.

²⁰ The only explanation is *mūḍhaṃ nirvivekam* (YVi 150,3).

For this state, too, the explanations of the YVi are quite scarce. It simply paraphrases *vikṣiptam* as *nānāḁṣiptam* “being fixed to several [objects].” Wezler takes this to mean that the mental capacity is bound to several objects simultaneously.²¹ I doubt that this interpretation is correct. The distracted mind is rather bound to several objects in a short succession of time. It corresponds to our everyday awareness, which usually lacks permanent concentration on a single object. The content of consciousness changes according to the different sense data which come to the mind by means of the sense capacities. The mental capacity is attached to one object for a more or less short period of time, and becomes attached to the next when it has lost interest in the preceding one. Presumably because the mind in its distracted state is connected to several objects, it develops a certain distance, or—as the author of YVi has it—impartiality to its objects. This impartiality provides the mental capacity with the freedom to deliberately choose a desired object, which, of course, not only is the precondition for acting as an autonomous subject, but also for entering upon the path of mental training and spiritual progress.

A voluntary connection of sufficient strength between the mental capacity and a deliberately chosen object, which comes about every now and then in the distracted state, is the characteristic of the state called one-pointed (*ekāgara*), the first of the specifically yogic states.

Patañjali’s discussion of yoga proper starts with PYŚ I.12. This passage deals with two methods conducive to the shutdown of mental processes, viz. practice (*abhyāsa*) and detachment (*vairāgya*). Their efficiency is elucidated by a comparison of the mental capacity with a river being capable of flowing in two directions. The mind-river either flows, when guided by practice and detachment, in the direction of well-being (*kalyāṇa*) or, when uncontrolled, in the contrary direction of a bad condition (*pāpa*). Detachment in this context is said to obstruct the stream towards objects, in other words, it prevents the mind from entering into an involuntary connection with objects.

Patañjali elaborates on the concept of detachment in PYŚ I.15–16. He teaches that detachment is of two kinds, a lower and a higher one. Lower detachment refers to all things which are subject to perception, like women, food, drinks and the execution of power. Moreover, it

²¹ Wezler 1983: 22: “[The] *citta* clearly ... [does] not [have] one object only, but several at a time.”

also applies to objects which are known from authoritative tradition, like heavenly objects. The detached mental capacity, even when in contact with these objects, keeps a neutral attitude. It neither wants to avoid nor does it want to possess them, because it sees their defect, which obviously lies in their transient nature. This sovereignty of the mind in dealing with objects is called “consciousness of the controllability [of all objects]” (*vaśīkārasamjñā*).²²

The second kind of detachment is called “detachment from the constituents of matter” (*guṇavairṣṇya*) and refers to the entities belonging to the realm of matter (*prakṛti*) in Sāṅkhya Yoga ontology. The mind, because of practice of “perception of the Self” (*puruṣadarśanābhyāsāt*), is satisfied with the self’s difference from the realm of matter, and therefore becomes detached from all potential objects. The highest degree of detachment, according to Patañjali, is “only clearness of knowledge” (*jñānaprasādamātra*). This is knowledge without content, in other words, an unrestricted self-perception of the self, which is—or leads to—the liberation of the self from the cycle of rebirths. In order to achieve this self-perception, the yogi has to cultivate detachment as an all-embracing and unrestricted attitude towards the content of his consciousness. Even the liminal content which exists in the mental capacity at the border with liberation has to be given up in a final step. When unrestricted perception of the self has been achieved, this experience terminates attachment once and for all. Patañjali, in a remarkable passage, lets the liberated yogi describe the degree of his detachment. He says:

“*prāptam prāpanīyam, kṣīṇāḥ kṣetavyāḥ kleśāḥ, chinnāḥ śliṣṭaparvā bhavasamkramāḥ, yasyāvicchēdāj janitvā mriyate, mṛtvā ca jāyate*“, *iti* (PYŚ I.16,5 f.).

“I have attained all that is attainable, I have destroyed all defilements being subject to destruction, I have cut the succession of existences with its [tightly] connected joints, due to the continuation of which after having been born, one dies, and after having died, one is born [again].”

