INTRODUCTION TO YOGA EPISTEMOLOGY

One of the special features of Patañjali’s Yoga system is that it elaborates a primary response to the epistemological problem of the subject-object relation — an issue that is fundamental to any metaphysical system and is especially crucial for any philosophy that purports to explain the state of spiritual enlightenment. In the YS, liberation (apavarga) or “aloneness” (kaivalya) implies a complete sundering of the subject-object or self-world relation as it is ordinarily known, i.e., as a fragmentation or bifurcation within prakṛtic existence. Our normal experience and everyday relations function as a polarization within prakṛti: the self as subject or experiencer which as an empirical identity lays claim to experience; and the objective world as it is perceived and experienced through the “eyes” of this empirical self. The conjunction (samyoga) between puruṣa and prakṛti gives birth to phenomenal (empirical) selfhood or identity and its content of consciousness. However, this process which is largely enmeshed in ignorance (avidyā) and egoity (asmitā) or affliction actually entails utterly mistaken notions of who we are as our authentic being. What is needed, according to Yoga, is a total purification of the subject-object relation so that the spiritual nature of selfhood can be fully disclosed and the Self (puruṣa), established in its true form and identity, is no longer mistaken for prakṛtic existence. Yet despite an overwhelming adherence to what normally amounts to being a mental array of confused human identity and its concomitant “suffering” (duḥkha),

* The first part of this article appeared in Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism: Saṃbhāṣā 18, 1997, pp. 35-62.
Yoga philosophy tells us that puruṣa, our true identity, is necessarily "present" to ordinary human experience in that without puruṣa all experience and knowledge would not be possible. Based on this perspective — that puruṣa is simultaneously transcendent and immanent — Patañjali formulated a practical and transformative "path" of Yoga in which knowledge (jñāna), as an integral aspect of Yoga theory and practice, can have profound implications for human life in this world.

Despite Śāmkhya’s unique distinction between pure consciousness and human awareness which allowed it to preserve its fundamental dualism in the face of monistic arguments — and thereby avoid the metaphysical problems attending monistic views — it could not avoid one fundamental philosophical question: What is it to say that prakṛti is dynamic because of the presence of puruṣa? To say that prakṛti reflects the presence of puruṣa, or that puruṣa is reflected in prakṛti preserves a rigid distinction between the two for neither an object reflected in a mirror nor the mirror is affected by one another. In Śāmkhya, liberation is the result of discernment (viveka), the highest knowledge. The process of attaining it suggests either an intention on the part of puruṣa — which, some would argue, is impossible considering that puruṣa, as pure consciousness, is content-less and nonintentional — or a response on the part of prakṛti, if not both. How then can puruṣa be said to have no relation, including no passive relation to prakṛti? Even Īśvara Kṛṣṇa’s enchanting metaphor (SK 59) of the dancer before the host of spectators does not answer the question, for there is a significant relationship between performer and audience. In an effort to elucidate a proper response to the above questions from the perspective of Yoga, the remaining sections of this study will address among other related topics: (1) how cognition and knowledge take place in Patañjali’s system; and (2) how cognition and knowledge inform our understanding of the relationship between puruṣa — the pure seer or knower, and prakṛti — the seeable or knowable.

In order to grasp how Yoga philosophy can be lived on a practical level, one must: (1) understand how puruṣa and prakṛti “relate” to oneself and in pragmatic terms, and (2) see that these two principles — “spirit” and “matter” — are not merely understood in the abstract thereby overemphasizing the metaphysical and the impersonal

127 Refer to notes 14 and 16 (and text) in part one on YS IV, 19 and IV, 22 respectively.
dimension of their existence. With the above consideration held in mind, Patañjali translated what appears to be a universal macrocosmic philosophy — heralding some of the main ideas of Sāṃkhya — into microcosmic, subject-oriented, and practical terms which apply to human life, such as, for example: perception, cognition and ethical sensibilities. The necessity of puruṣa's presence to human experience notwithstanding (see above), it must also be emphasized that without the manifestation of psycho-physical being which includes our personhood — the material source and cause of which in Classical Sāṃkhya is said to be prakṛti — liberation would not “take place” in Yoga. Without prakṛti, puruṣa could not awaken to its true identity, could not “become” liberated. As YS II,23 spells out, it is by virtue of the conjunction (samyoga) between puruṣa and prakṛti that the essential nature of the “seer” (puruṣa) and the “seeable” (prakṛti identity) can eventually be grasped.128

Throughout the YS, Patañjali’s main contention is that puruṣa — pure, immortal consciousness — is our true nature and being and therefore the real foundation or ground of authentic identity and livelihood. However, due to spiritual ignorance (avidyā) human awareness mistakes the Self or “seer” (puruṣa) for the “seeable.” In this state of misplaced identity brought about by the conjunction (samyoga) of puruṣa and prakṛti, and defined by Patañjali (YS I, 2) as the misidentification with the modifications of the mind, the cognitive error of mistaking intrinsic (spiritual) identity for extrinsic (material) identity is continually reinforced. With the above “teaching” having been properly considered and through an appropriate form of pedagogy, Yoga seeks to establish our identity as the seer, and in the process to “dismantle” the mechanism of misidentification (śārūpya, YS I,4) due to which we remain deluded, confused, and dissatisfied.

VRṬTTI

One of the most important terms used in the YS is vr̥tti. The word vr̥tti stems from the root vr̥: “to turn, revolve, roll, proceed.”129 Vṛttī can mean: “mode of life or conduct,” “behaviour (esp.) moral conduct,” “mode of being,” “disposition,” “activity,” “function,” “livelihood,”

128 See n. 117 above.
129 See Monier-Williams (1899: 1009).
“mood (of the mind),” “nature,” “character,” “addition to” and “occupation with.” In the context of YS I,2 (yogāś cittavṛtti-nirodhaḥ) vṛtti has been translated as: “fluctuations,” “modifications,” “acts’ and ‘functions,” “Bewegungen,” “activities,” “processes,” “transformations” and “mode.” I have adopted the general term “modification” for vṛtti. The functioning of the mind takes place through various modifications (vṛttis) which give form to our perceptions, thoughts, emotions and so forth.

Like all other aspects of “insentient” prakṛti, the mind undergoes continual change, and from the viewpoint of Yoga its most noteworthy modifications are of five kinds outlined by Patañjali as follows: the means of knowing or valid cognition (pramāṇa), error (viparyaya), conceptualization (vikalpa), sleep (nidrā) and memory (smṛti). These vṛttis must be clearly understood and witnessed in order for finer states of awareness to arise. The five kinds of modifications listed above are described in the first chapter of the YS. The first, the means of knowing or valid cognition (pramāṇa), allows for the understanding of something that is fully manifested and is verified through one of the three avenues: perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna) and valid testimony (āgama). The experience of objects such as: people, animals, plants, buildings and so forth, whether by direct perception, inference or reliable testimony belongs to the modification called pramāṇa. I will be saying more on pramāṇa.

130 Ibid, p. 1010.
133 See Müller (1899: 337).
135 See Purohit Swarni (1973: 25).
136 See Tola and Dragonetti (1987: 3).
138 See Hiriyanna (1949).
139 YS I, 6 (p. 10): pramāṇaviparyayavikalpanidrāsmṛtayah.
140 YS I, 7-11 (pp. 10-16).
141 YS I, 7 (p. 10): pratyakṣānumānāgamāḥ pramāṇāni.
especially in its form of perception (*pratyakṣa*) in the last section of this study.

The remaining four types of *vṛtti* explain other ways in which the mind operates. The second is "error" (*viparyaya*), i.e. when one’s understanding or a thought does not correspond with reality and one apprehends something as other than what it is. Vyāsa (*YB* I, 8) treats *viparyaya* as a synonym for the term *avidyā* (ignorance), *avidyā* being the principal among the five afflictions (*klesa*). The *vṛtti* of *viparyaya* is the fundamental error due to which we misinterpret or misconceive existence itself! Vyāsa writes of *viparyaya*:

Why is this not valid cognition? Because it is sublated by valid cognition. The object of valid cognition is a thing as it is, and the fact of not being valid cognition is shown by the fact that valid cognition cancels it. For example, seeing the moon as double is refuted by seeing that it is in fact a single moon. This ignorance is fivefold, namely the afflictions (*klesa*): ignorance, I-am-ness, attachment, aversion, desire for continuity. These very five bear their technical names: darkness (*tamas*), delusion (*moha*), extreme delusion (*mahā-moha*), gloom (*tāmisra*) and utter darkness (*andhatā-misra*).

For Patañjali the conjunction (*samyoga*) of the seer and the seeable, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, is the cause of all suffering and dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*) because it gives rise to the incorrect understanding that one’s identity is defined within the limits of the individuated psycho-physical being or personality-complex and not according to the unbounded nature of the *puruṣa* or spiritual Self. The conjunction is caused by spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*), the primary affliction which

---

142 *YS* I, 8 (p. 12): *viparyayo mithyājñānam atadṛṣṭapratiṣṭham*. “Error is incorrect knowledge not based on the [actual] form [of an object].”

143 See n. 62 above.

144 *YB* I, 8 (p. 13): *sa kasmān na pramāṇam. yatāḥ pramāṇena bādhyate. bhūtārtha visayatvāt pramāṇasya. tatra pramāṇena bādhanam apramāṇasya drṣṭam. tad yathā dvicandra dārśanam sadvisayenaikacandradārśanena bādhyata iti. seyam pañcāpavrā bhavaty avidyā, avidyāsmitārāgadveṣābhitinivesvāḥ klesā iti. eta eva svasaṃjñābhis tamoh mohah mohah klesāt nādhatāmisra.*

145 *YS* II, 17.

146 *YS* II, 24 (p. 94): *tasya hetur avidyā*. “The cause of this [conjunction] is ignorance.”
is the origin\textsuperscript{147} of all other afflictions including our mistaken identity as a finite, egoic self or “I-am-ness” (\textit{asmitā}).\textsuperscript{148} Asmitā constitutes the major affliction which permeates the principle of individuation thus leading to the ongoing misidentification of selfhood with the modifications of the mind. Ignorance is also at the root of three other afflictions: attachment (\textit{rāga}), aversion (\textit{dveṣa}) and the desire for continuity or the instinctive fear of death (\textit{abhiniveṣa}).\textsuperscript{148} In attachment and aversion the emotive core of the concept of affliction (\textit{kleśa}) comes into play thereby signifying an obvious affective dimension to \textit{vṛtti}. The impressions (\textit{samskāras}) centered around the experiences of pleasure are operative in and supportive of \textit{rāga} or attachment/attraction. The modifications are said to take the form of \textit{gardha}, \textit{trṣṇa}, and \textit{lobha}, which may be translated as longing, thirst, and greed respectively.\textsuperscript{149} Metaphorically speaking, the seeds (\textit{bijā}) of \textit{sukha-samskāras} or impressions of pleasurable experiences germinate and will give rise to a state of attachment leading to effort directed toward the attainment of the object of pleasure or desire. In a seeming opposition to attachment, the emotive core of the phenomenon of aversion (\textit{dveṣa}) is provoked by the seed recollection of pain. The states that arise are said to be those of retaliation (\textit{pratigha}), malice (\textit{manyā}), revenge (\textit{jīghāṃsā}) and anger (\textit{krodha}).\textsuperscript{150} Thus, attachment and aversion dwell upon the \textit{samskāras} of pleasure and pain. In general terms the mind is not repelled by that which is pleasurable, nor does it desire that which is painful.

The description by Vyāsa that the \textit{kleśas} are prime examples of erroneous cognitions is especially noteworthy as it cuts through the stereotyped opposition between the emotive/affective and the rational/cognitive. This brings forth an integral view of the mind (\textit{citta}). It is in this frame in which a picture emerges that sāṃśāric identity and its reified notions of self and world (i.e., worldly existence) is not possible without I-am-ness, attachment, aversion, and the desire for continuity or fear of extinction, and that these afflictions govern the mind of the individual and perpetuate the wheel of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{147} \textit{YS} II, 4 (p. 59) states: \textit{avidyā kṣetram uttareśām prasuptatanvicchinnodārānām.} “Ignorance is the origin of the others (afflictions), which may be dormant, attenuated, intercepted, or fully active.”
\item \textsuperscript{148} See n. 62 above.
\item \textsuperscript{149} See n. 168 below.
\item \textsuperscript{150} See n. 169 below.
\end{itemize}
sāṁsāra. The compulsive forces of attachment, aversion, and desire or fear cannot be uprooted and discarded unless asmitā is subdued, weakened. Thus the attenuation and ultimate transcendence of all the afflictions is the objective of Yoga praxis. The importance of the theory of the five afflictions has been emphasized by I.K. Taimni, who correctly notes that this theory is the foundation of the system of Yoga outlined by Patañjali.151

The function of Yoga is to oblige puruṣa to “awaken” to its true status through progressive stages of removing any misidentification with the forms of prakṛti, of uprooting and eradicating ignorance (avidyā), the primary affliction defined in YS II,5. Here, Patañjali states: “Ignorance is seeing the noneternal as eternal, the impure as pure, dissatisfaction as happiness, and the nonself as self.”152 Interestingly, Patañjali seems to be admitting in the above that there is a special kind of happiness (sukha) that is intrinsic to freedom (“aloneness”) in Yoga and that, far from resulting in a lonely or aloof nature or association with the world, implies that one of the fruits of Yoga can be experienced as an exalted sense of well-being that embraces our emotional/affective as well as our cognitive dimension.

Vyāsa correlates the five afflictions outlined by Patañjali (see n. 144 above) with the five categories of fundamental misconception or error (viparyaya) of Classical Sāmkhya.153 The correlation of the five viparyayas with the five kleśas of Yoga is also made by Vācaspati Miśra154 and Vijñāna Bhikṣu.155 Ignorance is said to fall within the category of viparyaya and is a factor common to all the afflictions. Therefore the other four afflictions are considered its segments.156 Vijñāna Bhikṣu calls the vṛtti normally termed “error” (the fivefold avidyā) the seed of the calamity called sāṁsāra; it is a special kind of misapprehension in which there is a superimposition of cognition in the

152 YS II, 5 (p. 61): anityāsucidāhukānātmasu nityasucisukhātaṁ khyātīr avidyā.
154 TV I, 8.
155 TV I, 8 and II, 5.
156 TV I, 8 (p. 13): avidyā sāmānyaṁ avidyāsmitādiśu pañcasu parvasy ity arthah.
WHICHER

object. Doubt (samsāya) is also included under this vṛtti.157 It is, thus, the kleśas manifesting in the form of the vṛtti of error or misconception (viparyayaya) which control the network or web of samsāric existence. Vyāsa describes the domination of the kleśas over empirical identity: “The word ‘afflictions’ means the five errors (viparyayaya). When active they confirm the involvement with the guṇas, impose change, bring about the flow or current in the body and senses by mutually reinforcing each other, and bring on fruition of karma.”158 The divisions of ignorance (avidyā) — which Vyāsa equates with the vṛtti of error (viparyayaya) — can be explained159 as follows:

(i) Avidyā (YS II, 5) means spiritual ignorance itself, sometimes called tamas (“darkness”), and is described as being eightfold: the error of mistaking as Self or puruṣa (ātman) the eight tattvas that are: (1) avyakta: unmanifest prakṛti, (2) mahat or buddhi (intellect), (3) ahaṃkāra: sense of self, (4-8) the tannmātras: the five subtle senses. Spiritual ignorance (avidyā) is sometimes defined as “darkness” in that it veils liberating knowledge (jñāna). It includes the error of misidentifying the physical body and psyche with puruṣa because body, etc., are the products of the eight tattvas listed above. Viparyayas — such as mistaking a seashell for silver — are not included in this category. SK 44 says that bondage (bandha) is caused by viparyaya. Hence avidyā, the major cause of bondage, is included here and not the other four “delusions.”160

(ii) Asmitā means I-am-ness/egoity (YS II, 6) or “delusion” (moha) and is eightfold: the error of considering the eight

157 YV I, 8 (p. 73): pañcaparvā yā vidyā samsārāmānarthābhyām sā, iyam eva = mithyājñānārūpa vṛttir eva, etad viṣeṣa eveti yāvat. YV I, 8 (p. 71): bhramas thale jñānākārasyāvai vaṣaye samāropa iti bhāvaḥ. samsārayāpya atrivāntarabhāvaḥ.

158 YB II, 3 (p. 59): kleśā iti pañca viparyayā ity arthaḥ. te spandamānā guṇādhikārāṃ dhradhayanti, pariṇāmam avastāḥ payantī, kāryakāraṇa srota unnamayanti, parasparānugrahatantri bhūtvā karmapipākam cāhānimharantī. The term spanda (“quiver,” “vibration”), used by Vyāsa in the above description refers not to activity or movement as ordinarily understood but rather to the first “movement” of (mis)identification with guṇas.

159 I am following the explanations provided by Vijnāna Bhikṣu (YV I, 8) and/or Vācaspati Miśra (TV I, 8) after having consulted U. Arya (1986: 168-170). For explanations of the viparyayas in Sāṃkhya, see Larson (1987: 57-58).

160 YV I, 8 (p. 74): avyaktamahadahānkarā pañcatanmātreṣv anātmasya aṣṭasvātmabuddhir avidyā = aṣṭavidhām tamah, jñānāvāraka tvād. etās veva dehāyutma buddhinām antarbhāvah, dehādinaṃ etad aṣṭākārāya tvāt. suktrirāga tādi viparyayāṇāṃ tu samsārāhetu tavā navra gaṇanā, viparyayā diṣyate bandha iti pūrva kārikāyā bandha hetu viparyayasyāiva prakṛta tvād iti.
powers or accomplishments (*siddhis*, *YS* III,45) as though they were some-thing benevolent and belonging to, or an essential property of, the Self (*ātmiya*).\(^{161}\) This preoccupation with one’s prakṛtic identity occurs when finite beings seek to overcome their limitations by pursuing the eight well known omnipotent or supernatural powers. According to Vyāsa these powers include: *animā*, the power of becoming minute; *laghimā*, the power to become light; *mahimā*, the power to become enlarged; *prāpti*, the power to reach or touch the most distant things (e.g. the moon); *prākāmya*, the power of an irresistible will to accomplish its tasks; *vaśītva*, mastery over all elements and elementals (their nature) not impeded by any; *iśītṛva*, sovereignty, the ability to will the production, absorption, and disposition of the elements and the elementals; *kāmāvasāyitva*, implying that what-ever one’s purposive idea is becomes true for that person.\(^{162}\) I-am-ness/egoity and self-possession are synonymous\(^{163}\) and therefore the above divisions apply; the *siddhis*, misunderstood as an end in themselves, are a form of possessive or obsessive power in that the attachment to their pursuit only furthers egoic states (i.e., pride, greed, fear, etc.).

(iii) *Rāga* means attachment (*YS* II, 7) or “extreme delusion” (*mahā-moha*) and is classified as being tenfold: one becomes attached to the five subtle elements (e.g. sound, sight) and the five gross elements. The attraction is for the attainment of the eightfold *siddhis* through Yoga, thereby becoming a powerful or “perfected” being (*siddha*) and gaining sovereignty over

---

161 Ibid.: *aśtasvämiyad̄yayāśvarēśvan ātmasvämiyabuddhir asmitā*.

162 *YS* III, 45 (p. 164): tato ‘nimādirādurbhāvah kāyasampattaddharmānabighātuṣ ca. “Hence [from the conquest of the elements] arise the manifestation [of eight powers], such as becoming minute and so forth, perfection of the body, and unassailability of its [bodily] attributes.” *YB* III, 45 (pp. 164-165): tatrdnīmā bhavaty anuḥ. laghmā laghur bhavati. mahimā mahān bhavati. prāptir angulya agrēndāpi śṛṣṭi candra masam. prakāmyamicchān abhīghātāh. bhūmīvaunmājijātī nimajjati yathodake. vaśītvaṁ bhūta bhautikēṣu vaśībhavaty avaśyaś cāṇyeṣām. iśītṛtvam teśām prabhavāyavyayāhāmiṣte. yatra kāmāvasāyitvaṁ satya saṃkalpatā yathā saṃkalpas tathā bhūtaprakṛtinām avasthānam.

163 *YV* I, 8 (p. 74): *svatvāsmityaḥ poryōya tvāt*, i.e., *asmitā* is derived from *asmi* (I am). The beingness of “I” in this context means the same as belonging to “I” or ego-possession/attachment.
nature. Thus it is thought that the yogin will enjoy the objects of the ten senses.  

(iv) Dveṣa means aversion (YS II, 8) or “gloom” (tāmisra) and is said to be eighteenfold: when one is fixed upon the above pursuits [i.e. in (ii) and (iii)] and some impediment prevents the attainment of āsmitā (the eight siddhis) and rāga (the ten enjoyments of the senses), then the anger arising with regard to that failure and towards its cause is gloom (tāmisra) or aversion (dveṣa).

(v) Abhiniveśa means desire for continuity (YS II, 9), a mode of clinging-to-life or instinctive fear of death. This state is referred to as “utter darkness” (andhatāmisra) and is eighteenfold: āsmitā and rāga have been attained, yet there comes the realization that this attainment will one day perish as, for example, at the end of a cycle of creation (kalpa). This fear is said to be the fear of death or “utter darkness” and the “darkness” or “night” refers to the period of dissolution in a single cycle of creation.

In the above order of five, each succeeding affliction (kleśa) is considered from the perspective of Yoga pedagogy to be more undesirable and of an inferior “grade” than its predecessor, indicating progressively deluded or impure levels of attainment. It is interesting to note that the above definitions seem to be of concern only to the so-called advancing yogin whose attainment of powers, ironically, can equally result in an inflated sense of ego rather than liberation from the ego. The general definitions of the afflictions as provided under YS II, 5-9 are wider and are applicable to the worldly-minded who are living more conventional states of awareness. U. Arya has conceived the following scheme (see below), which shows viparyaya from (a) the “common view” or ordinary (worldly) person’s viewpoint as compared with (b) the novice and “imperfect” yogin’s viewpoint.

164 YV I, 8 (pp. 74-75): tathā dṛṣṭānuśravika bhedena daśasu śabdādi viśayeṣu rāgo daśavidho mahāmohah. TV I, 8 (p. 13): tathā yogenaśṭastavidham aiśvaryaṃupādāya siddho dṛṣṭānuśravikaḥ śabdādindasa viśayān bhokṣya ity evam ātimikā pratipattir mahāmohaḥ rāgaḥ.

165 YV I, 8 (p. 75): tathāṣṭaśvaryasya viśayādāśakasya ca paripanthidveṣo ‘ṣṭādaśadhā tāmisraḥ.

166 TV I, 8 (p. 13): evam animādi guna sampattau dṛṣṭānuśravikaviśayaṃpratypasthāne ca kalpante sarvam etannakṣyatīti yastrāsaḥ so ‘bhinniveśo ‘ndhatāmisraḥ.

While the yogin’s consciousness is said to be more refined and subtle, it is clear from the scheme outlined below that the yogin, not yet having reached the fully liberated state of “aloneness” (kaivalya), can still be prone to a selfish mentality where attachment to the attainment of power diverts the yogin off the true spiritual “path” of Yoga:

**Kleśa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>avidyā</th>
<th>Common View</th>
<th>Imperfect Yogin’s View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am the body, male or female, with resultant pleasures and attachments.</td>
<td>I am prakṛti and its evolutes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| asmitā | I have an identity dependent on possessing the objects of experience. I desire worldly success, power and wealth. | I desire powers (siddhis). |

| rāga¹⁶⁸ | I desire the objects of my immediate pleasure. | I will appropriate my power to obtain refined pleasures. |

| dveṣa¹⁶⁹ | I have an aversion to specific objects, persons or situations that have caused me pain. | I am angry at causes, persons or situations that have prevented my fulfillment of siddhis and resulting enjoyment. |

| abhiniveśa¹⁷⁰ | I fear my death, that is the death of this body that I am. | I fear that all my powers and resulting pleasures and enjoyments of prakṛti will cease. |

The above scale may be understood as constituting the range of misidentifications in the context of phenomenal selfhood. Under the dominating and delusive power of viparyaya, the yogin is in need of

---

¹⁶⁸ YB II, 7 (p. 65): sukhābhijñāsya sukhānusmṛtya pūrvah sukhe tattādhane vā yo gardhas tṛṣṇā lobhaḥ sa rāga iti. “When one familiar with a pleasure now has a memory of it, one’s eagerness for the pleasure or for the means to it, that thirst or greed, is [called] attachment.” See also n. 94 above on YS II, 7.

¹⁶⁹ YB II, 8 (p. 65): duḥkhaḥbhijñāsya duḥkhanusmṛtya pūrṇa duḥkke tattādhane vā yoh pratigho manṣuṣjigānām ātītō kroḍhoḥ sa dveṣāḥ. “When one familiar with a pain now has a memory of it, that aversion toward the pain or what causes it, the desire for retaliation, malice, revenge and anger, is [called] aversion.” See n. 95 above on YS II, 8.

¹⁷⁰ YS II, 9 (p. 65): svarasavāhī viduṣo ’pi tathā rūḍho ’bhiniveśaḥ. “Desire for continuity, arising even in the wise (sages), is sustained by its own inclination.” Vyāsa seems to take the primary meaning of abhiniveśa to be fear of death (annihilation): maraṇaṭrāṣa ucchedadṛṣṭātmaka (YB II, 9) p. 65. Unlike rāga and dveṣa, and their resultant pleasure-pain impressions of which examples are easily found in this life itself, the samskāra of fear and anxiety involving death cannot be so easily accounted for, there being no such definitive experiences in this life. Thus, for Vyāsa, the idea of a previous death and the experience of former lives is confirmed. Abhiniveśa arises naturally and spontaneously from the habit patterns (vāsanās) of the past experiences of death pangs (YB II, 9; pp. 65-66).
the guidance of a spiritual preceptor or guru: one who has transcended
the compulsive need to identify with prakṛtic existence. In the guru, or
“accomplished one,” has awakened the “knowledge born of discernment” (vivekajam jñāna) that, endowed with the power of liberating (tāraka),\(^{171}\) enables one to “cross over” the limitations of saṃsāric identity. As the yogin progresses on the journey towards authentic identity, the influence of the afflictions progressively lessens. Vṛṣṇa makes it clear that it is the vṛtti of misconception or error (viparyaya) that underlies our mistaken notions of selfhood and their attendant dissatisfactions and sorrows (duḥkha). According to Vṛṣṇa (YB I, 8), viparyaya encompasses the source-affliction (avidyā) in which the karmic residue (karmāśaya) of samskāras and vāsanās, and the resultant fruition (vipāka) of afflicted action, are generated and sustained. In short, our afflicted identity rooted in spiritual ignorance functions through viparyaya. Curiously, this important insight, which can be attributed to Vṛṣṇa, has not been clearly noted by scholars.\(^{172}\)

The Sāṃkhya and Yoga systems hold divergent views on the nature of avidyā. The Sāṃkhya system proper uses the term a-viveka, “an absence of discerning knowledge” of the nature of puruṣa, which the teachers of formal logic place under the category of “non-apprehension” (a-khyāti). It appears that the Yoga system differs in this regard. Yoga considers ignorance to be a misapprehension (anyathā-khyāti),\(^{173}\) the definition of ignorance being: mistaking the non-eternal and the “non-self” for the eternal and the Self, etc., as in YS II, 5.\(^{174}\) Vṛṣṇa states that although avidyā is a negative compound it should be known as a positive existent, like the compound amitra, which signifies not the absence of a friend (mitra) but the contrary of friend, namely an enemy. Likewise, avidyā is neither valid cognition nor the absence of valid cognition, but is a cognition of a different

---

171 YS III, 54 (p. 174).


173 See YV I, 8 (p. 71): atra ca śāstre 'nyathākhyātiḥ siddhānto na tu sāmkhyavad avivekā-mātram.

174 See n. 152 above.
kind, contrary to both of them. In Yoga, therefore, avidyā is not akhyāti, that is, the non-apprehension of the nature of puṣa as in Śāmkhya, but anyathākhyāti, that is, a particular kind of cognition which mistakes puṣa for prakṛtic existence. As the Śāmkhyas (SK 44) hold that bondage is due to “the opposite of jñāna” (viparyaya), liberation occurs through the central expedient of discriminating knowledge (referred to in SK 2 as vijnāna). In the philosophy of Classical Yoga, avidyā is a type of cognition, however invalid, that can be remedied by various methods in Yoga such as the cultivation of faith (iraddhi), energy (vīrya), memory (smṛti), cognitive samādhi and clear insight (prajñā) — all outlined in YS I, 20 — or devotion to the Lord (īśvara-pranidhāna, YS I, 23). Avidyā can be completely overcome only in the culminating realization of puṣa “attained” through the high-level state of samādhi termed asamprajñāta (YB I, 18).

The third type of vṛtti, conceptualization (vikalpa), is defined by Patañjali (YS I,9) as the apprehensions arising out of verbal knowledge only but whose referents are words and ideas but not things. Vikalpa involves a notion, not necessarily an error, that does not correspond to an object or thing, but that may in fact serve as a useful function as in a metaphor or simile. A vikalpa can be an imaginary cognition. The term vikalpa has been understood in the sense of “fancy” or “hallucination,” but these are insufficient meanings. In states of meditation, the engagement of vikalpa is considered important in strengthening and focusing the mind.

Vikalpa is that modification (vṛtti) of the mind which follows language, knowledge of words and the knowledge provided by words, and is productive of the same where no actual thing is its referent. Yet, being verbal knowledge, why could it not be included under valid testimony (āgama pramāṇa, YS I,7)? According to Vyāsa (YB I,7), there has to be an actual object (artha) that is corroborated by an accomplished teacher (āpta) in order to qualify under āgama.

175 YB II, 5 (p. 63): yathā nāmitro mitrābhāvo na mitramātraṁ kim tu tadviruddhāh sapatanaḥ ..., evam avidyā na pramāṇaṁ na pramāṇābhāvaḥ kim tu vidyāvāparītaṁ jñāntaṁ avidyeta.
176 YS I, 9 (p. 13): sabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ.
177 See I.K. Taimni’s (1961) usage.
178 See R.S. Mishra’s (1972) usage.
179 YB I, 7 (p. 12): āptena drṣṭo ’numito vārthaḥ paratra svabodhasaṁkrāntaye śabdenopadiśyate, sabdāt tadartha viśayā vṛttih śrotur āgamaḥ.
Vikalpa relates to no “objects” as such. Nor is the vṛtti of conceptualization formally included under error (viparyaya) because in the latter (YS I,8) there is an “object” which is at first wrongly cognized, but when the error is corrected, the true form of the “object” — such as the moon, to use Vyāsa’s example — is seen clearly. There is no succession of error and refutation, and one word does not replace another (e.g. the word “seashell” replacing “silver” in the case of an oyster). In vikalpa there is no real external object at all, the referent being language itself rather than things.

Paraphrasing Vyāsa, conceptualization does not amount to valid cognition or to error. As there can exist a certain satisfaction or sense of exaltation about the use of language and knowledge of words, people bring words into usage even when there is no actual substance or object signified or designated by the words and their definitions. For example, the statement, “Consciousness (caitanya) is the nature of puruṣa,” is ultimately meaningless or fallacious. When the actual position of Yoga philosophy is that consciousness itself is the puruṣa, what consciousness, other than the very puruṣa, could be designated as the nature of that puruṣa? Otherwise, as Vyāsa tells us, it is as though one were talking of a cow belonging to a person called Caitra, who — as the owner — is other than his possession. Similarly, to assert that, “Puruṣa being inactive is a denial that it has the attribute of a thing,” is making no positive statement about any object. Only the the attributes of prakṛti as pertaining to puruṣa are denied. The adjective “inactive” (niṣkriya), denying any possible activity in the case of puruṣa, expresses no qualification. The negative (pseudo) adjective is false, has no substance and is a mere verbal expression of the vṛtti called vikalpa. It is an absence, conceptualized as though a positive state, then attached to puruṣa as though it is its attribute, yet it expresses no attribute of puruṣa. However, the modification of vikalpa is by no means worthless and can serve a practical and pedagogical purpose. Vikalpa has, for example, a greater practical value than has viparyaya: “For unless we have a concept of a ‘higher Self’ or a ‘path’, we cannot exercise our will to overcome the limitations of

---

180 YB I, 9 (pp. 13-14): sa na pramānopārohi na viparyayopārohi ca. vastuśūnyatve ‘pi śabda-jñāna māhāmya nibandhano vyavahāro drṣyate. tadyathā caitanyam puruṣasya svarūpam iti. yadā cītir eva puruṣas tadā kim atra kena vyapadīṣyate. bhavati ca vyapadeśe vṛttih. yathā caitrasya gaur iti. tathā pratisiddhavastudharmo niṣkriyah puruṣaḥ.
conceptual thinking and to break through to the level of the ... Self.”\textsuperscript{181}

The fourth modification or \textit{vṛtti} is sleep (\textit{nidrā}) and is defined as: “... the modification based upon the apprehension of non-becoming/absence.”\textsuperscript{182} It is a kind of rudimentary awareness, the awareness of “absence” (\textit{abhāva}). That sleep is not simply the “absence” of experience, cognition or apprehension is, according to Vyāsa, demonstrated by the fact that when one wakes up one can recollect that one has slept well or badly.\textsuperscript{183} The \textit{YS} (I, 38) also states that attending to the knowledge derived from sleep (or dreams) can help to bring about clarification of the mind.\textsuperscript{184}

The last modification is memory (\textit{smrti}) defined thus: “Memory is the recollection of contents (conditions/objects) experienced.”\textsuperscript{185} Memory operates exclusively on the level of the inner organ (\textit{antahkarana}), wherein the contents of a previous experience are returned to consciousness (i.e., remembered) via thought, although there are no longer any corresponding objects (on the gross level). Although not a means of knowledge (\textit{pramāṇa}) in Yoga, memory nevertheless does play an important role in cognition and in determining the nature and range of cognition. Regarding \textit{smrti}, Vyāsa asks: “Does the mind remember the process of apprehension of an object (e.g., a vessel) or, rather, the form of the object experienced?”\textsuperscript{186} To which he then replies: “The cognition, coloured by the experience of the object known, shines forth in the forms both of the knowledge (or content or the object) and the cognition itself, and generates a latent impression that conforms to the above process.”\textsuperscript{187} A cognition (\textit{pratyaya}) is “coloured” (\textit{uparakta})\textsuperscript{188} or influenced by the object experienced. Therefore a cognition carries the form (\textit{rūpa})

\textsuperscript{181} Feuerstein (1979a: 32).
\textsuperscript{182} \textit{YS} I, 10 (p. 15): \textit{abhāvaprātyayālambanā vṛttir nidrā}.
\textsuperscript{183} \textit{YS} I, 10 (p. 15): \textit{sā ca samprabodhe pratyaavamarśat pratyaayaviśeṣah, katham, sukham akhamavāpsam}.
\textsuperscript{184} \textit{YS} I, 38 (p. 41): \textit{svapnamirdrāṃnālambanaṃ vā. “Or resting on the knowledge [derived] from dreams or sleep [the mind is made clear].”}
\textsuperscript{185} \textit{YS} I, 11 (p. 16): \textit{anubhūtavisayāsampramosaḥ smṛtih}.
\textsuperscript{186} \textit{YB} I, 11 (p. 16): \textit{kīṃ pratyayasya cītāṃ smarati āhosvīd viṣayasyeti}.
\textsuperscript{187} Ibid: \textit{grāhyoparaktaḥ prataya grāhyagrahamobhayākāranirbhāsas tajjātyyakam samśkāram ārabhate}.
\textsuperscript{188} See n. 187 above.
or representation of the object as well as the representation of the process or the fact of that apprehension. It contains both the representations of the grāhya (the object of experience) and the form or representation of the grahā (the instrument and the process and the fact of the experience), that is, it resembles the various features and natures of both of these and manifests them.

