

Threads of Yoga



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The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali *in a new transliteration by Linda Brown Holt, D.Litt.*



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INTRODUCTION

“First, you must grab the thread; then, it will lead you to the rope,” said Vijayendra Pratap, Ph.D., University of Bombay, a psychologist and teacher of Yoga, in an interview in April 1993. The threads he referred to are the sutras of the legendary Indian philosopher or philosophers known to us as Patanjali; the rope is a popular metaphor in Indian thought which represents escape from the world of delusion into the path to understanding and truth.

For more than two thousand years, the strands or threads of the 196 sutras--a mala (rosary or necklace) of succinct idea-seeds which inspire rather than embody philosophical development--have provided the raw material for yogic thinkers to weave philosophical fabrics of great diversity. Thinkers within the Yoga system have used the sutras as a point of departure to develop philosophies as disparate as the so-called “scientific Yoga” of Sri Yukteswar in the 19th century (which presaged the contemporary fascination with correlations between Eastern mysticism and quantum physics) to the teachings of the contemporary yogi, B.K.S. Iyengar (which indicate that the body must be aligned and perfected as a necessary first step before philosophical inquiry and spiritual quest may be undertaken).

It is safe to assert that there is no form of Yoga--from its heights in the work of Krishnamurti and Kuvalayananda to its lowest denominator in stretching and relaxation classes at community adult schools or fitness clubs--which does not trace its origins to these 12 pages of aphorisms (and, of course, the accompanying commentaries by other scholars which extend into hundreds of volumes).

“The sutras are terse,” said Dr. Pratap in his office in Philadelphia, Pa., where every book lined beneath a sun-drenched window bore a title relating to this topic. “The sutras open up with your practice. The various commentaries resulted from the practice of the writers, not from anything Patanjali wrote or from previous intellectual knowledge. When I was young, I read it as a text, but it did not have meaning as such. It was only after practice that the meaning became clear.” It is important to note that the second of the four sections or books of the sutras focuses entirely on practice, and is considered by many teachers of Yoga (like Dr. Pratap) to be the most important pada (portion) of this work. Unlike much of the theoretical philosophy of Western Europe, Indian thought in every traditional system has integrated within its structure a component of practical application. “Practice gives you insight into the sutras,” Dr. Pratap continued. “It is like Newton sitting under the apple tree. For a long time, he knew intellectually everything he needed to develop his theory of gravity, but he sat under that tree many, many times before click! He understood! Patanjali gives us the tools; it is up to us to develop the practice which will lead to our understanding.”

While practice may be necessary for the serious student encountering the sutras under the guidance of a credentialed yogi, the casual reader can in fact gain some intellectual understanding of this concise compendium of yogic thought by referring to the various commentaries, glosses, and interpretations which have attached themselves to the sutras over the centuries. Premier among commentaries is the scholarly exposition of Vyasa with sub-commentary by Vachaspati; contemporary readers in the West may prefer the readability of critical interpretations by Sw. Vivekananda, India's representative to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893; and Sw. Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, published in 1953 under the somewhat onerous title, *How to Know God*. However, both the Vivekananda and Prabhavananda commentaries are the work of Vedantists, not Yogists (the distinction will be drawn in the section of the current study entitled, "The Six Systems of Traditional Indian Philosophy."). Reading Vedantic commentaries to explore one of the seminal texts of Yoga is not unlike trying to understand St. John's philosophy of Jesus by referring exclusively to Islamic scholarship (granted, this is not an exact analogy because of the largely cooperative and collaborative nature of the traditional Indian philosophies throughout their coexistence): a fruitful exercise, but missing, perhaps, a key element in the process of interpretation.

In the next few chapters, this study provides a context for the sutras in the Indian philosophical tradition and explores what is known about the history of Patanjali's work. This will be followed by a new transliteration of *Threads of Yoga*, as the title may more tellingly be translated, accompanied by comments gleaned from a variety of sources and filtered through the author's modest practice over a period of more than 20 years. Unlike other interpretations, this may be the first by a contemporary American woman and can be expected to reflect not so much the classical ideas of Indian Yoga as the resilience of the sutras as a source of intellectual and spiritual inspiration to all people in all times.

The Indian Philosophical Context

To understand the philosophy advanced by Patanjali's *Threads of Yoga*, it is instructive to understand Yoga in the context of the Indian philosophical mindscape.

Unlike Western philosophies, which for the most part developed sequentially from around the time of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the darsanas (ways of seeing) of India evolved concurrently as discrete but parallel perspectives. In the West, major philosophical schools (such as rationalism, utilitarianism, existentialism, et. al) were each developed by a few highly individualistic thinkers in a chronological order over a relatively short period of time (2,500 years or thereabouts).

In India, however, six orthodox (astika) schools developed simultaneously over thousands of years. While individuals may be associated with these schools (Shankara with Vedanta, for example), each philosophy represents centuries of development and refinement by many thinkers (not necessarily Hindu); no one genius is the guiding light behind a particular philosophy. (This is not the case with at least one of the heterodox (mastic) schools, Buddhism. It is interesting to note that Buddhism was exported from India, however, and developed as a philosophy in Southeast Asia, China and Tibet, leaving hardly a trace in its place of origin!) According to Dr. Pratap, Indian philosophy has never emphasized the authority of the person "because our thinkers never claimed that they were the owners of a particular idea or concept."

The development of each school follows a formula which is not unfamiliar to Western students: 1). Statement of the opponent's view; 2). Refutation of that view; 3). Exposition and proof of one's own point of view. Most Indian philosophies are categorized as to whether they accept or reject the authority of the four Vedas (the Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva). Also included in the Vedic tradition are two epic poems, the Mahabharata, which includes the justly famous gospel of India, the Bhagavad Gita; and the Ramayana. Vedantists also accept a collection of aphorisms called the Brahma Sutras, which interpret and organize the Upanishads (The three basic scriptures--the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras, and the Bhagavad Gita --are known collectively as the Prasthanatraya).

Each Veda is divided into two parts, Work (comprising hymns, ritual instructions, and rules of conduct) and Knowledge (specifically knowledge of God; these sections are entitled Upanishads and sometimes are referred to as the Vedanta, or the end--anta--of the Vedas). Each of the orthodox schools accepts the authority of the

Vedas, sacred texts dating back to time immemorial (as some Western schools of philosophy are based on the Bible). The heterodox schools reject the authority of the Vedas and rely on empirical data and discursive reasoning to arrive *a priori* at often similar conclusions.

The six primary astika (relying on the revealed truth of the Vedas) are:

* Nyaya and Vaisesika (realism)--Vaisesika is the older of these two schools of logic. Although they are separate systems, they have much in common, viewing God as the efficient cause of the universe and accepting a physical world existing outside of mind. They acknowledge seven categories which are ultimately "real": substance (the only independent entity), quality, activity (karma), generality, particularity, inherence, nonexistence.

Both schools hold that the Self (Atman) and the mind are eternal; however, the self is all-pervading while the mind is exceedingly small and limited. As a result, the unlimited Self is bound within individuals because of the ignorance of the limited mind and body. Individuals can achieve liberation of the self and gain release from suffering through true knowledge, proper actions, and contemplation of truth.

The schools differ primarily in their approach to philosophical problems. Vaisesika starts with the conception of being, while Nyaya starts with knowing. Further, Nyaya, which literally translates as "logic," employs syllogism in its investigation of both physical and metaphysical phenomena. Nakamura states that Vaisesika is called "Conceptual Realism" by European scholars because it is similar to the moderate realism of medieval European philosophy (Nakamura 50).

* Mimamsa and Vedanta (Satprakashananda refers to Vedanta, but not Mimamsa, as "monism")--Mimamsa and Vedanta are most closely linked with the Vedas, the former being associated with philosophical justification of rites and rituals, and the latter developing an elaborate philosophy out of the speculative nature of the Vedas. Together they stand apart from the other four schools for their primary dependence on Vedic authority rather than on argument as a basis of knowing.

Like Nyaya and Vaisesika, Mimamsa is realistic and pluralistic in its view of the self and the universe; however, it neither accepts nor denies God as the efficient cause of the universe. "It holds that the ultimate goal of life, which is freedom from all miseries and the attainment of the utmost happiness called heaven, is achieved not by Self-knowledge but by the performance of ceremonial and righteous deeds enjoined in the Vedas." (Satprakashananda 317). That is to say, action is exalted above knowledge; or, action is perceived as a form or expression of knowledge.

Vedanta refutes the Mimamsan position on the primacy of action and approaches the question of ultimate cause and purpose through monism (nondualism) or monotheism. According to the Ramakrishna-Vedanta Wordbook, Vedanta teaches that the purpose of human life is to realize the Godhead here and now through spiritual practice (Usha, Brahmacharini 82).

* Samkhya and Yoga (dualism)--Both of these schools are dualistic, accepting two ultimate principles: Purusha, which denotes the changeless Self, the Absolute, Spirit, Pure Consciousness, and Prakriti, changeable nature or the universe of mind and matter consisting of three gunas (qualities), i.e., sattva, rajas, and tamas (calm, activity, inertia, respectively)(Usha 34, 55, 59).

Samkhya, however, does not recognize an ever-free, eternal God because such an existence cannot be established by logical proof. In contrast, Yoga admits a personal God, a special being "untouched by any kind of misery whose knowledge is infinite and who, being unlimited by time, is the teacher of even the earliest teachers." (Satprakashananda 315). For his (or their) work codifying and expressing the philosophy of Yoga in aphoristic form, Patanjali is considered the father (although not the originator) of Yoga.