²² Cf. the YVi’s gloss in 218,8 ff.: *vaśīkartuṃ śakyante ’syām avasthāyām sarve gauṇāḥ padārthāḥ, vaśīkartavyatvena samjñāyante. vaśīkṛtāni ca tasyām avasthāyām indriyāṇi samjñāyante. vaśīkaraṇam vā samjñāyate ’syām iti.*

In this state [of mind] all things (*padārtha*) consisting of the constituents of matter (*gauṇa*) can be controlled [so that] one is aware of their being controllable. And one is aware of the sense-capacities as being controlled. Or one is aware of their control in this [state of mind].

As mentioned before, PYŚ I.12 names a second concept besides “detachment” which is conducive to the shutdown of mental processes, i.e. “practice” (*abhyāsa*). Within a comparison of the mental capacity to a river “practice of perception of the difference [between the self and matter]” (*vivekadarśanābhyāsa*) is said to open the stream to well-being.²³

In the passage immediately following Patañjali gives a more detailed definition: “... practice is the effort for steadiness (YS I.13).”²⁴ He explains: “The mental capacity’s state of flowing calmly, when its processes are reduced, is steadiness. ... Practice [means] complying to the methods with the desire to produce this [steadiness].”²⁵

This quotation confirms the analysis of the specifically yogic form of concentration (*samādhi*) outlined above. In order to belong to yoga proper, concentration has to fulfil two requirements: (1) It must consist of a stable connection between the mental capacity and an object, and (2) the object has to be a deliberately chosen one. The second requirement corresponds to “detachment” from all objects being potentially subject to an involuntary connection caused by attachment. The first requirement, i.e. stability of the connection, is the aim of practice.

The structure of the “non-theistic yogic concentration” as being conscious of its object is briefly described in PYŚ I.17:

vitarkavicārānandāsmītārūpānugamāt samprajñātāḥ (YS I.17).

vitarkaś cittasyālabhane sthūla ābhogaḥ. sūkṣmo vicārah. ānando hlādah. ekarūpātmikā samvid asmitā. tatra prathamaś catuṣṭayānugataḥ samādhiḥ savitarkaḥ. dvitīyo vitarkavikalah savicārah. tṛtīyo vicāravikalah sānandah. caturthas tadvikalo ’smitāmātrah. sarva ete sālambanāḥ samādhayaḥ (PYŚ I.17,2–6).²⁶

[Concentration is] conscious [of an object], because it is accompanied by thinking, by evaluation,²⁷ by joy, and by the form [?] (*rūpa*) of individuality (YS I.17).

²³ PYŚ I.12,6 f.: *vivekadarśanābhyāsenā kalyāṇasrota udghātyate.*

²⁴ ... *sthītau yatno ’bhyāsaḥ* (YS I.13).

²⁵ *cittasyāvṛttikasya praśāntavāhītā sthitiḥ. [...] tatsampipādayiṣayā sādhanānuṣṭhānam abhyāsaḥ* (PYŚ I.13,2 f.).

²⁶ The parallels to the Buddhist *dhyāna* meditation (for which see Eimer 2006: 25) have been noted by Bronkhorst 1993: 71; cf. also Cousins 1992: 148 and 151 ff.

²⁷ The meanings of *vitarka* (Pāli *vitakka*) and *vicāra* as stages of *samādhi* in Buddhism and Yoga are the subject of Cousins 1992. He concludes that “[f]or the canonical *abhidhamma*, *vitakka* ... is the ability to apply the mind to something and to fix it

“Thinking” is the mental capacity’s gross investigation²⁸ of an object²⁹. The subtle investigation is “evaluation.” “Joy” is pleasure. Consciousness having a single form is “individuality.” Of these [four kinds], the first concentration, which is accompanied by all four [kinds of consciousness content], is accompanied by thought. The second, which is devoid of thought, is accompanied by evaluation. The third, which is devoid of evaluation, is accompanied by joy. The fourth, which is devoid of this [joy], is individuality only. All these concentrations have an object.