The cognition then generates a sāṃskāra in which both features are represented: (1) the fact that the person cognizes the content or object, has gained experience through the process of apprehension of the object, and (2) the content or object as it actually is. Memory does not arise by itself. An experience first becomes a sāṃskāra, an impression in the stored karmic stock (āśaya) in the mind. From the impression the memory arises again as a mental function or modification (vṛtti). The object itself therefore ceases to be present, but the impression produces the memory. Vyāsa further states, “That impression, being activated when similar or cognate cognitions occur, brings forth the memory experience. This memory also consists of the representation of the content or of the process of cognition.”

The cause of the sāṃskāra’s activation is the original cognition. When it reproduces the experience in the form of memory, the memory also is “identical” to: (a) the sāṃskāra, as it manifests, shows itself to be “identical” with the original experience, and (b) the experience itself that was the manifesting cause of the sāṃskāra (although the memory has now been triggered by some other manifesting cause, such as a similar cognition or an appropriate time). The memory, just like the original cognition and the sāṃskāra it had formed, consists both of the representation of the object apprehended and the knowing experience or process of cognition. The chain of causation is as follows: (a) the experience, from which is produced (b) the sāṃskāra, which generates (c) the memory, each with the twofold process: (1) the process of cognition which makes possible the awareness that “I know the object,” and (2) the cognition of the nature of the object itself. Obviously, unless the mind “knows that it knows,” it cannot reproduce as memory the experience of the original object. In this process the faculty of determination or ascertainment (buddhi) plays its part. Vyāsa tells us that the representation of the process of cognition relates primarily to the

---

189 YB I, 11 (p. 16): sa sāṃskārāḥ svavyaṅjakāṇjanas tadākāram eva grāhyanābhayātmikāṁ śmrīṁ janayati.

190 See YV I, 11 (p. 88).
The expression “I know the vessel” is a particular type of apprehension (anuvyavasāya): the awareness the intellect (buddhi) has that it cognizes or experiences. It is an important part of the process of memory, in which the other part of the cognition is the object, the vessel. However, when one sees the vessel a second time and says, “This is that vessel,” this is not, in Yoga, technically included under the vṛtti of memory. In the cognition “I know the vessel,” one apprehension — of “the vessel” — is the subject matter (viśaya) of the other apprehension — “I know.” “Knowing,” here, is the primary feature. Vyāsa adds: “Memory has primarily the representation of the content or object known.” Even though the type of apprehension termed anuvyavasāya is an important part of the process of memory, the memory proper is a single apprehension: “the vessel.” Here, the awareness “I know” is secondary.

In the list of five vṛttis (YS I, 7-11), memory has been placed last because, in Vyāsa’s words, “All those memories arise from the experiences or apprehensions that come forth from [the other vṛttis of the mind, i.e.] the means of knowing, error, conceptualization, sleep, or of other memories.” “Experience” in the above refers to the buddhi’s (citta’s) first ascertainment of or involvement with the remembered object; thereafter it becomes the awareness of the cognition that buddhi has (anuvyavasāya) as explained earlier. It is also clear from Vyāsa’s passage that a memory may be remembered, as the first-time experience of that memory. Thus there may occur the memory of a memory. As cognition (in the process of apprehension) generates impressions (saṃskāras), so do the impressions serve to activate the memory experience assisting the process of knowing and provide the content of the memory experience.

---

191 YB I, 11 (p. 16): tatra grahanākārapūrvā buddhiḥ.
192 See YV I, 11 (p. 88): vyākhyaśanuvyavasāya ...
193 YB I, 11 (p. 16): grāhyākārapūrvā smṛtiḥ.
194 YB I, 11 (p. 17): sarvāḥ smṛtayaḥ pramāṇaviparyayavikalpanidrāśmṛtinām anubhavāt prabhavantī.
195 See TĪ I, 11 (p. 16).
196 Without explaining himself further, Bhoja (RM I, 11) asserts that of the five types of vṛttis, the means of knowledge or valid cognition, error, and conceptualization occur in the wakeful state (jāgṛt). The experience of these three combined, masquerading as direct perception (pratyakṣa), becomes the dream state (svapna). Sleep is a unique state in that it is marked by the absence of other vṛttis even though it is in itself a vṛtti. Memory is the effect of any or all of these vṛttis. RM I, 11 (p. 4) states: tatra pramāṇaviparyayavikalpā jāgṛd avasthā. ta eva tadanubhava balāt
samskāras and resulting memories are said to ensue under the influence of the afflictions, an afflicted latent deposit or karmic residue is formed and becomes operative. Thus the link between the \textit{vṛttis}, \textit{karma}, and samsāric identity is established.

Vijñāna Bhikṣu informs us that \textit{buddhi} is the “raw material” from which all \textit{vṛttis} are shaped, as images are shaped from gold. The \textit{vṛttis} are the specific transformations (\textit{parināmas}) arising from the intellect or \textit{buddhi},\textsuperscript{197} which, as we have seen, is located in the mind (\textit{citta}). Because \textit{buddhi} is a form of \textit{prakṛti}, which consists of the three \textit{guṇas}, Vyāsa says: “Also, all these modifications (\textit{vṛttis}) are characterized by pleasure, dissatisfaction (pain) and delusion and are to be understood as being under the sway of the afflictions.”\textsuperscript{198} The afflictions which correlate with pleasure, dissatisfaction (pain) and delusion are attachment (\textit{rāga}), aversion (\textit{dveśa}), and ignorance (\textit{avidyā}) respectively.\textsuperscript{199}

Obviously, the above five categories of \textit{vṛtti} do not offer a comprehensive list of all psychomental states. By classifying the \textit{vṛttis} into five categories, the totality of innumerable modifications that can actually take place can be seen generally as derivatives of these five. However, in the context of yogic praxis the five types of \textit{vṛttis} are all significant in that they contribute to the mechanism of our karmic identity and its “entanglement” within \textit{prakṛti} and, as we will soon see, our spiritual liberation as well. It is therefore quite natural that those modifications which keep the \textit{yogin} bound in misidentification and are of an afflicted (\textit{kliṣṭa}) nature, and those modifications that are conducive to liberation and are of a nonafflicted (\textit{akliṣṭa}) nature,\textsuperscript{200} should be a topic of great concern in Yoga. We must keep in mind that according to Yoga, “knowledge” is not simply the ratiocinative process or reasoning, but correlates with the all-pervasive principle of \textit{mahat} (\textit{liṅga-mātra}) — the first principle of manifestation in \textit{prakṛti} out of which everything else manifests and is activated.

\textsuperscript{197} \textit{YV} I, 11 (p. 90): \textit{etāḥ sarvāḥ pramāṇādī vṛttayaḥ buddhi dravyasya suvarṇasya eva pratimā-”divad viśayākārā dravyaryatipāh parināmāh ...}

\textsuperscript{198} \textit{YB} I, 11 (p. 17): \textit{sarvāḥ caitā vṛttayaḥ sukhadūkkhamohātmikāḥ, sukhadūkkhamohāḥ ca klesēṣu vyākhyeyāḥ.}

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{YB} I, 11 (p. 17): \textit{sukhānuṣayā rāgāḥ, dukhānuṣayā dveśāḥ, mohāḥ punar avidyēti.}

\textsuperscript{200} \textit{YS} I, 5 (p. 9): \textit{vṛttayaḥ pañcatayyaḥ kliṣṭākliṣṭāḥ. “The modifications are fivefold; afflicted or nonafflicted.”}
The five types of vṛtti comprise the normal range of human functioning, encompassing three modes of everyday transactions, including things (as registered in pramāṇa), mental content or objects whether remembered (smṛti), conceptualized (vikalpa) or erroneous (viparyaya), and sleep (nidrā). Each of these states is related directly to a sense of self or subject who appropriates and lays claim to the experience. The experiences of discrete objects or mental content or thought are filtered through and referenced to an afflicted identity of self that permeates the mind. When this happens, puruṣa, the pure witness or knower of vṛtti, is forgotten or veiled/concealed; the ego-sense possesses the experience, thinking it to be its own. Puruṣa (seemingly) becomes as if reduced to the finite realm, of limitation, of the “me” and “mine” of worldly, empirical existence. As described by Patañjali (YS II, 6), the unseen seer (puruṣa) becomes as if “mixed” with the seeable (drṣṭya) in the process of samyoga, the congenital conflation of puruṣa and prakṛti. The result of this “mixture” or “conjunction” of “spirit” and “matter” is the emergence of reified notions of the world and self (egoity) rooted in ignorance, attachment, aversion, and fear and functioning in the mind in the form of vṛtti (i.e., cittavṛtti).

The vṛtis may be described as being cognitive, conative, and affective considering the nature that Patañjali and Vyāsa attribute to them. As its general translation of “modification” indicates, vṛtti incorporates both a mental content as well as an activity, a function, an act of mind. Vijñāna Bhikṣu provides a helpful definition of vṛtti: “A vṛtti of the intellect, like the flame of a candle, is the foremost point of the mind whereby the mind’s one-pointedness is experienced. This foremost point, contacting external objects through the senses, is transformed into replicas of objects like melted copper in a crucible.”201 The author of the Sāmkhya-Pravacana-Sūtra (V, 107) states: “The vṛtti is a principle different from a member or a quality; it reaches out to make a connection and glides forth [among objects, senses and the mind].”202 In his commentary on the above text,
Vijñāna Bhikṣu explains that the mind naturally forms vṛttis that are real “psychic” transformations taking place through mental processes.203 Vṛtti is not specifically defined by Vyāsa. Vācaspāti Miśra understands the five modifications as “change into the form of an object.”204 Bhoja Rāja states: “The vṛttis are forms of modification which are parts of the whole [the mind];205 and elsewhere he says, “the vṛttis are particular modifications of the mind.”206 Even the discriminative discernment (vivekakhyāti)207 that takes place in the sattva of the mind, as well as the five afflictions — understood as parts of the vṛtti of error (viparyaya)208 — can all be classified under the category of vṛtti. Vṛtti is employed by Patañjali in a more general sense as “function” or “movement” or “mode of being,”209 and as a technical term implying any mental content which falls into the five categories of vṛttis (i.e., YS I, 5; II, 11; IV, 18). In the latter sense it is often used in the plural.

By rendering vṛtti as “modifications,” our study means to include the cognitive conditions, mental, emotive, and affective content, processes and activities, in fact any act or content of consciousness, self-identity, or mode of consciousness operating in the mind itself. Unlike the term parināma (transformation, development), which implies serial change (of prakṛti), vṛtti in Yoga is an “occurrence,” which implies a more local human (temporal) activity inextricably linked to self-identity.210 A secondary meaning of vṛtti is “means of livelihood,” as in “vṛttis are the means for the mind (empirical selfhood) to attain its livelihood.” As appropriated by limited self-consciousness, the vṛttis are like individuated “whirlpools” metaphorically signifying “whirls” of consciousness or an existence that appears separate from the water (but

---

203 In R. Garbe, ed. (1943), Śāmkhya-Pravacana-Bhāṣya or Commentary on the Exposition of the Śāmkhya Philosophy by Vijñānabhikṣu, Vol. II. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press); see SPB V, 107 (p. 140).

204 TV III, 47 (p. 166): vṛttir ālocanam viśayākāra pariṇatir iti yāvat.

205 RM I, 2 (p. 2): vṛtayo 'ngāngībhāvaparīṇāmarūpas tāsām ...

206 RM I, 5 (p. 3): vṛtayaś cittasya pariṇāmavīśeṣāḥ.

207 TV I, 2 (p. 6): yadā ca vivekakhyātir api heyā tadā kaiva kathaḥ vṛttyantarāṇāṁ doṣa-bahulāṇāṁ iti bhāvah.

208 YB I: 5, 8, 11 and II, 11.

209 See, for example, YS II, 15: guṇa-vṛtti; see also YS II, 50 and III, 43.

CITTA IN CLASSICAL YOGA (2)

is not really); the puruṣa “as if” conforms to an identity extrinsic to itself and takes on the appearance of a changing, finite, psychophysical being, rather than abiding in its true nature as pure consciousness.

We have seen that in the realm of empirical selfhood the law of karma operates if and only if the modifications of the mind are rooted in afflictions (YS II, 12). Vyāsa (YB IV, 11) likens this bound state of affairs to the wheel of samsāra, which turns due to the power of ignorance with its six spokes, namely, virtue (dharma) and nonvirtue (adharma), pleasure (sukha) and pain/dissatisfaction (duḥkha), as well as attachment (rāga) and aversion (dveṣa).211 The five afflictions (kleśas) provide the dynamic framework through which mistaken identity of Self is maintained urging the psychophysical organism to emerge into activity, to feel, to think, to desire, etc. As the basic emotional and motivational forces, they lie at the root of all delusion, dissatisfaction, or pain. In Yoga, misidentification is suffering. As long as we live out of a deluded understanding of authentic identity, we remain subject to sorrow and conflict. Hence, Vyāsa labels the afflictions as “errors” or “misconceptions” (viparyaya). Thus the normal human situation can be characterized as the product of a cognitive error, a positive misconstruction of reality and an apparent loss or concealment of intrinsic identity. The correction of this error or misunderstanding of the world and the true nature of selfhood is contingent upon the full recovery or realization of puruṣa. What role, if any, does vṛtti actually play in the “recovery” process through which the disclosure of our authentic identity as puruṣa, the seer, takes place?

KLIŚTA- AND AKLIŚTA-VṚTTI

Patañjali understands the five types of vṛttis as being either “afflicted” (kliśta) or “nonafflicted” (akliśta).212 Vyāsa explains:

The afflicted [vṛttis] are caused by the five afflictions and are causes of the afflictions (kleśa-hetuka); they become the seed-bed for the growth of the accumulated residue of

---

211 See YB IV, 11 (p. 195).
212 See n. 200 above.
The compound word *kleśa-hetuka* used in the above by Vyāsa to explain *kliśta* may be translated as “caused by the *kleśas*” and “causes of the *kleśas*.” Vācaspati states that the *kleśas* such as *asmitā* (egoity) are the causes that bring about the advent of (afflicted) *vṛttis*. Or, as Vācaspati adds, it may be said that as *prakṛti* serves *puruṣa*, only its rajasic and tamasic *vṛttis* are the cause of *kleśa*.214 According to Vijnāna Bhikṣu, the word *hetu* (cause) can also mean a purpose as well as referring to the effects of the *vṛttis*. Bhikṣu states that *kleśa* should be taken mainly to mean suffering/dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*), which is the effect (e.g., greed) produced by the *vṛttis* that take the form of objects experienced; hence it is said to be *kliśta* (“afflicted”).215

Feuerstein understands Vyāsa’s explanation (see above) of *kliśta* as making little sense in that “*akliśta* would consequently have to be understood as ‘not caused by the *kleśas*’, which is absurd, since all mental activity is *ex hypothesi* engendered by the *kleśas*.”216 Feuerstein’s claim in the above amounts to a tautological and reductionistic explanation of all mental activity as being engendered by the afflictions; it fails to take into account the soteriological purpose of *vṛtti* in the form of subtler mental processes leading to liberating knowledge (*jñāna*, *YS* II,28) or what I will refer to as the “sattvicification” of the mind and its *vṛtti*-processes. The process of sattvicification takes place in the *sattva* of consciousness, the most refined aspect of the mind (*citta*), and its effect is such that it opposes the afflictions by purifying and illuminating the yogin’s consciousness thereby dissolving the barriers to spiritual liberation.

Bhikṣu interprets Vyāsa’s exposition on *akliśta* by paraphrasing it thus, “resulting in *aklesa*,”217 meaning that *akliśta-vṛttis* do not result in afflictions. Through cognitive error or misconception, the *kleśas* both

---

213 *YB* I, 5 (p. 9): *kleśahetukāḥ karmāśayapracaśye kṣetṛbhūtāḥ kliśtāḥ. khyātivibāyā guṇā-dhiśkāra virodhinya ‘kliśtāh."

214 *TV* I, 5 (p. 9): *kleśā asmitādayo hetāvah pravṛttikāranaṁ yāsām vṛtānāṁ tās tathokāh. yad vā puruṣārthapradhānasya rajastamatāyāṁ hi vṛtānāṁ kleśakāraṇatvena kleśāyaiva pravṛttih."

215 *YY* I, 5 (p. 57): *atra ca hetuḥ pravṛttikāranaḥ. kleśaś cātra mukhya eva grāhyo duḥkhāḥkhyāḥ. tathā ca kleśahetukāḥ duḥkhaphalikāvibāyākāvṛtīsyāya ity arthaḥ."


217 *YY* I, 5 (p. 57): *akliśta aklesaphalikāḥ."
generate and arise from the activity and changes of the guṇas in the samsāric condition of self-identity, a condition that continues up to the discernment (khyāti) of puruṣa and prakṛti.\textsuperscript{218} According to Vācaspati Miśra, khyāti (used by Vyāsa in the sense of discriminative discernment or viveka-khyāti) means “clarity of insight” (prajñā-prasāda) and occurs when the sattvic component of buddhi (intellect), having been cleansed of the impurities of rajas and tamas, flows tranquilly.\textsuperscript{219} Any yogic “methods” that lead to the discernment of puruṣa and the mind (sattva) can be included under the clause “have discernment as their object.”\textsuperscript{220} Soteriologically, the unafflicted vṛttis are helpful in bringing about discernment and reducing the power of the guṇas over the yogin until the guṇas (the seeable) have finally fulfilled their dual purpose of experience (bhoga) and liberation (apavarga). They do so by opposing or blocking the activation of ignorance, its resulting desire and attendant actions (karma).\textsuperscript{221} In his commentary on Vyāsa (Maṇi-Prabhā), Rāmānanda Yati (sixteenth century CE) states that the result of kliśṭa-vṛttis is bondage (bandha-phala) whereas the result of akiśṭa-vṛttis is liberation (mukti-phala)\textsuperscript{222}; but this is technically incorrect. Akiśṭa-vṛttis only lead up to and include discernment (a quality of the sattva of the mind) which in turn must be transcended in higher samādhi (asamprajñāta)\textsuperscript{223}. Only then can final liberation (kaivalya) from misidentification with all vṛttis and their effects/effects take place.

Bhoja Rāja interprets kliśṭa and akiśṭa as “with kleśas” (in the technical sense: ignorance, etc.) and “without kleśas” (in the technical sense), or as “affected by kleśas” and “nonaffected by kleśas” (both in

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{218} Cf. Āraṇyā (1963: 18).
\bibitem{219} \textit{TV} I, 5 (p. 9): vidhūtarajastamaso buddhisattvasya praśāntavāhīnaḥ prajñāprasādah khyātīs tayā viśayinīyā.
\bibitem{220} \textit{YV} I, 5 (p. 57): khyātisādhanasyāpi samgrahāya viśaya padam iti.
\bibitem{221} \textit{YV} I, 5 (p. 57): tāś ca gunādhikāra-viśvihinoh, gunānāṁ sattvādināṁ adhikāraḥ kāryā-rambahānāṁ tadviśvihinavo 'vidyākāmākarmādirūpakāṛṇanaśakvatāt. khyātīviśayā vivekākhyātī sambaddhā ity arthoḥ.
\bibitem{222} Rāmānanda Yati, (1903). \textit{Pātañjaladarśanam} with a gloss called \textit{Maṇiprabhā}. (Benares, Vidya Vilas Press, Benares Sanskrit Series No. 75) p. 4.
\bibitem{223} See \textit{YS} I, 18 and \textit{YB} I, 18; \textit{YS} III, 50 states that the yogin must develop dispassion/detachment even toward discriminative discernment and its effects, i.e., omniscience and sovereignty over prakṛti.
\end{thebibliography}
the above technical sense). Hauer agrees with Bhoja’s interpretation. Many scholars understand kliśṭa as “with kleśas” (in the general sense) — as in “painful,” and akiśṭa as “without kleśas” (in the general sense) as in “not painful.” YS I, 5 also appears in the Śāṃkhyā-Sūtras (II, 33) attributed to Kapila. In his commentary Śāṃkhyā-Pravacana-Bhāṣya ad locum, Vijñāna Bhikṣu interprets kliśṭa as the vṛttis which are proper of samsāric existence and produce suffering, and akiśṭa as the vṛttis which arise through the practice of Yoga and are contrary to the kliśṭa-vṛttis. In his commentary on the same work, Aniruddha (fifteenth century CE) explains kliśṭa as being united to the kleśas and composed of rajas and tamas, and akiśṭa as being made of sattva wherein the kleśas have been discarded.

Based on the above analysis, and for the sake of clarification, it can be concluded that kliśṭa-vṛttis refers to mental activity that helps to maintain the power and influence of the kleśas; and akiśṭa refers to mental activity that facilitates the process of the dissolution of the kleśas. The “afflicted” modes of the mind refer to the ordinary intentional consciousness of everyday life. Referring earlier to Bhikṣu’s (YV I, 5) understanding of akiśṭa as “resulting in aklesa,” it does not seem inappropriate to deignate akleśa as that condition in which the grip of the afflictions on the mind is partially or completely checked. Evidently, according to the commentators (and to counter Feuerstein), not “all mental activity is ... engendered by the kleśas.” Kliśṭa-vṛttis are brought about by the afflictions, but this is not necessarily the case for the akiśṭa-vṛttis. By reducing all mental activity to being a product of the kleśas, Feuerstein has failed to differentiate between two radically different causes in Yoga: (1) avidyā, which is responsible for the misidentification of self or egoity (asmitā) leading to further affliction, and (2) the purposefulness of puruṣa, which is the final cause of the three differentiated states of prakṛti and for which the

---

224 RM I, 5 (p. 3): klesaṁ vākyamānalakṣaṇair ākrāntāḥ kliśṭāḥ. tadviparītā akiśṭāḥ.
226 See, for example, the writings of Taimni, Vivekananda, Bangali Baba, Rāma Prasāda, Ballentyne, Max Müller (1899: 337). Purohit (1973) uses “painful” and “pleasurable.”
227 See SPB II, 33 (p. 266) in N. Sinha, trans. (1915), The Śāṃkhyā Philosophy.
228 See Aniruddha’s commentary on the Śāṃkhyā-Sūtras (p. 1104) in R. Garbe, ed. (1987), Śāṃkhyā Sūtra and Śāṃkhyā System.
229 YB II, 19.
mind ultimately serves the purpose of liberation. Vṛttis of the nonafflicted (akliṣṭa) variety are engendered by the purposefulness of puruṣa and cannot be reduced to being a product of the kleśas.

The task of the yogin lies in the gradual overcoming of the impressions (samskāras) of "emergence" (vyutthāna) that generate an extrinsic self-identity or the externalization of selfhood in its worldly attached modes "away" from the puruṣa, and the simultaneous cultivation of the impressions of "cessation" (nirodha) and the eventual establishment of selfhood in its intrinsic spiritual nature. Based on our discussion of samskāra and vṛtti, it can be inferred that: (1) From samskāras of a vyutthāna-nature arise vyutthāna-vṛttis, afflicted vṛttis that generate or support a deluded understanding of reality. (2) From samskāras of a nirodha-nature arise vṛttis that are conducive to the process of "cessation" (nirodha) and that being of the akliṣṭa type, aid in removing the kleśas and their effects thus leading to an enlightened understanding of self and world. These two "directions," which imply radically different understandings of selfhood based on samskāra and vṛtti, can be correlated to the mind's guṇic dispositions as the following statement by Vyāsa makes clear:

The mind always tends towards three dispositions: illumination, activity or stasis, which leads to the inference that the mind is constituted of the three guṇas. The nature of mind-sattva is illumination. Mingled with rajas and tamas the mind is drawn toward power and possessions. The same mind, when pervaded by tamas becomes subject to non-virtue, ignorance, attachment and impotence. Again, when the covering of delusion (moha) [correlated with tamas] has diminished from the mind, it [the mind] shines in its fullness; when this is pervaded by a measure of rajas, it turns toward virtue, knowledge, dispassion and power. When the last vestige of the impurity of rajas has been eliminated, the mind is established in its own nature, becoming simply the discernment (khyāti) of the distinction of the sattva and the puruṣa ...
The presence of *sattva*, the purest *guna* (merit, virtue), *jñāna* (knowledge that arises from Yoga), *vairāgya*\(^{233}\) (dispassion/detachment), and *aśvarya* (supremacy, possession of power, sovereignty).\(^{234}\) These four qualities, according to *SK* 23,\(^{235}\) are the natural aspects of a sattvic “mind,” i.e., intellect or *buddhi*. For example, sovereignty implies an unthwarted sense of will power or determination whereas the loss of sovereignty denotes that one’s will is weakened or thwarted by many impediments. The word *aśvarya* is an abstract noun formed from *īśvara* (“master,” “lord”), used here not in the sense of God, but rather as an exalted human sense of power, of lordship, a commanding presence, the ability to be effective, to be “in control.” According to Yoga philosophy, one cannot be “in control of things” or in harmony with one’s objective world without first being in control of one’s mental faculties or “subjective world,” personality traits, etc. The word *īśvara* is derived from the root *īs*, meaning “to command, rule, reign,”\(^{236}\) “to be the master of.” The presence of *sattva* gives one the clear-sightedness so as to exercise such autonomy and effectiveness in a morally responsible way. One in whom *sattva* is predominant can easily become engaged in Yoga and lead a purified, increasingly virtuous, and cognitively illuminated existence with a preponderance of *akliṣṭa-vṛttis*.

The “absence” of *sattva* and dominance of *tamas* robs the mind of clarity and, consequently, effectiveness in wielding power in a morally responsible way is lost. This does not mean that one who wields power in a manipulative egoic fashion, or in a non-discerning way, is also endowed with *sattva*. Nonvirtue, ignorance, and attachment are all symptoms of the predominance of *tamas* whereas only “meritorious” effectiveness in wielding power would mark the presence of *sattva*. When *sattva* is eclipsed by *tamas* one becomes weakened, overly dependent, no longer a “sovereign” person. One in whom *tamas* predominates misidentifies with *kliṣṭa-vṛttis* and is ensnared in the network of afflicted consciousness and identity.


\(^{234}\) See Monier-Williams (1899: 234).


\(^{236}\) Monier-Williams (1899: 170).
In Vyāsa's statement that "the mind always tends to illumination (sattva), activity (rajas) or inertia (tamas)" as a result of the presence of the three guṇas, it must be understood that the above list of qualities of the guṇas is far from being an exhaustive one. Sattva in its form of moral and mental activity implies other luminous qualities such as clarity of mind, serenity, insight, kindness and compassion, benevolence, forgiveness, pleasantness of character, etc. In the case of rajasic qualities, not only energy and will (volition leading to action), but passionate moral and mental activity, anguish, anger, and pleasure and pain of different kinds (joy, anxiety, dissatisfaction, conflict) are to be understood. The word "inertia" (sthiti) or "stasis," used to express the attribute of tamas, means both "stability" and "stagnation," and refers as well to other tamasic qualities such as dullness, confusion, stupidity, indolence, dejection, heaviness, sloth, etc. All forms of prakṛti carry within themselves all three guṇas, and nothing within prakṛti exists that does not include all the three guṇas together. Variances in the nature of all phenomena, entities, attributes, self-identifications, tendencies and inclinations, personalities, choices, relationships, and acts depend on the dominance and preponderance of the guṇas. In fact, the guṇas are used to characterize almost all aspects of life including the nature of faith, knowledge, action, agency, intellect, and foodstuffs.

Upon further analysis of the guṇas it would appear to be the case that the mind can undertake an initiative only because of rajas. Through tamas it can be drawn to "negative" or irresponsible states such as malevolence toward others. Sattva brings to the mind serenity, clarity, pleasantness, and lucidity. What impels the mind to move in the direction of virtue? It is the presence of rajas. The mind, being a composition of the tripartite process, can never be without rajas and tamas. It is not, therefore, that in Yoga rajas and tamas are to be negated or abolished; rather, they are to be purified so that their presence as well as their effects (and affects) no longer obstruct the natural illuminating power intrinsic to sattva. In their natural state, rajas and tamas are essential and their measure is ideally sufficient to

---

237 On the physical side, sattva gives rise to lightness, brightness, and other related material properties and is associated with the colour white; rajas is responsible for mobility of various kinds and is associated with the colour red; tamas produces darkness, inertia, decay, and related phenomenon and is associated with the colour black.

238 See chapters seventeen and eighteen in the BG.
fulfil the purpose of sattva. When present within the limit of this measure, rajas initiates virtue, etc., and tamas imparts stability. What is initially intended by the discipline of Yoga is simply purification of body and mind so that rajas and tamas may be brought under the power of sattva. As such, sattva is then no longer dominated by the moral and mental processes of rajas and tamas. Vyāsa shows (YB I, 2) the subtlety and the superiority of the sattva of consciousness, which functions as a “bridge” on the “path” to the untainted consciousness of puruṣa. The way and journey in Yoga from a tamasic or rajasic disposition to a sufficiently sattvified one thus involves a highly moral process; it is not, as one scholar puts it, an “a-moral process.”

Yoga does not succumb to an antinomian perspective but seeks to integrate, through an embodiment of being, an enlightened consciousness with an affectively and morally matured sense of identity and personhood.

It is clear from the above analysis that tamasic vṛttis are afflicted modifications of the mind and sattvic vṛttis are non-afflicted ones. Vijñāna Bhikṣu regards rajasic vṛttis as mixed, both akliśta and kliśta. In Classical Sāmkhya the function of rajas is always to impel both sattva and tamas. Without the initial impelling force of rajas the other two guṇas are ineffective and inefficacious. In this sense the rajasic element may be considered to be mixed with either sattva or tamas, whichever is dominant, and therefore sattva or tamas is served or supported by rajas. The progress of the mind toward pure sattva is not possible without the operational capacity of rajas.

How do the different qualities of vṛtti interrelate in the system, that is, in the mind? Given our prevalent habit patterns of thought and misidentification and their proneness for generating and sustaining turbulence, affliction, and conflict — both within ourselves and in the world — how do nonafflicted states of mind survive in the midst of ignorance and suffering? One could, as does Vācaspati Miśra, pose an argument as follows: It is understood that all beings, with the exception of liberated embodiments (i.e., a “descent” [avatāra] or a jīvanmukta), bear afflicted vṛttis and have various attachments,

---

239 See Feuerstein (1979a: 81). I have written more specifically on Patañjali's Yoga and its implications for an embodied state of liberation; see n. 338 below.

240 YV I, 5 (p. 58).

241 As, for example, in its role of bringing forth the two processes of the sāttvika and tāmasa akhamkāra, i.e., the manifestation of the subjective sensory world and the objective sensed world respectively.
aversions, fears, etc. It would be rare if nonafflicted vṛttis were to arise in the constant stream or “whirling” of such afflicted mental and emotional content. Moreover, even if nonafflicted vṛttis were to arise among the afflicted ones, they would be powerless, having fallen among innumerable powerful opponents. Therefore, it could be deemed illogical that afflicted vṛttis could be overcome through nonafflicted ones, and that even by practicing dispassion (vairāgya) toward any manner or type of vṛtti, however sattvic, the afflicted patterns of vṛtti-identification would in the end prove to be insurmountable. To counter this kind of pessimism, Vyāsa assuredly and optimistically replies: “They [non-afflicted vṛttis] remain nonafflicted even if they occur in a stream of afflicted ones. In intervals between afflicted ones, there are nonafflicted ones; in intervals between nonafflicted ones are located afflicted ones.” In Yoga, practice (abhyāsa) and dispassion (vairāgya) can arise from ākliśṭa-vṛttis, for example, from āgama: reliable testimony — one of the means of knowledge or valid cognition (pramāṇa); or from anumāna: inference, another pramāṇa and through which can take place spiritual upliftment or inspiration, or perhaps the instruction of a teacher resulting in contemplation and greater understanding. When practice and dispassion cause a break in the flow or movement of afflicted patterns of thought, the vṛttis leading to a “higher good” or “purpose” (paramārtha) arise. Even though, as Vyāsa states, these latter vṛttis arise in the stream of afflictions and afflicted vṛttis, they nevertheless remain untouched by them and are not corrupted. The same applies to nonafflicted vṛttis that appear in intervals between afflicted vṛttis. Similarly, when nonafflicted vṛttis are generated or activated, their stream is often interrupted by afflicted vṛttis. However, these impure vṛttis have no power to alter the purer ones; rather, as the purer vṛttis grow in strength through repeated practice, their samskāras gradually mature, and the impure vṛttis and samskāras lose their hold over the mind. Attention then need no longer be monopolized by afflicted states of identity. The mind and its modifications become progressively infused in the nature of sattva, the guṇa

242 See TV I, 5 (p. 10).
244 See TV I, 5 (p. 10).
245 See Aranya (1963: 18).
I.WHICHER

that predominates in the makeup of akliṣṭa-vṛttis and sanskāras of “cessation” (nirodha). The yogin’s identity becomes increasingly sattvified. As dispassion (vairāgya) toward forms of misidentification (sārūpya) matures into higher dispassion (para-vairāgya), even the dependency on sattvic vṛttis — previously so necessary for the yogin’s growth and spiritual development — falls away. The soteriological point to be made here is that any attachment to vṛtti, whether that vṛtti is afflicted or nonafflicted, must be transcended in Yoga. By fostering the akliṣṭa-vṛttis, one masters the kliṣṭa-vṛttis, and then, in turn, one dissolves any attachment to the akliṣṭa-vṛttis through higher dispassion.²⁴⁶

Examples of the “nonafflicted” type of vṛtti can be alluded to. A valid cognition of the pratyākṣa type can be deemed nonafflicted when it leads to higher perception of the true nature of both prakṛti and puruṣa. A conceptualization (vikalpa) is beneficial when one conceives of, or imagines, greater states of yogic awareness. For example, after having read the “great sayings” (mahāvākyas) of the Upaniṣads such as tat tvam asi — “That [the all-pervasive Self] you are” (Chāndogya Up VI. 12, 3) — one can be left with a purificatory impression in the mind even if the sayings have not been fully understood. Nidrā (sleep) can be of value when a particular image in a dream acts as a catalyst for meditation (YS I, 38). And memory (smṛti) is helpful when, for example, upon viewing “objects” in the world of nature such as a blue sky, one is reminded of the all-pervading nature of puruṣa or of descriptions of appearances of one’s favorite “descent” (avatāra) or embodiment of the deity (e.g., Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Śiva, etc.).²⁴⁷

YS I,33 states: “The mind is made pure and clear from the cultivation of friendliness, compassion, happiness and equanimity in conditions (or toward objects) of joy, sorrow, merit or demerit respectively.”²⁴⁸ Thus the sattvic vṛttis or attitudes of friendliness (maitrī), compassion (karuṇā), happiness (muditā) and equanimity (upekṣā) replace the rajasic and tamasic attitudes based on more self-centered orientations or egoic modes of being and relating in the world.