I. YOGA AND ITS ESSENCE

So open to interpretation are the sutras that four of the most popular translations have significantly different titles for the first section, or collection, of aphorisms. “On Concentration,” “Yoga and its Aims,” “Trance,” and “Samadhi” are various ways which scholars translate Samadhi-pada. None of these titles adequately express the essence of the 51 statements which comprise the first book of sutras.

“Trance,” in particular, evokes an image of pathological detachment from reality, a state of stupor, oblivion, and deluded self-absorption. “Concentration” suggests nothing more than mental focus, such as one might bring to a mathematical puzzle or Civil Service examination. “Yoga and its Aims” is the most liberal of these translations, scrapping any attempt at a literal translation of samadhi and instead trying to describe the didactic nature of the sutras. “Samadhi” skirts the issue altogether by refusing to define what cannot easily be expressed in a few words. In an interview, Pratap suggested the word “integration,” which may speak of this state most clearly to contemporary scholars. (Pratap interview)

“Yoga and its Essence” is an alternative way to characterize this initial section. Without attempting to define a technical Sanskrit term, this title suggests that samadhi is in fact the essence as well as goal of all Yoga practice. Not asana (postures), not pranayama (breathing exercises), not even dhyana (meditation) can claim this status in Yoga philosophy. Samadhi is at once the goal of Yoga thought and practice as well as the very nature of Yoga itself.

According to A Ramakrishna-Vedanta Wordbook, *samadhi* is “The superconscious state, in which man experiences his identity with the ultimate Reality....defined by Patanjali as a state in which ‘the true nature of the object shines forth, not distorted by the mind of the perceiver.’” (A Ramakrishna Vedanta Wordbook 67.) “Superconscious,” however, is not an entirely appropriate descriptor, for it implies a higher level of reality outside of (or interior to) ordinary, everyday awareness. It is my reading of Patanjali that samadhi is consciousness pure and simple, albeit consciousness in its most perfect, unpolluted state, something we do not experience in our ordinary existence because our senses and the relentless activity of our minds cloud our perception of our true nature. Yoga is the process of refining and purifying consciousness rather than progressively leap-frogging from one stone of awareness to another. Patanjali describes the process of Yoga as one of unfoldment rather than step-by-step progression.

Despite the many critics who claim that Indian philosophy is antithetical to East Asian thought, I find in Patanjali, if not in other Indian writings, a seamless depiction of Ultimate Reality as the same as ordinary, everyday reality: the only difference is that the murkiness of our vision prevents us from apprehending it. This is astonishingly similar to the Zen doctrine of ordinary mind (“Enlightenment is nothing other than your ordinary mind” is a popular saying of Zen); samadhi is the state in which we realize that we are not only one with the Dao, but have been all along, though unaware.

I-2 defines Yoga as the control of currents of thought so that individuals can experience a process of distillation in which the sediment of distraction and obfuscation is filtered out of the pure essence of being (I-3). I-3 Then the seeker after truth finds it in his or her own original nature. (“What was your original face, before you were born?” is a well-known Zen ko’an which mirrors Patanjali’s statement).

Sutras I-4 through I-6 deal with the nature of these thought currents (*vrutti*, which is literally “whirlpool”) which distract the mind and cloud its pure nature. Patanjali divides thought-waves into five categories, some negative or painful and some positive or non-painful. The five categories are: real knowledge, false knowledge, verbal delusion, deep sleep, and memory.

Here we begin to encounter one of the characteristics of Indian thought which is logical, cohesive, appealing to Western rationalism and at the same time utterly exasperating. The sutras, no less than the Vedas before them, are fond of breaking down a subject into smaller and yet smaller component parts, as though the scientific precision of rational subdivision in and of itself constitutes intellectual proof.

Rather than explore a concept fully by thinking it through on its own terms, many Indian thinkers choose to divide it up into smaller parts, and again to subdivide those parts into additional components. The result is a philosophical approach not unlike the technique used by an English teacher parsing a sentence by Milton. There is a kind of left-brained, captivating beauty about the strata, substrata, superstrata, and exponents so displayed.

Our minds, which crave both complexity and symmetry, delight in this brilliant exhibition of logical order. But just as a sentence diagram fails to reveal to us the poetry of Milton, so often does the architecture of Indian philosophy leave us hollow, hungry for a deep meaning we sense is lurking beneath the dazzling surface.

In this spirit, Patanjali begins to subdivide the *vrittis* into their component elements. I-7 breaks down real knowledge into direct perception, inference, and reliable testimony, all of which are considered valid proofs (*pramanas*). Direct perception is defined by Vyasa as a thought wave which is caused by contact with an outward object via the senses (Mukerji 20). Inference is defined as thought wave based on the general characteristics of something that is knowable by way of a point of reference. Cognition transferred from a righteous person to a hearer is the third *pramana*, reliable testimony.

All three *pramanas* demand a certain level of trust and confidence in the “proof”: direct perception assumes that our senses are reliable; inference takes for granted that different, individual minds can construct identical truths from certain constants and points of reference; and reliable testimony demands that we accept as “gospel” the witness of certain individuals and in particular the scriptures in which the parameters of reliable testimony are set forth. To the contemporary secular humanist, trained to view the world with a skeptical eye and residing outside of the Indian tradition, this reliance on trust and confidence may at first glance seem too dogmatic to qualify as philosophy. However, pressed further, today’s cynic may admit to valuing a surprisingly similar set of constructs, trusting his or her own senses, power of reason, logical inference, and even reliable testimony, providing it comes from a credentialed scientist or historian. Patanjali and his commentators do not order us blindly to accept “reliable testimony”—probably the most controversial of the *pramanas* from a philosophical point of view—but to consider the moral character and intellectual essence of the authority; and then and only then to decide for ourselves if the experience described by the testimony conforms to our own definition of truth. This is very different from a religious compulsionism which attempts to enforce an inviolable scriptural authority which has been elevated beyond scrutiny, criticism, and both logical and intuitive knowledge. It is also abundantly clear through these sutras that Yoga is not a life-effacing philosophy which values Ishvara (ultimate reality) and Purusha (consciousness) over Prakriti (the world). According to Pandit Arya (Arya 151), direct perception is the root of all other proofs, which in turn depend on it. Contact between the mind and objects occurs through the senses, he writes. Patanjali’s Yoga is firmly rooted in the world of the senses and individual perception; life in the world is highly valued as the only avenue through which more subtle fields of knowledge can be explored.

Not all knowledge, of course, is viewed as positive and true. I-8 When knowledge is not based upon the true nature of its object, it is false knowledge. There are five forms of ignorance which produce false knowledge: pure ignorance itself, the delusion that the individual self is all, attachment, aversion, and fear of death. These forms are known as the *klesas* or afflictions (Pratap prefers to translate *klesa* as “stress,” a word with a richer range of connotation for contemporary thinkers. The *klesas* are dealt with in greater detail in II-2). Verbal delusion (or imagination), sleep, and memory are other thought waves which cannot be trusted to lead us to real knowledge. They must be overcome through practice and nonattachment, the highest level of which is knowledge of the Atman, that essential core of the individual which is identical with the divine. (I-16).

By concentrating on a single object, one may reach one of four stages: gross thought (concentration on a physical object), subtle thought (an object’s essence), ecstasy (delight in the inner power of the mind itself) and individual awareness (not egotism, but rather consciousness of our individual self as distinguished from all other entities). And yet concentration on an object is not the ultimate goal which Yoga establishes. A higher level of concentration is described in I-18: the cessation of the cognitive principle in objectless awareness during which the Atman encounters its identity with Ishvara (according to Prabhavananda, who is a monist). This state is the highest level of *samadhi*, the subject of Part I and the final of the eight limbs of Yoga described in II-28 and 29.

Success in *samadhi* comes best to those who pursue it with intense energy and a spirit of nonattachment. One of the ways in which it can be cultivated is through devotion to Ishvara (I-23). According to Patanjali, Ishvara is a unique being, a “special Purusha,” according to Arya, unblemished by ignorance (*avidya*) and not subject to *klesas*, karma (consequences of mental or physical acts), *samskaras* (tendencies created in the mind of an individual as the result of actions) or *vipaka* (the fruit or results of karma and *samskaras*). Feuerstein

calls Ishvara “essentially an experimental construct arrived at primarily on the basis of yogic self-absorption rather than pure theological ratiocination.” (Feuerstein 3) The commentator Bhoja interprets Ishvara as “One who by his mere wish has the power to give liberation to all who seek him,” a more personalized interpretation than Feuerstein’s starkly abstract definition. (Prabhavananda, *The Spiritual Heritage of India* 227.)

This brings us to Patanjali’s theory or conception of God. Unlike the earlier Samkhya philosophy--similar to Yoga in so many other ways--Patanjali’s advances certain proofs that God exists. Chatterjee and Datta (Chatterjee 308) infer three proofs from the sutras attesting to the existence of God:

- 1). Scriptural authority. Scriptural authorities speak of the existence of God as the Supreme Self;
- 2). The law of continuity. Under the law of continuity (whatever has degrees must have a lower and an upper limit), the existence of different degrees of knowledge and power dictates that there must be a person who possesses perfect knowledge and perfect power. This supreme person is God;
- 3). The association and dissociation of Purusha and Prakriti. Purusha and Prakriti are responsible for creation and destruction of the world and its components by their interaction. As two independent principles, they cannot be naturally related or dissociated. There must be a perfect, intelligent cause which directs their activity and how it affects individual selves. This Being is God. Without divine guidance, Prakriti could not produce order in the world resulting in morality and emancipation.