Four key words sketch the development of the mental capacity towards conscious concentration: Thinking (*vitarka*), evaluation (*vicāra*), joy (*ānanda*), and individuality (*asmitā*). Each keyword is characteristic of one phase in the development of concentration. In the first phase, all four forms of mental activity exist in succession. Nevertheless, it is “thinking” which establishes the connection between the mental capacity and its deliberately chosen object, the self.³⁰ “Thinking” obviously has to be understood as the comprehension of the teachings concerning the “self” in Sāṅkhya Yoga philosophy, which provides a basis for the practice of the perception of the self (*puruṣadarśanābhīyāsa*). In the second stage, the connection between the mental capacity and its object is

upon a (meditative) object. *Vicāra* ... is the ability to explore and examine an object” (153). Oberhammer (1977: 149 f.), whose work seems to be unknown to Cousins, draws upon Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and Yaśomitra’s commentary thereon. He concludes his discussion stating that “... Vitarka und Vicāra ein von Sprache ... begleitetes diskursiv-begriffliches Erfassen des Gegenstandes ist. Der Unterschied der beiden scheint ... darin zu liegen, daß der Vitarka ein prüfendes Überlegen (*ūhaḥ, paryeṣaṇam*) ist, während der Vicāra jene erwägende Einsicht am Ende ist, in der das prüfende Überlegen auf das Ergebnis hin überstiegen wird, und die daher subtiler als jenes genannt werden kann” (150).

²⁸ *ābhoga* according to BHSD (99, col. 2, s.v.), means “effort,” “endeavour.” Oberhammer (1977: 148) takes it as “tasting (Verkosten)”; Cousins (1992: 148) presumably in accordance with the meanings “ideation, idea, thought” which are recorded in PTSD (103, col. 2, s.v.) translates more appropriately as “directing (the mind) towards.” With some hesitation I decide to translate as “investigation,” which should be taken as “directing the mind towards an object in order to grasp it conceptually.”

²⁹ The meaning “object” for *ālambana* is recorded in *pw* (187, col.1, s.v.) for Buddhist texts. It was not properly included in *MW* (“also *dharma* or law belonging to *manas*” 153, col. 2, s.v.), but it found entry into BHSD (105, col. 2, s.v.). Oberhammer (1977: 148) in translating “Objektstütze” apparently follows Woods’ (1914: 40) “supporting [object].” The correct translation was already known to Ganganatha Jha (1934: 30).

³⁰ Cf. Oberhammer 1977: 156.

fixed to a degree which makes a rethinking of yoga philosophy dispensable. The yogi can draw upon the insights he has gained from his occupation with yoga teachings concerning the self, and does not need to investigate the subject again. This presumably is the reason why “evaluation” is termed a “refined” investigation of the object in comparison to “thinking” which is seen as gross. In the third phase, which is characterised by joy, the connection between the mental capacity and its object is deprived of its conceptual and linguistic dimension. The self, which in the previous phase was the object of conceptualisation, now turns into the content of a direct, joyful experience. The passage cited unambiguously states that the penultimate concentration has two aspects, the characteristic aspect of joy, and a secondary aspect of individuality. The last mentioned aspect is not only a constituent of consciousness in this phase of concentration, but of experience in general. Experience by its very nature belongs to an individual, who is able to refer to the subject of experience with the pronoun “I.” Usually, however, individuality is eclipsed by the content of consciousness, and does not turn into an object of perception. In the final stage of conscious concentration the situation is different. As joy, the content of consciousness characteristic in the previous phase has been given up, it is now the form of consciousness that turns into a content of consciousness, experienced as individuality, or—according to the author of YVi—as the state of being experience only (*pratyayamātratā*).³¹ Nevertheless, consciousness here still is a consciousness of something. It is being conscious of belonging to an individual. The self, therefore, does not experience itself as being ontologically different from matter. It still perceives as the subject of perception in association with its mental capacity. And the existence of a content within the mental capacity justifies the designation “concentration being conscious of an object” (*saṃprajñātasamādhi*) even in its ultimate phase.

The transition from concentration having a content to contentless concentration is the subject of PYS I.18:

athāsaṃprajñātaḥ kimupāyaḥ, kiṃsvabhāva iti?

virāmapratyayābhyāsapūrvakaḥ saṃskāraśeṣo 'nyaḥ (YS I.18).

... tasya paraṃ vairāgyam upāyaḥ. sālambano 'bhyāsaḥ tatsādhanāya na kalpyate, itī virāmapratyayo nirvastuka ālambanīkriyate. tadabhyāsapūrvakam cit-

³¹ YVi 223,8: *asmitā pratyayamātratā*.

taṃ nirālanbanam abhāvaprāptam iva bhavati. sa eṣa nirbījaḥ samādhir asamprajñātaḥ (PYŚ I.18,1–7).

What means is there for [concentration being] not conscious of an object, and what is its nature?

The other [concentration], which has a remainder of impressions, is preceded by practicing the cessation experience (YS I.18).

