

# Snkhya and Yoga : where they do not speak in one voice

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## SĀṆKHYA AND YOGA: WHERE THEY DO NOT SPEAK IN ONE VOICE

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The controversy as to whether *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* were two different schools of thought coming together later because of their acceptance of certain common metaphysical and epistemic principles, or whether one of them precedes the other to which the latter owed most of its principles, or yet again whether there was a common *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* school which then differentiated into two separate systems of thought are still speculations in our current state of knowledge and cannot be decided one way or the other with certainty.<sup>1</sup>

But that does not prevent us from forming our own conclusions based on the evidence before us. I, for one, would like to believe that the differences between *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* which are sometimes very sharp, point to some important conclusions. While both the schools grew in a rich common speculative background, it appears that there were two broad distinctive developments that separated the approach to spirituality even in these early speculations. One was the emphasis on reasoning and knowledge *per se* to work out the spiritual connections, while the other was a transformation of the personality of the individual, in such a way, through different techniques so as to receive knowledge of the spiritual connections.<sup>2</sup> One depended on reasoning itself through a leap, to use Karl POTTER's phrase, to realize the ultimate, whereas the other depended on transforming the vehicle itself i.e. the body, mind and intellect to be able to receive the ultimate truth. The many sidedness of the speculations are evident even in the surviving Vedic hymns and one can see the emphasis of one or the other approach in the Ṛgvedic hymns themselves. *Yajña* (sacrifice), *tapas* and the *ṛc*, *yajus*, *sāman* and *atharvan mantras* that accompany sacrifice belong to one kind of approach. It is based on action and scholars like Hriday SHARMA have pointed out the connection of this preliminary Vedic *yajña* eventually leading to *Brahmabhāva* by the

1 cf. G. J. LARSON, *Classical Sāṅkhya*, p. 15 f.

2 Mircea ELIADE, *Yoga Immortality and Freedom*, passim.

cleansing of the impurities of body and mind.<sup>3</sup> There is also enough material on the power of contemplation and reflection as well as on the power of speech, both in the form of loud chant and in the form of secret *mantras* capable of transforming the consciousness, as well as references to devotion and esoteric practice in the *Vedas*.<sup>4</sup> Almost all the means for being in tune with *ṛta* are thus laid out in the *Veda*. Thus the claim of all of the six orthodox systems having their basis in the Vedic corpus is not difficult to establish. It is in the choice of one means over another or in the choice of one predominant means in combination with others as subsidiary, that the later schools of philosophy differ. While we will not know with certainty the early history of each of these schools, their finished *sūtras* lead us to some observations.

While for instance, one is struck by the consistency of method and structure in Jaimini's *Pūrvamīmāṃsāsūtras*, one is equally amazed at the loose structure of Patañjali's *Yogasūtras* (YS). In a sense both these schools belong to the "action model", one retaining the transformation through the motif of sacrifice while the other through giving up 'fire-sacrifices' as a medium of transformation and finding other substitutes both in the form of words and esoteric practices to purify and cleanse the personality of the performer. One will have to visualize an initial stage where many philosophical models were co-existing horizontally and vying for supremacy in such circles. The few examples that we get of such debates in the *Upaniṣads* like that at the court of Janaka point to this stage.<sup>5</sup> Ṛṣis like Yajñavalkya finally seem to have swayed the mood in the direction of "contemplation and reflection" away from the model of "contemplation and action." While the atmosphere in the early *Upaniṣads* points to one heavily weighted in favour of reason and knowledge the "action model" never lost ground and continued to grow independently, even, borrowing generously from circles outside the Vedic circles. One can argue that *Yoga* allied itself to this model. It is such a phenomenon that one witnesses in the YS. It betrays this in its vocabulary and in its acceptance of many approaches for getting rid of the impurities (*kleśas*) before attaining liberation. Because of

3 Hriday R. SHARMA, "The Spirituality of the Vedic Sacrifice", in *Hindu Spirituality*, p. 29 f.

4 i. R. P. PANDEYA, "The Vision of the Vedic Seer" in *Hindu Spirituality*, p. 5 f.  
ii. A. C. BOSE, *Hymns from the Vedas*, passim.

5 *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, II. 4; IV. 1-6.

its openness to many strands, there is a lack of coherence and structure that one meets with in the multilayered canvas that Patañjali's YS display. So much so that even the basic vocabulary and concepts of the YS have not been defined properly. There is no precision regarding concepts like *vyutthāna* and *nirodha*, there is a failure to come to terms with *prajñā*, *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta samādhis*, there is also a profusion of words to indicate more or less the same meaning and so on.<sup>6</sup>

As opposed to *Yoga*, *Sāṅkhya* seems to have settled down finally to a choice of rationality and knowledge. Using LARSON's chronological table for the purposes of this paper, we could say that the two paradigms to spiritual knowledge i.e. one through reasoning and pure thought and the other through action, discipline and other transformative processes find their voices in the proto-classical period (substituting LARSON's proto-Sāṅkhya for proto-classical) though *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* are not as yet distinguished from each other definitely as separate schools.<sup>7</sup> Of course this could also mean that though the schools were different and separate others could not make this distinction very easily and so there is an ambiguity in this period. We have many quotations to substantiate this position and GARBE et al have pointed out a number of these examples in the middle *Upaniṣads*, the *Mokṣadharma* and *Bhagavadgītā* sections of the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>8</sup> By the classical period choices have been made and it is the "rationality and knowing" model that comes out as the winner. It is that side that *Sāṅkhya* has opted for finally. The description of *Sāṅkhya* as *Sāṅkhyayoga* which stands for *Jñānayoga* in the *Gītā* is very close to *Advaita Vedānta* as far as the role that knowledge plays in acquiring liberation. There is a strong resemblance as we know, in the composition of *antaḥkaraṇa* and *buddhi* respectively in *Advaita Vedānta* and in *Sāṅkhya* and so is the way both *sākṣī* and *puruṣa* are conceived of in any knowledge event in the two systems.<sup>9</sup> It is this close resemblance to *Vedānta* that

6 cf. T. S. RUKMANI, "Tension between Vyutthāna and Nirodha in the Yogasūtras", in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Dec. 1997.

7 G. J. LARSON, op. cit., p. 75 f.

8 i. G. J. LARSON, op. cit., p. 15 f.

ii. P. CHAKRAVARTI, *Origin and Development of the Sāṅkhya System of Thought* passim.

9 M. HIRIYANNA, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 341-344.



makes *Sāṅkhya* a threat to *Advaita* and also that prompts Śaṅkara to attack it so vehemently in his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.<sup>10</sup>

Thus one could derive the conclusion that *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* started within a common milieu and then gradually got associated with broad categories of knowledge and action respectively. They could have had much in common in that early period, progressively moving towards their own preferences in the middle period (proto-classical) and finally having their distinct personalities revealed in the *Sāṅkhyakārikā* (SK) and in the YS. Within that background this paper is interested in exploring the differences that are basic to the two schools of thought as we find them revealed in the YS and the SK. It will also try to make sense of those differences in the light of the choices that these two schools have finally opted for. The concepts that are discussed are those of *Īśvara*, *sphoṭa*, *jīvanmukti*, *aviveka* versus *avidyā*, *nirvikalpa* versus *savikalpa pratyakṣa*, *liṅgaśarīra* and other minor differences.

### *Īśvara*

The case of *Īśvara* is one such instance. The rather glib statement that *Sāṅkhya* is *Nirīśvara-Yoga* and *Yoga* is *Seśvara-Sāṅkhya* is totally off the mark in such a discussion. In a Vedic atmosphere both the schools could have accommodated initially the *Brahman/Īśvara* idea, then *Sāṅkhya* could have moved away in the direction of material reality in the middle period and then found itself in a position where it could not find a place for *Īśvara* in the rational approach it had finally opted for. *Yoga*, on the other hand, had no problem holding on to *Īśvara*, perhaps a relic of the *Brahman* of the Upaniṣadic period. It is also a tendency on the part of *Yoga* not to let go of any concept or method that will help in the transformation of the individual to a state of purity. *Īśvara* as conceived in the YS is very different from the usual theistic *Īśvara* we come across in religion or philosophy. Unlike let us say, the Nyāya *Īśvara* or the *Saguṇa-brahman* of *Advaita Vedānta*, the *Yoga Īśvara* is not integrated into the *Yoga* system as a whole. There is no logical explanation offered for *Īśvara*'s existence except to say that *śāstra* points to such an *Īśvara*. Because of the mutual dependence of *Īśvara* and

10 Śaṅkarācārya *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, I. 1.5; I. 2.19; II. 2.1.

*śāstra* on each other, the argument is indeed weak to prove *Īśvara*'s existence.

The argument that in *Īśvara* the seed of omniscience reaches its limit rings hollow for in the ultimate analysis there seems to be no difference between the *kevalajñāna* (absolute knowledge) of *puruṣa* and the omniscience of *Īśvara*, the perfect *puruṣa*. As the unfoldment of *prakṛti* happens teleologically there is no role that *Īśvara* plays in it.<sup>11</sup> In YS IV. 2 and 3, where there was indeed an opportunity to assign a role to *Īśvara*, we find that the YS and *Vyāsabhāṣya* (VBH) just stick to the original theory of *prakṛti* evolving by itself through the causes *dharma/adharma*.<sup>12</sup> It is later commentators like Bhikṣu that transfer this activity of *dharma/adharma* to *Īśvara* but the YS itself just not justify it.<sup>13</sup>

To my mind the connection of *Īśvara* with *praṇava* points to the *mantra/śabda/sphoṭa* aspect of *Yoga*. *Īśvara* is denoted by *Om* in YS I. 27, but in 1. 28 there is advocacy of the repetition of *Om* and meditation on *Īśvara*, which is the meaning of *Om*.<sup>14</sup> So it is this aspect of *Īśvara* which is closely connected with *mantra* and meditation on the *mantra* in its operational aspect, that did not allow *Yoga* to let go of the *Īśvara* concept in its final formulation.<sup>15</sup> There could have been many other reasons as well for retaining *Īśvara* in *Yoga* but one cannot ignore this *mantra* aspect in it. It is in this sense that one can understand meditation on *Īśvara* as an alternative means to attain *samādhi* mentioned in the first *pāda*.<sup>16</sup>

*Samādhi* is a transformation from a gross state to one of purity using in the main a mystical identification between microcosmic and macrocosmic layers of being. It is significant that *Īśvara* occurs in the context of *kriyāyoga* in YS II. 1.<sup>17</sup> Along with *tapah* (austerities) and *svādhyāya* (study of scriptures), *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is mentioned as part of *kriyāyoga* (*Yoga* that is action or *Yoga* through action). The second *pāda* is really about the cleansing of the impurities of the mind by removal of the

11 Patañjali, *Yogasūtras*, I. 23-29.

12 i. *jātyantarapariṇāmaḥ prakṛtyāpūrāt*, ibid, IV.2.

ii. *nimittamaprayojakam prakṛtīnām varaṇabhedas tu tataḥ kṣetrikavat*, ibid, IV. 3.

13 T. S. RUKMANI, *Yogavārttika of Vijñānabhikṣu*, vol. IV, pp. 9-10.

14 *tasya vācakah praṇavaḥ*, YS I. 27.

15 *tajjapas tadarthabhāvanam*, YS I. 28.

16 *īśvarapraṇidhānād vā*

17 *tapahsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*, YS II. 1.

*kleśas* and the means towards that end.<sup>18</sup> Thus *Īśvara* is mentioned in the beginning of this *pāda* as an active means for the end of *Yoga* which is making the *buddhi* come back to its pure state so that it can reflect *puruṣa* as it truly is.

One should also bear in mind that *kriyāyoga* is later on combined with *niyama* as the second of the eight aids to *Yoga* in YS II. 32.<sup>19</sup> While *yama* emphasizes an internal transformation of the mind, *niyama* deals with both external and internal purification. *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* on its part is included under *niyama* which is specifically mentioned as *kriyāyoga*. While it is clear that *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is part of the *kriyāyoga* of *Yoga* we are not able to disentangle the *praṇidhāna* in the second *pāda* from the *bhaktiyoga* of the *Gītā* and *Anugītā* texts.<sup>20</sup> The YS in keeping with its accommodating tendencies now has *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* in two different places trying to serve two purposes. In the first *pāda* it is a means to *samādhi* itself whereas in the second *pāda* it is only a means to purification of the *sattvabuddhi*.<sup>21</sup> Later commentators like Bhikṣu try to grapple with this use of *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* in two different ways. For whatever final reasons, we find *Yoga* retaining the *Brahman/Īśvara* idea, while *Sāṅkhya* throws it away. This is one of the major differences between the two schools.

### *Sphoṭa*

Another operative model is the word and meaning (*śabda/artha*) aspect of word which is homostatized as *sphoṭa* in the Grammar Tradition.<sup>22</sup> The importance of *śabda* is recognized by all systems of Indian philosophy by accepting it as a *pramāṇa*. *Advaita Vedānta* may dismiss *śabda* and *artha* as *nāma* and *rūpa* (name and form) to the second level of reality. But it needs the *mahāvākyas* like “*tat tvam asi*” and “*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*” to establish oneness with *Brahman*. The difference between such *mahāvākyas* used for self realization in *Advaita Vedānta* and the use of *śabda* as an *ālambana* (support) in *Yoga* is very clear. In *Advaita* the intended meaning is identity

18 *Vyāsaśāstra* on YS II. 2 and II. 4.

19 *śaucasantoṣatapahsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ*.

20 T. S. RUKMANI, *Yogavārttika of Vijñānabhikṣu*, Vol. II. p. 6.

21 *ibid.* pp. 3 - 9.

22 Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadīya*, 1.1.

between the *ātman* and *Brahman* whereas in *Yoga* the *śabdālaṃbana* or word as support is a means to transform the *buddhi* from a state of impurity to that of purity. And that is why there is an open-endedness in the choice of the *ālambana* in *Yoga* as opposed to *Advaita*.<sup>23</sup> Moreover *Yoga* also makes it clear that in *ṛtaṃbharā-prajñā* (correct insight) it is the true nature of the object used as *ālambana* that is revealed.<sup>24</sup> Thus if any *śabda* is used as support for meditation, in *prajñā* there is the capacity for the mind to grasp the mystery of language.

Patañjali in YS I. 42 and YS III. 17 addresses this aspect of words being mixed up with meanings and ideas in the world and how in meditation one is able to reach a level of word which is free from convention and is the basis of both inference and scripture.<sup>25</sup> In YS III. 17 he even goes further and says that such an *yogī* acquires the ability to understand the language of all creatures on earth.<sup>26</sup>

Here is a clear indication of the *Sphoṭa* theory though not stated in so many words either by Patañjali nor by Vyāsa. It is not difficult to imagine a number of ideas sprouting from the original *Vāk Sūkta* of the *R̥gveda* with its mystical overtones. While one could have grown on lines which eventually culminated in the *Sphoṭa* theory of the grammarians the other could have taken a different turn emphasizing the practice mode and resulting in the YS model. While Bhartṛhari's *Śabdatattva* resembles *Advaita Brahman*, this hypostatization of *śabda* did not take place in the YS because of its metaphysical preferences. Bhartṛhari's *Śabdabrahman* is perhaps an answer to the questions<sup>27</sup>

23 *yathābhimatadhyānād vā*, YS I. 39.

24 *ṛtaṃbharā tatra prajñā*, YS I. 48.

25 i. ... *tac ca śrutānumānayoṛ bījam, tataḥ, śrutānumāne prabhavataḥ. na ca śrutānumānajñānasahabhūtam taddarśanam...* VBH on YS I. 42

ii. *śabdārthapratyayānām itaretarādhyāsāt sankaras tatpravibhāgasamyamāt sarvabhūtarutajñānam*

26 *ibid.*

27 i. *ṛco akṣare parame vyoman yasmin devā adhi viśve niṣeduh. yas tan na veda kim ṛcā kariṣyati ya it tad vidus ta ime samāsate.* RV I. 164.39.

ii. *catvāri vāk parimitā padāni tāni vidur brāhmaṇā ye manīṣiṇaḥ guhā trīṇi nihitā neṅgayanti turīyam vāco manuṣyā vadanti.* RV I. 164.45.

What will he do with the hymn of the *Veda* who does not know its theme – the Eternal in the supreme region, in which the *devas* dwell? But those who have come to know that are perfect.

and

Four are the grades of speech that have been measured; men of divine knowledge who are wise know them. Three of these kept in secret make no motion, people speak only the fourth grade of speech.

The YS on the other hand were looking for the revelation of the secret of *śabda* and *artha* through its meditational techniques. There are echoes of this in verses such as:<sup>28</sup>

With worship they followed the steps of the speech and found it installed in the hearts of sages. They acquired it and gave it at many places and seven singers intone it together

Or when Vāc describes herself as:

I am Queen, the gatherer up of treasures, the Knower, the First among the Holy Ones. The *Devas* have established in many places Me who live on many planes in many a form.

The nine portalled lotus covered under three bands, in which lives the Spirit with the *Ātman* within, that the *Veda*-knowers know.

The potency of the *mantras* and their leading to further developments in the religious sphere like *tantra* and *kuṇḍalinī yoga* have been pointed out by a number of scholars like André PADOUX and Harold COWARD.<sup>29</sup> In the philosophical schools on the other hand we find Word raised to the highest principle on the part of Bhartṛhari and in another sense becoming the vehicle for a correct understanding of the word and what it stands for in

- 28 i. *yajñena vācaḥ padavīyam āyan tām anvavindann ṛṣiṣu praviṣṭām*  
*tām ābhṛtyā vyadadhuḥ purutrā tām sapta rebhā abhisam navante.* RV X. 71.3.  
 ii. *ahaṃ rāṣṭī saṃgamanī vasūnām cikituṣī prathamā yajñīyānām.*  
*tām mā devā vyadadhuḥ purutrā bhūriṣṭhātrām bhuryāveśayantīm.* RV X. 125.3.  
 iii. *puṇḍarikam navadvāram tribhīr guṇebhīr āvṛtam*  
*tasmin yad yakṣam ātmanvat tad vai brahmavido viduḥ.* AV X. 8. 43

- 29 André PADOUX, “Mantras – What Are They”, in *Understanding Mantras*, p. 303.  
 Harold COWARD, “The Reflective Word: Spirituality in the Grammarian Tradition of India”, in: *Hindu Spirituality*, p. 209 f.



*Yoga*. As a digression then one can say that one need not give much thought to the theory of the identity of the two Patañjali-s based on *Sphoṭa* that DAS GUPTA wrote about.<sup>30</sup> To the Mahābhāṣya Patañjali, *Sphoṭa* is only a standard sound value (*prākṛtadhvani*) distinguished from the many varieties of uttered sound values (*vaikṛtadhvani*);<sup>31</sup> to the Yogasūtra Patañjali, on the other hand, the implied *sphoṭa* is the standard value of each word revealed in *savitarka/nirvitarka* and *savicāra/nirvicāra samādhis*.<sup>32</sup> So based on the *sphoṭa* view we cannot identify these two Patañjali-s.

### Śabdapūrvayoga

It is possible to conjecture that in the post-Vedic period there must have been a number of directions in which the theory of *vāk*, speech, *mantra* and thought developed and crystallized. One such practice that might have developed in this period of intense philosophical debates was that of *śabdapūrvayoga* (SPY). This word occurs at least five times in the *Vṛtti* on Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* (VP).<sup>33</sup> It is also possible to argue that the YS, along with the *Bhāṣya* of Vyāsa, was in existence by the time of Bhartṛhari and Bhartṛhari could have been influenced by the technique of *Yoga* as expounded by the YS to change the mind.<sup>34</sup> The other possibility is that both Bhartṛhari and Patañjali were individually influenced by these ideas that were in existence at the time. Thus ordinarily *pratibhā* (insight) is what reveals *paśyantī* or *Śabdabrahman* for Bhartṛhari, in which all sequencing

30 S. N. DAS GUPTA, *Yoga Philosophy*, p. 54 f.

31 i. K. A. Subramania IYER, *Bhartṛhari*, pp. 156-158, pp. 170-171.

ii. S. D. JOSHI, *The Sphoṭanirṇaya of Koṇḍabhaṭṭa*, p. 17.

32 YS I. 41-49.

33 For the purposes of this paper the question of whether the *Vṛtti* and *Kāṇḍa* I of *Vākyapadīya* is by Bhartṛhari or not is not important. One is only arguing that this technique of *śabdapūrvayoga* finds a place in a grammatical work and is in itself significant.

i. *Vākyapadīya*, I. 5. *Vṛtti*, I. 20.

ii. K. A. S. IYER, op cit., pp. 139-146.

iii. A. AKLUJKAR, *Bhartṛhari*, pp. 45-56.

34 K. K. RAJA, in *Indian Theories of Meaning*, p. 109, suggests that the YS with VBH could have existed by then.



is eliminated.<sup>35</sup> But at other places in the VP/*Vṛtti*, we find mention of the practice of SPY as a method or discipline to attain *Śabdabrahman*.<sup>36</sup>

*Śabdapūrvayoga* demonstrates that the meaningfulness of words is not merely intellectual; it is meaningfulness which has spiritual power. With the proper *yoga*, words have the power to remove ignorance (*avidyā*), reveal truth (*dharma*), and release (*mokṣa*).

We are familiar with *Yoga* connected with *kriyā*, *karma*, *bhakti*, *jñāna* and *dhyāna* by the time of the *Gītā* but this SPY has been mentioned for the first time only in Bhartrhari's VP/*Vṛtti*. The methodology and description given of this *Yoga* is so similar to that described for other yogic practices<sup>37</sup> that we cannot but conclude that such an approach to spirituality was very much in vogue at that time. One need not even rule out the possibility of Bhartrhari's access to the YS themselves as already mentioned. Thus the presence of the discipline of SPY in a grammatical work, which also discusses metaphysical questions, confirms the view that the action-oriented model continued to make its presence felt not only in the YS of Patañjali but in other circles as well.

### *Jīvanmukti*

In the conception of the state of *jīvanmukti* (JM) or liberation while still in the body as well, *Yoga* differs from *Sāṅkhya* significantly. I have speculated whether JM in *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* is an ontic or epistemic state in a paper (in press). I will however confine myself here to discussing whether JM can even be admitted in *Yoga* in the way it has been formulated. *Sāṅkhya* mentions the means which leads to liberation in SK 2.<sup>38</sup> In this *kārikā* the means is called just *vijñāna* and Gauḍapāda defines it exactly as

35 i. *Vākyapadīya*, II. 119, 145.

ii. Harold COWARD, op. cit., pp. 224-225.

36 i. *śabdapūrvam hi śabdasvarūpasyābheda tattvajñāne kramasamhāreṇa yogam labhate*. K. A. S. IYER, op cit., p. 452.

ii. *tadabhyāsac ca śabdapūrvakayogam adhigamya pratibhām tattvaprabhavām bhāva* ... ibid.

37 K. A. S. IYER, op cit., p. 451.

38 *drṣṭavad ānuśravikaḥ sa hi aviśuddhikṣayātīśayayuktaḥ tadviparītaḥ śreyān vyaktā-vyaktajñānavijñānāt*. SK 2.

it is given in the SK as knowledge of the manifest, the unmanifest and the knower. The liberated one (JM) continues to live in the body till the *prārabdhakarma* (PK) that started this life is exhausted. The same example used in *Advaita Vedānta* of the revolution of the potter's wheel after the pot has been fashioned is cited for the continuance of the *jīvanmukta*'s body till *videhamukti* (VM) i.e. liberation on the fall of the body takes place.<sup>39</sup>

As for *Yoga* there is no single *sūtra* in which Patañjali mentions JM. It is only in the commentary of Vyāsa on YS IV. 30 that there is even a hint of the concept. The last stage of *saṁprajñāta samādhi* (SS) or *dharmamegha* having come into being, the *yogī* is said to be "freed while still in the body."<sup>40</sup> Later commentators gloss over this but do not come to grips with the problem.<sup>41</sup> There is no explanation for calling *puruṣa* a JM at this stage. The reason for calling this JM is because the *yogī* has to continue to live because in *Yoga*, *kaivalya* can only come into being in the *asaṁprajñāta samādhi* (ASS) state, which comes in much later after *dharmamegha*. As SS, even *dharmamegha*, is still inferior to ASS, and the practice of ASS repeatedly has to continue for attaining *kaivalya*,<sup>42</sup> how can this "*jīvaṇn eva vidvān vimukto bhavati*" even remotely be JM? At best it can only refer to a flash of insight into what *kaivalya* can be but not as yet achieved. We therefore have to come to the conclusion that *Yoga* as laid out in the YS subscribes to the notion of JM without being able to substantiate it. Belonging as *Yoga* does to the action oriented approach to metaphysical knowledge, it must also be its firm conviction that such a state is possible. But there is no satisfactory explanation for the connection between the body and PK as is found in *Sāṅkhya*.

39 i. *tiṣṭhati saṁskāravaśāt cakrabhramivad dhṛtaśarīraḥ*. SK 67.

ii. ... *āśrite ca tasmin kulālacakravat pravṛttavegasyāntarāle pratibandhāsaṁbhavāt vegakṣayapratipālanam*. Śāṅkarabhāṣya on *Brahmasūtra* IV. 1. 15

40 *kleśakarmanivṛttau jīvaṇn eva vidvān vimukto bhavati*. VBH on YS IV. 30.

41 i. Miśra does not even try to explain the situation in the *Tattvaiśārādī* under YS IV. 30.

ii. Śāṅkara the author of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivarāṇa* also does not add anything to Vyāsa's commentary.

iii. Bhikṣu alone tries to somehow reconcile the contradiction in all *kleśas* being burnt and the body still continuing. According to him all *kleśas* except *abhiniveśa* is destroyed and he also calls this *jīvanmukti* as a second liberation, the first being the knowledge of the distinction between *puruṣa* and *buddhi* mentioned under YS IV. 25.

42 YS I. 48-51 and VBH on them.

In *Yoga* we find that PK determines the kind of life, the life span and the kind of experiences that an individual has.<sup>43</sup> Thus for the continuance of the body there must be a residue of PK or *prārabdhakarmavāsanā* (PKV) as is found both in *Sāṅkhya* and in *Advaita Vedānta*. But in *Yoga* there is no such PKV present at the time of JM. As all the *kleśas* have been burnt by the subliminal impressions (*saṃskāras*) of *prajñā* (insight) (SIP) and the mind (*citta*) has only the SIP, there are no more *kleśas* and conversely PK to be burnt.<sup>44</sup> So how can this be similar to the *Sāṅkhya* state of JM? One can only conclude that the body can also continue to exist with the *prajñā-saṃskāras* operating, even when theoretically the other *karmas* are not in existence. We will then have to reconcile ourselves to the conclusion that though the body comes into being due to PK, midway after *dharmamegha* comes into being the PK gives away to *prajñāsaṃskāras*, which are then gradually overcome by the *saṃskāras* of *asamprajñāta samādhi*. It appears that one can truly attain *kaivalya* only in the last AS stage when it is no more called JM in *Yoga*.<sup>45</sup>

This ambiguity in the *Yoga* concept of JM or rather this difference of approach to JM in *Yoga* could also indicate its assimilation of ideas from other quarters. The burning up of the *kleśas* through *prajñāsaṃskāras* and then all *karma* being burnt up, strikes a cord with the influx of fresh *karma* being stopped (*saṃvara*) through right knowledge and self restraint in Jainism and then *saṃvara* itself resulting in the destruction of *karma* already present in the mind (*nirjarā*) which is the Jaina description of an *arhant* (JM).<sup>46</sup> Thus corresponding to *saṃvara* we have *dharmamegha samādhi* in *Yoga* in which state there is a cessation of all *kleśas* and *karma*. Then there are only the *prajñā-saṃskāras* and they in turn progressively lead to *asamprajñāta* when even *prajñāsaṃskāras* are destroyed; this resembles the *nirjarā* of the Jaina school. As the *arhant* continues to exist till he sheds his body so also the *jīvanmukta yogī* continues to live till he gives up his body. This could be the reason why the *Yoga* JM has no resemblance to the *Sāṅkhya* JM at all.

43 *sati mūle tadvipāko jātyāyurbhogāḥ*. YS II. 13.

44 *tajjaḥ saṃskāro 'nyasaṃskārapratibandhī*. YS I. 50.

45 *tasyāpi nirodhe sarvanirodhān nirbijāḥ samādhiḥ*. YS I. 51.

46 M. HIRIYANNA, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 169.

Means to *kaivalya*

Another area in which *Yoga* and *Sāṅkhya* do not speak the same language is in the way they define the means to *kaivalya*. *Sāṅkhya* is not very vocal as far as the means to *kaivalya* is concerned. There is one indication as to how to secure release in SK 64.<sup>47</sup> The term used for the means there is *tattvābhyāsāt* and Gauḍapāda paraphrases it as “*pañcaviṃśatitattvālocanābhyāsāt*” (repeated reflection on the twenty five principles); as this does not tell much about the methodology other commentators fall back on YS I. 12-16 in order to make sense of this ‘*tattvābhyāsa*.’ Thus Vācaspati Miśra reminds one of YS I. 14 and the VBH on it when he says:<sup>48</sup>

... thus by repeated practice of reflection on the principle of truth undergone for a long time without interruption there arises vivid discernment of the difference between *sattva* intellect and *puruṣa*.

It is clear that in Sāṅkhyan circles at least, as witnessed in SK 64, and the commentaries of Gauḍapāda and Miśra, there is no way of understanding this process without recourse to the YS.<sup>49</sup> There is one more place where an attempt has been made to describe the means at the very beginning in SK 2 in the context of discounting the means that are ordinarily available both here in this world and through Vedic instruction, to remove the threefold misery. This superior means is stated very briefly as the insight (*viññāna*) that distinguishes between the manifest, the unmanifest and the knower.<sup>50</sup> The means called *viññāna* is explained by Miśra as ‘knowledge by discrimination’.<sup>51</sup> There is no help to get at the process of *viññāna* and Miśra uses the same words he will later use to explain SK 64 in this context as well.<sup>52</sup> In fact he concludes the commentary on SK 2 by quoting SK 64. It thus appears that there was a real dearth of textual sources to explain how

47 *evaṃ tattvābhyāsān nāsmi na me nāham ity aparīṣeṣam...* SK 64.

48 ... *uktaprakāratattvaviśayajñānābhyāsād ādaranairantaryadīrghakālasevitāt sattvapuruṣānyatāsākṣātkāri jñānam utpadyate...* Miśra TK on SK 64.

49 i. *sa tu dīrghakālanairantaryasatkārāsevito dṛḍhabhūmiḥ*. YS I. 14.  
ii. *dīrghakālā “sevito nirantarā” sevitaḥ, satkārāsevitaḥ... dṛḍhabhūmir bhavati*. VBH on YS I. 14.

50 cf. note n. 38.

51 ... *viparītaḥ sattvapuruṣānyatāpratyayaḥ...* TK on SK 2.

52 ... *dīrghakālādaranairantaryasatkārāsevītā bhāvanāmayāt viññānāt...* ibid.

*Sāṅkhya* really understood the word *viññāna*; it probably relied on the frequent use of *viññāna* in the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā* for an understanding of it.<sup>53</sup>

Could this imply that *Sāṅkhya*, having opted for the ‘knowledge model’ (*jñānamārga*), did not think it necessary to define the terms *viññāna* and *tattvābhyāsa* because they are well known from the *Upaniṣads* and other sources? It was the later commentarial works that has aligned it to the *sattvapuruṣānyathākhyāti* of the YS as it appears that, by then, there was a felt necessity to do so. SK 44 also states that bondage occurs due to *viparyaya*.<sup>54</sup>

As opposed to *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga* has any number of occasions wherein the nature of *kaivalya* and the means to it have been discussed. All the chapters (*pādas*) discuss it in one way or the other.<sup>55</sup> As far as the broad outlines of the theory are concerned there is a fundamental agreement in the two schools. *Kaivalya* in both cases comes about by the discriminate discernment which reveals the different natures of *puruṣa* and *buddhi* respectively. But while in *Sāṅkhya* the means is *viveka* (*viññāna*, *tattvābhyāsa*), in *Yoga* it is through *vidyā*, also called by a host of other names, that *kaivalya* comes into being. Thus there is an association between *puruṣa* and *buddhi* due to *avidyā* and when there is absence of *avidyā* there is liberation of *puruṣa*.<sup>56</sup>

I had written a paper earlier suggesting that the negation in *avidyā* in the YS is of the nature of *paryudāsa*.<sup>57</sup> This was based on YS II. 23 and Vyāsa’s comment on it. Vyāsa uses the word *adarśanam* in this comment to serve the purpose of *avidyā*. Of the nine times where the word occurs only once is *avidyā* used. *Adarśanam* is not “not knowing” but “knowing wrongly”; this in turn is based on the definition of *avidyā* in YS II. 5 as a “positive knowledge of a thing as being something which it is not” and that translates as knowing “the non-self as the self.”<sup>58</sup> In MATILAL’s language

53 cf. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* III. 26; *Gītā* IX. 1, XI. 31, XVIII. 42.

54 ... *viparyayāt atattvajñānāt iṣyate bandhaḥ*. TK on SK 44.

55 YS I. 3, 12, 13, 41, 47, 48, 51; YS II. 11, 12, 17, 24, 25; YS III. 5, 36, 50, 54; YS IV. 26, 30, 34.

56 YS I. 23-25.

57 Adyar Library Bulletin, 1986.

58 *anityaśuciduḥkḥānātmasu nityaśucisukhātmakhyātir avidyā*. YS II. 5.



we can define *paryudāsa* as a nominally bound negative and the above definition of *avidyā* in Vyāsa's comment will fit into it.

Vijñānabhikṣu (Bhikṣu) commenting on Vyāsa's *bhāṣya* under YS I. 8. draws a distinction between *Sāṅkhya aviveka* and *Yoga anyathākhyāti*.<sup>59</sup> Bhikṣu probably is the first person to point out this difference in defining error in the two schools based on the distinction of the use of the negation in the two instances: 1) based on similarity, 2) based on prohibition.<sup>60</sup> Based on that understanding the removal of *aviveka* in *Sāṅkhya* is an "act of discrimination" (*viveka*) whereas in *Yoga* the removal of *avidyā* is an "act of substitution" of wrong knowledge with correct knowledge.<sup>61</sup>

Thus to use the standard example of mistaking mother-of-pearl for silver we could say that in *Sāṅkhya*, *aviveka* is due to the reason that the memory of silver cannot be distinguished from the mother-of-pearl that is present to perception. Or in the case of a white crystal next to a red flower appearing red, the apprehension of red crystal in *Sāṅkhya* is due to the non-discrimination (*aviveka*) of the two as separate entities and taking the qualities as characterising a single knowledge.<sup>62</sup> The conscious subject in *Sāṅkhya* is neither "the *buddhi* by itself nor the self by itself."<sup>63</sup> Since it is the two in combination that gives rise to knowledge, every knowledge event is a failure to notice these two factors in it. This failure is *aviveka* and its removal is through the act of *viveka* (discrimination). If we use the same example, *Yoga* seems to be saying that it is the mother-of-pearl which is appearing as silver which is due to *avidyā*. Thus its removal will also be by the substitution of the knowledge of silver by that of mother-of-pearl. It is this distinction that prompts Bhikṣu to draw a distinction between *aviveka* and *anyathākhyāti*. *Sāṅkhya* as mentioned earlier having aligned itself to the "jñāna" model believed in attaining *kaivalya* through knowledge alone. One need not make much of this distinction and it is not something that everyone will agree to. However the way the negations are spelt out in the

59 T. S. RUKMANI, op cit., Vol 1, p. 72.

60 *dvau nañarthau samākhyātau paryudāsaprasajyakau paryudāsaḥ sadṛggrāhī prasajyas tu niṣedhakṛt.*

61 ... *evam avidyā na pramāṇam na pramāṇābhāvaḥ kim tu vidyāvīparītam jñānāntaram avidyēti.* VBH on YS II. 5.

62 M. HIRIYANNA, *Indian Conception of Values*, pp. 52-53.

63 M. HIRIYANNA, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p. 289.



two systems does suggest this distinction. This difference in approach to *kaivalya* marks out the two systems and has been noticed already in texts like the *Upaniṣads*, the *Manusmṛti*, the *Mokṣadharma* and *Gītā* sections of the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>64</sup>

### *Savikalpa and nirvikalpa pratyakṣa*

*Sāṅkhya* in keeping with its preoccupations with knowledge divides perception (which is both a means of knowing and that which is knowledge) into indeterminate and determinate perception. The first is only vague and is without any qualities; it is in the second stage that there is 'perception' in the true sense of the term.<sup>65</sup> Because of its emphasis on *viveka* for liberation, *Sāṅkhya* works from *pratyakṣa* of the determinate stage in order to distinguish between the real nature of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. Thus it is the determinate stage which is perception in truth and which forms the basis later for correct perception or *viveka*. These two terms are called *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka pratyakṣa* by later commentators and it is the mind that plays its role in this transition, being of the nature of both the organs.<sup>66</sup>

When we turn to the YS on the other hand, there is no obsession with 'indeterminate' or 'determinate' perception in the context of discussing *pratyakṣa* (perception) as a means of knowing (*pramāṇa*). It is *pratyakṣa* as knowing itself which is viewed in five different ways of which one is *vikalpa* (mental construction).<sup>67</sup> It then reserves its analysis of *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa*, to the context of *samādhi* in terms of its definition of *vikalpa* itself.

64 i. G. J. LARSON, op cit., pp. 95-134.

ii. Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI, op. cit., pp. 4-73.

iii. K. C. BHATTACHARYYA, *Studies in Philosophy*, pp. 221-230.

65 SK 27, 28, 30.

66 i. ... *asti hy ālocanajñānam prathamam nirvikalpakam... tataḥ param punarvastu-dharmairjātyādibhir yathā...* TK on SK 27.

ii. ... *tasmād ubhayātmakam manah. saṅkalpayatīti saṅkalpakam.* Gauḍapāda on SK 27.

67 *pramāṇaviparyayavikalpanidrāsmṛtayaḥ.* YS I. 6.

The equivalent words for *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* in the YS as understood from Patañjali's *sūtras* and VBH are *savitarka* and *nirvitarka* as well as *savicāra* and *nirvicāra*. According to YS I. 17, 41-47 then, *nirvitarka* and *nirvicāra* are the *nirvikalpa* states and at that point they are not only 'not vague' as in *Sāṅkhya* but belong to a 'higher level of being.' Thus when *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* discuss *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa pratyakṣa* they are talking about two different realms altogether.

### *Lingaśarīra*

Another important difference between the two systems is the conception of the subtle body or *lingaśarīra*. *Sāṅkhya* as described in the *kārikā* spends some time defining what the subtle body is and also explains the rationality for its assumption of a subtle body.<sup>68</sup> *Yoga* on the other hand, does not seem to be unduly concerned with explaining the mechanism of *puruṣa* getting connected with a new body in subsequent births in accordance with the *dharma/adharma* residue. It seems to be satisfied by explaining all future lives of particular combinations of *puruṣas* and *prakṛtis* in terms of their respective *kleśas* (afflictions), *karmāśayas* (deposit of *karma* in the form of *dharma* and *adharma*) and their *vipākas* (result in the form of birth, life span and kind of experiences). According to the YS the subliminal impressions are stored in the *citta* and the *citta* seems to fulfil the role of the subtle body of *Sāṅkhya*.<sup>69</sup> *Yoga* is also not particular to distinguish between *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra* and *manas* in the way that *Sāṅkhya* does; *citta* seems to fill in for all of these dimensions in the YS. As the prime purpose of *Yoga* is the transformation of the mind to its pristine state of *sattva*,<sup>70</sup> its concern is with the complex *citta* which has all the characteristics of the *Sāṅkhya buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra* and *manas* in it.

*Yoga* probably is one school other than *Advaita Vedānta* which spends some time on the relationship between 'karma' and future lives, in a purely numerical sense. Questions like whether one *karma* causes one birth or many births or alternatively whether many *karmas* cause one birth or many

68 SK 39-43.

69 YS I. 2; YS II. 12, 13.

70 YS II. 2, 10, 11, 16, 28, 29, 55; YS III. 1-55; YS IV. 8-10.

births are discussed seriously in the YS,<sup>71</sup> *Sāṅkhya*, on the other hand, does not show any evidence of this kind of approach.

One other area, where there is no uniformity of understanding is in the process of evolution of the five subtle elements (*tanmātras*). This has been noted by many scholars already.<sup>72</sup> In the YS itself this evolution is described in two different ways. In YS 1. 45 it seems to toe the SK line of evolution from *ahamkāra* while in YS II. 19 the *tanmātras* evolve out of the *tāmāsa* constituent of the *mahat* acted upon by *rajas*.

The use of the term *Sāṅkhyapravacana* qualifying YS at the end of every *pāda* of the VBH can also indicate that *Yoga* along with *Sāṅkhya* belong to one stream of development having resemblances in their metaphysical approaches. But that only indicates the preferred metaphysical position of the two schools. Apart from that the two grew in their own way *Sāṅkhya* exhibiting a tighter, cohesive knowledge model while *Yoga* used the ideas from many sources to further its purposes. Thus *Yoga* is a synthetic approach showing evidence of accommodation in its evolutionary theory, in the understanding of the locus of *dharma*, being accepted by and also conversely being spoken with favor by schools like the *Vaiśeṣikas*.<sup>73</sup> That both these schools were viewed as separate and believed in a rational approach is also evidenced by Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*.<sup>74</sup> The occurrence of both Sāṅkhyan and Yogic ideas in the middle and late *Upaniṣads*, specially the *Guṇa* theory, argues for the presence of two distinct approaches to the ultimate problems with which the ancient Hindus were concerned. The need for Pāṇini to have two derivations for the word *yoga* as also his acquaintance with *yogins* is also significant in this context.<sup>75</sup> There are many parallels and strong resemblances to yogic vocabulary, ideas and practices in Buddhism, Jainism, *Āyurveda*, etc. which again have been pointed out by other scholars as well. I would also like to draw attention to one such instance in the *Vṛtti* of the *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari.

71 YS II. 13 and VBH on it.

72 S. N. DAS GUPTA, op.cit., p. 188; Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI, op. cit., p. 83-90.

73 i. Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI, op. cit., pp. 73-75.

ii. BHATTACHARYYA, op.cit. pp. 240-250; pp. 262-272.

74 *sāṅkhyam yogo lokāyatañ cety ānvīkṣakī*.

75 S. N. DAS GUPTA, op. cit., pp. 44-46

One verse which occurs both in the *Vṛtti* under VP I. 8. and in the VBH under YS IV. 31 resembles *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* 1. 25. It can be translated as

the blind man pierced the jewel; one without fingers strung it on a thread; one without a neck put it on; one without a tongue praised it.<sup>76</sup>

It is also interesting to note that the *Vṛtti* on VP I. 131 sounds exactly like the Yogic *samādhi* and reaching oneness with the word through *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*.<sup>77</sup> That the *Yoga* action model made its presence felt in the overall atmosphere of the country in the classical period is attested to by its inclusion in such texts.

As a concluding note one can point to the name of the sage Āvatya (Āṭavya) mentioned in the VBH but nowhere do we find this name in the Sāṅkhya literature.<sup>78</sup> Jaigīṣavya also is more used in *Yoga* circles but not exclusively so. But Āṭavya does not seem to belong anywhere to the *Sāṅkhya* tradition.

One is thus struck more by the differences between *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga* in many an area which forces us to believe that these are two independent schools with some common metaphysical areas of agreement.

76 *andho maṇim avidhyat tam anaṅgulir āvayat agrīvastam pratyamuñcat tam ajihvo 'bhyapūjayat.*

77 *prāṇavṛttim atikrānte vācas tattve vyavasthitah  
kramasaṃhārayogena saṃhr̥tyātmānam ātmāni  
vācaḥ saṃskāram ādhāya vācam jñāne niveśya ca  
vibhajya bandhanāny asyāḥ kṛtvā tām chinnabandhanām  
jyotir āntaram āsādy chinnagranthiparigrahaḥ  
pareṇa jyotiṣaikatvam chittvā grathin prapadyate*

78 i. *Vyāsabhāṣya* on YS III. 18.

ii. Pulinbihari CHAKRAVARTI, op. cit., p. 293-94.

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*Tattvakaumudī*

*Tattvavaiśārādī*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AV	<i>Atharvaveda</i>
ASS	<i>asamprajñāta samādhi</i>
JM	<i>jīvanmukti et Jīvanmukta</i>
PK	<i>prārabdhakarma</i>
PKV	<i>prārabdhakarmavāsanā</i>
RV	<i>R̥gveda</i>
SIP	subliminal impressions of <i>prajñā</i>
SK	<i>Sāṅkhyakārikā</i>
SPY	<i>śabdapūrvayoga</i>
SS	<i>saṃprajñāta samādhi</i>
VBH	<i>Vyāsabhāṣya</i>
VM	<i>videhamukti</i>
VP	<i>Vākyapadīya</i>
YS	<i>Yogasūtras</i>