While none of these proofs is particularly compelling outside of the context of Indian philosophy, within the framework of that closed system these are considered adequate proofs of the existence of Ishvara. However, the sutras do not state that one must believe in a supreme being in order to advance on the yogic path of knowledge; Patanjali recommends faith in God and religious practice as one--if not the only--certain way to advance in Yoga. Among the key sutras in this regard is *I-25 Knowledge, which in others is but a seed, reaches its ultimate fruition in Ishvara.* (“In Him, the seed of the omniscient is not exceeded.” Prasada. “In Him, knowledge is infinite; in others it is only a germ.” Prabhavananda. Literally: Tatra [there/in that God] nir-ati-shayam [ultimate, not exceeded by any other, not excelled] sarvajna [of omniscient] -bijam [seed]). According to Prabhavananda, this aphorism proves the existence of God for some commentators (such as Vyasa). The Purushas, they declare, are all endowed with knowledge, some with more and some with less, and the fact of limited knowledge proves the existence of unlimited knowledge. There must therefore exist a Being possessed of infinite knowledge. This argument should be compared with the remark of Kant that the concept of the finite involves the existence of the infinite.” (Prabhavananda *The Spiritual Heritage of India* 228) This is clearly an example of the use of inference as a source of real knowledge and authority as indicated in I-7.

The nature of God is further explored and amplified in I-26 through 29. *I-26 Not being limited by time, Ishvara was also the teacher of the first gurus.* This not only established God as a Being outside of time, but also implies direct divine intervention in human lives at some point in history (“teacher of the first gurus”). This aphorism also forms the basis for the high regard in which teachers, or gurus, are held in the yogic tradition, since it states that God was the first teacher. Although beyond the realm of karma and vipaka, obviously (in Patanjali’s view) Ishvara is not entirely outside the realm of maya if able to act (“teach”) in a particular epoch (early times as suggested by this aphorism). Ishvara is not only real knowledge Itself but is also the agent of disseminating this knowledge.

One of the ways in which Ishvara is perceived by the individual self is through the sphota-vada, a sound-symbol not unlike the Word of St. John, the Logos of the Greek philosophers and other sacred words in (primarily) religious cultures. *I-27 The word which embodies the essence of this Great One is Om. I-28 To experience the divine presence, repeat that name and ponder its meaning. I-29 Through this practice, obstacles to awareness are removed and inward consciousness is attained.*

In I-27, the word “pranavaḥ” is used to represent “Om” in the original Sanskrit: Tasya vachakah pranavaḥ (Literally, It is expressed through the symbol which stands for the supreme music). One is reminded of the Jewish scriptural admonition not to utter the name of God.

Arya uses I-27 as a point of departure to discuss two levels of knowledge: those which can be experienced without a name (such as the sensation of the color blue) and those which cannot be experienced without a name (one cannot know a certain John as the son of Jack without having the words “father” and “son” and the mean-

ings they communicate). “Since God, unlike the colour blue, is not tangible to the senses, He cannot be experienced by the unrealized,” writes Arya in a specious twist of logic. “He can only be signified by his name, Om.” (Arya 310) Regrettably, it is undeveloped pseudo-logic of this ilk which gives Indian philosophy a bad name! Skirting the quagmires of false logic, Prabhavananda suggests practically that Om as the name of God has been sanctified by millennia of use by believers rather than by some inherent musical-mystical perfection. (Prabhavananda *How to Know God* 58). “...what really matters is that we should appreciate the power of the Word in our spiritual life; and this appreciation can only come through practical experience,” he writes. (Prabhavananda 58) The extreme polarities of Arya’s and Prabhavananda’s readings of I-27 exemplify the wide range of interpretations to which all of Patanjali’s terse “threads” can be subjected to.

Through the repetition of Om with meditation upon its meaning comes the destruction of obstacles to knowledge of the Atman. These obstacles (antarayah), or mental distractions, are enumerated in I-30: *sickness, mental idleness, doubt, negligence, sloth, failure to abstain from sense pleasures, confused understanding, and inability to attain and remain in a yogic state*. These obstacles exist together with the vrittis or thought waves as barriers to the mental clarity required for the attainment of samadhi.

Patanjali then proceeds to describe the methods which truth-seekers should follow to remove these obstacles one by one and to advance to the highest states of consciousness, which are described at the end of this section. These techniques include the cultivation of pranayama (controlled breathing) and concentrating on the Inner Light as well as on an exemplary personality (a saint or avatar, for example). A very interesting attitude is expressed in I-33, *The mind is purified and calmed by developing affection for the happy, compassion for the suffering, joyfulness toward the virtuous, and equanimity to those who remain in delusion and error*. Most translators interpret upekshanam as indifference rather than equanimity (even Arya who offers both synonyms as literal translations of the Sanskrit word). “...those who remain in delusion and error” is variously expressed as “the wicked,” “the non-virtuous,” “sinful creatures” “those who are demeritorious, evil-natured,” and “vice” in the various translations consulted in this paper. The overall impression from these translations is the sense that one should be indifferent to evil-doers, a most disturbing admonition which is out of step with the body of the sutras. I believe a better interpretation can be made by incorporating the alternative translation which Arya presents (“equanimity,” with its fragrance of fairness and even-mindedness) and substituting “...those who remain in delusion and error” for references to evil, sin, and vice, concepts steeped in self-righteous religious condemnation and foreign to the placid spirit of Yoga.

One of the methods for overcoming obstacles which is most difficult for Western students to understand is I-38, *And the mind may become stabilized by concentrating on dreams or the state of deep, dreamless sleep*. Except for certain psychoanalysts, most Westerners consider the awakened state the human condition which is most “real.” The realm of dreams and the deeper state in which dreams cease both are considered of a lower order of consciousness, more akin to delusion than enlightenment. In this sutra, Patanjali shows a greater affinity with traditional Eastern ways of thinking. As the Daoist Chuang Tzu is reported to have asked, “How do I know that I am a man who has dreamed he was a butterfly, and not that I am a butterfly who is now dreaming that he is a man?” Beyond this level of ambiguity, Yoga goes several steps further and affirms that the dream sleep is actually closer to the Real and that wakeful consciousness is a coarser, inferior state of experience. In this, Yoga is similar to Vedanta which recognizes four progressively more evolved states of consciousness:

- * Jagrat--Ordinary wakeful consciousness in which we receive information through our five senses;
- * Swapna--The dream state. Consciousness is functioning but is not externally expressed;
- * Susupti--Dreamless sleep. The sleeper has neither external nor internal awareness;
- * Turiya--Samadhi or union with the Ultimate. Although it comes after dreamless sleep, this state is associated with true awareness and consciousness, not the limited state of awareness experienced in jagrat. According to Sankaranarayanan, turiya may be fourth in this list, but it is the fourth which makes the whole. Four quarters make up a dollar, but once we have the fourth quarter, we usually do not say we have four quarters: we say we have one dollar. So it is that turiya is the whole of consciousness and the goal of progressively refined awareness, according to Vedanta and Yoga.

The sleep so valued by both schools of thought, however, is no ordinary slumber. It is the purposeful, controlled sleep of one already well along on the path of Yoga. Arya says this about yogic sleep:

Philosophically, one views the experience of personal sleep as part of the cosmic sleep of tamas (one of the three gunas or personality types which is associated with inertia, darkness, gluttony and sloth), which has befallen consciousness. Knowing, however, that the pure-self is ever awake and that only a small part of the mind actually sleeps, one learns to observe the sleep process by dwelling in the light of the pure self and by resorting to the higher mind, which observes the lower, sleeping mind. Thus one learns to enter conscious sleep. When the mind becomes absorbed in this experience of consciousness, the true knowledge of sleep thus becomes the object of meditation. The mind then becomes established in stability. (Arya 364)

The inevitable final stages of consciousness transformation, as indicated in the Sanskrit title of this entire section, is samadhi. Patanjali begins to approach this subject in I-41, *As a pure crystal reflects images in its range, so the calm mind takes on the identity of the object of its focus*. This transformational process is called samapattih. Prabhavananda, wrongly I think, translates samapattih as samadhi, for it is clear from other translations that the two words have different meanings. Samapattih has several translations, including “encounter, coalescence, transmutation, transformation, attainment of a state of consciousness.” (Arya 371, Mishra 207) Samadhi is the name of the state to which samapattih leads.

This transformational process is of four types (in ascending order of importance):

- * Savitarka, when the mind identifies with a gross object of concentration mixed with the awareness of word, meaning, and idea;
- * Nirvitarka, when the mind identifies with a gross object unmixed with the awareness of word, meaning, and idea, so that only the object remains;
- * Savichara, concentration on a subtle object mixed with awareness of word, meaning, and idea;
- * Nirvichara, concentration on a subtle object unmixed with the awareness of word, meaning, and idea. (I-42-44)

Although the left/right brain paradigm is an imperfect metaphor for these processes, it is convenient to think of savitarka and savichara as left-brain processes, whereby logic, mathematical reasoning, and verbal categorization prevail; and savichara and nirvichara as right-brain processes dominated by intuition, insight, and knowledge gained outside the realm of intellectual understanding.