... The means to this [concentration] is higher detachment. Practice having an object is not capable to bring about this [concentration]. Therefore, the cessation experience, which does not refer to a thing (*nirvastuka*), is used as its object. The mental capacity, preceded by the practice of this [cessation experience], having no object [at all], seemingly becomes non-existent. This seedless (= having special impressions [?])³² concentration is not conscious of an object.

Higher detachment is the means to bring about concentration that is not conscious of an object. This supports the role of detachment as outlined above. In order to finish the interaction between the mental capacity and the self, the remaining content of consciousness, viz. the experience of individuality, has to be given up. The consequence is severe. The yogi, in order to let the transcendental self appear within the mental capacity—clear and un-eclipsed by any content of consciousness—even has to detach himself from the coherence of his own existence as an individual. The yogi, as it were, gives up his empirical personality in order to win his true self.

How can this goal be achieved? The very nature of “individuality,” the content of consciousness in the ultimate phase of conscious concentration, rules out the possibility of any act of will. The only reason for a transition from concentration with content to concentration without content therefore is the self-perception of the self (*puruṣa*), which by itself leads the mental capacity away from the realm of matter. It seems that it is this dynamism that found its way into the definition of higher detachment in the following statement:

³² YVi 226,15 glosses *nirbījaḥ* with *saṃskāraviśeṣasvabhāva[h]* but this does not contribute much to my understanding of the term. Maybe Patañjali alludes to a concept discussed in PYŚ II.4. There we learn that defilements may exist in the mental capacity in a latent (*prasupta*) form. These defilements exercise their effect as soon as the mental capacity comes into contact with an object which serves as a trigger. This, however, does not happen in the case of yogis who have “burned” the defilement-seeds with the fire of *prasaṃkhyāna* meditation.

puruṣadarśanābhyāsāt tacchuddhipravivekāpyāyītabuddhir guṇebhyo vyaktāvyaktadharmakebhyo viraktaḥ (PYŚ I.16,2 f.).

Because of practising sight of the self (*puruṣadarśanābhyāsāt*) the [yogi] having his mental capacity satisfied with distinguishing the pureness of the [sight] (or: of the self) [from the sight itself]³³ is detached from all constituents of matter, whether their characteristics are manifest or not manifest.

The starting point for the development to concentration without content is individuality. This content decreases in proportion to the increasing clearness of the perception of the self. When almost no content is left, the very insignificant remainder serving as “support” of the mental capacity is called “cessation-experience” (*virāmapratyaya*). The YVi explains the compound “cessation-experience” as a descriptive determinative (*karmadhāraya*) compound.³⁴ Accordingly, the expression does not denote an experience having the content of cessation, but an experience being characterised by cessation. In other words, it is the final experience of the mental capacity immediately before its complete loss of content. The YVi gives an illustrative example. It compares the liminal experience with the final flame of a fire that has consumed its fuel.³⁵

In the state of being free from content, the mental capacity makes room for the unlimited consciousness of the self. In dealing with this state of consciousness Oberhammer correctly refers to PYŚ I.3

³³ YVi 219.10 ff.: *tad iti puruṣadarśanam parāmṛṣyate. tasya śuddhis tacchuddhiḥ. nirṇīktakleśādimalatvam. athavā tasya puruṣasya śuddhis tacchuddhiḥ. tacchuddes tadāmbanadarśanam pravivicyate. tatpravivekenāpyāyītā buddhir asya yoginaḥ.*

[The word] “its” (*tad*) refers to the sight of the self. The compound *tacchuddhiḥ* is a dependent determinative compound with a genitive case relation. [“Pureness of the sight of the self” is] the state of having the defilements of taints (*kleśa*) etc. cleansed. Or otherwise, “its pureness” [means] the pureness of the self. [The yogi] distinguishes the pureness [of the self] from the sight, which has the [self] as its object. The yogi’s mental capacity is satisfied with distinguishing it.