²⁴⁶ See TV I, 5 (p. 10). The process of dispassion (detachment) has been explained in greater detail in Whicher (1992), (1995), and (1997).

²⁴⁷ Some of the above examples are taken from Nārāyaṇa Tirtha’s Yogasiddhāntacandrīkā as cited in Arya (1986: 143).

²⁴⁸ YS I, 33 (p. 38): maitrkaruṇamuditopeksānām sukhaduhkhapunyāpunyavāyānām bhāvanā- taṁ cittaprasādanam.
This is done in the spirit, as it were, of dispassion toward the moral and mental states of others. Vyāsa writes on the above sūtra: "Such devoted cultivation produces dharmā, and thereby the mind is made pure and clear. When it is clear it attains the state of one-pointed stability." Obviously, not the entire emotive and affective dimension of human nature can be subsumed under the traits of afflicted identity as the above attitudes make clear. The sattvic qualities that adhere within our emotive/affective dimension can be understood as positive (i.e., nonafflicted) aids on the yogin’s journey.

Once an aspirant has begun to practice is success in Yoga definitely assured? Do the vṛttis associated with affliction (kleśa) then cease to have power over the aspirant? The above questions may be answered in two ways: (1) Vyāsa (YB I, 1) rejects those with distracted (vikśipta) minds as being unworthy of consideration as serious yogins and is, therefore, not talking about them. (2) The wording of the Sanskrit commentators (e.g. Vācaspati Miśra, H. Āranya) suggests that nonafflicted vṛttis have to be strengthened through practice and dispassion until they cease to be intermittent and thus create a flow (pravāha) in the yogin’s consciousness. As a result, afflicted vṛttis arising intermittently lose their power over the yogin and are therefore mastered. The yogin is no longer enslaved by the afflicted modes of thinking and acting. This is the essence of what Vyāsa says: “It is only by the modifications (vṛttis) that the impressions (samskāras) corresponding to them are generated, and by the impressions are generated new vṛttis. Thus the wheel of vṛttis and samskāras revolves.” The vṛttis both generate and strengthen the samskāras, the latter in turn facilitating the rise of the former. There is no conception of mind as tabula rasa to be found here. The only way the samsāric wheel of samskāras and vṛttis can cease, implying an end to mistaken identity and the experience of suffering, is through the process or practice of “cessation” (nirodha) itself.

Epistemologically, vṛtti refers to any mental “whirl,” “wave” or modification. It is, thus, the medium through which a human being understands and experiences: whatever we know is based on the

---

249 YB I, 33 (p. 39): evam asya bhāvayataḥ śuklo dharmā upajāyate. tataś ca cittāṃ prasiddati. prasannam ekāgraṁ sthitipadaṁ labhate.

250 YB I, 1 (p. 3). The states of mind according to Yoga are discussed in Whicher (1997); see n. 172 above.

251 See n. 85 above.
functioning of \textit{vrtti}. Our total apprehension of a conscious self/person is only by way of observing and recognizing the \textit{vrittis}, intentions, ideas (\textit{pratyaya}), and thought-constructs that arise in the mind. In other words, in ordinary human experience the existence of consciousness without an object in the mind is not suspected. \textit{Citta} may be described as a network of functions that allows for the relay of information to the uninvolved experiencer (\textit{puruṣa}). These functions include the inner organ (\textit{antaḥkāraṇa}) composed of \textit{buddhi}, \textit{ahāṃkāra}, and \textit{manas}, in conjunction with sense and motor organs (\textit{buddhiṅdriyas} and \textit{karmendriyas}) and their objects. The \textit{citta} is regarded as the vehicle for perception (wherein the contents of experience take form for presentation to the \textit{puruṣa}) as well as the receptacle for the effects of \textit{karma}. The \textit{citta} takes on a karmic shape or mentality due to the arising of each \textit{vrtti} that pervades it in the form of various perceptions, thoughts, emotions, and so on, and as reference to a prakṛtic sense of self. In ordinary experience, \textit{citta} is thus experienced as a series of particular mental states. However, according to Yoga, the \textit{citta} is not capable of functioning by itself; it derives its semblance of consciousness through the proximity of \textit{puruṣa} (YS IV, 19 and 22-23) in a manner analogous to that in which the moon is illuminated by the light of the sun. As the sun shines on the moon, so the \textit{puruṣa} “shines” its “light” upon the \textit{citta} and thereby knows all that passes in the mind by observing \textit{vrittis}, thoughts and emotions as a witness (YS II, 20; IV, 18). Hence \textit{puruṣa} is the true experiencer (\textit{bhoktr}, YB II, 6) and knower. However, the capacity to witness or observe the ongoings of the mind is not available to the empirical selves bound as they are to the identity of the body, mind and its modifications, i.e., psychophysical being.

Human consciousness, due to misidentification, experiences selfhood according to the changing modes (\textit{guṇas}) of \textit{prakṛti}. All our “knowledge” as misidentified selves is structured in the prakṛtic realm of \textit{cittavṛtti} and functions as a masquerading consciousness of phenomenal selfhood. Through the “cessation” (\textit{nīrodha}) of misidentification or mistaken identity (YS I, 2) in Yoga the seer (\textit{puruṣa}) is said to be established in its unchanging, ever-wise, ever-pure nature.\footnote{YS I, 3 (p. 7).} Yet in ordinary consciousness and perception \textit{puruṣa appears} to be misidentified with \textit{prakṛti} (\textit{cittavṛtti}), our self-identity having con-
formed (sārūpya) to the changing nature of vṛtti.\textsuperscript{253} Does puruṣa have two natures? The total and permanent incorruptibility and unchangeability of puruṣa is the fundamental tenet of Yoga philosophy. If any of the “attributes” of puruṣa were to increase or decrease, the entire tenet would have to be rejected. In that case puruṣa would not be transcendent, pure, or free at all because it would be subject to factors outside of itself, namely, alteration, delusion, and suffering. There would simply be no point in pursuing Yoga because it would only lead to a series of temporary states of change and development (parināma) rooted in egoity, attachment, aversion, fear, confusion, and conflict, and that ineluctably fuel further afflicted identity. But how and why does conformity (sārūpya) of self-identity with vṛttis take place?

\textit{Samyoga}

The existence of empirical identity or self enveloped in spiritual ignorance (avidyā) does not mean that puruṣa deviates from its essential intrinsic nature of unconditioned freedom and purity. The starting point of the search for liberation in Yoga must be an inquiry into the nature of the “conjunction” (samyoga) between the seer (draṣṭr) and the seeable (drṣya),\textsuperscript{254} i.e., of the congenitally conflated realms of puruṣa and prakṛti. Although the Yoga system has no qualms about expressing the shortcomings of mundane existence, to the discerning one (vivekā\textsuperscript{255}) all identity contained within the saṃsāric realm is seen to involve dissatisfaction and suffering. Yet Yoga does not conclude on a note of existential despair by seeking, for example, to negate mundane existence or take flight from the world. From Patañjali’s perspective, \textit{samyoga} provides an experiential basis from which the yogin can then go on to apprehend the natures of puruṣa and prakṛti (YS II, 23\textsuperscript{256}) through a rigorous spiritual discipline for overcoming attachment to the modifications of the mind (cittavṛtti) and thereby abiding or resting in one’s true identity (svarūpa ‘vasthānam). Patañjali maintains that in the condition of

\begin{footnotes}
\item[254] YS II, 17.
\item[255] YS II, 15.
\item[256] See n. 117 above.
\end{footnotes}
samyoga the “contact” between the seer and the seeable is merely an apparent junction, since both the seer (intrinsic identity) and the seeable (extrinsic identity) are held to be utterly distinct.\textsuperscript{257} He does not explicitly analyze this epistemological problem further. This has led to a great deal of speculation in the commentarial literature on the YS.

To explain the cognitive processes, Vyāsa resorts to various metaphors and analogies comparing, for instance, the mind to a magnet\textsuperscript{258} that attracts the objects, and elsewhere (YB I, 41 and IV, 23\textsuperscript{259}) compares it to a crystal that reflects the colour of the object near it. Through the “contact” (explained below\textsuperscript{260}) with puruṣa, the mind takes on a semblance of awareness and cognizes the objects just as a crystal receives the form of an object and appears identical with that form:

Mind is coloured by an object cognizable to the mind, and by the fact of being an object, it is bound up with the subject, puruṣa, by a mental function of belonging to it. It is this very mind alone that is coloured by the seer and the seeable. It assumes the appearance of object and subject, the insentient (“nonconscious”) becoming sentient (“conscious”). The mind, being insentient, essentially an object — conscious as it were, on the analogy of the crystal — is said to comprehend everything.\textsuperscript{261}

Due to the association of the mind with puruṣa, puruṣa then appears to be an empirical state when knowledge and experience are attributed to it. Drawing on the philosophical teachings of both Patañjali and Sāmkhya (SK 20), Vyāsa contends that it is through the conjunction of puruṣa and prakṛti (i.e., the mind) that consciousness “takes on” the role of an empirical identity or knower. He understands the “contact”

\textsuperscript{257} See YS III, 35 and III, 49.
\textsuperscript{258} See n. 277 below.
\textsuperscript{259} See n. 261 below.
\textsuperscript{260} See, for example, n. 265 below.
\textsuperscript{261} YB IV, 23 (p. 198): mano hi mantavyenārthenoparaktam, tatvayam ca viśayatvād viṣayinā puruṣenā” miśayā vṛttyā bhisambaddhām, tadetaccittam eva draṣṭrādyoparaktam viṣayaviṣayinirbhāsam cetanācetanasvarūpāpāpanum viṣayātmakam apy aviṣayatmakam ivācetanām cetanām iva sphaṭikamanikalpaṁ sarvārtham iti ucyate.
to be in the form of mere proximity (saṁnidhi\textsuperscript{262}). Yet how can there be 'proximity' between these two eternal all-pervasive principles (that is, puruṣa and prakṛti)? The proximity, however, does not mean proximity in time and space because both puruṣa and unmanifest prakṛti (pradhāna) are beyond time and space, engaged as it were, in a beginningless relationship (anādiḥ sambandha\textsuperscript{263}).

Finite categories of time and space would thus seem particularly inappropriate in any description of this "union." However, saṁyoga is an effective relation through which prakṛti is influenced by the presence of puruṣa, understood here as a transcendent influence.\textsuperscript{264} This means that prakṛti can neither be nor be understood without reference to puruṣa, the realm of the guṇas ultimately serving the purpose or "goal" of spiritual emancipation or puruṣa-realization. It is paradoxical that prakṛti manifests and is activated because of the transcendent influence of puruṣa, and yet puruṣa is revealed as being intrinsically free by nature — never really lost, forgotten or acquired — by "contemplating" prakṛti. Consciousness learns, from experiencing the manifestations of prakṛti, that it (puruṣa) is not contained within prakṛti. It is even more of a paradox to observe that both puruṣa and prakṛti are realized and recognized as what they truly are only after they have appeared to be what they are not: the mind itself appears conscious and puruṣa appears as if to be the empirical agent of activity (cf. SK 20). Vācaspati sees the nonspatial and nontemporal connection between puruṣa and prakṛti as a kind of "preestablished harmony." He speaks of their enigmatic relationship in terms of a special "fitness" or "capacity" (yogyatā) and explains the "proximity" (saṁnidhi) between the two principles as a "capacity" or juxtaposition of two complementary powers. The "proximity" of puruṣa and prakṛti, consisting of this "capacity" (yogyatā), is qualified by Vācaspati as the "power of being experienceable" (bhogyasaṅkṛiti) belonging to prakṛti and the "power of being the experiencer" (bhoktṛśakti) belonging to puruṣa.\textsuperscript{265} Puruṣa thus has the capability of being the "experiencer" and citta has the capacity of being an object of experience. What is,

\textsuperscript{262} YB I, 4 (pp. 8-9); see n. 277 below.
\textsuperscript{263} Ibid; see n. 277 below.
\textsuperscript{264} See F. Catalina (1968: 136).
\textsuperscript{265} TV I, 4 (p. 8): saṁnidhiḥ ca ... yogyatā lakṣaṇaḥ. asti ca puruṣasya bhoktṛśaktiḥ cittasya bhogyasaṅkṛitiḥ.
therefore, the mysterious “union,” termed saṃyoga, between puruṣa — the “seer” (dṛṣṭa) — and prakṛti (citta) — the “seeable” (dṛṣṭya)? Vyāsa considers the “union” to be a projection or superimposition (adhyāropa) of the contents of consciousness we are aware of as given real existence with respect to puruṣa, i.e., they reflect puruṣa’s existence. They appear real because of the reality of puruṣa. As Vyāsa explains, this superimposition results in a confusion of identity between puruṣa and the mental processes wherein puruṣa is not distinguishable from the process of the emergence or extraversion (vyutthāna) of consciousness that generates an extrinsic sense of self-identity, i.e., mistaken identity or misidentification.

In YS II, 23 the terms “possessor”/“owner” (svāmin) and “possessed”/“owned” (sva), referring to the seer and the seeable respectively, epitomize well the nature of the conjunction between puruṣa and prakṛti. Puruṣa is the possessor who is “joined” to its own seen object for the purpose of apprehending or seeing. A felix culpa, a confusing temporary misidentification, appears almost a necessary prelude to the realization of yogic wisdom and true identity. Why should there be this apparent “loss” or “fall” of puruṣa from its pristine and unencumbered existence into a state of change and enslavement to the prakṛtic realm, only then to be followed by strenuous efforts for liberation? Patañjali’s reply seems to be that the conjunction (saṃyoga) takes place so that the essential nature of the seer and the seeable can be grasped and discernment arises. Awareness of the seeable object arising from that conjunction is worldly experience (bhoga). Awareness of the nature of the seer, however, is liberation (apavarga).

Insofar as the conjunction comes to an end and there is seeing (darśana) and its result, seeing is said to be the cause of disjunction, and failure-to-see as the opposite of seeing is said to be the cause of the conjunction. Seeing, namely knowledge (jñāna), is said to bring about aloneness.

266 YB II, 18 (p. 84): etena grahaṇadhāraṇahāpohā tattva jñānābhīnivesā buddhau vartamānaḥ puruṣe ‘dhyāropratad bhūvāḥ.
267 YB I, 4 (p. 8): vyutthāne yāś cittavṛttayas tadaviśiṣṭavṛttih puruṣah.
268 See n. 117 above.
269 YB II, 23 (p. 91): puruṣah svāmi dṛṣyena svena darśanārtham saṃyuktah. tasmāt saṃyogā- dṛṣyasyopalabdhir yā sa bhogah. yā tu draśṭah svarūpopalabdhiḥ so ’pavargah.
CITTA IN CLASSICAL YOGA (2)

(kaivalya) only in the sense that in the presence of seeing there is annihilation of failure-to-see which is the cause of bondage. What then is this failure-to-see (adaršana)?

Vyāsa’s commentary on YS II, 23 becomes an exposition of various definitions of the “failure-to-see” (adaršana) or ignorance (avidyā). He lists several alternatives for understanding the ignorance which lies at the root of a person’s sense of worldly involvement and selfhood. According to Vyāsa the present conjunction (saṃyoga) is caused by avidyā producing a mentality or “mind” of its own kind. Patañjali states in YS II, 24: “The cause of it [i.e. saṃyoga] is ignorance.” Vyāsa’s commentary makes it clear that it is avidyā, understood as the subliminal traits or habit patterns (vāsanās) rooted in erroneous knowledge (viparyaya-jñāna), that is the cause of “contact” and the resulting bondage of self-identity. This is the theory of the nature of avidyā as favoured by the Yoga school. Throughout his commentary (YB II, 23), Vyāsa uses the word adarśana as a synonym for avidyā. The other terms commonly used for avidyā in the Yoga system are viparyaya (YS I, 8 and YB I, 8) and mithyājñāna (YS I, 8). Vyāsa stresses that it is the particular conjunction of avidyā in relation to the inward individual consciousness (pratyak-cetanā) and not simply the impersonal, abstract conjunction of puruṣa with guṇas metaphysically conceived (which is the same for all beings) that is specifically being

---

270 YB II, 23 (pp. 91-92): 

271 See YB II, 23 (pp. 92-93). The eight alternative explanations for avidyā listed by Vyāsa, which were probably prevalent during his time, are summarized as follows: (1) the prevailing of the guṇas over the puruṣa; (2) the failure of prakṛti to bring the puruṣa to liberating sight; (3) the fact that the guṇas are purposeful; (4) avidyā producing a mentality of its own kind; (5) the manifestation of the latent impressions of activity, the potency for stasis having ceased; (6) the need of pradhāna to make itself known; (7) the requirement of the presence of puruṣa for things knowable to be known, with an attendant apparent reflection of things knowable back upon the puruṣa; and (8) the identity of the failure-to-see with knowledge. Later in YB II, 23 (p. 94), Vyāsa says that the above explanations are the alternatives contained in the [yogic] śāstra and that this multiplicity of opinion concerns a common object, namely the conjunction of the constituents (guṇas) [of prakṛti] with puruṣa. For more on the term avidyā see T.S. Rukmani (1986), “Avidyā in the System of Yoga and an Analysis of the Negation in it,” (The Adyar Library Bulletin) pp. 526-534.

272 YB II, 23 (p. 92): avidyā svacittena saha niruddhā svacittasyotpattibījam.

273 YS II, 24 (p. 94): tasya hetur avidyā.

274 YB II, 24 (p. 95): viparyaya-jñāna vāsanety arthaḥ.
pointed to here. This is in line with Yoga’s more psychological and epistemological approach to reality in contrast to a metaphysical (ontological) approach. It would be misleading to impute to ignorance a cosmogonic function which would be more appropriate in the context of Advaita Vedanta. One scholar, for example, states: “In the Yoga-sūtra the reason given for the emergence or the evolution of the manifest world is avidyā (‘ignorance’).” This appears to be a misunderstanding of the precise viewpoint of Patañjali and Vyāsa.

Vyāsa asserts that through the proximity (saṃnīdhi) of spirit and psychophysical being (matter) the mind becomes the property of puruṣa, that is, is “owned” by puruṣa: “The mind is like a magnet, serving by mere proximity, by the fact of being seen. It is the property of its owner, puruṣa. There is a beginningless connection and this is the cause of puruṣa’s cognition of the mental processes.” Samnīdhi (proximity) is a technical term used to describe the immanent association between puruṣa and the mind by virtue of which it is possible for the puruṣa to perceive the cognitions of the finite mind. The service that the mind performs for puruṣa is to be of the nature of the “seeable” (dṛśya) so that cognition may occur and consequently puruṣa’s capacity to be the “owner” or “master” (svāmin) of the “owned” (sva, prakṛti) may be developed and actualized. To serve as the “seeable” means to be puruṣa’s object of experience when the mind registers the forms of the objects it encounters within the “objective” world. For example, a sight or sound presented to the mind is refined into a vṛtti. In the process of cognition, this vṛtti “commingles” with the reflected light of puruṣa in the mind and serves puruṣa by its proximity without actually affecting it. However, as Vyāsa clarifies, just as victory and defeat encountered by the soldiers are attributed to the ruler (because the ruler experiences the effects of them), so bondage and freedom happening in the mind alone are attributed to puruṣa because their effects are experienced.
is to say, one experiences sorrow or dissatisfaction (duṣṭkha) in the case of bondage, and liberating knowledge (jñāna) in the case of freedom. However, any “change” in the puruṣa is only apparent.

Puruṣa has always been the “owner” or “possessor” and prakṛti has always been puruṣa’s possession (sva). Their relationship is beginningless and natural. No other relationship between them is possible because of their respective natures. Referring to the relationship of puruṣa and prakṛti, Koelman writes: “the two terms, which de facto are in relation, are permanent; yet the relation itself, though without beginning, is not permanent. Hence the relation must be rooted in something over and above, in something additional to the very essence of prakṛti ...”

279 The afflictions experienced by each individual are present as modifications in prakṛti yet do not wholly belong to the prakṛtiic essence. Furthermore, as Vācaspāti Miśra informs us: “… insofar as the originating of (i.e., the conjunction) is concerned, ignorance is its cause, but insofar as its stability (i.e., its continued existence and activity) is concerned, the purpose of the Self is the cause, since the stability of that (conjunction) is due to this (purpose) of the Self.”

280 But how is ignorance the cause of the origination of the conjunction samyoga? Patañjali’s answer is: by considering empirical selfhood to be the true experiencer and by mistaking the Self to be the active agent — however effected or altered — in the process of cognition and experience. Egoity is neither the pure root-cause, nor puruṣa, but rather is the distorted reflection of puruṣa in the form of ignorance as the root-cause.

Prakṛti does not plan for either deceptive or liberating knowledge, for prakṛti does not intrinsically possess the necessary capacity to be conscious (cetana) in herself. Any act of cognition can have a binding effect/affect if the mind is governed by the afflictions (kleśas) and afflicted (kliṣta-) vṛttis, or a liberating effect if the nature of the experience is predominately of the nonafflicted (akliṣṭa-vṛtti) type and leads to the discriminative discernment (vivekahātyāti). Prakṛti has only to show herself as she is, as the dancing girl image in the SK (59) illustrates. Prakṛti’s essentially ambivalent nature can lend its activity


280 TV II, 17 (p. 80): pragbhāvitayā samyogasyāvidyā kāraṇam sthīthetutaye puruṣārthah kāra-ṇam tad (= bhogāpiavargau puruṣārthatā) vaśena tasya (samyogasya) sthitah. We note here that the purpose “of” the Self (puruṣa) is an objective genetive and not a subjective genetive, i.e., puruṣārthah means “for the sake of puruṣa.” It is not that puruṣa actively has purposes.
to both alternatives, can serve both purposes, but has only the capacity
to collaborate according to the degree of understanding or mis-
understanding which, located in the mind, informs our decisions,\textsuperscript{281}
intentions, volitions, and therefore how we experience the world and
others.

THEORY OF REFLECTED CONSCIOUSNESS IN YOGA

The saṃsāric condition of self is the result of the failure to distinguish
between the pure experiencer or seer (\textit{puruṣa}) and the seeable or
“experienced” thereby making “a mental self out of delusion.”\textsuperscript{282} The
“mental self” referred to by Vyāsa is simply a \textit{vṛtti}-accumulated sense
of being and identity, the result of an afflicted condition or deluding
process of selfhood called \textit{asmitā}. Any attempts to claim the power of
consciousness by way of identifying \textit{puruṣa} within \textit{prakṛti} amount to
no more than reified notions or concepts of self and, from Patañjali’s
perspective, are clearly misguided; for the Self, not being an object of
experience, can never be seen, can never be turned into a thing or
entity to be experienced, can never be “thing-ified.” Yet, to whatever
extent the “coverings” or “veils” of \textit{vṛtti}-identification (\textit{sārūpya}) eclipse
our identity as \textit{puruṣa}, \textit{puruṣa}’s power as the pure experiencer remains
constant, for:

The power of the experiencer (\textit{puruṣa}) does not change. Unmoving it has as it were passed into the changing object,
conforming to its function. The assumption of its form of
borrowed consciousness by mere resemblance to the mental
process, and not distinguished from it, is what is called the
[normal] mental process of knowing.\textsuperscript{283}

In the above, Vyāsa is describing how the immutable \textit{puruṣa}, without
essentially undergoing modification, appears to conform to the mental

\textsuperscript{281} Cf. \textit{BG} XVIII, 30-32 which discusses three types of understanding (\textit{buddhi}): (1) a discerning \textit{buddhi} that knows what is to be done, etc., and is sattvic; (2) a \textit{buddhi} which understands incorrectly and whose nature is rajasic; and (3) a \textit{buddhi}, whose nature being tamasic, is
completely deluded.

\textsuperscript{282} \textit{YB} II, 6 (p. 64): \textit{ātmabuddhiḥ mohenā}.

\textsuperscript{283} \textit{YB} IV, 22 (p. 197): \textit{aparināmīni hi bhokṛśaktir apratisamkramā ca parināmīny arthe
pratisamkrānta eva tadvyttīmanapatati. tasyaś ca prāpta ca ityopagraha svarūpāyā buddhivṛtyter
anukārimāratatayā, buddhivṛtyaviśiṣṭā hi jñānavṛtiḥ ākhyāyate.}
state which has assumed the form of an object or content of consciousness and experiences that object or content through a self-reflexive activity. Although the presence of the experiencer and its capacity for “seeing” is an unchanging yet dynamic power of consciousness that should not be truncated in any way, nevertheless our karmically distorted or skewed perceptions vitiate against the natural fullness of “seeing.” By definition the purusa is not the prakrtic agent of activity and experience, yet it appears to be; although free from ignorance it appears to possess ignorance; and even though as pure awareness purusa is said to be transcendent of both the mind and the need to discern itself from the mind (which takes place in the sattva of the mind), nevertheless it appears to be dependent upon and illuminated by the mind. Vyasa further explains (repeating the above analogy of the magnet in n. 277 above) that the qualities of the mind become attributed to purusa because of the condition of their conjunction or samyoga, just as the qualities of the magnet are induced in a piece of iron placed close to it. When not properly discerned from purusa, the mental processes are said to be “the secret cave in which is hidden the eternal brahman.” Misidentification with the form and nature of vrtti conceals our true identity; removing our misidentification reveals our true identity. Thus, a thorough understanding and insight into the mental processes located in the “secret cave” of the mind may be, in Yoga, the key to revealing the knowledge of our true nature and identity.

One of the central theories in Yoga philosophy that attempts to illuminate our understanding of how cognition and perception function in the mind is that of the theory of the “reflection” of consciousness. The notion of “reflection” (pratibimba, bimba) is a technical term in the epistemology of Classical Yoga especially as interpreted by Vacaspati Miśra. I will now examine this key notion and see how it correlates with an analogical understanding of consciousness in Yoga. Later I will clarify the analogy of “reflection.” “Reflection” denotes 284 Cf. YB IV, 23 (p. 198), where Vyasa uses the term pratibimba for “reflection.” 285 YB II, 17 (p. 79): tadetad drṣṭam ayaskāntamanikalpanaṃ saṃnidhkimātipiśūryena svam bhavati puruṣasya drṣṭipyasya svāminah. 286 See YB IV, 22 (p. 197); Vyasa is quoting some authority here. The verse quoted tells us that the secret cave in which brahman is hidden is neither the underworld, nor the mountain cave, nor darkness, nor the hidden caverns of the sea. The last stanza ends thus: guhā yasyāṁ niḥitaṁ brahma śāśvatam buddhivṛttiṁaviśṭām kavayo vedoyante.
the “reflection” of the transcendent Self-awareness (caitanya) in the most lucid aspect of the mind, namely the sattva or buddhi, that is, the faculty of decision making and discerning. Vācaspati Miśra (TV I,7287) speaks of the mind as a mirror (darpana) in which puruṣa’s awareness is reflected. While the YS itself makes no direct reference to a theory of “reflection,” Vyāsa mentions the term pratibimba twice (YB IV, 23) and understands it as the “reflection” of the object in the mind. Vyāsa uses the simile of the reflected image to explain the “tinging” of the mind by the object. Vācaspati, writing several hundred years after Vyāsa, makes a distinction (TV II, 17) between bimba, or the mirroring of the object in the mind, and pratibimba, or the reflection of that content of consciousness back to the Self (puruṣa). However, Vācaspati frequently uses both terms interchangeably and the simile of the reflected image “becomes almost a philosophical explanation and is applied chiefly to the imaging of the [puruṣa] in the [buddhi], while the tinging of the mind by the external things is generally rendered by the expression ‘configuration’ (ākāra).”288

The “reflection” theory is also referred to by Vācaspati as the “shadow of transcendent consciousness” (citi-chāyā) and seeks to explain how knowledge is possible given the fact that the mind (including the buddhi aspect) is an evolute of insentient prakṛti. Vācaspati subscribes to the cicchāyāpattivāda, which can be described as knowledge taking place due to the reflection of puruṣa in the intellect.289 The buddhi coupled with the sense of self or ahaṁkāra becomes as if an agent of knowledge due to the reflection of puruṣa in it. Puruṣa seemingly becomes “possessed” of knowledge, pleasure, etc., knowledge taking the form of an object through the intelligized buddhi. The result is the apparent identity of the two: puruṣa — which comes to be erroneously associated or mixed with experience and knowledge290 — with an empirical agent or sense of self that lays claim to or (mis)appropriates that experience and knowledge.

Reflected consciousness is a borrowed state of consciousness, borrowed as it were from puruṣa. Moreover, reflected consciousness

287 TV I, 7 (p. 11): caitanyam eva buddhidarpana ...
289 TV II, 17 (p. 79): citicchāyāpattir eva buddher buddhipratisāṃvedītvam udāśīnassyāpi purusāh. See also TV IV, 3 (p. 198): tacchāyāpattih puruṣasya vṛttiḥ. See also for chāyā: TV II, 20, 21, 23; III, 35 and IV, 22.
290 See n. 283 above on YB IV, 22; see also YB II, 6 and Vācaspati’s STK 5.
becomes the locus of selfhood as an empirical identity. It is simul-
taneously: (1) not real, because it is merely a “reflected” state, of
extrinsic value, and in spite of it being derived from the sustaining
power and presence of the unchanging transcendent spirit, appears to
reduce puruṣa to phenomenal existence; and yet, can be said to be (2)
real, because it is actually experienced as human awareness although it
is understood that, for all but enlightened persons, this state of
reflected consciousness constitutes a more or less confused or deluded
and dissatisfying sense of self-identity. In Patañjali’s central defmition
of Yoga (YS I, 2 states: yogaḥ cittavṛttinirrodhah), cittavṛtti can refer
to an analogical understanding of consciousness in that the conscious­
ness reflecting in the mind, and functioning in the form of the
modifications of the mind (cittavṛtti), is analogous to the consciousness
of puruṣa. As Patañjali later establishes (YS IV, 19), cittavṛtti has no
self-luminosity because of its nature being that of the “seeable.” Yet
puruṣa (as if) becomes like the mind, as the locus of the congenital
conflation of puruṣa and prakṛti. Samyoga, the cause of suffering or
dissatisfaction, is a false “union” of sorts and refers to the pure Self as
if becoming something other than itself. Samyoga is the state of the
mistaken identity of puruṣa with the vṛtti-mechanism; and the
misperceived identity of Self with the psychophysical being or ego in
samyoga is merely a construct of the mind, a product of vṛtti and
samāskāra, which, unlike puruṣa, is not the real “center,” “core” or
spiritual “essence” of being. The above analogy is alluded to in YS II,
20 where Patañjali describes the nature of the seer as follows: “The
seer is seeing only; though pure, it appears in the form of a cognition
(idea, apprehension).”291 Vyāsa explains:

“Seeing only” means the power of the seer alone, untouched
by any qualification. This puruṣa is the witness of the mind.
It is not like the mind, and not absolutely unlike it. To some
extent it is not like the mind. In what way? Because mind is
changeable in that an object is [sometimes] known to it and
[sometimes] unknown. Its object, whether [for example] a
cow or a jar, is known to it and also unknown, which shows
its changeability. But the fact that the object of puruṣa is
always known shows clearly the unchange-ability of puruṣa.
Why so? Because mind, which is by definition the object of

291 YS II, 20 (p. 87): draṣṭā drśimatrah śuddho ’pi pratyayānupaśyah. For more on the
meaning of cittavṛtti, see Whicher (1997).
purusa, could not be [sometimes] known and [sometimes] unknown to it; hence the unchangeability of purusa is established in that its object is always known to it.292

However, purusa is not absolutely unlike the mind, “Because though pure, it [purusa] appears in the form of a cognition (i.e., is intentional in the form of an idea, mental construct, apprehension). Looking on, it appears as if it were of the mind’s nature, though it is not.”293 Purusa’s intrinsic, unchanging nature as the pure seer has an innate capacity to witness the thoughts, ideas and apprehensions in the mind without any binding identification with or misappropriation of them, i.e., purusa is the unaffected seer, not enslaved to the “things” of the mind. However, due to ignorance purusa appears to take on an extrinsic, changing nature of selfhood characterized by a binding identification with the mind: purusa appears to waver from its unchanging nature. There are, it seems, two very distinct possibilities resulting from the transcendent connection (sambandha) between purusa and prakrti: (1) Due to epistemological distortion purusa is mistaken for prakrti in samyoga; the reflected consciousness of the mind takes on a confused, deluded nature in the process of vyutthana. (2) Through Yoga self-identity is established in its ever-free, ever-pure nature as purusa, the reflected consciousness of mind having come into or taken on the enlightened disposition of knowledge (jñana, YS II, 28) in the process of nirodha. Patanjali does not go into a metaphysical explanation of the beginningless connection between purusa and prakrti. His emphasis is on epistemological and psychological concerns relating to consciousness in the system.

The mind’s changing nature consists of the three guñas which, tending to illumination, activity, and inertia (stasis), are said to produce ideas of basically three kinds: peaceful (śānta), violent (ghora) and deluded (mūdha).294 Each guña, when predominant in operation and

292 YB II, 20 (pp. 87-88): drśimātra iti drksakīr eva viśeṣaṇāparāmāśty arthah. sa puruṣo buddhe pratisamvedi. sa buddher na sarūpa nātyantam virūpa iti. na tāvāt sarūpah. kammat. jñātānātā viśaya tvāt pariṇāminī hi buddhiḥ. tasyaś ca viśaya gavādirgūḍhātīrṇā jñātās cājhātaś ceti pariṇāmitvam darsayati. sadājñātā viśayatvam tu puruṣasyāpariṇāmitvam paridipayati. kammat. nahi buddhiḥ ca nāma puruṣaviśayaś ca svād agrhitāt ghṛtāt ceti siddhām puruṣasya saddājñāta viśayatvam tataś cāparināmitvam iti. See also SK 17 for the proofs establishing puruṣa.


294 YB II, 15 (p. 77): śāntaṃ ghoraṃ mūdhaṃ va pratayayaṃ trīgūnam eva ’rabbhante.
manifesting as an apprehension (pratyaya), cognition or idea, clashes with the predominance of the others; but when unmanifest, they cooperate with the predominant one. Thus, the three gunas “... come to form ideas of happiness, dissatisfaction and delusion respectively, through the support of the other two, each one having the form of all. However, the distinction is made between them according to which guna is then in the principal place. The seed (bij) which produces this great mass of suffering is ignorance.”

The idea of happiness (sukha) is formed in the sattva through the support of rajas and tamas; in the state of rajas is formed the idea of dissatisfaction or frustration through the support of sattva and tamas; tamas comes to its deluded ideas through the support of sattva and rajas. The various human dispositions will depend on whichever guna is predominant, the other two being subsidiary and subservient. Sānta (peaceful), ghora (violent), and mūḍha (deluded) are the three major personality dispositions, depending on the “weight” being accorded to each guna and the quality of the intentions, inclinations, thoughts, words, and acts of each person. Any appearance of these attributes “in” puruṣa is a temporary condition of appearance (aupādhika) arising from a superimposed condition (upādhi).

Vācaspati takes recourse to the analogical theory of reflection in order to elucidate the nature of empirical experience illustrating it by the similes of the crystal and the moon. Using the analogy of a crystal and a hibiscus flower, Vācaspati explains that on account of the conjunction of the seer with the mind, we ascribe our mental states to the puruṣa by reflecting, “I am peaceful,” “I am violent,” “I am deluded.” The pure consciousness of puruṣa, understood analogically as empirical selfhood, takes the function of the mind as its own just as there is redness reflecting in the clear crystal due to the proximity of

---

295 YB II, 18 and II, 15.
296 YB II, 15 (p. 77): evam ete gūnā itaretarāśrayenoparīta sukhadūkhkhamohā pratyayāḥ sarve sarvarūpā bhavantīti, gūnaprādhānabhāvakṛtaḥ tveṣām viśeṣa iti ... tadasya mahato dūkhka samudāyasya prabhavabhiṣaj āvidyā.
297 TV I, 3 (p. 7). It is interesting to note that the terms upādhi and aupādhika are not strictly from the early Yoga philosophical system. They have been borrowed by Vācaspati Miśra without reserve from the Vedānta doctrinal system, thus creating a syncretic terminology. This by no means changes the Yoga doctrine itself, but only emphasizes grounds that are, according to Vācaspati, shared by both Vedānta and Yoga.
the hibiscus flower.\textsuperscript{298} It is like a man thinking his face is dirty when looking into an unclean mirror.\textsuperscript{299} Vācaspati takes as another example the reflection of the moon in the water. The reflected form of the moon in the water appears as a shining object. Similarly, the intellect (\textit{buddhi}) acts as an agent of cognition with the “light” of pure consciousness reflected in it. The movement of the water around the reflected light of the moon is superimposed upon the moon. Just as the full moon, although “stationary” and round, appears to be moving and ruffled without any activity on its part due to its reflection in the clear water, so \textit{puruṣa}, without any activity or attachment on its part, appears to possess activity or attachment on account of its reflection in the mind.\textsuperscript{300} In this way, \textit{puruṣa} is erroneously understood to be the locus of the functions of the \textit{buddhi}. The transcendent \textit{puruṣa}, however, is only indirectly related to the process of knowledge as an onlooker or witness and does not experience or know as would the prakṛti agent in the process of experience. Vyāsa consistently describes the locus of knowledge as \textit{puruṣa}, since the intellect (\textit{buddhi}) or mind is the property of \textit{puruṣa} (see, for example, n. 277 above). In the \textit{cicchāyāpatti} theory adopted by Vācaspati, the locus of knowledge is shifted to the intellect. Vācaspati makes it very clear that there is knowledge only because of the reflection of \textit{puruṣa} in the mind (\textit{citta}), and the empirical consciousness (\textit{cittavṛtti}) is not an object of \textit{puruṣa} as in the empirical or phenomenal subject-object relation.\textsuperscript{301}

We can say that the \textit{sattva} aspect of the mind contains a reflection of \textit{puruṣa} that, under the influence of ignorance, then yields the illusions, misconceptions, or errors (\textit{viparyaya}) of the empirical consciousness (\textit{cittavṛtti}). As Vyāsa implies, the empirical conscious-ness, wrongly understood as constituting intrinsic selfhood, is \textit{viparyaya}. Vyāsa is thus describing the mechanisms of the \textit{guna}s in the context of an analogical theory of consciousness, i.e., as applied to thought-

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{298} \textit{TV} I, 4 (pp. 7-8): \textit{itaatra vyutthāne yāṣ cittavṛttayaḥ sāntagharamūdhās tā evāvīśiṣṭā abhināṃ vṛttaya yasya purusasya sa tathoktaḥ, ... japākusumāṣṭhiyakor iva buddhipuruṣaḥyoh saṁnīdhānād abhedagrahe buddhiṃvṛtthe puruṣe samāropya ...}
  \item\textsuperscript{299} Ibid. (p. 8): \textit{yathā maline darpaṇatate pratibimbatam mukham malinamāropya śocatyātmānaṃ malino ’smiiti.}
  \item\textsuperscript{300} \textit{TV} IV, 22 (p. 198); see also \textit{TV} III, 35.
  \item\textsuperscript{301} \textit{TV} III, 35 (p. 155): \textit{budhiḥ caitanyabimboḍgraheṇa caitanyasya sāntādyākārādyāroḥ pah. \textit{TV} IV, 23 (p. 198): tasmāc cītaptatibimbatayā caitanyagocarā’ pi cītavṛttir na caitanyāgocareti.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
constructs, ideas or relative states of self-understanding and their different levels or degrees of confused or deluded identity resulting in reified notions of self/personality and as appropriating action. In this regard, the guṇas are modifications of consciousness of the mind and are governed by ignorance; they come to form ideas or concepts of reality based on the fundamental error of mistaking puruṣa for what amounts to being an afflicted sense of self-identity (asmitā) that permeates human consciousness. In other words, the guṇas are being understood with an epistemological (and moral) emphasis, the various combinations of sattva, rajas and tamas forming ideas pertaining to a deluded (in which tamas is predominant), violent/aggressive (in which rajas is predominant), or happy (in which sattva is predominant) nature. The predominance of sattva signifies more illuminated degrees of self-understanding which more “closely” resemble or are analogous to the true nature of puruṣa. Unlike Classical Sāṃkhya, in Yoga the guṇas do not appear to be given an ontological emphasis (i.e., as relating to categories of existence). We see, therefore, that in Yoga our psychosomatic organism involving thoughts, ideas, relationship, etc., is primarily an integral part of the prakṛtic world as consciousness, albeit a reflected and changing consciousness. The guṇas therefore apply to the world of phenomenal consciousness and (self-) understanding as much as to the world of things or categories of existence.

While Vijñāna Bhikṣu agrees with Vācaspati that the presentation of the object of cognition to an unchanging Self is not possible except in the form of a reflection, he states that cognition arises through the reflection in the spiritual Self of the mental state that has assumed the form of the object. Bhikṣu speaks of a “mutual reflection” (anyonyapratibimba)302 and offers a different hypothesis called the “double reflection theory” (bimbapratibimbavādā).303 He maintains that not only does the puruṣa reflect in buddhi (as in Vācaspati’s theory), but a second reflection of buddhi into puruṣa takes place. Having the reflection of both the puruṣa and the object, the buddhi is then reflected “into” puruṣa. Bhikṣu states: “This conformity with the
According to Bhikṣu, the first reflection intelligizes the content of the mind (buddhi) and the second reflection makes puruṣa the agent of the particular knowledge. Bhikṣu brushes aside the objection — that this would make puruṣa subject to change — by arguing that a reflection is merely an appearance of change, as in the case with the reflection of the red flower reflected in a crystal, and is not a substantial change. He justifies his ‘double reflection’ as the correct view and points to the mutual reflection of each in the other as expressed in the SK (20) by the use of the two “iva-s.” In the SK (20), Isvara Kṛṣṇa states that through the conjunction (saṁyoga) of puruṣa and prakṛti, the nonconscious intellect appears as if it is conscious, and in the same way the puruṣa appears as if it is the performer of action. Vācaspati Miśra’s interpretation is perhaps “cleaner” in the sense that all transactions of experience occur only in the intellect after it has been “intelligized” by puruṣa. Vijñāna Bhikṣu’s interpretation has the merit of ascribing experience to puruṣa (because the contents of intellect-awareness are reflected back on puruṣa).

Bhikṣu’s hypothesis, if understood literally, makes puruṣa changeable and subject to development or alteration (pariṇāma-rūpa) through the proximity or influence of psychophysical factors (including satisfaction, suffering, confusion, knowledge, etc.) or limited adjuncts (upādhi) outside of itself. This goes against the tenets of Yoga philosophy and destroys the very foundation of the doctrine of the eternal purity of puruṣa. Probably Bhikṣu hoped to avert a literal interpretation of his theory by citing the analogy of the crystal and using phrases like “semblance of mutability” and “as if puruṣa were undergoing a change, but in reality remaining unchanged like the crystal.” Of course, Bhikṣu can be understood to be speaking...
analogically: The reflection of a red flower in a crystal does not mean to imply a change in the crystal nor in the substance of the crystal; rather, any change occurs merely in the (distorted?) “eye of the beholder” of the crystal.

As a result of the process of reflection, puruṣa and prakṛti appear as if united. They “appear” “one” in samyoga (YS II, 17 and 23) as congenitally conflated realms even though they are distinct. One is not converted into the other though their proximity causes them to seem as one. How is it possible that the formless puruṣa reflects in the citra, which, though composed of the “material” of prakṛti, is so subtle as to appear formless? The analogy of reflection needs to be clarified. It does not mean an actual reflection like that of the sun into a pool of water. In ordinary perception, the reflection can be seen as being twofold: (1) through the proximity of puruṣa some natural change or alteration occurs in the mind enabling it to cognize; and (2) a certain other modification occurs in the mind upon the proximity of an object or content whereby the mind takes on the very form of the object or content perceived. That change is called a vṛtti.

Vṛtti serves the purpose of causing a connection between the mind and the object or content of perception. Vṛtti gives to the mind a power of knowledge, a “consciousness-of” objects, content, persons, and so on. Vṛtti is meant to “ooze out” the knowledge of any object or experience, but its function is not to provide a direct realization or identification as puruṣa, for as the true “subject” or experiencer puruṣa can never be the object of any experience, can never be known or experienced as can prakṛti and her manifestations. The active agent in the process of the rise of knowledge is citra — the locus of the affliction asmitā, the false I-am-ness. The role of puruṣa, insofar as puruṣa is concealed throughout this process of masquerading consciousness, is said to be that of a passive witness through its mere presence. Thus Yoga emphasizes practices that can help to disclose the presence of puruṣa through the sattva of the mind. The immutability (YS IV, 18) and unaffected nature of puruṣa is retained throughout the modifications occurring in the mind regardless of any misidentification taking place.

308 See n. 202 above.
309 See n. 334 below.
The crux of the problem of puruṣa's appearance of changeability lies in the explanation of the citta-puruṣa relation. I suggest the following summary as a clarification of Patañjali’s position on this matter. It is against the intent of Patañjali to consider puruṣa's intrinsic nature, pure immutable consciousness, as though impure, changeable and therefore subject to suffering/dissatisfaction (duḥkha). It is not as though puruṣa mimics the vṛtti of the citta and exclaims “I am impure.” Puruṣa’s luminosity must remain constant and unaffected. It is the citta (and its modes) that, after having been activated by the luminous presence of puruṣa and under the grip of ignorance, masquerades as puruṣa as if to say, “I am spirit. Though I am pure, I appear as impure. Though not subject to pain and suffering, I appear to suffer.” In other words, the locus of misidentification (sārūpya) is within the mind.

All the repetitions of the particle iva (“as if,” “as though”) and similar words and phrases employed by the commentators do not literally apply to puruṣa. They apply to the afflicted I-am-ness (asmitā) — the affliction of egoity being the true explanation of sārūpya (YS I, 4). It is in the sūtra defining asmitā that Patañjali uses the word iva: “as if” the two principles — the power of the seer and that of the mind — had assumed an identity appearing as a single self. Any superimposition (adhyāropa) goes only this far and does not literally extend to include puruṣa. Any assumption of false identity (abhimāna) is an act of the ego-consciousness or egoity (asmitā), the state of misidentification or mistaken identity (cittavṛtti), and to attribute this extrinsic form of self-identity to puruṣa is contrary to the understanding of authentic identity in Yoga philosophy.

A CLOSER LOOK AT “PERCEPTION” IN THE YOGA-SŪTRAS

Both Classical Sāṃkhya and Patañjali’s Yoga accept three means of knowledge or categories of valid cognition (pramāṇa): perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāṇa), and valid testimony (āgama). Because the mind (citta) is constituted of the three guṇas, all of its operations such as the processes of logic, modifications (vṛtti) such as valid means of cognition (pramāṇa), and acceptance or rejection of a postulate or a conclusion do not in themselves possess consciousness.

---

310 YS I, 7; see n. 141 above.
Being insentient or nonconscious (*jāda, acetana*), it is only through the presence of *puruṣa* that the mind and its processes can function and are intelligized.\(^{311}\)

A *pramāṇa* is an instrument, means, or method for reaching a valid apprehension (*pramāṇa*) of a state, condition, fact, object, or principle (*tattva*) previously not obtained.\(^{312}\) Vyāsa states that following from the act of perception (*pratyakṣa*) — of internal and external objects, there results (i.e., in *samyoga*) an apprehension by *puruṣa* of the *vṛtti* of perception and not distinguished from it.\(^{313}\) *Puruṣa* appears to become identical with the *vṛttis* of the mind. In *YS* IV, 17 Patañjali states: “An object is known or not known due to the requisite colouration of the mind by that [object].”\(^{314}\) What is this ordinary act of perception? Vyāsa informs us that:

The mind is coloured (*uparāga*) by an external object through the channels of the senses. With that as its object, a modification (*vṛtti*) is produced in the mind; this *vṛtti* is the valid cognition called perception. It takes as its "field" the determination mainly of the particular nature of the object, which has, however, the nature of the universal. The result is an apprehension by *puruṣa* of the mental process, not distinguishable from it.\(^{315}\)

An external object (*vastu*) is a requisite in perception so that the type of apprehension that occurs in the *vṛtti* of conceptualization (*vikalpa*) may be excluded. The senses must consistently confirm the reality of the object. Such “proof” contradicts any “perception” of lesser validity (i.e., invalid cognition) and would prove the latter to be an error (*viparyaya*).

We can assume that when one person is attracted to another person, or the mind is drawn toward the experience of an object, the same process of “colouring” (*uparāga*) or “influencing” takes place with the qualities of the person or object reflecting in the mind. In the case of

\(^{311}\) *YS* IV, 22-23.

\(^{312}\) See Monier-Williams (1899: 685).

\(^{313}\) *YB* I, 7; see n. 315 below for text.

\(^{314}\) *YS* IV, 17 (p. 193): *taduparāgāpeṣṭivācittasya vastu jñātājñātām.*

\(^{315}\) *YB* I, 7 (p. 11): *indriyapramāṇaḥ cittasya bāhyavastīparāgāḥ tadviśayā sāmānyaviśeṣā- tmano’rthasya viśeṣāvadhāraṇa pradhānāḥ vṛttih pratyakṣam pramāṇam. phalam aviśiṣṭaḥ puruṣeyaḥ cittavṛttibodhaḥ.*

73
pratyakṣa, the qualities of the object of experience pass through the channels of the senses. We can also assume that Vyāsa’s phrase tad-viśaya (see n. 315 above): “With that as its object,” refers to the entire process of colouring the mind in this way, with the mind taking on the form of the vṛtti that is being produced. If it were only a mental perception without contact through the senses, the realist philosophers of Śāmkhya and Yoga would not classify it as a valid perception (of the ordinary pratyakṣa type). When the mind is presented certain information by the senses, a modification occurs in the mind whose object is the sense data. A doubt may arise regarding the actual properties of an object, particularly in the case of an object that also shares certain of its properties with other objects. The determinative process (avadhāraṇa) helps the mind to eliminate general shared properties so that it focuses on the specific. For example, one can take the question, “Is that a person or a post?” In this question the general shared properties of the person and the post (e.g., tallness, thinness) are eliminated, and by focusing on the specific properties, one determines the visible object to be either a person or a post. This vṛtti, which chiefly determines the specifics, is a valid cognition called direct perception. 316

A perception is made possible because the origin of the awareness is puruṣa. Through its very presence as the witness or knower of the process of apprehension, puruṣa gives to the mind its capacity to perceive. Puruṣa’s presence makes possible our processes of perception, which consist of the following: The “light” of puruṣa reflects in the pure sattva of the mind and enables the mind to perceive objects and experience sensations, and so on. The mind thereby perceives these objects as they also reflect into it. The reflection of puruṣa and that of the objects mingle in the mind generating vṛtis (perceptions) and the mind in turn can reflect on these perceptions. In ordinary perception the mind does not distinguish between its experience of the object from the external world and the awareness generated by puruṣa. A person’s mental processes are mistaken as being processes within and of puruṣa: the objects, the experience, the vṛtti, the mind, and puruṣa all being conceived to be as if identical. 318

316 See Arya (1986: 150).
317 YB I, 7 (p. 11): pratisamvedi puruṣa...
318 This is the explanation offered by Vācaspati Miśra and H. Āranya on YB I, 7.
The above realism presents a problem because within the major schools of Indian philosophy “yogic perception” (yogi-pratyakṣa, see below) is often considered to be the supremely valid type of perception. The ordinary person’s perception definitely requires the presence of external objects and the mind’s contact with them through the functioning of the senses. But does Patañjali intend to include the process of yogi-pratyakṣa under YS I,7? Even a cursory reading of Vyāsa’s words leads us to understand that yogi-pratyakṣa is not meant to be included here. The finer perceptions of the yogin are in fact described by Patañjali elsewhere.319

Yogi-pratyakṣa is another term for direct apprehension (sāksātkāra320) which involves the yogin’s conscious identification with an object. This is the basis of the practice of “unification” (samāpatti), and constraint (saṃyama) through which various yogic powers (siddhi) can be acquired (e.g. the yogin’s perception of past lives, YS III,18). If we take our cue from YS IV,17 (see n. 314 above), it appears that Vyāsa’s use of the phrase upa-rāga (“colouring”) is for the purpose of stating the cause and process of the vrūtis produced in the mind from merely external sources. The above description of perception should not be taken as part of the definition of yogic perception, otherwise, as Vijñāna Bhikṣu points out, the realization of the Self and iśvara could not occur,321 not being a product of, and not having been induced through the contact between external objects and the senses. Nevertheless, Bhikṣu322 and others (such as Vācaspati and Rāmānanda Yati) have attempted to classify yogi-pratyakṣa here (YS I,7) as a type of direct perception.323 This seems to be in conformity with and supported by the YS philosophy in general. It should be noted that ordinary cognition or perception is subject to distortion due to various

319 See, for example, YS III:17-19, 25-29, 33-36, 43, 49, 52, and 54. An example of yogi-pratyakṣa is the yogin’s effecting the perception of sanskāras whereby knowledge of previous births is attained (YS III, 18). Another example of yogic perception is the discriminative discernment (vivekakhyāti) that mind-sattva and puruṣa are different, as we are told in YS III, 49 (see n. 125 above).

320 See TV I, 7 and YY I, 7.

321 See YY I, 7 (p. 61).

322 Ibid.

323 In TV I, 7 Vācaspati sees the definition of pratyakṣa in YB I, 7 as a “pointer” to the implicit and more complete idea of direct realization (sāksātkāra). Rāmānanda Yati understands yogi-pratyakṣa as taking place in samādhi. When the mind is clear and no longer dependent on external objects, there appears a clear reflection of pure consciousness.
karmic factors in the mind (that is, samskāras and vāsanās) that affect or colour how we perceive and appropriate the objects we encounter, as is implied in YS IV, 17 (see n. 314 above). Whether classified as being ordinary or yogic, perception is made possible because the origin or root-consciousness is puruṣa by which the mind obtains its capacity to perceive\textsuperscript{324} and identify with the objects or content of experience.

Patanjali and Vyāsa acknowledge the superiority of perception over inference and valid testimony. Why? Both inference and testimony are concerned only with the general qualities (sāmānya) of an object and not with its particularities (viśeṣa). Words themselves are incapable of producing knowledge of particulars. Although the generic qualities of an object are also brought to consciousness in perception, still the special “field” of the latter is the ascertainment of particularities. Thus perception is seen to carry with it more conviction than knowledge derived from inference and testimony. Moreover, according to Yoga, the authority and efficacy of anumāna (inference) and āgama (reliable authority, i.e., śruti) is ultimately transcended in higher perception. As Patanjali makes clear in YS I, 49: “The condition of that insight [which is Truth-bearing, ātmābhūta] is of a particular purpose, and is different from the insight gained by tradition or from inference.”\textsuperscript{325} Direct perception gives knowledge of anything particular, but the yogic perception of “truth-bearing insight”\textsuperscript{326} that arises in samādhi is entirely different in scope from that of heard (cf. BG II, 52-53) or inferred knowledge as well as sensory perception in the ordinary world. Vyāsa writes:

Scriptural authority and the teaching received orally are the same as the knowledge within the category of valid testimony (āgama). The area is generalities. Valid testimony cannot communicate the particular. Why not? Because the particular does not have the conventional association with a word. Inference too has only universals for its object. Furthermore, inference leads to a conclusion through a generality .... Ordinary perception gives no knowledge at all of some subtle, remote or hidden object, but we should not think that the latter is not demonstrable and has no existence.

\textsuperscript{324} See YS IV, 22-23 and YB IV, 22-23.

\textsuperscript{325} YS I, 49 (p. 52): śrutānumānaprajñābhīṣyām anyaviṣayā viśeṣārthatvāt.

\textsuperscript{326} YS I, 48 (p. 51): ātmābhūta tatra prajñā.
A particular relating to subtle elements or to *purusa* is only perceptible through the insight [attained in] *samadhi* alone.327

Ordinary valid cognition as understood in the *YS* is therefore a sort of knowing wholly different from yogic “insight” (*prajña*). In its conventional usage, valid cognition is knowledge *about* reality (*purusa* and *prakrti*). Insight (*prajña*) is direct yogic perception (*sakṣākāra*), and its purpose is to enable knowledge of *purusa*.328 It may be concluded therefore that ordinary perception, inference, and valid testimony (authority) can produce correct knowledge *about* reality. But in Patañjali’s system the above means of knowing (pramāṇa) are merely instruments of conventional understanding, rational knowing, or even metaphysical knowledge, all of which can function as a buffer separating one from insight-by-direct-experience. Ordinary valid cognition is a mediated knowledge of *purusa* and *prakrti*; yogic insight or *prajña* (attained in *samadhi*) is immediate.

Pedagogically, it may well have been the case that Patañjali initiated disciples into yogic disciplines that, although including reasoned investigation (*tarka*) or discursive thought (*vitarka*, *YS* II, 33-34), transcended the limitations of reasoning and discursive thinking.329 Moreover, whereas the valid cognition of *YS* I, 7 has the limited capacity to bring about intellectual conviction, yogic “insight” (*prajña*) has the power to effect spiritual emancipation (*apavarga*). Both levels of perception (*pratyakṣa*) are communicated in a pedagogical context in the service of soteriology. Therefore, the mind — the vehicle of perception — performs a crucial role in Patañjali’s soteriological methodology. When, from textual sources such as scripture and the teachings of spiritual preceptors or *gurus*, as well as exercising our own processes of rational analysis and understanding, we have learned of and contemplated upon the culminating state of liberation in Yoga,

327 YB I, 49 (pp. 52-53): śrutamāgamavijñānam tattvānyavijñayam. na hy āgamena śakyo viśeṣo 'bhidhātun, kasmāt, na hi viśeṣena kṛtasamketaḥ śabda iti, tathā 'numānām sāmānyavijñayam eva, ... anumānena ca sāmānyenopasamāhāroḥ. tasmāc chruṇānumānavijñayo na viśeṣāḥ kaścid asti. na cāsyā śakṣmāmyavahuavijñprakṛṣṭasya vastuno lokapratyakṣena grahaṇam asti. na cāsyā viśeṣasyāpramāṇakasyābhāvo 'stīti samādhiprajñā nirgrāhāya eva sa viśeṣo bhavati bhūtasakṣmamat vā puruṣagato vā.

328 YS III, 35; see n. 333 below.

329 As, for example, in the processes leading up to savitarka-samāpatti (YS I, 42) and culminating in nirvitiarka-samāpatti (YS I, 43).
there nonetheless can linger doubts (ṣaṃśaya, YS I, 30) about any existence subtler than that of the obvious world we “see” and “know,” a world comprising the “things” of our daily perceptual experience. Perception, as defined in YS I,7 and the Yoga-Bhāṣya (I,7), therefore needs to be extended and expanded to include the direct experience of the subtler aspects (sūkṣma) of prakṛti through yogi-pratyakṣa. Having attained yogic insight directly through the vehicle of one’s body and mind, the experience reinforces the faith (ṣraddha, YS I, 20) that what one had previously arrived at through inference, and based upon what teachers and texts have propounded, is true. Such perception strengthens one’s resolve to proceed to the subtler “invisible” reality and seek that identity (i.e., puruṣa), which one has not yet “experienced” and which alone can result in a state of freedom and lasting satisfaction. In Yoga epistemology, reality is accurately “seen” only by the seer “who” alone can “see” without any epistemic distortion caused by ignorance (avidyā) and the intervention of egoic states or egoity (asmitā).

The mind can be understood as having a twofold faculty of perception. On the one hand, there is an “outward facing” capacity of the citta, which, directed towards the object of perception, functions in a rational and conceptual mode and issues in a reflective cognition and discerning power of the intellect (equivalent to adhyavasāya in the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā: SK 23). On the other hand, the mind has an “inward facing” capacity “toward” puruṣa where it is temporarily disengaged from the external world of things and objects of the senses, and can function as a vehicle for the liberating knowledge of discriminative discernment (vivekakhyāti). Perception of the ordinary kind (pratyakṣa) as studied in YS I, 7 functions by way of the “outward facing” power of the mind to perceive objects through the senses. Yogic perception (yogi-pratyakṣa) takes place through the “inward facing” power of the mind. The volitions of reasoned investigation (pramāṇa) and the higher knowledge called “insight” (prajñā) arise in the mind and both are types of mental content presented to puruṣa for its viewing. However, it is yogic perception that eventually leads to the mind’s total purification, sattvification, and liberation. Yogic perception — liberating insight — is soteriologically the most efficacious means in Yoga. At no time is the former lower level of perception to be confused with yogic perception and the discriminative discernment (between puruṣa and the mind or prakṛti) that occurs in the higher
stages of *samādhi* and culminates in the realization of *puruṣa*. Rather, perception in its “outer facing” mode is initially to be understood in the context of the apparent identity of the mind and *puruṣa* wherein extrinsic selfhood in the situation or mode of “emergence” (*vyutthāna*) is mistaken for *puruṣa*, intrinsic identity.

Patañjali explains the mind’s epistemological limitations. *YS IV*, 20 tells us that the mind (i.e., *vṛtti*) and the “object” cannot in one circumstance (i.e., simultaneously) be clearly ascertained.\(^{331}\) The mind cannot ascertain itself and the “object” at the same time; the mind’s function is to cognize objects while its processes are witnessed by the self-luminous *puruṣa*. Also, if one mind were to know another mind, this would result in an unending series of minds each perceived by another. This infinite regress or overextending of the intellect from the intellect (from one cognition to another) would result in a confusion of memory.\(^{332}\)

Unlike empirical selfhood, which is part of the “seeable” (*dṛṣṭa*), *puruṣa* can never be made an object, nor can *puruṣa* be realized through the ordinary processes (*vṛttis*) of valid cognition (*YS I*, 6). Patañjali tells us (*YS IV*, 18) that *puruṣa* is transcendent of the object-oriented realm of the “seeable” as the knower or witness of the content and intentions of the empirical consciousness or mind. In *YS III*, 35, however, it appears that *puruṣa* can be made an object of knowledge. Patañjali states: “Since it is for the purpose of the other [*puruṣa*], experience is [based on] the idea that there is no distinction between the *puruṣa* and the *sattva*, though they are absolutely unmixed; from *samyama* (constraint) on the purpose being for itself (serving its own purpose), there arises knowledge of *puruṣa*.”\(^{333}\) Vyāsa surmises that *puruṣa* cannot be known in the ordinary way and cannot be made an object of constraint (*samyama*): “It is not that *puruṣa* is known through the *sattva*-intellect which has the idea of *puruṣa*. It is *puruṣa* that sees the idea supported by its own self (*ātman*). Thus it is said [*BA Up IV*.

---

\(^{330}\) Cf. *YS I*, 21-22.

\(^{331}\) *YS IV*, 20 (p. 195): *ekasamaye cobbhāyānavadhāraṇam*.

\(^{332}\) *YS IV*, 21; see n. 40 above.

\(^{333}\) *YS III*, 35 (p. 154): *sattvapurūṣayor atyāntāsamkīrṇayoḥ pratayo-viśeṣo bhogad parārtha-tvāt svārthasaṁyamāt purusatāhānam*. 

79
5, 15): ‘By what indeed would one know the knower?’”

Why is it that puruṣa cannot be known or seen in the ordinary way? It is not that all distinctions necessarily collapse in some Absolute realm; rather, it is that as pure experiencer and knower, puruṣa can never be made an object of experience and knowledge. Vṛtti and puruṣa’s awareness of them are two separate factors. The final goal is not one of knowledge as a mental state or activity, nor could it be a subjective state of being. In Yoga one cannot “find” true identity for puruṣa is not an entity or object to be found, i.e., “there is no one there to find; the witness cannot be witnessed.”

Puruṣa as pure “subject” is both transcendent and immanent, uninvolved yet present and necessary to ordinary experience. The reality of prakṛti (and hence of citta and vṛtti) is not denied. However, what are normally held to be real independently existing “things” (vastu) or categories of existence (tattvas, as in Sāṁkhya) are seen in Yoga to be linked to the perceptual processes of the mind and as appropriated by empirical selfhood. The “world” thus experienced becomes an egoically referenced reality based on reified notions or ideas (pratyaya) of self and world that, having formed as sediment in the mind, limit human identity within the confines of a distorted way of “seeing” (i.e., a “failure-to-see”) and “relating” to the world (i.e., how the sense-of-I relates to the “things” of the world). Psychologically, in such a fractured or fragmented state of selfhood (cittavṛtti), the network of impressions (samskāras), habit patterns (vāsanās) and vṛtti-identifications continues to sustain and reinforce a predominantly afflicted human nature. The power of consciousness potentially present to all is forgotten and concealed within this framework or “wheel” (or “whirl”) of misidentification and spiritual ignorance. Life is experienced through a repetitive or seemingly unending generation of habit patterns (vāsanās) rooted in dissatisfaction and affliction. Yet mistaken identity and its self-centered misappropriation of the world can, according to Yoga, be ended.

We have seen that cognition and knowledge play a crucial role in Patañjali’s system, and are structured and function in the mind due to a reflection (understood analogically) of the presence of puruṣa.

334 YB III, 35 (p. 155): na ca puruṣapratyayena buddhisattvātmānā puruṣo drśyate. puruṣa eva tam pratyayaṃ svāmīvalambanām paśyati, tathā hy uktam — “vijñātāram are kena vijñāniyāt ” iti.

335 Chapple and Kelly (1990: 116); see also BĀ Up III. 7, 23.
Without puruṣa or pure consciousness, ordinary “knowledge” and experience would not take place. Based on yogic insight into the nature of human identity, Patañjali was then able to communicate a “path” of Yoga through which the afflictions (kleśas), so fundamental to the human condition of struggle and conflict in samyoga, can be uprooted and overcome. But the “path” from samyoga to Yoga (liberation) requires, as we have seen, a thorough study of the mind, for it is only by way of the transformation of the mind and its “modifications” (i.e., mental processes) that the key to success in Yoga becomes evident. Puruṣa, by definition being ever-free, ever-wise, unchanging, etc., could never be in bondage, and its intrinsic nature is therefore unaffected by any apparent loss of true identity or by any form of limitation. Vyāsa reveals that: “These two, experience and emancipation, are created by the mind (i.e., buddhi) and function only in the mind. ... In the mind alone are bondage, which is the failure to fulfil the purpose of puruṣa, and emancipation, which is completion of that purpose.” Accordingly to the above statement made by Vyāsa, it would make more sense to understand spiritual emancipation as referring to a liberated state of mind (i.e., the mind is liberated from its former condition of spiritual ignorance) and not literally as referring to a puruṣa, which is by definition already free and has no intrinsic need to be liberated from the fetters of worldly existence. Therefore, the concept of the mind (citta) — its nature, structure, and functioning — is an essential component or building block of Patañjali’s philosophy. Yoga has been described as a “theory-practice continuum,” a philosophy, including a discipline, which unites theory and practice. With this idea held in mind, it would now seem appropriate to examine closely Patañjali’s soteriological methodology and praxis-orientation beginning with an analysis of the meaning of “cessation” (nirodha) in Yoga, and then moving on to look at central methods of Yoga discipline showing how Yoga can be seen to culminate in an embodied and integrated state of liberated consciousness and identity.

336 YB II, 18 (pp. 83-84): tāvetau bhogāpavargau buddhikṛtau buddhāv eva vartamānau ... buddher eva puruṣārthāparīsamāptir bandhas tadarthāvasāyo mokṣa iti.


338 For more here, see the discussion in Whicher (1995) and (1997) as well as my larger work (1998) entitled, The Integrity of the Yoga Darsana: A Reconsideration of Classical Yoga (forthcoming with State University of New York Press). This present paper on the mind (citta) in a
(the end)

way presupposes an understanding of Yoga ontology and metaphysics both of which are looked at in detail in chapter two of the above mentioned book, *The Integrity of the Yoga Darśana*. 