Underlying all subtle objects is Prakriti, one of the two ultimate realities in Samkhya philosophy (I-45). (Prakriti was also referenced earlier in this paper under I-8). Defined as primordial nature, Prakriti is composed of the three gunas and constitutes the material of the universe (Usha 55). The three gunas, or energies, explicated clearly in the Bhagavad Gita (Isherwood 140-145) and analogous to the Sheridan’s three personality types in Western psychology, are:

- * Tamas, discussed earlier under I-38, solidity and resistance, associated with sloth, gluttony, love of luxury, and laziness in personalities, and inertia in the physical world (e.g., a block of granite);
- * Rajas, the active principle, associated with aggression, physical activity, temper, emotionalism in personalities, and the power of nature in the physical world (e.g., an active volcano);
- * Sattva, the pure and fine, associated with serenity, integration, purity, and compassion in personalities, and subtle but sustaining elements in the physical world (e.g., sunshine).

The four types of samapattih (means of attaining samadhi) which Prakriti underpins are classified as “with seed” in I-46. Arya claims that Vyasa does not state there are four separate samadhis but rather that the path leading to one samadhi can be divided fourfold in this manner (Arya 409). By “with seed,” Patanjali means that these methods depend on something outside of pure mind to develop (Mukerji 103).

As indicated in reference to their ascending order, nirvichara is the highest of these attainments. In this state, the mind becomes clear and pure, while knowledge gained in this state brims with the Supreme Truth (I-46-47). This knowledge transcends the type obtained through verbal authority and inference (see discussion of vrittis and pramanas under I-7). This knowledge is not jnana, intellectual knowledge, but prajna, true wisdom (I-48. Harshananda defines prajna as the wisdom temporarily achieved in deep sleep, but this is not the meaning advanced in I-48, which uses prajna to signify the most profound and enduring form of deep knowledge.) I-51 *When all the lower tendencies of mind have been subsumed into the highest consciousness, one enters the seedless state known as samadhi*. The dualistic perspectives of Yoga converge in samadhi as the individual

becomes identified with Ultimate Reality. The difference between Yoga and Vedanta on this point is that for Yoga, dualism exists at all times except for the individual who achieves this form of liberation and knowledge. For Vedanta, the intellectual concept of monism exists from the beginning; dualism is considered from the start a delusion born of avidya (ignorance).

The ensuing sections of the sutras address the techniques leading to samadhi, the powers which may develop during this process and a discourse on the nature of mind and liberation.

II. YOGA AND ITS PRACTICE

Unlike many Western schools of philosophy, Indian systems all contain a component of practical application. For the Indian thinker, thought and action, abstract ideas and personal experience are intertwined expressions of the same philosophical process. It would be incomprehensible to a traditional Indian philosopher that a person would think about the ultimate good without following a lifestyle to experience that good first-hand. Such an approach would be like presenting a starving person with a detailed menu complete with color photos, recipes, and tantalizing aromas, but providing no opportunity to eat. Many teachers of Yoga believe that the heart of Patanjali's sutras lies not in the exposition of ideas, but rather in the path set forth to experience the ideal. Because of this, Book II of the sutras, entitled "Practice," holds a place of high esteem in Yoga philosophy. In these 55 sutras, Patanjali identifies the concepts which form the foundation of all Yoga practice, such as tapas, klesas (these terms will be defined and discussed at a later point), and the eight steps of achieving union. Despite the many diverse schools of Yoga which have developed over the centuries, all accept the principles set forth by Patanjali as the common denominator of their practice. They do, however, interpret the sutras very differently. No two schools of contemporary Yoga, for example, can be farther apart than those of B.K.S. Iyengar and Paramahansa Yogananda. Iyengar focuses primarily on the body (asana) while Yogananda emphasized the importance of meditation (dhyana). Iyengar teaches that first we must train the body before we can improve the mind and spirit (Palkahivala interview), whereas the Self Realization Fellowship lessons of Yogananda barely acknowledge the existence of traditional Yoga postures. Yet each teacher drew his inspiration from Patanjali's 46th sutra in Book II: "Asana is nothing more than to remain motionless in an aesthetic pose," Iyengar on the one hand making this the point of departure for an entire system evolving from physical culture, and Yogananda conversely taking this as a sign to minimize the role of physical exercise in the process of self-cultivation.

Key sutras relating to Practice are as follows:

II-1. To achieve the goal of Yoga, one must first practice self-discipline, study spiritual literature, and surrender to the One.

According to Patanjali, these three steps comprise Kriya Yoga, the Yoga of action. The Sanskrit words for the three steps have been interpreted in a variety of ways by different scholars. Tapas, or self-discipline, is translated by Mukerji (Hariharananda) as austerity, a word which conjures up images of yogis engaged in prolonged and painful mortifications of the flesh which many contemporary thinkers associate with the abnormal psychological states of religious fanatics. Pratap, quite originally, I think, interprets tapas as none other than pranayama: carefully controlled breathing exercises under the guidance of an experienced and reputable teacher (Pratap).

In contrast, Prasada reads tapas as "purificatory action." (Prasada 88) "Impurity is variegated by the eternal in-dwelling of the aroma of action and affliction, and is ever in contact with the network of enjoyables," Prasada's Vyasa somewhat quaintly muses. "It cannot be dispersed without purificatory action." Mukerji translates this same commentary as, "The impurities or the dross of mind arising out of the snares of worldly objects which are harmful to Yoga, are coloured by the Vasanas of actions and afflictions from beginningless time, and they cannot be got rid of or dissipated without the practice of austerities."

Most interesting is Prabhavananda's approach. Pointing out that tapas in its primary sense means "heat" or "energy," he defines its use in Patanjali as "the practice of conserving energy and directing it toward the goal of Yoga, toward union with the Atman." He suggests that tapas be interpreted as a joyful, positive activity, not the "grim, negative" action implied in words such as "austerity" or "mortification." (Prabhavananda 96). Mukerji's translation of Vyasa, however, seems to counter Prabhavananda's positive thinking, calling tapas "renuncia-

tion of sensuous pleasures...and putting up with resulting hardship,” hardly a joyful activity in anyone’s book. Mukerji does agree with Pratap that breath control is at least part of tapas since it involves “attempts to restrain natural afflictive actions.” (Harshananda 114)

(This emphasis on activity and physical culture is largely outside the mainstream of Western philosophy, which defines itself according to ideas rather than actions. However, it is worth noting that the Greek roots of Western philosophy included physical discipline as a component in the process of achieving the Good, the concept of “a sound mind in a sound body” being somewhat more than a cliché. This high value on self-discipline, extolled by the pre-Socratics into and through the Platonic era, is one of the commonalities shared by Indian and Greek philosophy. Others, quoted by Lomperis [who curiously overlooks self-discipline], include a fundamental belief in an underlying moral order within the universe and striking similarities in both religion and epic poetry [Lomperis 15]. The introduction of Christianity into Western thought--and, in many early expressions through the Middle Ages, its contempt for the human body--resulted in a view of self-discipline which was ancillary rather than integral to philosophical and religious ideas, and focused primarily on the practice of self-mastery [“mind over matter” practices in which the mind could force the body to overcome feelings such as hunger or sexual attraction] and mortification [memento mori practices such as the hair shirt as a reminder of the nastiness of everyday life and the beauty of a higher reality]).

Svadhya is the second step of Kriya Yoga, indicating spiritual study and the repetition of mantras, or religious words or phrases which are repeated as an aid to achieve deeper consciousness. Like the other traditional systems of Indian philosophy, Yoga accepts the authority of the Vedas much as Medieval Scholasticism in Europe accepted the authority of the Bible. Japam, or the repetition of mantras, has many parallels throughout the world where philosophy is blended with religion and spiritual practice (the Pure Land school of Buddhism, the Russian Orthodox Church in its Prayer of Jesus, and even the contemporary Roman Catholic Church’s use of litanies and the repetition of short, repeated prayers relate to this practice). Purely rational philosophies (“left-brained” in today’s New Age parlance) do not accept this practice as a method leading to true knowledge; however, many profound schools of thought since early times have advocated this activity as a means of cultivating wisdom.

Most remarkable about Patanjali’s emphasis on the importance of svadhya, however, is his admonition to study. This sutra is unequivocal in its advocacy of rigorous intellectual activity as a component of practice (albeit activity associated with revealed scripture), thereby dispelling any charges that Yoga is purely an otherworldly, mystical enterprise.

The third step in Kriya Yoga is Ishvara-Pranidhana, complete surrender to God. While the first two steps comprise physical and mental discipline, the third is clearly a matter of religious or spiritual attitude (I use religious here to connote practices associated with a formal religious path, and spiritual to connote practices or attitudes not necessarily affiliated with a particular faith). Prabhavananda defines this as “dedication of the fruits of one’s work to God.” (Prabhavananda How to Know God 95) Prasada interprets the Sanskrit (which is literally “worship of God, God the motive of action”) as “making God the motive of action.” (Prasada 88) Vyasa in Prasada’s translation calls this “dedicating all actions to the Highest Teacher, or the renunciation of its fruit,” (Prasada 89), again using the negative “renunciation” where Prabhavananda uses the positive “dedication of...to.”

The use of negatives in Indian thought is a natural occurrence due to the structure of Sanskrit and other Indian languages, according to Nakamura. Studying how Eastern peoples think, Nakamura analyzed the grammar and syntax of major Asian languages, drawing the conclusion that Indian thought overall tends to be: negative, universal, and abstract--as opposed to the highly individualized, concrete expression of the Chinese, alienated from the natural objective world, highly introspective and metaphysical.) Western language and culture tend to take negatives “more negatively” than Indian philosophers intended them, which accounts for Prabhavananda’s attempts to avoid literal translation when addressing an American audience.

In II-2-4 Patanjali states that Kriya Yoga leads to the power of concentration which alone can alleviate stresses. The obstacles to enlightenment which cause and are identical with these stresses are: pure ignorance itself, the delusion that the individual self is all, attachment, aversion, and fear of death (see I-8. “Obstacles,” “afflictions,” and “stresses” are all words used to define klesas).

According to Prabhavananda, the word “obstacle” is analogous to the word “sin” in Christian philosophy, however with a significant difference. Sin implies a willful act of disobedience against God, which can be obviated only by divine grace and forgiveness and the cultivation on the part of the individual of a “Father knows best” attitude; whereas an obstacle is something which stands between the individual and his or her experience of truth and which can be removed through the application of “tried and true” actions (kriyas) without the additional burdens of guilt and forced humility. To the yogi, the individual soul (Atman) is naturally drawn to its source, God (Ishvara); within the context of dualism, they are different expressions of the same ultimate reality. To the Christian, however, God is a separate and higher state of being, not fundamentally the same as the individual soul. God is the inescapable father figure, like Leopold in Amadeus, whose impossibly high standards and overbearing demands cry out to human recreants even beyond the grave and hound them to their own ineffectual ends. Yoga’s philosophy of God is covered in greater detail in I-25.

Patanjali defines the klesas (obstacles to enlightenment) as follows:

- * pure ignorance itself: mistaking the temporal for the eternal, impurity for purity, pain for pleasure, and non-Atman for Atman;
- * the delusion that the individual self is all: confusing the instrument of seeing (ego) with the object to be seen (Ultimate Reality);
- * attachment: that which dwells on pleasure;
- * aversion: that which dwells on repulsion due to pain;
- * fear of death: the inborn dread of annihilation which exists in both the learned and the ignorant. (I-5-9).

These stresses can be reduced to their state as primal tendencies (samskaras) through meditation and can be entirely eliminated as the mind is clarified and returns in essence to its cause (Prakriti). Patanjali then goes on to advance the yogic view of the role of tendencies created in the past (karma) to influence current and future states and activities. Implicit in this discussion--in fact, in the entire yogic philosophy--is acceptance of the concept of the cycle of birth and death known as reincarnation. In this concept, present levels of stress can be attributed to the accumulated karma of past lives as well as actions and attitudes cultivated in this one. In Indian thought, this is the ultimate law of cause and effect, comparable to the importance of Newtonian law in physics. Thinkers who reject the theory of reincarnation must reject the overall philosophy of Yoga on which it is based. Patanjali depicts the course of life through its cyclical repetitions as filled with suffering. The individual (jiva) is caught in a Moebius strip of delusion and pain from which he or she cannot escape to encounter the truth of Ultimate Reality without drastic action. While pain and pleasure are experienced by individuals according to their past merit, even pleasure is defined as suffering because of the foreknowledge that it will cease. This defuses the argument that the life of delusion and the cycle of rebirth are acceptable as long as we concentrate on the pleasurable aspects (hedonism), for suffering always prevails, culminating in death. However, by the practice of Yoga, one may recognize the cause of one’s delusion and break out of the cycle, overcoming suffering and attaining the highest knowledge, according to this point of view. II-17. Confusing the subject with the object is the root cause of avoidable suffering.

Patanjali then proceeds to identify the nature of the object of experience by describing the three gunas (see also I-45 in the first section of this paper), the cosmic energies which are the three primal causes of the internal and external world (Mukerji 161). II-18. Characteristics of the objective world are illumination, motion, and inertia. The objective world exists to be experienced and to lead the individual to liberation. This last statement is a key to understanding the nature of the universe in Yoga philosophy. In it are implied (and implication, as we have seen, is a way of knowing) the idea that the universe has a purpose, that suffering is not in vain, that there is an ultimate power beyond the phenomenal world and that this power in some way has intent toward individuals, whether that intent is personal and religious (e.g., God caring for deluded humankind) or impersonal and secular (e.g., the intent of gravity to attract matter).

The experiencer of this phenomenal world is the Seer (drista): pure consciousness, which appears to take on the qualities of the mind, but which is in essence immutable. (The word “Seer” is not used in the sense of “mage” or “sorcerer/ess” but rather in the sense of “one who sees; see-er”). Although the sutras use the word drista, the Seer, Self or experiencer also may be properly referred to as Atman. The implication of intent surfaces again in II-21. *The material universe exists only to serve the purpose of the Self.* The phenomenal

world outside the experiencer has no purpose; if the tree falls in the forest, for the yogi, it makes no sound, has no *raison d'être*. The experiencer or Seer gives meaning to the world in all its forms: gross, subtle, primal, and unevolved. The experiencer is mistakenly taken for Prakriti because of appearances, but when ignorance is replaced by insight and the power to discriminate between the real and unreal, the true essence of the experiencer is known, bondage ends and the individual is liberated.

II-27. Intuitive knowledge is developed through seven stages. Vyasa lists those stages as follows:

1. Knowledge of the suffering to be removed;
2. Removal of the causes of suffering;
3. Cultivation of discriminative knowledge of samadhi;
4. Understanding of the means of knowledge;
5. Elimination of identity of the phenomenal mind with reality;
6. Termination of the influence of samskaras and the gunas;
7. Identification of the Self as identical with Purusha, both immanent and transcendent. (Mishra 260-261).

Having explained the objectives, Patanjali then proceeds to a detailed description of the practices which remove the stresses which act as obstacles to enlightenment (II-28-55). These are the famed "Eight Limbs of Yoga," known alike to scholars, practitioners, and habitués of Western health spas. Once again, a list:

1. Yama, moral conduct, restraint achieved through will power, including harmlessness (ahimsa), truth, non-stealing, continence, abstinence from greed;
2. Niyama, purification or cleanliness (Mishra 265), in the sense of religious observances (Yogananda 263). This includes personal cleanliness, pure speech and thought, contentment and study, as well as surrender of one's self and actions to the Supreme Being;
3. Asana, or posture which is steady, firm, and pleasant. As mentioned earlier, this is the only reference in the sutras to the physical positions which many people identify as Yoga. Vyasa and the accompanying gloss by Vachaspati identify a number of sitting postures for meditation in which the spine is kept erect and circulation is reduced in the lower extremities. There is no reference in the sutras to the wide range of calisthenics and contortion exercises (hatha) commonly referred to as Yoga. While these exercises may be beneficial, they do not warrant any mention in the sutras and do not comprise a component of traditional Yoga philosophy.
4. Pranayama, regulation of breath. Prana is the total cosmic energy (Mishra 285). Patanjali contends that one can master subtle energy by control of the breath, culminating in periods in which the breath ceases and the mind becomes clear.
5. Pratyahara, withdrawal of the mind from sense objects, which is the state which must be achieved before concentration and meditation can be attempted.

With the description of the first five "limbs" which deal with mastering the senses, Section II concludes, leaving discussion of the last three--concentration, meditation, and samadhi--to the next section entitled, "Powers."

III. YOGA AND ITS POWERS

Part III is the most controversial of the four books of sutras. In this section, Patanjali explains the last three "limbs of Yoga" which culminate in perfect knowledge and describes an array of supernormal powers which may be the by-product of yogic practice. Acceptance of occult phenomena is not part of the mainstream Western philosophical tradition, although all Western religious traditions include paranormal occurrences as part of their scriptural legacy. A religious philosopher like Kirkegaard, for example, would not have taken seriously 19th century claims of telepathy as a means to discover truth; but would accept, through a "leap of faith," the essential message of scriptures which deal routinely with matters such as prophets foretelling the birth of a messiah, speaking in tongues, and miraculous healings. Most Western thinkers who also embrace traditional religions believe either that the latter occurrences took place in an "age of miracles" or that they are either metaphorical devices or misinterpreted examples of the power of mind over matter, a phenomenon which has gained some scientific respectability in recent decades.

Patanjali's matter-of-fact recounting of yogic powers such as being able to see celestial beings, enter into

the body of another, walk on water (why does that ring a bell?) and fly through the air are so beyond belief for many Westerners (and some “enlightened” Indians) that they effectively cancel out the otherwise rational philosophy outlined in the sutras. Others, however, impressed with the logic displayed in the first two sections, may be open to interpret Part III at least in some symbolic manner, as the alchemical writings of certain Chinese Taoists use magical terms as codes to stand for spiritual practices. An element of hyperbole may also be inherent in these claims: invisibility, for example, may simply mean that an enlightened person is so quiet and disciplined that other people do not notice that he or she is near.

Perhaps the most appropriate way for scientifically minded thinkers to approach Part III is with the knowledge that different cultures view reality from various perspectives. Pratap said that if a person has some insight into modern physics, Part III is not so controversial (Pratap interview), suggesting that its principles reflect scientific laws of cause and effect, and the indestructibility of matter. Just as Chinese traditional medicine deviates from virtually every known principle of Western science and yet has effected cures where conventional medicine has failed, so it may well be that thinkers steeped in a culture which accepts reincarnation and occult phenomena as well as logic and rationalism may, on its own terms, have insights worthy of respect and consideration. The idea is not that this perspective displaces Western thought, but rather than it supplements and amplifies it.

While Patanjali acknowledges the occurrence of paranormal powers, he strongly discourages the cultivation of these powers for their own sake. Occult powers are only signposts that one is making progress. They are, in fact, obstacles to knowledge when they call attention to themselves and distract the individual from continued pursuit of absolute knowledge.

Part III opens with a continuation of the “limbs of Yoga” mentioned in Part II. After number five, pratyahara, the final three stages (collectively referred to as samyama) are:

6. Dharana, concentration, attention which is focused on a fixed point;
7. Dhyana, meditation, or constant and continuous mental suggestion in the state of fixation (Mishra 297);
8. Samadhi, cognitive absorption or, in Pratap’s interpretation, integration. “When consciousness of the suggested object shines forth, as it were, devoid of external form of (sic) object, this is called samadhi.” (Mishra 298). Samadhi itself is divided into the lower samadhi (with seed) and the higher samadhi (seedless or nirvikalpa). In samadhi, knowledge and experience of the unity of all things displaces the multiplicity perceived by the ordinary, dis-integrated mind.

As the mind becomes one-pointed, with no “gaps” or breaks between smoothly flowing thought-waves, it transcends the three kinds of changes associated with gross and subtle matter: form, time, and condition. (Prabhavananda 179). Patanjali then describes in sutras 16-46 the various forms of pararational phenomena which may occur when one “makes samyama” on certain elements. The objects of concentration and the possible consequences are listed below. First objects dealing with gross and subtle phenomena:

Object	Consequence
16. The three kinds of changes	Knowledge of past and future
17. Sound, meaning, and reaction to a word	Understanding all sounds uttered by living beings
18. Previous thought-waves	Knowledge of one’s past lives
19-20. Distinguishing marks of another person’s body	Knowledge of the nature of that person’s mind but not its contents
21-22. The form of one’s body	Bodily invisibility and inability to be heard

23.	Present and future karmas	Knowledge of the exact time of one's death
24.	Friendliness, compassion	The powers of these qualities
25.	A particular strength	Possession of that strength
26.	The Inner Light	Knowledge of what is subtle, hidden and distant
27.	The sun	Knowledge of the universe
28.	The moon	Knowledge of the arrangement of the stars
29.	The polestar	Knowledge of the motions of the stars
30.	The central nervous system	Knowledge of the constitution of the body
31.	The centers of appetite and thirst desires	The ability to overcome these
32.	The internal center of gravity	The steadiness of individual consciousness
33.	The radiant light in the center of the head (the so-called Golden Flower or Blue Pearl in the center of the forehead seen in intense meditation)	Direct perception of the One
34.	The radiant light of Brahman (Purusha) without any specific location	All knowledge described in III-33 will positively come
35.	The radiant light in the heart	Knowledge of Cosmic Mind
36.	The principle of Self-existence	Self-knowledge

Through samyama on Purusha, the thresholds of the senses are extended, and heightened capacities of sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell are experienced. While these perceptions and any occult powers which may appear are valid signposts that one is making progress on the path to knowledge, these powers are paradoxically also obstacles to attaining enlightenment, according to Patanjali and Vyasa. Patanjali goes on to list other objects or activities and their paranormal results:

Object	Consequence
40. Control of bodily functions	Mastery of dangers associated with mud, water, thorns, et. al., and victory over death
41. Control of bodily temperature	Ability to project light (aura)
42. Control of inner hearing	Divine hearing
43. The relationship between body and ether	Levitation, flying
44. Thought-waves when the mind is separated from the body	Disappearance of all coverings over knowledge
45-46. Detailed gross and subtle forms of the elements	Mastery of matter and energy; Invincibility
47-49. The mechanisms of psychic processes, sensation, perception, various forms of consciousness	Mastery over the organs and Prakriti
50. The psychic process of knowing as well as Self-knowledge	Freedom from suffering and obstacles except in seed form ; omnipotence, omniscience
53. Single moments and their succession	Discriminative knowledge in time

However, as stated in III-51, giving up these powers leads to destruction of the seed of bondage. Attachment and pride are obstacles which may prevent the individual from proceeding further. (Mishra 382) At the stage described in this aphorism, all the seeds of stress fall away together with the perception of the individual mind; the seeker has achieved absolute identity with Purusha, Brahman . Patanjali calls this state tarakam--the Nirvanic and absolute--which has all things for its knowledge. "This means that it has intuitive knowledge at all times of one whole--past, present, future--with the sum of all its states." (Mishra 389). The mind of the individual becomes as pure and true as the Self which is the essence of all knowledge and truth (Prabhavananda How to Know God 201).

IV. ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE

The title of Section IV is variously translated as "Independence" (Prasada), "Enlightenment" (Mishra), "Liberation" (Prabhavananda), and "On the Self-in-Itself" (Mukerji). In Patanjali's epistemology, the state described in III-56 is the highest form of knowledge; senses of independence, enlightenment, freedom, and so forth are expressions of that field of knowing. This section continues a discussion of psychic powers and karma and introduces Patanjali's description of the mind which is capable of attaining absolute knowledge. Patanjali acknowledges that psychic phenomena not only are a by-product of progress on the path to enlightenment, but also may occur by means of inherited or environmental factors, changes in the bodily chemistry caused by drugs, asanas, and other means, the use of mantras , and the practice of austerities (e.g., the hallucinogenic effects associated with starvation).

He then embarks on a discussion of the role which good and evil play in the evolution of beings from lower to higher consciousness (IV-2-3). In Yoga, good and evil deeds do not advance evolution in Prakriti proactively, but simply remove or erect obstacles to progress, as a farmer removes obstacles in a water course to enable water to flow through naturally. This contrasts sharply with both religious and secular views of evolution in the West, in which will and action are catalysts to change and in which the natural order, if left alone or negatively affected, will devolve into chaos. (One deviation from this perspective is noted in Christian philosophers who argue that salvation is through grace alone, not by good works).

The role of actions, or karma, is explored through IV-9. Mishra notes that karma is not a material cause, but is instrumental in both the evolution and involution of Prakriti, which itself plays the role of material cause (Mishra 407). When obstacles are removed, the creative power of Prakriti flows naturally into the essential mind. Patanjali suggests that the yogi may be able to create a number of secondary minds over which the original mind exercises control. IV-5. There exist many activities by innumerable minds, but the original Mind directs all. This is not as far-fetched as it may at first sound to the scientifically oriented. On a practical, day-to-day basis, individuals often experience the existence of mind at several level, e.g., the level of “monkey mind” which chatters and runs uncontrolled and the level of “controlling mind” which forces the wandering mind to become quiet and concentrate on a single object. (Holt)

Samadhi alone purifies the mind and liberates it from all karma. Karmas of most people fall into three categories: white, or harmless, which involves study, self-discipline, and meditation; black, or evil, which causes injury to others; white, and black, which depend on both internal and external means, and have mixed results. When the conditions are right, a particular form of karma will manifest itself. Tendencies, which have no beginning, persist through space, class, and time and express themselves in resulting karma. However, Patanjali says that the illumined yogi has evolved beyond the reach of these three forms of karma., partly through the action of removing the focus of the mind (which houses tendencies) from sense-objects. Foreshadowing the science of genetics (and psychoanalysis), Patanjali suggests that every individual and object contains both the seed of its past and the potential of its future (IV-12), implied or evident according to the balance of the gunas which work in harmony in all things.

Sutras 15 through 26 explore the nature of mind. Mind is other than its object, but an object cannot be said to exist if it owes its existence to the perception of only a single mind. Mind is not self-luminous, since it itself is an object of perception. Patanjali admits the reality of an objective world independent of mental perception (Prabhavananda How to Know God 214). IV-17. An object is known or unknown to the extent that the mind reacts to and acknowledges it. While nature (Prakriti) changes, the Self, which knows all the thought-waves of the mind, is unchanging. The mind, however, is like an intermediary between Prakriti and Purusha for it reflects both the Self and the objects of perception. Nonetheless, it cannot act independently for its own sake: it is a compound substance with an infinite number of karmic forces. It exists for the service of the Self (Purusha) alone.

An individual of discrimination ceases to regard the mind with the Self. When a mind tends toward discriminative reasoning, it is on the path which leads to absolute knowledge. Patanjali stresses the importance of remaining undistracted by past tendencies and impressions and in particular by psychic phenomena. Through the resulting samadhi, one gains perfect knowledge and freedom from both suffering and the power of karma. IV-31. Knowledge, like a breaking rain cloud, floods the consciousness, sweeping away error. In the infinite power of this awareness, the objective world shrinks to something small and insignificant. The gunas shrivel away, having served their purpose, resolving themselves into the engine of Prakriti. The Self, radiant as the sun after rain, shines forth in absolute knowledge in Nirguna Purusha where there is no difference between perceiver and perceived.

THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI

Phrased and interpreted from line-by-line translations of the original Sanskrit by Linda Brown Holt

I-1 The following is an explanation of Yoga.

I-2 By controlling the currents of thought, one can attain the state of union with Brahman which is called Yoga.

I-3 The seeker after truth finds this state of union in his or her own original nature.

I-4 When not in yogic consciousness, the individual identifies only with the currents of thought carried by the mind.

I-5 There are five kinds of currents or thought-waves, some painful and some pleasant.

I-6 The currents of thought are: real knowledge, false knowledge, verbal delusion, deep sleep, and memory.

I-7 The varieties of real knowledge are: direct perception, inference, and reliable testimony.

I-8 When knowledge is not based upon the true nature of its object, it is false knowledge.

I-9 When words do not correspond to reality, they give rise to verbal delusion.

I-10 The natural absence of waking consciousness is sleep.

I-11 Memory returns the past experience of an object to the present..

I-12 Through practice and detachment, currents of thought can be controlled.

I-13 Practice is concentrated mental effort to keep the mind firmly fixed on the higher consciousness.

I-14 Practice becomes firmly rooted when it is cultivated continuously, with sincere attention, over a long period of time.

I-15 Detachment from the desire for what is seen or heard brings a sense of self-mastery.

I-16 The highest form of detachment takes place when the individual transcends the three ruling principles of the universe (the gunas) in order to focus exclusively on the Self.

I-17 One realizes the unity of the entire universe as united with the Self by concentrating on a single object through reasoning, philosophical discrimination, joyful comprehension, and individual awareness. This is samprajnata samadhi, characterized by union with Purusha.

I-18 One realizes the unity of the entire universe as identified with the Self by constantly monitoring one's thought-waves without focusing on a single object. This is asamprajnata samadhi, characterized by identity with Purusha.

I-19 Knowledge in which the individual is absorbed in the world of matter and phenomenal mind does not lead to absolute knowledge of the Self. This is bhava-pratyaya samadhi .

- I-20 The individual may transcend this state and achieve absolute knowledge of the Self through self-discipline, tremendous enthusiasm, and energy, attention, and meditative practice. This is upaya pratyaya asamprajnata samadhi.
- I-21 Those who work with speed and intensity are most successful in their practice.
- I-22 For best results, one should increase the intensity of practice from mild to moderate, and from moderate to extremely intensive.
- I-23 One can also achieve absolute knowledge by devotion to God (Ishvara).
- I-24 Ishvara represents a special power of consciousness, unblemished by ignorance and not subject to the stresses of ordinary life, the consequences of mental or physical acts, tendencies created in the mind as the result of actions or the results of these consequences or tendencies.
- I-25: Knowledge, which in others is but a seed, reaches its ultimate fruition in Ishvara.
- I-26 Not being limited by time, Ishvara was also the teacher of the first gurus.
- I-27 The word which embodies the essence of this Great One is Om.
- I-28 To experience the divine presence, repeat that name and ponder its meaning.
- I-29 Through this practice, obstacles to awareness are removed and inward consciousness is attained.
- I-30 Obstacles to knowledge are: sickness, mental idleness, doubt, negligence, sloth, failure to abstain from sense pleasures, confused understanding, and inability to attain and remain in a yogic state.
- I-31 These distractions bring with them grief, anxiety, worry, unsteadiness of body and irregular breathing.
- I-32 They can be removed with a single element: practice.
- I-33 The mind is purified and calmed by developing affection for the happy, compassion for the suffering, joyfulness toward the virtuous and equanimity to those who remain in delusion and error.
- I-34 Proper breathing makes the mind peaceful and removes obstacles.
- I-35 Extrasensory perceptions encourage progress in concentration.
- I-36 Concentration on the Inner Light (the transcendent nature of Purusha) also stabilizes the mind and produces self-confidence.
- I-37 It is similarly beneficial to concentrate on a saint or revered authority who has learned to overcome obstacles and to control the passions.
- I-38 And the mind may become stabilized by concentrating on dreams or the state of deep, dreamless sleep.
- I-39 One may, in fact, concentrate on any object which makes the mind calm and serene.
- I-40 By practicing concentration, one acquires infinite mastery of everything from the smallest subatomic par-

ticle to the vastness of distant space.

I-41 As a pure crystal reflects images in its range, so the calm mind takes on the identity of the object of its focus. This transformational process is called samapattih .

I-42 When the mind identifies with a gross object of concentration mixed with the awareness of word, meaning, and idea, this is called savitarka samadhi .

I-43 When the mind identifies with a gross object unmixed with awareness of word, meaning, and idea, so that the object shines forth alone, this is called nirvitarka samadhi .

I-44 Transformation of the mind into subtle objects limited by time and space is called savichara . The mind transformed into subtle objects not limited by time and space is called nirvichara .

I-45 Prakriti , primordial nature, underlies all subtle objects.

I-46 These (four) kinds of samadhi contain the seeds of desire and attachment.

I-47 When there is an undisturbed, pure stream of consciousness, the radiance of absolute knowledge illuminates the mind.

I-48 In this state of concentration, intuitive and absolute knowledge are one.

I-49 The intuitive knowledge of samadhi is different from knowledge gained from books, lectures, and discursive reasoning. It is direct knowledge of truth.

I-50 The experience of the highest state of concentration destroys old habits and tendencies, transforming the personality.

I-51 When all the lower tendencies of mind have been subsumed into the highest consciousness, one enters the seedless state of samadhi .

II-1. To achieve the goal of Yoga, one must first practice self-discipline, study spiritual literature, and surrender to the One.

II-2 Through these means, we can eliminate the stresses which distract us from the pursuit of truth and discover that the individual consciousness is in fact one with the larger Self.

II-3 The stresses which afflict us are obstacles to the discovery of truth. These stresses are pure ignorance itself, the delusion that the individual self is all, attachment, aversion, and fear of death.

II-4 All suffering is caused by ignorance. The other stresses are contained within ignorance, whether they are latent, abbreviated, temporarily overcome or fully functioning.

II-5 Ignorance is acceptance of the temporal as the eternal, the tainted as the pure, the painful as the pleasant, and the individual ego as the Self.

II-6 Egoism occurs when one confuses the Self which sees with the individual instrument of seeing.

II-7 Attachment is that which lingers on pleasure.

II-8 Aversion is that which focuses on pain.

II-9 The desire to live and the dread of death exist in both the ignorant and the wise. One may infer from this the reality of past lives in which death has been experienced.

II-10 The obstacles to knowledge caused by the five forms of stress can be removed once they have devolved back to their primal origins.

II-11 When they reach a most troublesome state of development, obstacles can be overcome through meditation.

II-12 The unconscious mind is the storehouse of karmas (the consequences of mental or physical actions), all of which have their origins in these stresses. This is the cause of suffering now and in future lives.

II-13 As long as this storehouse--the cause--exists, there will be suffering--the effect--which is expressed by converting the One into the appearance of the many (the existence of species, the length of life, experiences of pain and pleasure).

II-14 The consequence is material pleasure and pain, experienced according to one's measure of good and evil.

II-15 To the discriminating mind, the entire material world, whether perceived as pleasant or unpleasant, brings suffering through the loss of happiness, the anticipation of pain, and the awakening of new desires.

II-16 Suffering which has not yet occurred may be avoided.

II-17. Confusing the subject with the object is the root cause of avoidable suffering.

II-18. Characteristics of the objective world are illumination, motion, and inertia. The objective world exists to be experienced and to lead the individual to liberation.

II-19 There are four stages of evolution which the characteristics of the objective world pass through: perfect equilibrium among all three forces; the appearance of ego-consciousness; the growth of combinations among these forces, forming the mind and inner essence of things; and the development of the physical (material) world.

II-20 The Self is pure consciousness even though it may appear to take on the limitations of the senses and the individual mind.

II-21. The material universe exists only to serve the purpose of the Self.

II-22 The material universe in all its multiplicity, which is no longer real to those who attain absolute knowledge, continues to appear real to those who are unenlightened.

II-23 When consciousness is identified with the material world, it is easy for the Self to be confused with the individual self.

II-24 This confusion is caused by ignorance.

II-25 When ignorance is destroyed, this confusion ceases. With the disappearance of this confusion, the Self is

liberated from bondage.

II-26 Ignorance is destroyed by rooting out the causes of suffering through knowledge of the differences between the material world and consciousness.

II-27 Intuitive knowledge is developed through seven stages.

II-28 Once all impurities have been removed by practice, the darkness of ignorance is dispersed by the light of the Self.

II-29 The eight practices which remove ignorance are: Yama, moral conduct; Niyama, ritual purification; Asana, posture which is steady, firm, and pleasant; Pranayama, regulation of breath; Pratyahara, withdrawal of the mind from sense objects; Dharana, concentration, attention which is focused on a fixed point; Dhyana, meditation; Samadhi, cognitive absorption in absolute knowledge.

II-30 Yama includes harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and freedom from greed.

II-31 These yamas are the universal great vows for all who pursue the path of truth. They are not limited by class, country, time, or circumstance.

II-32 Niyama includes purity, cleanliness, contentment, self-discipline, study, and surrender of self to the Supreme.

II-33 When overcoming destructive forces, one should cultivate their opposites.

II-34 Destructive forces are thoughts which rise from greed, anger or ignorance which harm an individual or others. Existing in mild, moderate or extreme form, they cause an infinite cycle of suffering. To overcome these forces, one should cultivate qualities diametrically opposed to them.

II-35 In the presence of one who practices harmlessness, all living beings surrender their hostility.

II-36 When the mind is fully committed to truth, one's actions are blessed with success.

II-37 Abstention from thievery leads to prosperity.

II-38 Sexual self-control leads to spiritual energy.

II-39 By surrendering greed, one comes to understand the process of birth and death.

II-40 Through purity and cleanliness, one is protected from infection from others, both in a physical and psychological sense.

II-41 Purity of mind leads to a state of readiness to perceive the Self.

II-42 Contentment leads to the supreme happiness.

II-43 When impurities are removed through self-discipline, physical and mental perfection may be achieved.

II-44 Through study and the repetition of mantras one achieves the direct perception of the Supreme.

- II-45 Surrender to Ishvara leads to absorption in absolute knowledge (samadhi).
- II-46. Right posture (asana) is nothing more than to remain motionless in an aesthetic pose.
- II-47 Through the release of tension and the cultivation of relaxation, one may create a suitable context for the realization of consciousness.
- II-48 The conflicts of the material world do not affect those who pursue truth in a relaxed state, free of tension.
- II-49 After mastering posture, one must control the breath.
- II-50 Ways of controlling the breath include stopping it internally, externally, and by total restraint. Breaths may be short or long, regulated by time, space, and number.
- II-51 One form of breath control consists of counteracting the natural processes of inspiration and expiration.
- II-52 Perfect control of the breath leads to uncovering the light of the Self.
- II-53 The mind is then ready for concentration on pure consciousness.
- II-54 Pratyahara permits the sense organs to withdraw themselves from material objects and sublimate their energy in the mind.
- II-55 From this practice comes control over the senses.
- III-1 Dharana is concentration on something which is either general or specific.
- III-2 Dhyana is meditation, or focus for a sustained period of time.
- III-3 Samadhi is the absolute knowledge in which the mind becomes the object of its focus.
- III-4 The state which combines concentration, meditation, and absolute knowledge is called samyama.
- III-5 By mastering Samyama one experiences the light of intuitive knowledge.
- III-6 Through its application, one discovers progressively higher stages of consciousness.
- III-7 Of the eight practices which remove ignorance, these last three--dharana, dhyana , and samadhi--work directly from within to speed progress along the way.
- III-8 However, they are external means when compared to the seedless state of absolute knowledge, asamparjnata samadhi .
- III-9 At this highest level of concentration, destructive impulses vanish and constructive energies arise. This state is characterized by union of the mind with Mind.
- III-10 At this stage, the stream of consciousness flows purely in perfect calm and serenity, according to its inherent nature.
- III-11 Multiplicity is displaced by unity when the mind attains this samadhi.

- III-12 In this state of single focus, there is little difference between past and present.
- III-13 The mind transcends the three conditions of gross and subtle matter: physical, chemical, and form.
- III-14 A substance is subject to change in all its states: past, present, and future.
- III-15 The process of change gives rise to evolution.
- III-16 By “making samyama “ on these changes, one gains knowledge of the past and future.
- III-17 Samyama on a word or symbol brings knowledge of the sounds of all living beings.
- III-18 Samyama on previous currents of thought brings knowledge of one’s past lives.
- III 19 Samyama on distinguishing marks of another person’s body brings knowledge of the nature of a person’s mind...
- III-20 ...but not the contents of that mind.
- III- 21 Samyama on the form of one’s body cloaks one’s body in invisibility and silence.
- III-22 This explains how objects which exist to our senses may seem to disappear.
- III-23 Samyama on karmas experienced now and in the future brings knowledge of the exact time of one’s death and signs of extraordinary events.
- III-24 Samyama on qualities such as friendliness and compassion imbue one with these qualities.
- III-25 Samyama on a particular strength brings possession of that strength.
- III-26 Samyama on the Inner Light brings knowledge of what is subtle, hidden, and distant.
- III-27 Samyama on the sun brings knowledge of the universe.
- III-28 Samyama on the moon brings knowledge of the arrangement of the stars.
- III-29 Samyama on the polestar brings knowledge of the motions of the stars.
- III-30 Samyama on the central nervous system brings knowledge of the constitution of the body
- III-31 Samyama on the centers of appetite and thirst brings the ability to overcome these desires.
- III-32 Samyama on the internal center of gravity brings the steadiness of individual consciousness.
- III-33 Samyama on the radiant light in the center of the head brings direct perception of the One.
- III-34 Samyama on the radiant light of Brahman (Purusha) without any specific location assures that this direct perception will absolutely occur.
- III-35 Samyama on the radiant light in the heart brings knowledge of the Cosmic Mind.

III-36 Attachment to the phenomenal world arises from a failure to discriminate between the temporal self and the Self which is everlasting. Samyama on the principle of Self-existence brings Self-knowledge.

III-37 Through Samyama on pure consciousness (Purusha), the thresholds of the senses are extended, and heightened capacities of sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell are experienced.

III-38 These paranormal perceptions are obstacles to attaining enlightenment if they distract and excite the mind. Used properly, however, they help one overcome obstacles and lead to samadhi.

III-39 Through freedom from the body's bondage and a knowledge of the subtle energies at work in others, one's mind may enter another person's body.

III-40. Samyama on control of bodily functions and physical energy brings mastery of dangers associated with mud, water, thorns, and other threats, and victory over death.

III-41 Samyama on control of bodily temperature brings the ability to project light (aura).

III-42 Samyama on control of inner hearing divine hearing.

III-43 Samyama on the relationship between body and ether brings experiences of levitation and flying.

III-44 Samyama on currents of thought withdrawn from oneself and projected into another's body destroys the facade which conceals true knowledge .

III-45 Samyama on physical objects brings mastery of the material world and its energy.

III-46 Mastery over the material world brings supernatural powers, perfection of body and mind, and knowledge that matter and energy cannot be destroyed.

III-47 Beauty, grace, strength, and the hardness of a diamond are characteristics of perfection of the body.

III-48 Samyama on sensation and perception, analysis and synthesis as performed by the mind, breaking down all objects into Self and other by the ego-consciousness, and realization about the nature of objects by one's higher consciousness leads to mastery over the senses.

III-49 Mastery over the senses brings quickness of mind, the power to perceive without using the senses and victory over Prakriti.

III-50 Samyama on higher consciousness and discriminative knowledge of the Self makes one all-knowing and all-powerful.

III-51 Giving up even these powers leads to destruction of the very essence of bondage and the experience of liberation.

III-52 Realization is not possible if one is attached to the material world or conceited about one's progress on the path.

III-53 Samyama on single moments and their succession in time brings discriminative knowledge.

III-54 This develops discernment of two similar events or objects who cannot otherwise be distinguished by class, qualities or place.

- III-55 One who has absolute discriminative knowledge understands all objects at the same time, in every moment, and through all their transformations.
- III-56 Absolute knowledge, which destroys ignorance and frees us forever, occurs when our higher consciousness is purified to the level of Purusha. This is unalterable fact.
- IV-1 Supernatural powers are obtained variously by birth, chemical means, the power of a word (mantra) or self-discipline.
- IV-2 The change from lower to higher level of existence occurs as Prakriti, the energy of the phenomenal universe, surges through the body, senses, and mind.
- IV-3 Behavior does not influence this transformation, but simply removes obstacles to progress, as a farmer removes objects which interfere with the growth of crops.
- IV-4 One who experiences a higher state of Mind can produce many individual selves (to work through one's karmas).
- IV-5 There exist many activities by innumerable minds, but the original Mind directs all.
- IV-6 Of the various kinds of mind, only that which is born of samadhi is free of the consequences of past and present action (karmas).
- IV-7 The karmas of enlightened people are neither evil nor good; the karmas of others are evil, good or a combination of both.
- IV-8 Only those karmas are manifested for which conditions are favorable.
- IV-9 Because of the subconscious memory of past tendencies, the law of cause and effect continues to operate despite apparent differences in class, space, and time.
- IV-10 Because these tendencies have always existed, our minds contain an unending reservoir of impressions and habits.
- IV-11 Karmas are sustained by the application of cause and effect. When this application does not exist, karma does not exist.
- IV-12 Past, present, and future exist in their own real nature. Matter and energy may be transformed, but cannot be destroyed.
- IV-13 Matter and energy are apparent or inherent, according to the nature of the cosmic forces (gunas).
- IV-14 As the changing forces of the universe are essentially unified, so there is an underlying oneness in all things which is the perfect reality.
- IV-15 While the object is the same, the appearance is different depending on the individual mind which considers it.
- IV-16 An object cannot be dependent for its existence on the perception of a single mind. For if that mind vanished, what would happen to the object?

IV-17 An object is known or unknown to the extent that the mind reacts to and acknowledges it.

IV-18 Because it is all-knowing, all-powerful, unchanging, and ever-present, Purusha, the conscious principle of the universe, knows all the transformations of the mind throughout eternity.

IV-19 The mind is not self-luminous; it is illumined.

IV-20 The mind cannot know subject and object, Prakriti and Purusha, at the same time.

IV-21 It would be absurd to imagine a world in which one mind depends on a second mind for its existence, and that mind on a third, ad infinitum.

IV-22 The Self, which is one with Purusha, is all-knowing, all-powerful, unchanging, and ever-present. But because it reflects the currents of thought flowing within its own instrument of knowing--the individual mind--it mistakenly identifies with its own higher, but limited, consciousness.

IV-23 The mind is not entirely objective. It reflects both the seer and the seen, the subject, and the object.

IV-24 Although it contains an infinite number of material forces and energies which link it to the phenomenal universe, the mind exists solely for the service of Purusha because of the complex way it is structured and makes associations.

IV-25 The discriminating individual ceases to identify the Self with body, mind, and senses.

IV-26 When this mistaken identity is removed and the Self appears, the mind becomes pure and serene, leaning toward the freedom of absolute knowledge.

IV-27 Distractions may arise if one relaxes one's powers of discrimination even slightly.

IV-28 Removal of these distractions is dealt with in the section on stresses and obstacles (II-2).

IV-29 That person who remains undistracted in the continuous practice of discriminative knowledge, with no selfish desire, personal attachment or ulterior motive, achieves the highest samadhi, the "rain cloud of consciousness."

IV-30 Suffering and all the actions leading to suffering end.

IV-31. Free of all disguises and impurities, the mind is transformed into the Cosmic Mind which is the source of all knowledge. This knowledge, like a breaking rain cloud, floods the consciousness, sweeping away error. In the infinite power of this awareness, the objective world shrinks to something small and insignificant.

IV-32 The sequence of the cosmic energies, the gunas, ceases, having served its purpose.

IV-33 Time, in effect, stands still.

IV-34 The cosmic energies return to their origins in Prakriti. The Self is established in its own nature, in the absolute knowledge of Purusha.

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