³⁴ YVi 225,10: *virāmaś cāsau pratyayaś ca virāmapratyayah.*

³⁵ YVi 225,11-13: *sarvaṣiṣayebho vinirvartamānasya vinirvartanakāle prāg apratyayā- {read apratyayātā-} patteḥ pratyayarūpatvam etat {instead of etat read etasya [?]}. yathā pāvakasya jvalataḥ prakṣīyamānendhanasya śanaiḥ śanir upaśāmyataḥ prāg aṅgāratāpatter jvalātmātā.*

At the time of turning away, [immediately] before the state of non-experience occurs, [the mental capacity] which is turning away from all objects [still] has [some] experience, like a flaming fire, when its fuel is being consumed, little by little becomes diminished, immediately before it assumes the state of being embers, [still] consists of a flame.

which gives a very short description of the cessation of all mental processes:³⁶

tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'vasthānam (YS I.3).
svarūpapraṭiṣṭhā tadānīm cicchaktir, yathā kaivalye (PYŚ I.3,2 f.).

Then the seer (i.e. the self) abides in his own form (YS I.3). At that time the capacity of consciousness (i.e. the self) is grounded in its own form, just as in isolation.

The second yogic concentration, which I am going to discuss briefly, is a variant of yoga as outlined so far. It shares, however, the general aim of meditation, i.e. the realization of unrestricted self perception of the self, and therefore also culminates in concentration which is not conscious of an object (*asamprajñāta samādhi*).³⁷ In its initial stages it has the supreme lord (*īśvara*) as its object. I would therefore like to name this kind of yoga “theistic yogic concentration.” The “theistic yogic concentration” is based on a special concept of God which lacks any sectarian or mythological element.³⁸

The summary of Sāṅkhya Yoga ontology given above did not even once refer to the supreme lord. This exclusion was justified, as the ontological dualism of Sāṅkhya Yoga includes the concept of a supreme lord alongside of the transcendental selves (*puruṣa*), but only as in principle identical with liberated selves, the only difference between the supreme lord and “ordinary” liberated selves being that the latter, before becoming liberated, were subject to bondage. The supreme lord, on the other hand, was never bound to the realm of matter in the past, nor will ever be bound in future. Apart from this, God and the selves are identical.³⁹ They are pure, unchanging, contentless consciousness. The question arises of course about how the transcendental nature of God can be brought in harmony with the concept of God’s activity within the world according to Sāṅkhya Yoga? In other words: How can a transcen-

³⁶ Oberhammer 1977: 161.

³⁷ Cf. Oberhammer 1977: 177.

³⁸ Cf. for the following exposition Oberhammer 1977: 162–177.

³⁹ PYŚ I.24,1–10: *atha pradhānapuruṣavyatiriktaḥ ko 'yam īśvara iti?*

kleśakarmavipākāśayair aparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ (YS I.24). ...

kaivalyaṃ prāptāḥ tarhi santi bahavaḥ kevalinaḥ. te hi trīṇi bandhanāni cchittvā kaivalyaṃ prāptāḥ. īśvarasya tatsambandho na bhūto, na bhāvī. yathā muktasya pūrvā bandhakoṭir jñāyate, yathā vā prakṛtilīnasyottarā bandhakoṭiḥ sambhāvyaṭe, naivam īśvarasya. sa tu sadaiva muktaḥ sadaiveśvara iti.

dental self, pure consciousness, which *per definitionem* is totally free from any kind of activity, intervene in the world which is the realm of matter? The texts points out that God's effectiveness within the world is quite limited. At the beginning of each of the cyclically reoccurring creations of the world, he assumes a perfect (*prakṛṣṭa*) mental capacity, made out of the luminous substance *sattva*, in order to provide instruction to a seer, and to start a lineage of teachers and pupils.⁴⁰ This process, according to Sāṅkhya Yoga, is not an activity in the full sense of the word. It is an event that takes place in accordance with His compassionate nature. Besides this, the concept of God in Sāṅkhya Yoga leaves no room for a this-worldly activity. The soteriological efficiency of devotion to the supreme lord is therefore not a result of God's action. It is brought about by "theistic yogic concentration."

Patañjali provides a basis for his discussion of "theistic yogic concentration" by way of philosophical reflections on the relationship between verbal denotations (*vācaka*), i.e. words, and the objects of denotations (*vācya*), i.e. the referents of words. God, according to PYŚ I.27, is denoted by the *praṇava*, the sacred syllable *om*, which is his denotation.⁴¹ Patañjali holds a theory of language, which claims a permanent connection (*saṃbandha*) between the objects of denotations (*vācya*), and verbal designations (*vācaka*).⁴² This permanence apparently can be put down to an identical structure of language and its referent. Although the relationship between language and its meaning is constant and non-accidental, the shape of phonetic entities—viz. the form of words—is non-constant and accidental, because it is established and maintained by convention (*saṃketa*). The form of phonetic entities can be subject to change, the logical structure of language cannot.

The author of YVi adds an empirical argument. The connection between the syllable *om* and God is fixed, because the employment of the *mantra* inevitably brings about its effect. It is therefore comparable to the connection between food, which is the object of cooking, and fire, which is the agent of cooking. If there was no fixed connection between

⁴⁰ PYŚ I.25,8–11: "jñānadharmopadeśena kalpapralayamahāpralayeṣu saṃsāriṇaḥ puruṣān uddhariṣyāmi", *iti. tathā cōktam*: "ādividvān nirmāṇacittam adhiṣṭhāya kārūnyād bhagavān parama ṛṣir āsuraye jijñāsamānāya provāca" (Pañcaśikha, according to TVś and YVā), *iti*.

⁴¹ PYŚ I.27,1: *tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ* (YS I.27); *vācya īśvaraḥ*.

⁴² PYŚ I.27,3: *sthito 'sya vācyasya vācakena saṃbandhaḥ*.

these two entities, fire would not be a suitable means for cooking. In the same way, if there was no fixed connection between the syllable *om* and God, muttering of the *mantra* would not bring about a direct experience of the supreme lord.⁴³ The means to this direct experience is described in the opening passage of PYŚ I.28:

vijñātavācyavācakatvasya yoginah—tājapasa tadarthabhāvanam (YS I.28).

The yogi, who has thoroughly understood that [God] is the object of denotation and [the syllable *om*] is its denotation, mutters the [syllable *om*] and makes its referent visible.

The interdependence of *mantra*-muttering and yogic concentration is the subject of a stanza from the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, which Patañjali cites as authority for his outline of the theistic yogic meditation.

svādhyāyād yogam āsīta yogāt svādhyāyam āmanet |
svādhyāyayogasampattiyā para ātmā prakāśate || (PYŚ I.28,5 f. = VPurāṇa 6.6.2)

One should practice yogic meditation after *mantra*-repetition, after yogic meditation, one should perform *mantra*-repetition. By means of the accomplishment of *mantra*-repetition and of yogic meditation, the highest self becomes visible.

The author of YVi explains the process leading to an experience of God as follows: Initially *mantra*-repetition establishes an orientation of the mind towards the supreme lord. Once this orientation is secured, the yogi practices a meditative vision (*dhyāna*) of God. When his mind is undistracted and the vision has become solid, he takes up an internalised form of *mantra*-repetition, which apparently increases the clearness of the vision, until finally the supreme lord is the only content of consciousness.⁴⁴ Then the mental capacity of the yogi attains one-pointedness.⁴⁵

⁴³ YVi 278,1–3: *vācyavācakayor asthitasambandhatve tu praṇavarūpeṇābhimukhībha-
vatīśvara iti nāvakaḥkalpate. na hi pācyapācakasambandhe 'navasthite pācakāgnyu-
pādānam pākārtham kalpate.* If the denotation and the object of denotation did not have a settled connection, the direct appearance of the supreme lord in the form of the *praṇava* would not be possible. As [for example], if the connection between [food which is] the thing to be cooked and the thing that cooks were not settled, the utilization of fire as the agent of cooking would not be fit for the purpose of cooking.

⁴⁴ YVi 279,14–280,2: ... “*svādhyāyāt*” *praṇavajapād īśvaram praty avanatacittah san* “*yogam āsīta*” *tadartham īśvaran dhyāyet. tadarthadhyānāc ca pra{* instead of *ca*

The similarity between the non-theistic yogic concentration having a consciousness content (*saṃprajñāta samādhi*) and its theistic variant is obvious. The states of the mental capacity are identical in both cases in that they both have a single content, which at first sight, however, seems to differ. In the first case it was the individual self, in the theistic variant the content is the supreme lord. If we remember the concept of God as outlined above, the difference is practically reduced to nothing, as both are identical in nature.

Patañjali provides an account of the experience of identity of the self and God in PYŚ I.29, which sums up the result of the theistic yogic concentration:

kiṃcāsyā bhavati tataḥ pratyakcetanādhiḡam[ah] ... (YS I.29). ... svapurūṣa-darśanam apy asya bhavati: "yathaiveśvaraḡ śuddhaḡ, prasannaḡ, kevalo, 'nupasargas, tathāyam api buddheḡ pratisaṃvedī madīyah puruṣaḡ," ity adhiḡacchaṭī. (PYŚ I.29,1-5)

Moreover, from this (*mantra*-repetition and yogic meditation) [t]he [yogi] acquires the realization of his inner consciousness (YS I.29). [This means,] he even acquires sight of his own self (*puruṣa*). He realizes: "As God is pure, clear, alone and free from trouble, so also is my self here that experiences its mental capacity."

The yogi's realization that his own self is identical in nature with the supreme lord must not be understood as knowledge gained by conceptual thinking. This would, of course, not be compatible with the one-pointedness of the mental capacity. The realization rather has to be seen in analogy with the non theistic yogic concentration with content as described above. In non-theistic meditation the content of consciousness is

pra read *cāpra* with manuscript L } *calitamanāḡ "svādhyāyam" praṇavam "āmanet" manasābhijapet. ... tathā ca praṇavajapaparamesvaradhyānasampatyā "para ātmā" parameṣṭhī "prakāśate" yogina iti.*

... "after mantra-repetition"—after muttering the syllable *om*—[the yogi] inasmuch as he has a mental capacity which is directed to God should "practice yogic meditation"—should visualise God, the referent of the [syllable *om*]. And after the visualisation of the referent [of the syllable *om*], [the yogi] having a mind which is not wandering [around] should practice mantra-repetition—[he] should [silently] mutter the syllable *om* in his mind. ... And this way, by means of the accomplishment of muttering the syllable *om* and of visualising the supreme lord, the highest self—the one who is standing at the highest position— "becomes visible" to the yogi.

⁴⁵ PYŚ I.28,2-4: *tad asya yoginaḡ, praṇavam japataḡ, praṇavārtham bhāvayataś, citam ekāgratām saṃpadate.*

the individual self which experiences itself as the subject of individuality. The self-realization in this state is imperfect, since the self as the subject of an experience is still bound to its own mental capacity. In the course of development, the remaining content of the mental capacity is reduced, and finally the self perceives itself as pure consciousness. In the theistic variant the starting point is similar. Here too the self experiences a self, viz. God. This experience is not a direct one. The self can only perceive the content of its own mental capacity, and therefore just has an image of God. In the course of the meditation, this content of consciousness gradually decreases. The image of God as a self becomes weaker and weaker, and the eclipse of pure consciousness by a content of consciousness vanishes. Finally, when all mental processes are shut down, the mental capacity allows for an unrestricted self-perception of the self, a concentration which is not conscious of any object (*asaṃpra-jñāta samādhi*).

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Āgāṣe 1904 K. Ś. Āgāṣe (ed.), *Vācaspatimiśraviracitaṭīkāsaṃvalita Vyāsa-bhāṣyasametāni Pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi*. Tathā Bhojadevaviracita-Rājamārtanḍābhīdhavṛttisametāni Pātañjalayogasūtrāṇi <Sūtrapāthasūtravarṇānukramasūcībhyāṃ ca sanāthikṛtāni.> ... Tac ca H. N. Āpaṭe ity anena ... prakāśitam. Puṇyākhyapattana [= Pune] 1904 (Ānandāśramasaṃskṛtagranthāvaliḥ, 47).
- Alper 1980 H. P. Alper, Review of Strukturen Yogischer Meditation: Untersuchungen zur Spiritualität des Yoga by Gerhard Oberhammer. *Philosophy East and West* 30,2. (April 1980), 273–277.
- BHSD F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. 2: *Dictionary*. New Haven 1953 (William Dwight Whitney Linguistic Series).
- Bronkhorst 1985 J. Bronkhorst, Patañjali and the Yoga Sūtras. *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985), 191–212.
- Bronkhorst 1993 J. Bronkhorst, *The Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India*. Reprint of the 1st Indian edition [1st ed. Stuttgart 1986]. Delhi 2000.
- Cousins 1992 L. S. Cousins, Vitakka/Vitarka and Vicāra: The Stages of Samādhi in Buddhism and Yoga. *Indo Iranian Journal* 35 (1992), 137–157.
- Eimer 2006 H. Eimer, *Buddhistische Begriffsreihen als Skizzen des Erlösungsweges*. Wien 2006 (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, 65).
- Frauwallner 1953 E. Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*. Bd. 1. Die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos. Der Buddha und der Jina.

- Das Samkhya und das klassische Yoga-System. Salzburg 1953 (Wort und Antwort, 6).
- Fröhlich 1993 W. D. Fröhlich, *dtv-Wörterbuch zur Psychologie*. 19. bearbeitete und erweiterte Auflage (1st ed. 1968). München 1993.
- Ganganatha Jha 1934 Ganganatha Jha (transl. of PYŚ, engl.), *The Yoga-Darshana*. Comprising the Sūtras of Patañjali. With the Bhāṣya of Vyāsa. Transl. into English with Notes. 2nd ed. thoroughly revised. Madras 1934.
- La Vallée Poussin 1936–1937 = L. de La Vallée Poussin, *Le Bouddhisme et le Yoga de Patañjali*. *Melange chinois et bouddhiques* 5 (1936–1937), 223–242.
- Maas 2006 Ph. A. Maas (ed.), *Samādhipāda*. Das erste Kapitel des Pātañjalayogaśāstra zum ersten Mal kritisch ediert. = The First Chapter of the Pātañjalayogaśāstra for the First Time Critically Edited. Aachen 2006 (Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis) (Geisteskultur Indiens. Texte und Studien, 9).
- MW M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages. New Ed. Greatly Enlarged and Improved with the Collaboration of E. Leumann ... C. Cappeler ... [et. al.], Oxford 1899.
- Oberhammer 1977 G. Oberhammer, *Strukturen yogischer Meditation*. Untersuchungen zur Spiritualität des Yoga. Wien 1977 (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 322) (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens, 132).
- PTSD T. W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary* (Reprint of the 1st ed.: The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary. London 1921–1925). Delhi 1989.
- pw O. Böhtlingk, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch in kürzerer Fassung*. (Reprint of the ed. in 7 vols. St. Petersburg 1879–1889) Delhi 1991.
- PYŚ Pātañjala Yogaśāstra ed. Maas 2006.
- Schmithausen 1968 L. Schmithausen, Zur advaitischen Theorie der Objekterkenntnis. In: *Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Indiens*. Festschrift für Erich Frauwallner. Aus Anlass seines 70. Geburtstages herausgegeben von G. Oberhammer. Wien 1968 (WZKSO 12).
- TVŚ Tattvavaiśaradī by Vācapatimīśra ed. Āgāṣe 1904.
- Vivarāṇa *Pātañjala-Yogasūtra-Bhāṣya-Vivarāṇa of Śaṅkara-Bhagavatpāda*. Critically ed. with Introduction by ... P. Sri Rama Sastri ... and S. R. Krishnamurthi Sastri ... Madras 1952 (Madras Government Oriental Series, 94).
- VPurāṇa Viṣṇupurāṇa: *The Critical Edition of the Viṣṇupurāṇam*. Vol. 1–2. ... by M. M. Pathak. Vadodara. Vol.1: 1 to 3 Aṃśas. 1997. Vol. 2: Aṃśas 4–6 & Pāda-Index prepared by ... P. Schreiner. 1999.
- Wezler 1983 A. Wezler, Philological Observations on the So-Called Pātañjalayogaśāstrabhāṣyavivarāṇa (Studies in the Pātañjalayogaśāstravivarāṇa I). *Indo-Iranian Journal* 25 (1983), 17–40.

- Woods 1914 J. H. Woods (transl. of PYŚ and TVś, engl.), *The Yoga-System of Patañjali*. Or the Ancient Hindu Doctrine of Concentration of Mind, Embracing the Mnemonic Rules, Called Yoga-Sūtras, of Patañjali and the Comment, Called Yoga-Bhāṣya, Attributed to Veda-Vyāsa, and the Explanation, Called Tattva-Vaiçarādī, of Vāchaspati-Miçra. (Reprint. 1st ed. Cambridge, Mass. 1914) Delhi 1992 (Harvard Oriental Series, 17).
- YBh *Yogabhāṣya*, traditionally ascribed to Vyāsa.
- YS Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*.
- YVā *Yogavārttika of Vijñānabhikṣu*. Text with English Translation and Critical Notes along with the Text and English Translation of the Pātañjala Yogasūtras and Vyāsabhāṣya. (Ed. and transl. by) T. S. Rukmani. Vol. 1: Samādhipāda. Delhi 1981.
- YVi *A Critical Edition of the Pātañjalayogaśāstravivarāṇa*. First Part. Samādhipāda with an Introduction ed. by K. Harimoto. 1999. (A Dissertation in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania).