ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS
SENSE OF AGENCY: THE MIND IN SĀMKHYA & YOGA

By HEMAL P. TRIVEDI

Thesis Director:
Edwin F. Bryant

Sāmkhya and Yoga are two of the most renowned and influential schools of Indian philosophy. With its rigorous introduction to metaphysics, Sāmkhya revolutionizes Indian philosophy by delineating the constituents of reality: puruṣa (consciousness) and prakṛti (matter). Yoga, the sister school of Sāmkhya, borrows from the latter’s metaphysics and introduces a psychologically based paradigm that allows for practitioners to apply the metaphysical teachings of Sāmkhya. Using the metaphysical and psychological constructs of the mind in both schools, this paper serves to ask the question: Which school of thought provides more of a sense of agency to the practitioner? In other words, which school allows the practitioner to feel that he/she is an agent of his/her actions? Using the Sāmkhya Kārikā to represent Sāmkhya, this paper explores the impersonal feelings evoked by the predominance of metaphysics in this text. Using the Yoga Sūtras to represent Yoga, this paper reveals the highly personal and egoistic reading provided by psychology and practice based verses. Using three concepts to measure a sense of agency (frequency, language of the commentators and results of personal effort) it is clear that Yoga provides the practitioner with a more promising feeling of ownership over his/her pursuits.
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“Sankhya and Yoga are different,” The childish declare; not the wise. Even with one of them, practiced correctly, one finds the fruits of both.” – Bhagavad Gītā (5.4)

Sāṃkhya is the oldest school of Indian philosophy that introduces the dichotomy of consciousness and material nature. Much of Indian philosophy has been influenced by Sāṃkhya. By grasping the latter’s metaphysics, one can understand the psychological implications of the structure of the mind according to its tenets. Before discussing the mind in Sāṃkhya, it is crucial for the reader to understand the school’s proposed metaphysics surrounding it. Once these fundamentals are established, it is easier to understand the functions of each metaphysical entity and the significance of each part in relation to the whole purpose of the mind’s ultimate endeavor of attaining discriminative wisdom.

Yoga is known as the sister school of Sāṃkhya. In systematically explaining the individual’s quest for stilling the mind, Yoga shares its metaphysics with Sāṃkhya in delineating the psychological and practice based paths of aṣṭāṅga and kriyā yoga. Where Sāṃkhya places its emphasis on discriminative wisdom, Yoga uses this same wisdom as a step towards its ultimate goal of stilling the mind. A key difference between the two schools is that Sāṃkhya will divide the mind into three fundamental components, while Yoga will use a cohesive single unit. In the Bhagavad Gītā verse listed above, Lord Kṛṣṇa¹, states that the schools of Sāṃkhya and Yoga are not different but are very much the same with regards to the end goal. I am interested in exploring if the two philosophical schools of thought do differ and if so, in what ways.

¹ Kṛṣṇa is a key figure known to be a transcendent God in the Bhagavad Gītā. In the story, he is the charioteer of the warrior, Arjuna who guides and instructs the latter to fight in an emotionally charged battle. Arjuna’s enemies are his close family members, leading to a conflict between duty and his material attachments.
In order to thoroughly understand and analyze an argument about the mind and its ‘sense of agency’, this paper will have a primary and secondary purpose. The primary purpose of this paper is to delineate the differences in the mind in both philosophical schools of Sāṃkhya and Yoga. By exploring the different views on the mind through the lenses of these prevailing schools of thought, one can grasp a solid understanding of the important expressions of Indian philosophy.

The secondary purpose of this paper is to answer the question: Which school of thought is more likely to contribute to the practitioner’s ‘sense of agency’? This paper will explore key differences between Sāṃkhya’s predominantly metaphysical approach and Yoga’s psychological emphasis. More deeply, one can find that Sāṃkhya introduces the goal of discriminative wisdom in a highly impersonalized manner while, on the contrary, Yoga introduces the goal of stilling the mind in a more personalized manner. What is the difference between an impersonal and personal reading of these schools of Indian philosophy, and how do they affect the practitioner? I argue that due to Yoga’s more egoistic and personal approach to its goal and the description of the mind itself, the reader or practitioner has more of an inclination to believe that he/she has a greater ‘sense of agency’ over his/her actions towards stilling the mind. Conversely, due to Sāṃkhya’s less egoistic, more passive and impersonal approach to its goal and mind, the reader or practitioner has less of an inclination towards feeling a ‘sense of agency’.

The primary sources used in this paper are the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, Sāṃkhya Śūtras and Yoga Śūtras. The commentaries for the Sāṃkhya Kārikā are by Vācaspati Miśra and Gaudapada. The commentary for the Sāṃkhya Śūtras is by Vijñānabhikṣu. The

2 Referring to language that does not relate to an individual
3 Referring to language that relates to an individual
commentaries for the Yoga Sūtras are by Vyāsa, Hariharānanda, Rāmānanda Sarasvati and a modern commentary by Edwin F. Bryant. The secondary sources are Classical Sāṃkhya: An Interpretation of Its History and Meaning written by Gerald James Larson, Free Will, Agency and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy by Matthew R. Dasti and Edwin F. Bryant.

Methodology

Words that are written in bold\(^4\) are the English translations of Sanskrit terms and the headings of every section. Words that are written in single quotations\(^5\) are the opposite of the words written in bold and do not necessarily have a Sanskrit equivalent. Words that are written in bold and also have single quotations indicate terms that are from another academic discipline\(^6\) besides religious studies, like psychology. Words that are written in italics\(^7\) are Sanskrit terms used in the relevant texts. Words that are written with double quotations are mostly direct quotations. At times, to draw the reader’s attention to certain words/phrases, the latter will be surrounded by double quotations\(^8\).

Sense of Agency

‘Sense of agency’ is defined as the feeling of being in control of one’s decisions (Barlas & Obhi). One is seen as the author of one’s own consequences and actions. In translation, this phenomenon can be described as follows: “I feel that I am an agent and have made this decision.” Adding onto this definition, it would make sense that decisions, actions and consequences must be attached to an “I.” They must have a centralized “I.”

\(^4\) E.g. intellect, ego, discrimination
\(^5\) E.g. ‘non-discrimination,’ ‘inactive’
\(^6\) E.g. ‘sense of agency’, ‘intentional binding’
\(^7\) E.g. citta, buddhi, ahaṃkāra. The word centralization will also be italicized.
\(^8\) E.g. “I,” “his”
For example, “run” turns into “I” run and similarly, “mind” becomes “my” mind and intellect translates into “his” intellect. With action, one must feel that one has made the decision to run. In the sense of possession, one must feel that one is ‘possessing’ something or someone that is a part of a cohesive ‘I’. In the academic field of psychology, ‘sense of agency’ is often studied by the ‘intentional binding effect’ which refers to the relationship between a perceived voluntary action and its effect. Specifically, ‘intentional binding’ is the ‘temporal attraction’ between the perceived time of a voluntary action and the effect (Haggard et al., 2002; Haggard and Clark, 2003; Haggard et al., 2009; Moore et al., 2009; Strother and Obhi, 2009; Strother et al., 2010).

The ‘intentional binding effect’ is said to be linked to a ‘sense of agency’ (Moore & Haggard, 2010). It is “…the subjective compression of the temporal interval between a voluntary action and its external sensory consequence” (Moore & Obhi). In other words, greater ‘intentional binding’ involves tightening the gap between times of the perceived action and result. Therefore, the greater the ‘intentional binding’, the greater one’s ‘sense of agency’ will be. Most importantly, the definition uses the word “subjective”. It is not the actual time difference between the cause and effect, but the subjectively perceived difference between the cause and effect experienced by the participant. The difference is that rather than measuring “what is”, a ‘sense of agency’ is

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9 At times the term “mind,” will be written simply as mind or mind. When it is not bold, it is referring to a general term for mind often associated with Sāmkhya because there is not a Sanskrit equivalent for the mind consisting of the intellect, ego and mind. When it refers to the specific third part of the mind (manas), then it will be written in bold. The only other time mind will be written in bold is when it is affiliated with yoga because the word citta is also related to the word mind.

10 The terms ‘his’, ‘your’, ‘my’ all have a centralized ‘I’ as a common root. For example, ‘His’ clearly does not represent my personal feeling of agency, but it explains another individual’s sense of I’ness attributed to something else.

11 For example, the time between a perceived voluntary action (moving hands together) and a result (a clap) can indicate ‘intentional binding’. The time between this, more specifically, the ‘attraction’ between this cause and effect is known as ‘intentional binding’.


reliant on “what feels”. This implies that “what feels” as a faster result, will more likely contribute to an individual feeling like an agent\(^\text{12}\).

There will be three main points used to explain the differences between Sāṃkhya and Yoga with regards to a ‘sense of agency’.

I) Frequency\(^\text{13}\)

II) Language\(^\text{14}\) of the commentators (Centralization)

III) Visibility\(^\text{15}\) of Results

Premises

The thesis held in this paper within the framework of the exposition on the mind will have three main premises:

1) A ‘sense of agency’ is more likely noticed by a practitioner who is frequently exposed to verses about psychology and practical paths while, most importantly, having the freedom to choose from a variety of starting points.

2) A ‘sense of agency’ is more likely felt when commentators use language and references that centralize metaphysical concepts, ideas, and practices to an individual as opposed to an external, “out there” entity.

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\(^{12}\) The next step would be to observe the relationship between the “actual” time difference between the “subjective feeling” time difference. This will not be discussed, but for now the reader can assume that in these experiments, the subjective time difference is used.

\(^{13}\) Frequency refers to the number and repetition of verses pertaining to psychology, practice, psychology/practice, metaphysics and miscellaneous. It also describes the variety of options (starting points to the same path) available to the practitioner, which will be discussed later.

\(^{14}\) Language refers to the impersonal and personal differences in explanations between the commentators (Vācaspati Miśra, Gaudapada, Vyāsa, Hariharānanda and Rāmānanda Sarasvati), including the notion of centralization.

\(^{15}\) Visibility asks the question: Can the results of the paths be experienced by the practitioner? Can the results of Sāṃkhya be experienced and can the results of Yoga be experienced? Overall, it refers to the perceived effects from the causes of one’s actions.
3) A *sense of agency* is more likely noticed when an individual can experience the effects and results of his/her actions.

**Frequency (Repetition & Multitude of Paths)**

The first measure of frequency refers to the number of verses regarding a particular topic that are available to the reader or aspirant, specifically in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* and *Yoga Sutras*. The topics will include:

a) Psychology  
b) Practice  
c) Psychology/Practice  
d) Metaphysics  
e) Miscellaneous

![Graph of Sāṃkhya Kārikā topics](chart.png)
Figure I: Bar graph of the five categories and number of relevant verses in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*

![Bar graph of the five categories and number of relevant verses in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*](image)

Figure II: Bar graph of the three condensed categories demonstrating the difference between psychology, practice, psychology/practice and metaphysics in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*.

In the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*, there are a total of seventy-two verses. Of the total seventy-two verses, there are roughly around fifteen\(^{16}\) verses (20.83\%) concerning psychology, six\(^{17}\) concerning practice (8.33\%), zero concerning psychology/practice (0\%), forty-one\(^{18}\) (56.94\%) concerning metaphysics and ten\(^{19}\) (13.89\%) concerning

\(^{16}\) **Psychology:** *Kārikā* 1, 2, 23, 24, 27, 35, 36, 37, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 65

\(^{17}\) **Practice:** *Kārikā* 44, 45, 51, 64, 67, 68

\(^{18}\) **Metaphysics:** *Kārikā* 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 66

\(^{19}\) **Miscellaneous:** *Kārikā* 4, 5, 6, 7, 30, 61, 69, 70, 71, 72
miscellaneous\textsuperscript{20} topics. Clearly, this text has an emphasis on metaphysics. Furthermore, in figure II we can see that even after placing psychology, practice, and psychology/practice together, there are still twenty-one (29.17\%) as opposed to forty-one verses (56.94\%) concerning the topic of metaphysics, leaving only ten verses as miscellaneous (13.89\%). It is evident that a reader or practitioner will primarily gain a metaphysical feel when reading this text because over fifty percent of the text is related to metaphysics. Therefore, it is important to place ourselves in the role of the reader or practitioner, who is constructing a particular reality from this school of thought.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{yoga_sutra.png}
\caption{Yoga Sūtra}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{20} Many of the miscellaneous verses include verses on epistemology: perception, inference and verbal testimony
In the *Yoga Sūtras*, there are a total of one hundred and ninety five verses. Among them, forty-nine\(^{21}\) verses (25.13\%) are concerning psychology, fifty-seven\(^{22}\) (29.23\%) concerning practice, thirty-six\(^{23}\) (18.46\%) concerning psychology/practice, forty\(^{24}\) (20.51\%) concerning metaphysics and thirteen\(^{25}\) (6.67\%) concerning miscellaneous topics. The verses on psychology and practice taken independently are each greater than

\(^{21}\) **Psychology:** *Sūtra* I.4, I.5, I.6, I.7, I.8, I.9, I.10, I.11, I.15, I.16, I.20, I.41, I.42, I.43, I.44, I.46, I.48, II.3, II.4, II.5, II.6, II.7, II.8, II.9, II.15, II.17, II.23, II.24, II.25, II.26, II.27, III.1, III.2, III.3, III.9, III.10, III.11, III.12, III.20, III.37, IV.18, IV.19, IV.20, IV.21, IV.23, IV.25, IV.26, IV.27, IV.29


\(^{23}\) **Psychology/Practice:** *Sūtra* I.12, I.13, I.17, I.18, I.32, I.33, I.34, I.35, I.36, I.37, I.38, I.39, I.47, II.2, II.11, II.28, II.33, II.35, II.41, II.42, II.45, II.48, II.52, II.53, II.54, III.5, III.19, III.33, III.34, III.35, III.43, III.48, III.49, III.52, IV.3, IV.31

\(^{24}\) **Metaphysics:** *Sūtra* I.2, I.3, I.19, I.45, I.49, I.5, I.51, II.1, II.12, II.13, II.14, II.16, II.18, II.19, II.20, II.21, II.22, III.14, III.15, III.54, III.55, IV.2, IV.3, IV.4, IV.5, IV.6, IV.7, IV.8, IV.9, IV.10, IV.11, IV.13, IV.14, IV.15, IV.16, IV.24, IV.28, IV.32, IV.34

\(^{25}\) **Miscellaneous:** *Sūtra* I.1, I.24, I.25, I.26, I.27, I.40, III.13, III.46, III.51, IV.1, IV.12, IV.22, IV.33
metaphysics. The substantial difference is seen in figure IV, the bar graph, where after being grouped together, there are one hundred and forty two verses (72.82%) on psychology, practice, psychology/practice versus forty verses (20.51%) on metaphysics, leaving only thirteen (6.67%) to miscellaneous. Thus, there are over three times more verses on psychological and praxis than those of metaphysics in the Yoga Sūtras. Furthermore, simply chapter one alone has seventeen psychology verses which is greater than Sāmkhya Kārikā’s fifteen psychology verses. Chapter one has eight practice verses while the entire Samkhya Kārikā has only six. Finally, chapter one has thirteen psychology/practice verses while the Sāmkhya Kārikā has zero psychology and practice verses. This leaves the Sāmkhya Kārikā only in the lead in terms of metaphysics. However, it is crucial to realize that the Samkhya Kārikā only has seventy-two verses while the Yoga Sūtras has one hundred and ninety-five verses. The latter has more than double the verses.

The Function of Frequency

Frequency measures two functions: repetition and the number of options (starting points) from which to choose. In the Sāmkhya Kārikā, out of the seventy-two verses, many are metaphysically based and so the reader will get metaphysical feel. With the same logic, since the Yoga Sūtras has more psychology based verses, the reader will naturally get a more psychological or practice based feeling.

Frequency also measures the number of options available to the practitioner. When speaking of particular paths, whether organized or disorganized, the Sāmkhya Kārikā has very few verses delineating a path towards the goal of discriminative knowledge. In the Yoga Sūtras, there are a total three structured angles or starting points
for the same path from which an aspirant can choose: *kriyā yoga*, *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, *abhyaṣa* (practice) and *vairāgya* (dispassion). Each of these paths lead to the same end goal of **stilling the mind**, however, depending on the aspirant’s preference, he/she can choose to have a particular starting point. Each path has sub-steps following by detailed directions in the relevant commentaries. Furthermore, the practitioner has the ability to choose the *ālambana* used for meditation. Bryant writes “…*ālambana*, is the support for the mind and refers to any object upon which the yogi has chosen to focus or concentrate the mind” (I.10). As the practice of chanting *OM* is strongly suggested, the practitioner has a wide array of options on what to meditate. The practitioner can choose to meditate on the moon, tip of the nose, a deity, another passionless mind, etc. This freedom to choose from many options allows for a ‘**sense of agency**’.

By offering several starting points and focuses of meditation, the *Yoga Sūtras* provides the aspirant more of a ‘**sense of agency**’. How does the ability to choose from a variety of choices contribute to a ‘**sense of agency**’? There is a fundamental belief that “…agency is thought to be strongest in an “environment of opportunities” (Pettit, 2001). Thus, “…it might be expected that agency and freedom are related such that increasing levels of freedom to choose a course of action correspond to increasing levels of agency”

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26 This argument can certainly spark debate as the three limbed path of *kriyā yoga* is found within the second limb of the eight limbed path of *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. The argument is not that these are different paths, but are three separate starting points offered to a practitioner. One can argue that *kriyā yoga* is contained within *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, so why perceive them to be separate starting paths? *aṣṭāṅga yoga* contains requirements of celibacy, truthfulness, and three other virtues. What is to say of an individual who is not yet ready to perform celibacy, but wants to begin by weakening the *kleśas* (impediments)? This individual is given the option to begin with *kriyā yoga* and perhaps gradually intensify to *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. What is then to be said about *abhyaṣa* and *vairāgya*? **Practice** and **dispassion** is offered in chapter one to those who are more firmly rooted in their practice with the predominance of the *satva guṇa* (Bryant, 169). Chapter two is for practitioners who are at a more undeveloped stage, under the *rajas* and *tamas guṇas* which will be explained later. Therefore, one can choose either *kriyā* or *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. However, a more developed aspirant can choose **practice** and **dispassion** or perhaps even lean back on *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. Although this topic is highly debatable, one should remember that these are not different paths, but are different starting points.
In plain words, more freedom to choose may equate to more of a ‘sense of agency’.

In a psychological study, researchers questioned whether more action alternatives produce greater levels of ‘intentional binding’ than a limited choice set. In other words, do more action alternatives produce greater levels of a ‘sense of agency’ than less action alternatives? Participants were required to press a button (on a seven button pad). They recorded two things: their perceived time of key press followed by an auditory tone after their key press. There were three varying conditions. The “no choice condition” forced them to press one button. The “medium choice condition” allowed them to choose from three buttons. The “high choice condition” allowed them to choose from any of the seven buttons. The results demonstrate that “…the degree of overall binding\(^{27}\) was greatest when participants had the highest level of action alternatives to choose from” (Barlas & Obhi, 2013). Both the “medium” and “low choice conditions” show much lower ‘binding’ than the “high choice condition”. Thus, results show that a greater degree of choice is associated with greater ‘intentional binding’, which in turn means, a greater ‘sense of agency’.

The issue of frequency is resolved here and will not be discussed in the remainder of the paper.

Language of the Commentators (Centralizing)

\(^{27}\) ‘Binding’ once again indicates the relationship between the perceived action and the result. The closer the ‘binding’, (perceived timing between the two) the more likely to produce a ‘sense of agency’. In this case, the timing between the two, or ‘attraction’ between the two (action and result) seemed closer when there were more action alternatives.
As the inquiry into the mind proceeds, a key determinant of agency is revealed by the language used by the commentators in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā and the Yoga Sūtras. 

Centralization or centralizing is the phenomenon of applying metaphysical concepts to an individual ego. Specifically, it is the idea of focusing the metaphysical interplay between puruṣa and prakṛti onto a specific person. For instance, in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, the verses and commentaries generally have a detached explanation such as: “the intellect is ascertainment”. This statement refers to the metaphysical entity of buddhi and simply defines it. In a simplified manner, the process of centralizing will change this phrase to: one’s buddhi has ascertainment or an aspirant’s buddhi has ascertainment.

The process of centralizing applies an egoistic tone to a broadly, impersonal metaphysical statement. In addition, in a very general sense centralizing can refer to applying practices and states of mind to the individual. For instance, ‘The mind is inclined towards āsana’, versus ‘One’s mind is inclined towards āsana, indicates the difference between an impersonal and a centralized personal reading, respectively. In a general sense, centralizing involves the addition of an “I” to a particular statement regarding practice, belief, action, etc. One must pay clear attention to sentences that are centralized because through this process, metaphysical concepts are given an “I” and are transformed into psychological concepts after being attributed to the individual.

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28 Synonyms are personalizing, centering, egoic, individuating
29 This thesis is heavily reliant on the English translations of the commentators and so the original Sanskrit commentaries are not used when referring to centralized words like ‘one’, ‘his’, and so on. When personalized words are referred to in the translations, they are used as evidence for the commentator using centered language. There can certainly be a discrepancy in which the translation shows evidence of centralization through language but the original Sanskrit commentary does not. This can be a weakness in the thesis and will be explored and verified once I am more familiar with Sanskrit.
The reader will see certain verses on the mind where the commentators will explicitly use examples in relation to a person and others that will not. It will be clear how the verses that do centralize will become more personal to the reader than the ones that do not. When the mind is described in relation to an individual rather than itself as a metaphysical entity, one will gain a more relatable experience. This phenomenon can be easily noticed by the use of the words: “one”, “his”, “aspirant”, etc. The addition of these words indicates an egoic self and more responsibility on the practitioner. It is important to note that the Sāmkhya Kārikā certainly has verses and commentaries that provide examples of personalizing but the reader will see that Yoga will have more of this within the language of the commentators. The reader will see there is moderate centering in the verses specifically on the mind in both the Sāmkhya Kārikā and Yoga Sūtras\textsuperscript{30}. Gradually, one will see drastic centralizing occurring when practices are introduced in the first, second and third chapters of the Yoga Sūtras. The following format will include verses from both texts followed by their respective explanations on centralization.

### Results of Personal Effort

If a ‘sense of agency’ is the feeling of having the ability to make a decision, one must at some point know that a decision has been made either by witnessing, hearing or simply being aware that when there is an action, there is a result. Without being the slightest bit aware that there is a result from the decision, the identity of being an agent is questionable. An agent would feel more like an agent when he/she can witness the result in comparison to being unaware of it. To be an agent or to feel more like an agent is to see, hear, touch, smell or taste the result of one’s actions.

\textsuperscript{30} Verses not directly related to the mind will have more centering.
“Previous studies of the sense of agency manipulated the predicted sensory feedback related either to movement execution or to the movement’s outcome, for example by delaying the movement of a virtual hand or the onset of a tone that resulted from a button press. Such temporal sensorimotor discrepancies reduce the sense of agency” (David, Skoruppa, Gulberti, Schultz, & Engel).

In a psychological study, varying ‘delayed’ responses were measured with the moment an action was taken. The details of the experiment need not be explained, but the key piece of information to note is the difference between the perceived action and perceived result.

The left chart taken from a study (David, Skoruppa, Gulberti, Schultz and Engel) shows that there is an inverse correlation between the ‘delay of a response’ and a ‘sense of agency’: the greater the ‘delay’, the less ‘sense of agency’. This paper is not concerned with the presence or absence of a ‘delay’. Instead, the focus is on the idea that a result of a perceived action (whether ‘delayed’ or not) can make an individual feel that he/she is an agent to varying degrees.31

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31 The perceived result is indicated by the sound of a tone that is followed by a successfully perceived action indicated by clicking. Therefore, one feels more of a ‘sense of agency’ when one hears the
How do one’s perceived results followed by actions indicate one’s ‘sense of agency’ in the Śaṅkhya and Yoga traditions? Do certain paths provide visible, tangible or feeling based results that allow the practitioner to feel that he/she is an agent? At the end of the presented verses, along with an analysis on centralization, there will be an analysis on cause and effect, action and result verses that can provide aspirants with a ‘sense of agency’. At the end of the paper, the remaining verses that include cause and effect relationships that are not discussed in the general body of the paper will be briefly mentioned.

_Sāṅkhya Metaphysics_

There are two fundamental entities in Sāṅkhya: puruṣa and prakṛti. Puruṣa is a changeless, uncaused, eternal, and multitudinous witness (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 19). The term _sentience_, the ability to feel or experience, is often associated with the term consciousness which is a term used to define puruṣa as well (Larson, 171). The second entity is known as prakṛti, translated as primordial nature or primal matter (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 3). Prakṛti exists in two forms, unmanifest and manifest. Prakṛti in its unmanifest form is known as avyakta, mūlaprakṛti and pradhāna (Larson, 161). In its unmanifest form, prakṛti is uncaused, eternal, pervasive, inactive, and uniform (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 38). Some of its

sound after the click, but more specifically, when one hears that sound more closely in time to the click.

32 (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 18)
33 (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 3)
34 (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 11)
35 (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 18)
36 (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 19)
37 Pradhāna, like prakṛti is also translated as primordial nature (Vācaspati Miśra, _Kārikā_ 11).
qualities are much like those of puruṣa\textsuperscript{38} (except sentience). Generally, prakṛti differs from puruṣa because it contains guṇas\textsuperscript{39} and a manifest form.

These two uncaused entities are in interplay with one another. When puruṣa comes near\textsuperscript{40} or interacts with prakṛti, unmanifest prakṛti begins to manifest, also known as creation. In other words, avyakta prakṛti becomes vyakta, and the physical world begins to form starting from the most subtle form of matter to the most gross. The manifest form of prakṛti is producible, non-eternal, non-pervasive, active, multiform, dependent, aggregate of parts and subordinate (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 10). The terms mūlaprakṛti, avyakta and pradhāna no longer apply and the word vyakta is now used.\textsuperscript{41}

The first evolute that emerges as vyakta prakṛti is buddhi. Buddhi is known as the faculty of will and intelligence, specifically the ability to discriminate between consciousness and material nature (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 23).\textsuperscript{42} As the evolution of prakṛti proceeds, the next form of matter is ahaṃkāra, or ego. Ahaṃkāra is a sense of

\textsuperscript{38} Vācaspati Miśra writes that puruṣa and prakṛti are similar because they are uncaused, unchanged and eternal (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 11). Puruṣa has other qualities like solitary and neutral which indicate a lack of the three guṇas, which also means a lack of pleasure, pain or delusion (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 19). Note: While the Śāmkhya Kārikā use terms like witness, isolated, neutral, spectator and non-agent (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 19), it does not mention the words: eternality, infinite, uncaused, etc. The latter listed qualities about puruṣa are primarily what the commentators say about it.

\textsuperscript{39} The three guṇas will be explained in the subsequent section.

\textsuperscript{40} It is not clear how puruṣa comes together or near with prakṛti. Puruṣa is seen as the animator and initiator of the material evolution, however, it is unclear how an immaterial substance can interact with a material substance. This problem is not discussed in the Śāmkhya Kārikā or Śāmkhya Sūtras. Larson states that “Little attention is given in the Kārikā as to how the two basic principles – i.e., prakṛti and puruṣa – come together, although the text does tell us that they are together and what happens when they come together” (Larson, 172). Both entities are eternally present, however, it is unclear how puruṣa initiates the process for prakṛti to begin material evolution. The Śāmkhya Sūtras claim that passion (rajas) is the reason why material creation occurs (Vijñānabhikṣu, Sūtra 9), however, this is also unclear as well.

\textsuperscript{41} The common term of prakṛti is still used to describe the manifest form in addition to vyakta.

\textsuperscript{42} Deeper functions of the internal organs will be explained later.
I’ness or self-assertion (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 24), which will be explained in more detail in a later section. From ahamkāra, the evolution of prakṛti follows two distinct routes. Under the first condition, from a sāttvic ahamkāra, evolves the eleven sense organs separated into organs of knowledge and organs of action (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 25). The organs of knowledge are known as the eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin. The organs of action are known as speech, the hand, feet, excretory organ and organ of generation. The eleventh organ is known as the manas, which is both an organ of knowledge and action” (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 27).

The ahamkāra under the influence of tamas will produce the five primary, subtle elements (tanmātras): sound, touch, color, taste and odor (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 38). From these form the gross elements (mahābhūtas): ākāśa (ether), air, fire, water and earth. Kārikā 38 clarifies that these gross elements can be calm, turbulent or deluding depending on the element’s guṇa. For instance, a particular “thing” made of the fire element when under sattva is calm, but when under tamas is heavy. The notion of guṇa will be explained later.

Sound----->Ether
Touch----->Air
Color----->Fire
Taste----->Water
Odor----->Earth
A proper understanding of Sāṃkhya metaphysics will familiarize the reader with the foundational concepts of this school and also provide a feel of the impersonal mechanisms used to describe the two fundamental entities: puruṣa and prakṛti. One can feel the dry, distant language used to describe the constituents of material nature.

Three Internal Organs

Kārikā 22: From the Primordial Matter [prakṛti] evolves the Great Principle [buddhi]; from this evolves the I-Principle [ahāṅkāra]; from this evolves the set of sixteen [eleven sense organs and five tanmātras]; from the five of this set of sixteen [tanmātras], evolves the five elements [mahābhūtas] (65).
The mind in Sāṃkhya is essentially composed of three parts:

1. Buddhi
2. Ahamkāra
3. Manas

These internal organs are under the umbrella of vyakta prakṛti. Before explaining the three internal organs, we must be familiar with the differences between unmanifest prakṛti and manifest prakṛti.

Kārikā 10: The manifested is producible, non-eternal, non-pervasive, active, multiform, dependent, serving as a mark (of inference), aggregate of parts and subordinate. The Unmanifest is the reverse of this (38).

Vācaspati Miśra explains that the manifest is producible, which simply means that it is a product, or it can be produced. On the other hand, the ‘unmanifest’ is ‘unproduced’ because it is ‘eternal’. Conversely, the manifest is non-eternal or anityam, because it can be created and revert back to its original form (unmanifest prakṛti-avyakta) and thus undergoes change. To describe non-pervasiveness, Gaudapada writes that the manifest is not omnipresent. (Gaudapada, Kārikā 10). The ‘unmanifest’, however, is omnipresent and exists within its effects (manifestations) (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 10). Prakṛti can pervade its effects, but the effects cannot pervade the causes. Thus the causes are pervasive, while the effects are not pervasive. For example, buddhi, ahamkāra and manas cannot pervade pradhāna, but pradhāna can pervade the internal organs. To describe activity, Vācaspati Miśra writes that buddhi and the other effects are

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43 Here, mind is used loosely as a general, umbrella term. In fact, the word mind would more closely related with the term manas, but in this situation is used to describe all three internal organs: buddhi, ahamkāra and manas.

44 To describe impermanence, Vācaspati Miśra describes that the manifest can be subject to disappearance into its material cause (Kārikā 10).
mobile because they give up the body and occupy another body\textsuperscript{45} (Kārikā 10). Pradhāna, or avyakta prakṛti does not do this, as it is pervasive, it does not move. The manifest is multiform because each individual has his/her own internal organs, thus, there is not a single buddhi or ahaṃkāra. Also, the manifest is dependent because its existence depends on its previous cause (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 10). We will leave the other characteristics as they are unnecessary to define as of now.\textsuperscript{46}

Three Guṇas

Prakṛti, in its manifest and unmanifest form, is composed of the three guṇas, usually translated as the qualities of matter. These guṇas are metaphysical qualities that are in interplay with one another (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 11).

Kārikā 11: The Manifest [vyaktam-prakṛti] is constituted of the three attributes [guṇas] (of Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas), is non-distinguishable, objective, common, non-intelligent, and prolific. So also is the Primordial nature [pradhānam-prakṛti]. The Spirit [puruṣa] is the reverse of both of them and yet is similar in some respects (40).

Vācaspati Miśra states that the manifest material world is composed of these three attributes which have pleasure\textsuperscript{47}, pain and delusion as their essences, respectively. The difference between unmanifest matter (pradhāna) and manifest matter is non-distinguishable because they have the same essence. The only difference is that unmanifest is unperceivable and manifest is perceivable (except for buddhi,

\textsuperscript{45} This describes the process of reincarnation.

\textsuperscript{46} Why is it important to know these categories? The Sāṃkhya Kārikā states that if ones knows these categories one will be closer to the goal of discriminative wisdom and subsequently, the removal of suffering. Vācaspati Miśra writes that knowing the buddhi’s properties under the states of sattva and tamas are conducive to attaining discriminative wisdom (Kārikā 23). This metaphysical framework is necessary to understand the difference between the two fundamental entities, which, according to Larson, contributes to the realization that is required within Sāṃkhya (Larson, 177). The notion of discrimination will be explained later on.

\textsuperscript{47} The translator has equated the word sattva with pleasure; however, this may not be accurate if pleasure is associated with sense pleasure. Instead, one should view the word pleasure as contentment or happiness.
ahaṃkāra and manas which are inferred). They are **objective** because they are apprehended by the senses and not based on one’s idea (Vācaspati Miśra). In other words, there is an objective reality of the **manifest** that exists rather than a reality in one’s mind.

Since the **manifest** is **objective** (existing externally), it is also **common** because all **puruṣa**s apprehend it rather than only a few having the ability to perceive its presence. It is **unintelligent** because all **matter** including the buddhi is ‘insentient’, unlike **puruṣa** which is **sentience** itself. It is **prolific** because **matter** continuously produces and evolves, while **puruṣa** does not do any of this. From the perspective of this paper, the strictly metaphysical explanations of the Sāṃkhya Kārikā are important pieces of information. There is a lack of psychological attributes not only in the actual kārikā itself, but also in the commentator’s explanations of the three guṇas.

*Kārikā 12: The attributes [guṇas] are of the nature of pleasure, pain and delusion; they serve the purpose of illumination, action and restraint and they are mutually dominating and supporting, productive and cooperative (42).*

The author describes their nature, purpose and operation.

Regarding their natures, Vācaspati Miśra explains that the term prītī (pleasure) is used for sattva, aprītī (pain) for the nature of rajas and viṣāda (delusion) for tamas. Their purposes are **illumination**, **action** and **restraint**, respectively (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 12). Notice how the natures of the attributes are somewhat linked to psychological states but are immediately and primarily explained metaphysically. The author does not elaborate on **illumination** but one can perhaps interpret it as clarity and sharpness of mind based on the **sluggishness** of tamas explained later. Rajas is associated with **action** and motion and thus interacts with immobile and **buoyant** sattva by stirring it to **action**. Tamas, however, is the **restraint** of **action** and **dullness**. It would seem that
primarily rajas acts upon sattva\textsuperscript{48}, unless tamas acts upon rajas. Thus, movement acts upon buoyancy, unless stopped by restraint, although this is not entirely so as the following operations will describe their reciprocal relationships.

Vācaspati Miśra explains that the guṇas are mutually dominating because when a particular guṇa is acting, it is predominating over the other two. For example, if sattva is acting, it means that it has dominated over the other two. Thus, it is not only that rajas acts on sattva but also that sattva can overpower rajas. They are mutually supporting because when a guṇa predominates, it subserves the other two with its specific quality. For instance, if sattva predominates, it is subserves the other two with illumination. If rajas predominates, it subserves the other two with activity. If tamas predominates, it subserves the other two with restraint\textsuperscript{49}. They are mutually productive because the guṇas modify each other. Vācaspati Miśra writes that a particular guṇa rests upon the other two while producing its effects. The effects consist of the same fundamental guṇas. Gaudapada uses the example of clay turning into an earthen jar. Thus, this may indicate that the effect (jar) still consists of the same fundamental guṇas as the clay indicating that there is no difference besides the degree of modification (different levels of the guṇas).

Finally, they are mutually cooperative, meaning that they are never separated from one another. In other words, a single guṇa does not exist by itself.

Vācaspati Miśra and Gaudapada offer a slightly more psychological twist by providing an example that the same object can be perceived in various ways depending on the perceiver’s essential nature (predominating guṇa). For example, Gaudapada writes

\textsuperscript{48} Rajas can also act on Tamas.
\textsuperscript{49} One can try to visualize a block (the predominating guṇa), resting on two blocks (submissive guṇas) and impacting the other two.
that a beautiful woman can be a source of delight to bystanders but can be the source of misery to the other wives of her husband and bewilderment to those who are addicted to beauty (Gaudapada, *Kārikā* 12). In this way, Gaudapada is relating the *guna* to an individual because a single object can produce varying effects in different types of people based on their natures. One’s nature, based on the predominant *guna* may determine one’s reaction. The process of *centralization* is very weak in the Sāṃkhya *Kārikā*’s exposition on the *gunas* as it produces a more metaphysical feel.

*Kārikā* 13: The *Sattva* attribute is buoyant and illuminating; the *Rajas* attribute is exciting and mobile; and the *Tamas* attribute is sluggish and obsuring; Their functioning is for a single purpose, like that of a lamp (45).

The used term for **buoyant** is *lāghava*, that which causes the efficient functioning of all instruments. In such a case, the **intellect**, **mind** and senses function in a lucid state. **Buoyant** is used as lightness, leading to the springing up of things, causes the shooting upward of the flame of fire. Gaudapada writes that the **intellect** is luminous and the senses are acute. What exactly is *sattva illuminating*? An individual under the state of *sattva* has clearly functioning senses and internal organs. Thus, this **buoyancy** is in contrast to the **sluggishness** of *tamas* which slows the functioning of internal organs. Similarly, this **illumination** is in contrast to the ‘darkness’ of *tamas*, which naturally clouds the judgement of the internal organs. *Rajas* causes the ‘immobile’ *sattva guna* and *tamas guna* to act and initiate their respective effects. It excites the other two *gunas* into **activity**, otherwise, they would just rest on their own. *Tamas* once again is the **restraining* guna which leads to the mind’s **delusion, sluggishness** and obscurity (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 13).
Vācaspati Miśra brings up an exception: If these guṇas have contradictory properties how is it that they do not destroy each other? The analogy of a lamp is provided, that wick and oil are opposed to the action of fire, but when all are brought together they cooperate and provide light. In the same way, the three guṇas coalesce and cooperate to free puruṣa. The mind: buddhi, ahamkāra, and manas are manifestations of prakṛti, thus they are also composed of the three guṇas. Psychological qualities such as pleasure, pain and delusion are attributed to a metaphysics that was originally introduced as illumination, activity and restraint. Therefore, this introduces psychological states of mind intertwined with the metaphysics of the material world. By understanding the metaphysics, one forms a foundation to subsequently understand the psychology behind the guṇas.

**Buddhi**

*Kārikā 23*: Buddhī is ascertainment or will. Virtue, knowledge, dispassion and power are its manifestations when sattva attribute abounds. And the reverse of these, when tamas attribute abounds (66).

Buddhi is ascertainment (adhyavasāyaḥ). Ascertain, used as a verb, is defined as the ability to identify true and correct information. In other words, a quality of the buddhi is the ability to know the truth about an object, person, place, etc. Vācaspati Miśra draws attention to the phrase “buddhi is ascertainment,” as a statement in apposition, The commentator states that this structure is intended so that one knows that the function is the same as the functionary. Thus, the function of buddhi is the same to that which holds the function, perhaps stating that there is no difference between the metaphysical entity of buddhi and its distinct function of the ability of ascertainment. Thus, ascertainment is not a quality of buddhi, but buddhi itself. Moving on, Vācaspati Miśra states that buddhi
is the **determination** that something has to be done, the power of **determination** (adhyavasāyah). The **buddhi**[^50] is synonymous with **ascertainment** and **determination**.

The **buddhi** has four qualities affected by the two **guna**s: **sattva** and **tamas**. The **sāttvic buddhi** is: **virtue**[^51] (dharmaḥ), **knowledge**[^52]/**wisdom** (jñānam), **dispassion**[^53] (vairāgaḥ), **lordliness/power**[^54] (aiśvaryam).

Vācaspati Miśra defines **virtue** as the cause for **secular prosperity**[^55] (abhyudaya), and the **highest good**[^56] (niḥśreyasa), **knowledge/wisdom**[^57] as understanding the difference between puruṣa, prakṛti and its **constituents**, **dispassion** as the absence of ‘passion’[^59], and **lordliness/power** as the **perfections**[^60] (siddhis). **Dispassion** is described as a fourfold system, **Yatamāna Samjñā** (Stage of Endeavor), Vyatireka Samjñā.

[^50]: In the Sāṃkhya Sūtras, buddhi is also translated as **intellect** or great principle. (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 2, Sūtra 13).

[^51]: Humanity, benevolence, and acts of **restraint** (yama) and of **obligation** (niyama) (Gaudapada, Kārikā 23).

[^52]: External Knowledge: Knowledge of the Vedas and branches (recitation, ritual, grammar, glossary, prosody, astronomy), purāṇas, logic, theology, law. Internal knowledge: Difference between nature and soul, three gunas (Gaudapada, Kārikā 23).

[^53]: External: Distance from sense objects. Internal: Focused on liberation and perceived nature to be like witchcraft or illusion (Gaudapada, Kārikā 23).

[^54]: Power of a superior or divine being (Gaudapada, Kārikā 23).

[^55]: Prosperity is tied to the notion of merit collected by performing sacrifices and charity, which could perhaps be referring to one’s prosperity when forming ‘good’ karma. Perhaps the link between a **sāttvic buddhi** and secular prosperity is that one possessing the former is likely to be inclined towards virtuous acts of charity which accrue ‘good karma.’ As of now, this is uncertain.

[^56]: Vācaspati Miśra specifically mentions that the eight-fold yoga (aṣṭānga yoga) path leads to the highest good. Similarly, perhaps the link between a **sāttvic buddhi** and the highest good is that one who possesses the former is inclined towards practicing aṣṭānga yoga.

[^57]: This is perhaps the most important quality of the buddhi, as it is directly related to the goal of Sāṃkhya: attaining discriminative wisdom within the buddhi for the release of puruṣa from prakṛti. The second quality of knowledge will be explained later in the paper, when the school’s goal is more elaborately explained.

[^58]: Three gunas

[^59]: Vācaspati Miśra specifies that dispassion is the absence of passion for sensual enjoyments (67).

[^60]: The **perfections** include the ability to become atomic (animā), levitation (laghimā), magnification (mahimā), ability to touch the farthest objects (prāpti), unrestricted fulfillment of desires (prākāmya), mastery of all elements and products; insubordinate to none (vaśītvam), sovereignty over the production, absorption and arrangement of elements (jīṣītvam), infallibility of will (yatra kāmāvasāyītvam).
(Discriminative Stage), Ekeñdriya Samjñā (One-Organ Stage), and Vaśikāra Samjñā (Control Stage).

Vācaspati Miśra explains that the citta\(^{61}\) is full of passions and emotions which contribute to its impurity. These passions attract the sense organs towards their objects. In the first stage, yatamāna samjñā (stage of endeavor), an individual is required to prevent the senses from being attracted to the sense objects. To purify these passions, this stage involves the process of totally inhibiting any sense contact between the sense organs and objects of pleasure. Vācaspati Miśra does not provide an example but perhaps we can use the typical scenario of seeing a chocolate bar and refraining from eating it. If one is blocking the interaction between the senses and their objects, then this requires a willful avoidance of the latter. Thus, if one notices a strong passion for chocolate, one must avoid instances, places, ideas and conceptions of chocolate to the best of one’s ability. This may involve eating in places that do not have chocolate, taking an alternate route home instead of passing an ice cream store and switching the channel when there are Cadbury commercials. In this way, when the senses cannot contact the sense objects, there can be no attraction.

In the second stage, Vyatireka samjñā (discriminative stage), Vācaspati Miśra explains that when the purification process begins, some passions are refined while others are still becoming purified. One is essentially ascertaining which passions are purified and which need to be purified (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 23). In this stage of dispassion

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\(^{61}\) A term used for mind, possibly a combination of buddhi, ahāmakāra and mana. Not commonly used in Sāmkhya, but used in Yoga Sūtras. Vācaspati Miśra calls it the retentive faculty, suggesting that it is an organ that holds something. In the context of Sāmkhya -Yoga, it seems to be saṃskāra. Saṃskāras are mental impressions that exist within the citta which are equivalent to latent or dormant memories and impulses that impact an individual’s conduct and condition of life.
one is discriminating between these two categories and forming a conscious awareness of one’s passions. For example, after avoiding all instances of chocolate, one becomes aware of that particular desire’s gradual refinement, but simultaneously notices one’s strong desire for the opposite sex. Thus, one notices what one has conquered, almost conquered and what still needs to be conquered.

In the third stage, *Ekeñdriya samjñā* (**one-organ stage**), Vācaspati Miśra explains that the sense organs are no longer capable of activities and the purified emotions residing within the *citta* exist as mere craving (*Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 23*). In other words, the sense organs are not drawn towards the sense objects because there is no sense contact. Thus, the passions are weak and exist within the mind as a weak craving. This reveals that the word refinement or purification is a process rather than an immediate change. Until this stage, the individual is preventing the senses from contacting the sense objects and identifying his/her weak and strong passions. This leaves the third step as isolating the passions within the mind in a weak and starved form. Therefore, this is a gradual process rather than an on/off switch.

In the fourth stage, *Vaśikāra samjñā* (**control stage**), Vācaspati Miśra explains that the individual experiences a complete cessation of craving towards all sense objects even when the latter is in proximity (*Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 23*). In other words, even after the senses contact the sense objects, one is no longer interested in pursuing the latter. A *sāttvic buddhi* entails having this type of dispassion. Overall, as the *buddhi* becomes more *sāttvic*, the passions (impurities) become refined and weakened. This process involves withdrawal from sense objects, **discrimination** between strong and weak passions, complete isolation of cravings, and elimination of cravings.
To describe the buddhi under a state of tamas the author states that it is the opposite of the four previously mentioned qualities: ‘vice’, ‘ignorance’, ‘passion’ and ‘servility’. One can argue that since a sāttvic buddhi is inclined towards virtuous activity, a tāmasic buddhi would have a propensity towards ‘vice’ or adharmic actions.62 Furthermore, if sattva entails discrimination, tamas indicates ‘non-discrimination’: a total and complete inability to understand the difference between puruṣa and prakṛti (avyakta, vyakta).63 The Śāmkhya Sūtras states that the buddhi becomes reversed through tincture (Vijñānabhikṣu, 198). When rajas and tamas act on buddhi, the nature of the latter changes, it becomes reversed. This implies that the buddhi’s natural course of progress is towards sattva or perhaps buddhi is in a natural state of sattva64.

When the commentary on buddhi is compared to that of Śāmkhya’s guṇa model, the buddhi is described by the commentators as having a slightly more centralized theme because it is explained as having inherent qualities of virtue, knowledge, dispassion and power. These inherent qualities are manifestations of an “individual’s” successful cultivation of a sāttvic buddhi. How does a virtuous buddhi act? How does a buddhi with knowledge act? How does a buddhi with dispassion act? By attempting to answer these questions, the reader will naturally find a centralized answer because these inherent qualities are related more to the individual than the metaphysical intellect. Overall, when reading Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary on the buddhi in the Śāmkhya Kārikā, a

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62 This may perhaps refer to a path of attaining bad merit from sinful deeds or chasing material desires rather than pursuing a path of renunciation.
63 It is very interesting to note here that in the Kārikā, discrimination indicates an understanding of knowing the difference between puruṣa and prakṛti, however, in the Yoga Sūtras, not only is this important but also one must understand his nature to be puruṣa, the seer. In the Kārikā, there seems to be a metaphysical distinction but not an understanding of identity. Metaphysics is discussed, but never in relation to one’s identity.
64 A rājasic buddhi is not mentioned in the Śāmkhya Kārikā.
practitioner is not limited to a metaphysical interpretation but is instead, exposed to a more psychological feeling.

A large portion of Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary on the buddhi includes the four stages of dispassion. These four stages are the same four stages mentioned in the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, I.15). Vācaspati Miśra wrote his own commentary on the Yoga Sūtras, suggesting a common link of ideas between both texts. Vācaspati Miśra even uses the word citta to describe the mind, which is a term more closely related to the Yoga Sūtras and not mentioned even once in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā.

Why is this important? The Yoga Sūtras65 was written earlier than Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary on the Sāṃkhya Kārikā66. Thus, if Vācaspati Miśra took these four stages of dispassion from the Yoga Sūtras commentary, if we were to exclude them from the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, his commentary would have a drastically more metaphysical interpretation of buddhi in that very text. Therefore, without using the Yoga Sūtras, a reader would indeed have a more metaphysical or impersonal sense of understanding the intellect in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā. Consequently, as previously mentioned, an impersonal or “out there” approach in defining constituents of the mind can provide a more detached reading and less room for a sense of agency for the practitioner. Although there are psychological qualities mentioned as residing in the buddhi, the lack of centralization can make it difficult for an aspirant to feel like an agent.

**Ahaṃkāra**

*Kārikā 24: Ahaṃkāra is self-assertion; from that proceeds a two-fold evolution only, viz, the set of eleven and the five-fold primary (or rudimentary elements)” (68).”

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65 5th century C.E. (Maas, 2006)
66 9th century C.E. (Larson, 149).
Vācaspati Miśra explains that *ahāṃkāra* is self-assertion and when there is self-assertion, there is ego-centricity. He provides several statements to demonstrate this form of egocentricity: “I am entitled to this.” “Verily, I am competent to do this.” “All these objects of sense are for my sake only.” “There is no one else other than me who is entitled for this, Hence I am.” If *buddhi* is will, *ahāṃkāra* is ego-centricity, and the latter emerges from the former, then it seems that *ahāṃkāra* is a form of a “centralized will.” The individual is not only ‘willing’ to act in a sāttvic or tāmasic manner, but he/she now believes that he/she is the actor. In other words, the act itself is attributed to a concept of self. Metaphysically, it may help to imagine the *buddhi* as a force of generalized will, and *ahāṃkāra* as a magnetic force, pulling the will into a centralized self. For instance, imagine a hot air balloon (*buddhi*) expanding/ floating upwards and a person (*ahāṃkāra*) is pulling it down by the ropes. The verbal form of this phenomenon can be demonstrated as such:

“Will” \(\rightarrow\) (*Ahaṃkāra*) \(\rightarrow\) I “will.”

“Ascertain” \(\rightarrow\) (*Ahaṃkāra*) \(\rightarrow\) I “ascertain.”

Furthermore, Larson states that “…the *buddhi* is individual but not personal. It is outside of self-awareness” (Larson, 183). The *buddhi* is independent of the *ahāṃkāra*. Perhaps, it is the *ahāṃkāra* that is pulling the *buddhi* into individuality, when in its original form, is generalized. The Sāmkhya Sūtra states that *ahāṃkāra* brings out the ego (self-centeredness) in every case of cognition, “…the matter of which cognition would, else, have lain dormant in the bosom of Nature, the formless Objective” (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 1, Sūtra 72). This statement reveals that cognition is occurring somewhere within

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67 This is the translator’s choice of words and the proper definition will be explained. In Sāmkhya Sūtras, it is also translated as conceit, which functions to bring out the ego (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 1, Sūtra 72).
prakṛti, but ahaṃkāra is that force which brings that cognition to a central agent. Perhaps this sūtra agrees with the notion that buddhi is general until it is pulled in by ahaṃkāra.

This kārikā on ahaṃkāra is perhaps one of the only verses where the commentator Vācaspati Miśra explicitly relates a metaphysical concept to the individual. The word abhimāna is used to describe ahaṃkāra. Abhimāna is defined as a “self-conceit, conception of one’s self, pride." Ahaṃkāra is defined as “the conception of one’s individuality, self consciousness." These definitions clearly indicate that the ego is related to the self. Thus, this verse does not seem to have the problem of centralization. From the practitioner’s point of view, reading this verse on ahaṃkāra allows for a more personalized experience. Although, the definition, without a clear explanation on how self-ego manifests (e.g. pride) can still retain a metaphysical form.

**Manas**

*Kārikā 27:* Of these (sense organs), the Mind [manas] possesses the nature of both (the sensory and motor organs). It is the deliberating principle, and is also called a sense organ since it possesses properties common to the sense organs. Its multifariousness and its external diversities are owing to special modifications of the Attributes [guṇas] (71).

Vācaspati Miśra states that cognition and action are not possible without the manas coming into contact with the sense organs. This occurs after the sense organs come into contact with sense objects.

1) Sense organs perceive sense objects

2) Manas comes into contact with the sense organ

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68 Monier Williams Sanskrit Dictionary (Online)
69 Monier Williams also defined as egotism, making of the self, thinking of the self.
70 Not to be confused with soul, puruṣa and ātman
71 Subsequently, the manas comes into contact with either ahaṃkāra or buddhi, depending on the commentator.
As mentioned previously, the sense organs are either categorized into organs of knowledge or organs of action. The *manas* is a special organ because it is both an organ of knowledge and organ of action. The *manas* functions as a **deliberating principle**.

Since **deliberation** involves thinking carefully and thoroughly before making a decision, the notion of doubt comes into question. This **deliberation** is different from the *buddhi*’s function of **ascertainment**, because the former is a rational process of understanding, while the latter is knowledge of an object. Vācaspati Miśra provides an example stating that when the senses contact the sense objects, at times a doubt will occur as to what the object is. For example, one may ask “Is that my friend or a stranger?” The mind will continue to **deliberate** until certainty arises. One can infer that certainty must come from the *buddhi*, because *buddhi* is **ascertainment**. When referring to *manas*, Gaudapada’s translation involves the word **reflection**.

The commentary of the *Sāṃkhya Sūtras* states that the mind is both an organ of intellect and action just as a single man can be a variety of characters (Vijñānabhikṣu, 206). With his beloved, he can be a lover, with someone indifferent, he becomes indifferent and with someone else, he is someone else. A more applicable example is a woman who can be a mother, daughter and wife. In such a way, when mind is associated with the organ of vision, it is related to seeing. When associated with the organ of sound, it becomes associated with hearing. The commentator is saying that whatever organ (action, or intellect) with what the mind is associated with, the latter seems to take on that same (action, intellect) characteristic.

Using only the *Samkhya Kārikā*’s commentaries, one can clearly see that the **mind** (*manas*) is entirely described as a metaphysical **material** entity. Once again, it is
described as a sensory and motor organ with the ability of deliberation. The only manner in which it is centralized is when Vācaspati Miśra describes the initial unknown apprehension in the mind such as an idea that arises in the mind of a boy (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 27). At first, the boy is unaware of what exactly is in front of him. Then the mind goes on to determine what this unknown idea is by comparing it to a certain genus, which then later identifies what the idea is. However, most commonly the example of the mind’s identification process is seeing an unknown distant object, followed by the mind’s inquiry or deliberation of the identity of that distant object. The commentator centers the manas to an individual by describing it as a sense organ that deliberates from a boy’s point of view. This form of personalization is more prevalent in the Yoga Sūtras.

**Discriminative Wisdom in the Buddhi**

In Sāṃkhya philosophy, the goal is for puruṣa to break free from the grasp of prakṛti. This result occurs by the attainment of discriminative wisdom, vijñāna within the buddhi (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 2). This is the metaphysical goal in Sāṃkhya. The personal72 goal of Sāṃkhya is practically the same, however, it is viewed from the individual’s eyes. The goal involves an end to the mind’s suffering, which is also attained by discriminative wisdom within the buddhi. Although there are two ways to see the same goal, the Kārikā begins with the personal goal.

I. Puruṣa and prakṛti are bound.

II. This binding occurs because the buddhi does not have proper discrimination. Thus, discrimination is needed within the buddhi and cultivated (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 1, Sūtra 56).

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72 A practitioner
III. When **discrimination** is attained, *prakṛti* releases *puruṣa* (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 66).

IV. Plot Twist: *Puruṣa* was never bound, it is *prakṛti* that binds and frees itself\(^{73}\) (*Kārikā* 62). One still needs to **discriminate**, and since **discrimination** exists within the *buddhi*, one can conclude that this false perception (‘non-discrimination’) occurs within the **intellect**.

*Kārikā* 1: From the torment caused by the three kinds of pain, proceeds a desire for inquiry into the means of terminating them; if it be said that (the inquiry) is superfluous since visible means exist (we reply), not so; because (in visible means) there is the absence of certainty (in the case of the means) and permanency (of pain)\(^2\).

In this *Kārikā*, the problem is clearly defined. Only from understanding pain resulting from the three-fold types, *ādhyāmika*\(^74\), *ādhibautika*\(^75\) and *ādhidaivika*\(^76\), does one begin a search for the removal of it.\(^77\) The first step of the journey into *Sāṃkhya* philosophy begins with one’s acknowledgement of pain in the **material world** followed by the desire to remove it completely. After this step, this *Kārikā* states that relieving this form of pain cannot be accomplished through **visible** means such as *Vedic* rituals, wealth, women, and pleasure, because their results are **temporary** and **uncertain** (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 1). For example, after realizing one feels dissatisfied or agitated and subsequently engages in sexual activity, one still finds oneself in a state of suffering.

Another example can be of a CEO who earns a six figure salary but still finds himself

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\(^{73}\) This will not be explained as of now, but is a large component of this school’s philosophy.

\(^{74}\) Intra-Organic: body-disorder of wind, bile and phlegm; mind-lust, anger, greed infatuation, fear, envy, grief and non-perception of objects (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 1)

\(^{75}\) External influences: man, beasts, birds, reptiles, plants and inanimate things (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 1)

\(^{76}\) Supernatural agencies: demi-gods, goblins, evil spirits, superhuman beings, planets (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 1)

\(^{77}\) Although there are three types of pain, I would argue that these pains all commonly existing within the mind, because regardless of where they come from, the mind feels frustration from it. Although they originate from different places, the mind is still suffering from them at some point.
suffering, perhaps from a disease or general dissatisfaction. Although a symptom of suffering has been relieved, suffering as a whole is not. It seems that this text is arguing that one form of suffering will only be replaced by another. Thus, rather than short lived alleviation, one needs a permanent solution stated in the next verse.

Besides the kārikā on the ahāmkāra, the first and second verses are some of the most subtle personalized verses in this particular text, without using the terms ‘one’, ‘individual’, etc. In order to speak of the three types of pain, the commentator must relate them to the individual. In particular, speaking of the mental forms of suffering and the temporary remedies like charming women, drinks and food, clearly demonstrates a more centralized approach to the goal of Sāṃkhya. Furthermore, in the following verse, mention of Vedic sacrifice as temporary means also indicates one’s futile attempt at ending one’s suffering. It is important to note that although the kārikā itself seems like it is centralizing, it is the commentary that has a more personal feel.

Kārikā 2: The scriptural means is like the obvious means since it is linked with impurity, decay and excess. The means contrary to both and proceeding from the Discriminative Knowledge [vijñāna] of the Manifest [vyakta prakṛti], the Unmanifest [avyakta prakṛti] and the Spirit [puruṣa], is superior (6).

According to Sāṃkhya, the only effective termination of pain is through discriminative knowledge. One must cultivate discrimination within the buddhi, which as previously mentioned is a quality of the sāttvic buddhi. Thus, the quality of wisdom/knowledge listed under the buddhi is the very goal in Sāṃkhya philosophy. Discriminative knowledge is defined as knowledge of the manifest (vyakta prakṛti), unmanifest (avyakta prakṛti) and spirit (puruṣa). Vācaspati Miśra states that one must first attain knowledge of the manifest (vyakta), then the unmanifest (vyakta) and that the latter is the cause of the manifest (9). From knowing that manifest and unmanifest
(prakṛti) must exist for another\(^{78}\) (puruṣa), the knowledge of puruṣa is gained.

Knowledge of the distinction itself is gained from understanding the manifest, which is:

“…from the Sruti (Vedas), Smrti ( Canonical texts), Ithihasa (historical accounts) and Puranas (mythology); then by duly having established the same through scientific reasoning, and finally by absorbing that knowledge into oneself by earnest and uninterrupted contemplation\(^ {79}\) for a long time” (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 2).

The process of attaining discriminative wisdom is clearly delineated by Vācaspati Miśra. By the means mentioned above, one must first attain knowledge of prakṛti. This seems to be counterintuitive, one can argue that the purpose of religious textual sources is for the understanding of God or a higher consciousness apart from matter, but in Sāṃkhya, according to Vācaspati Miśra, it seems that the direct goal is to understand material nature. If these means satisfy the buddhi’s understanding of manifest and unmanifest prakṛti, one must finally understand that prakṛti exists for another, puruṣa. Thus, discriminative wisdom has been cultivated. If this is the case, one must have a totally sāttvic buddhi.

Discrimination, being a quality of the buddhi, indicates that one does not need to seek discrimination outside of oneself, because it already exists within. If discrimination is already a part of the buddhi and individuals are unable to cultivate it, then there must be something keeping the buddhi from acting with discrimination. The most logical answer here would be the guṇa of tamas\(^ {80}\), as stated in a previous verse. If the buddhi has such an important task and is covered by the quality of tamas, then the only solution would be to make the buddhi more sāttvic. The next step is to inquire into the process of making the buddhi sāttvic when it is not. There are many options within

\(^{78}\) This inference is not clearly explained.

\(^{79}\) This refers to meditation.

\(^{80}\) This quality is heavy or sluggish, but also, the buddhi under tamas is the opposite of being in sattva, which means it lacks discrimination.
the Śāmkhya Sūtra as well as the Bhagavad Gītā which explain how to reduce rajas/tamas and increase sattva. To reiterate, the goal of Śāmkhya is to cultivate discrimination within the buddhi, which is its natural state under the guṇa of sattva while its natural state under tamas being ‘non-discrimination’.  

When defining discriminative knowledge, Gaudapada refers to knowing the twenty-five total principles (tattvas) of Śāmkhya philosophy. Discriminative knowledge entails the understanding of the buddhi, ahamkāra, manas, five subtle elements, five gross elements, the eleven organs of perception and puruṣa (Gaudapada, Kārikā 2). When one completely understands Śāmkhya metaphysics, one has perfect knowledge.

The metaphysical goal of this school is the release of puruṣa from prakṛti. The same goal viewed from a personal lens, is for an individual to end his/her suffering. His/her suffering occurs because of that very bond between puruṣa and prakṛti. The individual who is under this bond has ‘non-discrimination’. Larson states that the world is understood by the individual, by how puruṣa witnesses it when it is in conjunction with prakṛti. Therefore:

“…this explains why the principles (tattvas) in the Kārikā are expressed usually in terms of a psychological rather than cosmological categories…In the Kārikā, however, the basic tattvas or principles are analyzed mainly from the point of view of the individual. Little attention is given to cosmological implications, and one can only conclude that such concerns were secondary in the mind of the author” (Larson, 178).

When referring to Śāmkhya, the author also creates two categories: psychological and cosmological. Thus, it is safe to say that one can view the soteriological goal of

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81 The inability to discriminate between puruṣa and prakṛti.
82 There are twenty-five total tattvas, material and immaterial entities used to describe the metaphysical world of Śāmkhya.
Sāṃkhya from a personal or metaphysical lens, respectively. From a psychological lens, the Sāṃkhya Kārikā has only a few verses that are rooted in the lens of the individual. So, for the most part, I will have to disagree with Larson when he says the tattvas are expressed in a more psychological manner. It is clear from the majority of verses that the view is from a more metaphysical lens, certainly in comparison to the Yoga Sūtras. Once again, this kārikā personalizes without the use of the terms ‘one’ and ‘his’ but through the natural relation to the individual.

Locus of Agency

Kārikā 20: Therefore, through this union, the insentient evolute appears as if it is intelligent; and similarly, also from agency belonging to the guṇas, the neutral Spirit [puruṣa] appears as if it were the Agent (62-63).

The Sāṃkhya Kārikā states that puruṣa does not have the function of ‘agency’ (Vijñānabhikṣu, 129). This kārikā states that agency is a function of the guṇas, which are the constituents of prakṛti. Thus, ‘agency’ must exist somewhere within prakṛti. The Sāṃkhya Kārikā states that the buddhi is translated as determination, the will to do something. Thus, it seems that ‘agency’ is located in the buddhi according to the Kārikā, in Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary. Furthermore, sūtra 54 states “Self-consciousness, not Soul is the agent” (Vijñānabhikṣu, 450). Even though the Sāṃkhya Sūtras mentions buddhi to be the highest and final organ, it still considers the ahamkāra (ego) to be the source of ‘agency’. The Sāṃkhya Sūtras take a slightly different view: the soul is seen as an agent only through the influence and proximity of the buddhi. In other words, puruṣa is seen as an agent because buddhi is near it. If the soul has no such

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83 Examples like Vedic sacrifices, expiatory rites and animal sacrifices are provided. Even if the sentence was: ‘Vedic sacrifices were performed,’ it would still be difficult to separate this from the individual. This is why the kārikā still manages to center even without the use of certain words.  
84 The purpose of this section is to locate ‘agency’ in the Sāṃkhya school of thought. This topic may appear to be a digression but is in fact helpful in locating the seat of doership.
quality, and the quality of ‘agency’ is occurring due to this reason, then ‘agency’ must be a part of buddhi.

In order to understand the meaning of ‘agency’ in relation to puruṣa, Bryant points out a highly important axiom in the Sāṃkhya school of thought: If something is ‘eternal’, then that thing cannot change (Bryant, 19). In order for an entity to be ‘eternal’, it must retain its identity or essence. A manipulation of that very entity suggests the production of a new entity with a different identity, qualifying the former as non-eternal. Thus, the puruṣa is seen to be ‘eternal’ because it does not undergo change, movement or manipulation. It is important to understand ‘agency’ because the Sāṃkhya Kārikā uses the word akartṛbhāvah, non-agent, to describe the lack of ‘agency’ in puruṣa (Kārikā 19). Bryant writes that “To be an agent, of course can only transpire in a context of changeability and responsiveness: ‘agency’ presupposes the potential to make choice and change one’s choice if one so determines) some form of investment in choice, and determinative and desirable choice between options” (Bryant, 20). Therefore, since ‘agency’ requires a change in choice, it cannot exist within puruṣa. It must exist with prakṛti.

**The Internal Instruments: Order**

Vācaspati Miśra states that first a sense object is perceived and the message then travels to the manas upon where it is reflected. Then the message goes to the ahamkāra which leads to the thought, “I experienced this.” Finally, the sense perception is presented to the buddhi which subsequently makes a decision, but also reflects the sense perception back to the soul, which simply witnesses it (Vācaspati Miśra, Kārikā 36).
Kārikā 36: These (external organs with the Mind and the I-Principle) which are characteristic-wise different from one another, and are different modifications of the attributes, and which resemble a lamp, illuminating all (their respective objects) present them to the Buddhi for the purpose of the Spirit, (ie for their exhibition to the Spirit)” (83).

Vācaspati Miśra provides an analogy of a village chief officer who collects taxes from the heads of different families and presents them to the head of the district. The head of the village gives the taxes to the head of all the districts who finally gives it to the king. In the same way, the external organs with their perceived objects, present sensory information to the manas which gives it to the ahaṃkāra, and finally gives it to the buddhi. The manas observes the sense impressions and ruminates and the ahaṃkāra takes personal cognizance by adding an “I.” Overall, according to Vācaspati Miśra, everything is presented to the buddhi.

Although Gaudapada agrees that the internal organs present information to buddhi, his order differs from that of Vācaspati Miśra’s. He states that after a sense object contacts the senses, sense perception comes into contact with the manas but then goes to the buddhi second instead of the ahaṃkāra. In other words, the ahaṃkāra is last on the list because addition of an “I” to a particular cognition occurs at the very end. He states that:

“…a person going along a road sees an object at a distance, and is in doubt whether it be a post or a man: he then observes some characteristic marks upon it, or a bird perched there; and doubt being thus dissipated by the reflection of the mind, the understanding discriminates that it is a post; and thence egotism interposes, for the sake of certainty, as, verily (or, I am certain it is a post)” (Gaudapada, Kārikā 30).

The Sāṃkhya Sūtras seems to agree with Gaudapada because it states that when something has been determined by the buddhi, then the making of an ego takes place (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 2, Sūtra 16). This suggests that the process of buddhi is followed by ahaṃkāra. In Kārikā 36, Vācaspati Miśra introduces an objection and poses the
question: Why do all the sense organs present the sense perception/cognition to *buddhi* rather than *ahaṃkāra*, as the last organ. The next verse should demonstrate why.

*Kārikā 37:* Because, it is the *Buddhi* that accomplishes the experiences with regard to all objects to the Puruṣa. It is that again that discriminates the subtle difference between the *Pradhāna* and the *Puruṣa* (84).

Vācaspati Miśra explains that the main objective of the organs is to serve *puruṣa*, in other words, for *puruṣa* to be free. The only way for *puruṣa* to be free is for *buddhi* to discriminate the difference between the two entities. Thus, the *buddhi* is the most important organ because it accomplishes the purpose directly, while the other organs do not. *Buddhi* has the potential to accomplish *Sāṃkhya’s* main goal of releasing *puruṣa*.

With this argument, Vācaspati Miśra makes sense when trying to explain the importance of the *buddhi* over the *ahaṃkāra*. He accomplishes this by explaining that this very organ performs the most significant function of all, *discrimination*. If so, then it must be the most important and dominant organ of which other organs are subordinate. *Ahaṃkāra* is the I’ness, and produces a sense of individuality. Although its function is important, and indirectly serves the purpose of *discrimination*, it does not directly do as the *buddhi* does. And so,

“...among the organs, the *Buddhi* alone does this directly; hence, that alone is considered to be the Principal organ, just like the government being considered superior to all other chiefs by virtue of his being the direct agent of the king, while others such as the village head etc, are only of the secondary importance when compared to the former” (Vācaspati Miśra, *Kārikā* 37).

The *Sāṃkhya Sūtras* agree with this statement accepting the *buddhi* as the most immediate and direct solution for the soul’s emancipation (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 2, Sūtra...
Furthermore, Vijñānabhikṣu states that *buddhi* is important because *saṃskāras*, reside within it. These expressions do not reside within the senses such as the eye and ear, because if they did then experiences previously perceived would not be remembered by those who lose sight or hearing, respectively (Vijñānabhikṣu, Book 2, *sūtra* 42). Gaudapada does not provide a reason for the *ahamkāra* being the last organ of perception. In his commentary on the same *kārikā*, Gaudapada certainly acknowledges the importance of the *buddhi* in accomplishing the *puruṣa*’s main goal, even directly, but does not explain why he considers *ahamkāra* as the last organ.

It is clear that the *ahamkāra* centralizes the *buddhi* and *manas* to an individual. In the same way, the commentators are occasionally centralizing the metaphysical entities to the individual when trying to explain the functions. Essentially, we are speaking of the same phenomenon when trying to understand the mind in *Sāṃkhya*. Are the commentators providing a centralized (*ahamkāra*-like) experience when describing the mind? On the contrary, are the commentators providing a more impersonal description of the mind and goal of this particular school of philosophy? Although there are analogies that refer to individuals, there still seems to be a metaphysical feel when talking about the interaction between the three internal organs.

*Kārikā 51*: Reasoning, oral instruction, study, the three-fold suppression of pain, acquisition of well-wishers, and purity (or charity) are the eight forms of success. The three mentioned before are the three restrainers of *siddhi* (or success).

This is one of the only verses in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā* that provides a suggested course of actions directly in the verse which is independent of the commentators’

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85 Saṃskāras are mental impressions that reside within the *buddhi*. They constitute the sum total of our memories, experiences, inclinations, etc. In the *Yoga* school of philosophy, *saṃskāras* exist within the *citta* (Hariharānanda, *Sūtra* 18). This idea will come later in the paper.
explanation. Vācaspati Miśra writes that to suppress pain, one must perform adhyayanaṃ⁸⁶, āhaḥ ⁸⁷, suhṛtrapṛtiḥ⁸⁸, dānaṃ⁸⁹ etc. Clearly this verse centralizes because it prioritizes a psychological path over metaphysics. Yoga will certainly have more many paths recommended than the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, but it is necessary to point out one of these verses. A proposed path consisting of actions provides the practitioner with the ability to witness visible results. When the practitioner starts to gain an understanding of the scriptures, more like-minded company, etc, he/she gains more knowledge. Subsequently, he/she can start to see the effects of his/her actions. By seeing the effects of his/her actions, he/she can feel more like an agent.

The Internal Instruments: Function in Time

Kārikā 33: The internal organ is three-fold. The external is ten-fold; they are called the objects of the three (internal organs). The external organs function at the present time and the internal organs function at all three times (80).

The ten external organs only function in the present moment. For instance, sight is perceived by the eye, sound by the ear, smell by nose, texture by touch, taste by tongue only in the present moment. The three internal instruments, buddhi, ahamkāra and manas function in the past, present and future. For instance, a person can use the mind to think of the past or even imagine a future circumstance. Three interesting examples in the form of inferential statements are given by Vācaspati Miśra to explain this example (Kārikā 33).

a) Past: It had rained because the river has become full with water

b) Present: There is fire in the mountain because there is smoke

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⁸⁶ Learning while living with teacher in hopes of understanding scriptures and the self.
⁸⁷ Reasoning or argumentation
⁸⁸ Acquiring friends, fellow students
⁸⁹ Charity, purity
c) **Future**: It would rain provided no obstacles are there, because, we see ants carrying eggs.

Gaudapada provides an example stating that,

“…intellect forms an idea, not only of a present water-jar, but of one that has been or will be made: so egotism exercises consciousness of an object past, present, or future: and mind considers the past and future, as well as the present. Internal instrument is, therefore, for all times” (*Kārikā*, 33).

This simply explains the limitations of the external organs compared to the internal organs. The commentators are *centralizing* very minimally.

*Kārikā* 30: Of all the four [senses, manas, ahaṃkāra, buddhi], the functions are said to be simultaneous and also successive with regard to the seen objects; with regard to the unseen objects, (and also seen objects) the functions of the three are preceded by that (76).

To explain simultaneity, Vācaspati Miśra uses an example of an individual who is surrounded by darkness. After the individual sees light from lightening and perceives a tiger, four steps take place. The eye’s perception of the tiger, the minds consideration (manas), identification with the self (ahaṃkāra), and determination (buddhi) occur all at once (*Kārikā*, 30). Thus, what seems to be a process that may seem separated by time is not and instead occurs *instantaneously*. Gaudapada states that the “Intellect, egotism, mind and the eye see form at once, in one instant, (coming instantly to the conclusion) that is a post. The same three, with the tongue, at once appreciate flavour; with the nose, odour: and so with the ear and skin” (Gaudapada, *Kārikā*, 30). Gaudapada provides the example of a person seeing an object but does not know whether it is a post or a man. The *manas reflects*, then the *buddhi discriminates* that it is a post, and finally *ahaṃkāra* states that: I am certain that it is a post.” Thus, *buddhi, ahaṃkāra, manas* and the eye are
progressively occurring. Here, we see a distinct difference between the order of interaction between the organs, but we will cover this in a different section.

Next, Vācaspati Miśra explains what he means by the word *successively*. He states that, when a man sees something vaguely in a dim light, he applies his *mind* to figure out what it is. Then when the *mind* notices that it is a ‘cruel robber’ with a bow aimed at him, the *ahaṃkāra* makes him aware that this threat is occurring at him (I’ness), then the *buddhi* determines that the man should escape immediately. But what about things that are unseen that do not require sense perception? Vācaspati Miśra states that the internal organs function on their own, without sense perception. He does not provide an example here, but we can perhaps imagine a situation where a student has to present for a speech the next day. In the moment, he is not perceiving the presentation or a podium, but is using the *manas, ahaṃkāra* and *buddhi* to imagine the event, leading to his anxiety. The *manas* can imagine a situation and the situation then causes him to relate it to himself by seeing the threat happening to him. Then the *buddhi* states that either he needs to prepare more or avoid it. However, this knowledge could only have occurred if it had been perceived or experienced before (*Vācaspati Miśra*, 76).

This is a clear example of *centralizing* the speed and order of interactions between the internal organs. The reader can understand the succession of the internal organs with reference to a tiger and a post. The commentators even use the language “when one sees...a tiger facing him...” and this is immediately linked to the *ahaṃkāra*. This type of language helps for a personal experience. In a *decentralized* experience, the commentator could have written, when the organ of sight perceives a tiger, the information is passed to
the mind which then considers, followed by the ego adding an “I”. The language and examples help the practitioner by relating it to oneself through visualization.

**Yoga**

The *Yoga Sūtras*, will provide more of a psychological feel as psychology and practice based *sūtras* are analyzed. This will allow the reader to imagine the world of the practitioner, or *yogi*, who strives for the end goal of this school of thought. The reader should pay close attention to the highly *centralized* verses located in this text in comparison with most verses of the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*.

**Sutra I.2: Yoga (1) is the suppression of the modifications of the mind.**

Where in *Sāṃkhya* the goal is to cultivate *discrimination* within the *buddhi*, in *Yoga*, the goal is to **still/suppress** the **mind** from having any **modifications**⁹⁰ (*vrittis*). In order to accomplish this, the **mind** must be in a state devoid of thoughts. When this occurs, the **seer**⁹¹ abides in his own nature (Patañjali, I.3). When all *vrittis* are **stilled**, the **seer, pure consciousness**, abides within itself and is no longer being taken in or absorbed by the *vrittis* of the **mind**. If the **seer** is not abiding in its own nature, then it is totally absorbed in the *vrittis* (I.4). A more appropriate word than absorption is identification. When the *puruṣa* is conscious of the *vrittis*, instead of itself, it is identified with the *vrittis*. The verse states that the **seer** appears to assume the form of the **modifications**.

It would seem that Vyāsa is saying that one believes one’s true nature to be the very thoughts one has and thus experiences this erroneous conception. This occurs because the **mind**, specifically *buddhi* is in proximity to the *puruṣa* and so its

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⁹⁰ The Sanskrit word for modification is *vṛtti*.
⁹¹ Pure consciousness or *puruṣa*
modifications are taken to be puruṣa itself. Therefore, it is important to understand that either the puruṣa is conscious of itself or puruṣa is conscious of the vrittis, which indicates that the mind confuses puruṣa for the vrittis. Thus, there are only two optional states for puruṣa to experience. Here a question is brought forward. In the second state, the mind is falsely confusing the puruṣa for the vrittis, which one could argue is Descartes’ famous cogito ergo sum (I think therefore I am). In this situation the mind is cognizing itself to be the soul. However, in the first state what exactly is cognizing if the mind has been stilled? If the puruṣa is conscious of itself, how does one know that this is the case if one has depended on the mind to cognize experienced states? This question needs to be explored further.

In the beginning verses, there is little centralization occurring. The sūtras along with the commentaries are speaking of the relationship between consciousness and citta in a slightly impersonal manner much like that of the Sāṃkhya Kārikā. In the first few verses, when intricately discussing the citta under the influence of the three guṇas, Vyāsa and Hariharānanda mention the term yogin, practitioner of yoga, twice. This word is mentioned in reference to the states and byproducts of mind that are achieved when stilled. Rāmānanda Sarasvati, also explains the different states of mind under the various guṇas but with reference to the four types92 of yogins (1.2). In a personalized experience this is important because the reader is initially exposed to language that is distant, but is soon followed by the idea of applying this distant language to the progress of a yogi. This allows the reader to step out of an impersonal environment into the personal reality of a yogi. Furthermore, Rāmānanda Sarasvati provides three examples of the error of

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92 The four types of yogins will not be discussed, however, it is important to note that certain inclinations and states of mind under the guṇas are related to a particular class of yogin. These classes are: prathamakalpikah, madhubhūmikah, prajñāyotiḥ, atikrāntabhāvaniyah.
associating the *puruṣa* with the mental states of the *citta*: ‘I am tranquil’, ‘I am miserable’, ‘I am deluded’ (I.4). In this example the commentator provides a solid example of *centering* by applying the metaphysical phenomenon of *ignorance/ego*\(^93\) in the form of personal mental states.

Hariharānanda writes “Such subject-object or proprietor-property relationship between the Seer and Buddhi is established by (analyzing) one’s own self-cognisance as in “my intellect” (Hariharānanda, I.4). Here, Hariharānanda is saying that the particular relationship between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* (specifically *buddhi*) is established by a *centralizing* process, by using or applying the *intellect* from one’s point of view. In other words, by being aware of one’s own cognitive processes, one can understand the relationship between these two metaphysical entities. Overall, there is a moderate amount of *centralization* in the first verses of this text because even if the particular language is excluded, metaphysical concepts are still *centered* around an individual.

*Vṛttis*, for the most part, are obstacles to the path of *Yoga* (*stilling the mind*). There are *kliśṭa*\(^94\) and *kliśṭa*\(^95\) *vṛttis* (Patañjali, Śūtra I.5). The five types of *vṛttis* are *Pramāṇa*\(^96\), *Viparyaya*\(^97\), *Vikalpa*\(^98\), *Nidrā*\(^99\), *Smṛtaya*\(^100\).

It is the *vṛttis* that need to be *stilled* in order to achieve the goal of *Yoga*. Thus, one must know the differences between the categories of *afflictive* and *non-afflictive*
vṛttis. Kliśṭa or afflicting vṛttis come from the kleśas\textsuperscript{101}, which are mutations of the guṇas and serve as impediments to yoga. These vṛttis distance one from the goal of Yoga. Akliśṭa or non-afflicting vṛttis do not emerge from the kleśas and are conducive to attaining discriminative knowledge\textsuperscript{102}. Hariharānanda writes that these vṛttis of viveka\textsuperscript{103} stop the functions of the citta by counteracting the vṛttis of the three guṇas. Thus, although the goal is to still the mind, the non-afflicting vṛttis are beneficial in reaching the goal. He writes “….non-afflictive modifications show up when spiritual practice and detachment effect a breach in the flow of afflictive mental modifications” (Hariharānanda, I.5). When an individual is having consistent thoughts that are not conducive to the goal of yoga, non-afflicting vṛttis start to break these thoughts when one has included spiritual practice and detachment in one’s life. Similarly, the commentator writes that the same can occur as afflicting vṛttis break the flow of non-afflicting vṛttis. One can infer that this occurs when an individual is moving away from spiritual practice and detachment.

If afflicting vṛttis come from the kleśas, then from where do the non-afflicting vṛttis come? Hariharānanda writes that “Saṃskāras are in turn causative factors of other modifications like right cognition (Pramaṇa) etc” (1.5). A cycle is established: vṛttis lead to saṃskāras, and saṃskāras produce new vṛttis. This cyclic relationship is occurring in the citta, and by cultivating non-afflicting vṛttis one gradually reach the goal of yoga (stilling the mind). Based on this cyclic model, if one cultivates non-afflicting vṛttis, then in turn, one cultivates saṃskāras that will produce further non-afflicting vṛttis.

\textsuperscript{101} These impediments will be explained more thoroughly in a later chapter.
\textsuperscript{102} In yoga, the term for discriminate knowledge is viveka (II.26). In Sāṃkhya, it is vijñāna (kārikā 2).
\textsuperscript{103} Viveka is discrimination. “Viveka is only the distinction between the seer and the seen” (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, II.26).
However, this solution can only work if non-afflictive vrittis are associated with non-afflictive saṃskāras and afflictive vṛttis are associated with afflictive saṃskāras.104

In the opening verses of vṛttis, there are no instances of centralization besides when the terms spiritual practice and detachment are used to describe the process used to break the pattern of afflictive vṛttis. Therefore, a similar distant language that was used in the Śāmkhya Kārikā is also being used in the Yoga Sūtras, however, there is a direct emphasis on the psychological modifications of the mind (knowledge, error, sleep, etc.) from the beginning. What types of thoughts are individual’s having that act as distractions to the goal? Answering this question by nature is centering. This emphasis may naturally evoke a more personal feeling within the reader. Also, there are several verses that explain each vṛtti in depth. Within these verses, there is great potential for more verses demonstrating centralization. For instance, for the sleep vṛtti Vyāsa writes:

“Since we can remember when we wake up that we had been sleeping, sleep is called a mental modification, as indicated in the feelings expressed by phrases such as ‘I slept well, I am feeling cheerful, it has cleared my brain’ or ‘I slept poorly; on account of disturbed sleep, my mind has become restless, and is wandering unsteadily,’ or I was in deep sleep as if in a stupor, my limbs are heavy, my brain is tired and languid, as if it has been stolen by somebody else and lying dormant.”
(Vyāsa, I.10)

A mental modification that occurs within the citta, a vṛtti, is a metaphysical concept that is being applied to the mind, but specifically an individual. This is evident through language use of words like ‘I’, ‘we’, ‘my’, ‘somebody’, etc. Simply by providing examples, the verses become personal. Therefore, it is important to note that

104 The next question to ask is, if afflictive vrittis are derived from the kleśas and non-afflictive vrittis are derived from saṃskāras, what is the relationship between the two causes? In other words, what is the relationship between the kleśas and saṃskāra? As we define the kleśas, this relationship will become clearer. 
although not all the verses on specific \textit{vṛttis personalize}, they predominantly have a psychological and personal flavor.

**I.12 By Practice and detachment these can be stopped (35).**

The analogy of a river is used to describe the \textit{mind}. The \textit{mind} flows towards \textit{good}\textsuperscript{105} or \textit{evil}\textsuperscript{106}. According to Vyāsa, in order to totally inhibit the \textit{vṛttis}, one must develop a habit of \textit{discrimination} and \textit{renunciation}, respectively (Vyāsa, Sutra I.12).

\textit{Renunciation} in particular, stops the flow of the senses towards sense objects, which in this case is evil, and developing \textit{discrimination} opens the floodgate of \textit{discriminative knowledge}. “Thus, practice and detachment are the means of arresting the modifications of Chitta” (Hariharānanda, I.11). Vyāsa uses the term \textit{sthiti} (tranquility) to describe a \textit{mind} in a state of undisturbed calmness (I.13). Only by prolonged \textit{practice}, without break and with devotion, does \textit{practice} become firmly instilled (Patañjali, I.14). Vyāsa expands and uses the terms \textit{austerity, continence, learning, reverence} and \textit{earnest attention} in describing practice.

The commentators use impersonal language to describe \textit{practice} and the manner in which it should be performed. This \textit{sūtra} is \textit{centralized} simply by answer the question: Who is performing practice and detachment? The process of \textit{centralization} is implied when a practice or path is provided. Although impersonal language is used when describing the practice, this verse reveals another determinant of a ‘\textit{sense of agency}’ and is much less metaphysical. The verse indicates that by the combination of \textit{practice} and \textit{detachment}, the \textit{vṛttis} of the \textit{mind} are stopped. More specifically, by \textit{practice}, the \textit{mind} becomes one pointed. This indicates that a practitioner can see the results (tranquil or one

\textsuperscript{105} Towards \textit{viveka (discriminative knowledge)} ending in \textit{kaivalya (liberation)} (Vyasa, 35).

\textsuperscript{106} Towards cycle of re-birth and ‘non-discrimination’.
pointed mind) by consistent, respectful and long-term practice (I.14). This verse provides the practitioner with a realizable result that can manifest as a result of his/her practice. Thus, there is a chance that this verse can evoke a ‘sense of agency’.

I.15: When the mind loses all desire for objects seen or described in the scriptures it acquires a state of utter desirelessness which is called detachment (37).

According to Vyāsa, detachment (vairāgya) occurs when,

A) The mind is indifferent to perceivable objects such as women, food, drinks, power and does not desire after them
B) The mind does not desire going to heaven or a discarnate state, dissolution into primordial matter
C) The mind is indifferent to good or evil

This state of detachment is known as vaśīkāra- samjñā. Simply put, Vyāsa states what detachment is and its sign. Hariharānanda goes on to describe the four stages of detachment making vaśīkāra- samjñā the last stage. These were the same stages that were discussed in Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary on the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, except in the Yoga Sūtras, these stages are listed in the actual sūtras, while in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, they are a part of Vācaspati Miśra’s commentary. The state of detachment mentioned in the Yoga Sūtras, vairagya, is equivalent to the vaśīkāra stage also mentioned in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā. Yatamāna is the continued and systematic effort of uprooting attachment from the mind. As a result, when one has identified on what one has improved and what is left to improve, one has reached the vyatireka stage. In the ekeñdriya stage, the attachment for objects is so weak that it cannot activate any sensory or bodily function and dwells only in the mind as just curiosity with desire (I.15). This certainly expands on Vācaspati Miśra’s four steps of detachment in Sāṃkhya. Therefore, this sūtra and its commentaries have weak personalization but once again, the state of detachment is naturally centered to an individual. The mind is detached, however, it is
clear that the language does not point to an “out there” entity but more towards an individualized mind that was once absorbed in the vṛttis.

1.16: Indifference to the guṇas or the constituent principles achieved through a knowledge of the nature of puruṣa is called paravairāgya (supreme detachment).

Paravairāgya is a state in which a yogi becomes totally indifferent to the guṇas. This state is reached when the yogi attains knowledge of puruṣa. According to Vyāsa, the very practice itself of trying to realize puruṣa, allows the yogin to attain clear vision\(^\text{107}\) and steadiness in sāttvic qualities, which subsequently leads to discriminative knowledge (knowledge of puruṣa). This is a direct answer to the question: how does one make one’s intellect sāttvic but also transcend the guṇas? With knowledge of puruṣa, along with practice/detachment the aspirant becomes more situated in sattva and eventually transcends the guṇas. According to Hariharānanda, suffering is related to the belief that buddhi is pure consciousness (I.17). This false belief terminates once detachment is cultivated. The highest form of detachment is that which is free from rajas, because rajas interferes with the discernment between puruṣa and buddhi.

Hariharānanda writes “…because a slight excess of dynamic Rajas destabilizes that state of discernment” (I.17). Therefore, another reason to eliminate rajas is because one cannot determine one’s true nature when it is predominant.

Vyāsa writes:

“When detachment appears in the shape of clarified knowledge, the Yogin, with his realization of the nature of Self, thinks thus: ‘I have got whatever is to be got; the afflictions which have to be eliminated have been reduced; the continuous chain of birth and death, bound by which men are born and die, and dying are born again…”

\(^{107}\) Clear vision may refer to seeing reality through sattva as it is as opposed to the distortion caused by tamas.
This *sūtra* is highly *personalized*. A realization is explained from the point of view of the *yogi*. Also, Hariharānanda specifically has the option of writing about the *buddhi* in an impersonal manner but chooses to describe it in relation to the *yogi* (e.g. the *yogin’s intellect*).

**I.27: The sacred word designating Him is praṇava or the mystic syllable OM** (Patañjali, 63).

The *mystic syllable OM* is another form of *Īśvara*\(^{108}\). Hariharānanda writes that the “…concept of Īśvara cannot be grasped without the help of an appropriate signifying word. Such word-meaning relationship being correlative, the signifying term is eternal: (I.27). It seems that because Īśvara is *eternal*, the word related to him is also *eternal*. Due to this relation, an aspirant must “Repeat it and contemplate upon its meaning” (I.28). Vyāsa writes that by doing so, one achieves one-pointedness. By repeating mantras the goal of *yoga* becomes firm and by *yoga*, the chanting of *mantras* is improved (Vyāsa, I.28). As a result, the *soul* is revealed. This *sūtra* indicates a particular starting point for *stilling* the *mind*, more specifically achieving one-pointedness of *mind*. The practitioner can choose to chant *OM* or other *mantras* for that matter. More generally, *OM* chanting can be viewed as a different starting point for the same path because the practitioner can choose to chant *OM*, while not engaging in *kriyā yoga* and *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. Patañjali does not mention this, but since he mentions the starting points of three practices: *kriyā yoga*, *aṣṭāṅga yoga* and *OM* chanting which certainly do overlap, why can the practitioner not choose one over the other?

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\(^{108}\) *Īśvara* is a term used to function as a position held by an individual’s preferred transcendent deity. E.g. *Shiva*, *Viṣṇu*. Beyond transcendence of *karma*, *kleśa* and time, there are characteristics of *Īśvara* that will not be described in this paper.
By chanting *OM* “…comes realization of the individual self and the obstacles are resolved” (Patañjali, I.29). Vyāsa writes that obstacles such as illness are removed by devotion to *Īśvara*. The individual **self** is realized by first recognizing the qualities of *Īśvara*: **pure**, **blissful**, **isolated** and **unembarrassed**. After realizing these qualities, the aspirant realizes the qualities of one’s own **soul**. Overall, how is the term *OM* related to the **mind**? *OM*, an eternal correlate of *Īśvara*, is used to achieve one-pointedness of **mind**, the removal of obstacles and finally realization of individual **self**.

There is much **centralizing** in these verses as the commentators are referring to the relationship between a higher being and the aspirant. Ideas, practices, obstacles are all related to the **yogin**. This provides a highly **personalized** account for the practitioner in comparison to that of the *Samkhya Kārikā*. After all, it is the **yogin** who is prescribed to chant *OM* to achieve a one-pointedness of the **mind**. Along with a personal reading, the practitioner is also provided with a concrete starting practice and a variety of **mantras**. The combination of a personal reading and an option of **mantras** to chant can provide the aspirant with a strong ‘**sense of agency**’.

**Kriyā Yoga & Aṣṭāṅga Yoga**

II.1 Tapas (Austerity or sturdy self-discipline—mental, moral and physical), Svādhyāya (repetition of sacred mantras or study of sacred literature) and Iśvara-praṇidhāna (complete surrender to god) are Kriyā Yoga (yoga in the form of action). [sic!]

*Kriyā Yoga* involves **Tapas**, **Svādhyāya** and **Iśvara-praṇidhāna**.

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109 Explain all these references Pure blissful, etc.
110 Austerity
111 Repetition of Sacred Mantras or Study of Sacred Literature
112 Complete surrender to God
In *Kriyā Yoga*, the goal is to diminish the **obstacles** to *yoga* known as *kleśas* (Patañjali II.2). **Tapas** or **austerities** are necessary to purify the mind of *vāsanās*\(^{113}\). Supposedly, these *vāsanās* of actions and afflictions have existed from the beginning of time, and due to this, they are very difficult to eradicate from the **mind** (Vyāsa, II.1). Thus, **tapas** leads to the removal of these *vāsanās* through cleanliness and purity of mind. Hariharānanda mentions that tapas weakens the dominance of *rajas* and *tamas* in the **mind** and includes **celibacy**, āsana, prānāyāma, fasting etc. He explains tapas as a practice to discipline the body while the other two steps of *kriyā yoga* lead to the discipline of the organs of speech and mind (Hariharānanda, II.1). Rāmānanda Sarasvati agrees and expands because, in his opinion, tapas involves **celibacy**, devotion towards a guru, **truth telling**, vow of silence, performing duties based on stages in life, endurance of opposites (heat & cold or pain & pleasure), and moderate eating (II.1).

Vyāsa simply states **svādhyāya** as the repetition of *OM* and the study of scriptures relating to liberation. Finally, Vyāsa states that *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* involves surrendering all actions such as the desire for the fruits of one’s actions to *Īśvara*.

Hariharānanda writes,

> “The three-fold practice results in withdrawal from external activities, leading to pacification of the organs of action and perception, and dawning of detachment and forbearance, all of which enhance the competence of the devotee for practicing concentration” (II.1).

In this portion concerning tapas, **centralization** occurs in a broader sense. Vyāsa uses the example of a ‘man without discipline’ to demonstrate how the goal of *yoga*

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\(^{113}\) *Vāsanā* has three psychologically relevant definitions from the Monier Williams dictionary: “the impression of anything remaining unconscious in the mind, the present consciousness of past perceptions, knowledge derived from past memories.” The most applicable definition would be the first: unconscious impressions.
cannot be reached without *tapas*. He also writes that a ‘*yogin*’ should follow an undisturbed path of purification. *Centralization* specifically involves applying a metaphysical concept to an individual. However in this verse, the term is used more broadly as the practice of *kriyā yoga* is associated with *yogins*. Either way, this is contributing to a ‘*sense of agency*’ by attaching the practice to a notion of ‘I’: Who is the individual performing these three limbs of *kriyā yoga*? Rāmānanda Sarasvati uses phrases like ‘one’s preceptor’, ‘one’s thought’, ‘one’s stage of life’, and ‘one’s actions’, to describe *self-study* and *devotion* to *Īśvara*. Overall, there is a medium to high amount of *personalization* in this *sūtra*.

As explained before, *samādhi* is synonymous with a *still mind* (absence of *vṛttis*) or *consciousness* abiding in its own nature. *Kriyā yoga* allows for this particular result by weakening the *obstacles* to *yoga*: *kleśas*. This is a necessary step because *samādhi* cannot occur when *kleśas* are active in the *mind* (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, II.2). *Discriminative knowledge* attenuates the *obstacles* and as a result, finding the distinction between *puruṣa* and *buddhi* is not hindered. According to Hariharānanda, *discriminative enlightenment* is the finishing touch to the *kleśas* (which are already thinned down). These weakened *kleśas*, like roasted seeds, are not yet removed but remain inactive in the *mind*. He writes that these roasted seeds cannot create any more *afflictive modifications*. The only *modifications* that can occur are those that help discriminate the difference between *puruṣa* and *buddhi*. To reiterate, *kriyā yoga* weakens the *kleśas* and with the emergence of *discriminative knowledge*, the latter destroys them.

*Kleśas*

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114 This is relevant
Kleśas are known as the impediments to yoga, in other words the impediments to stilling the mind. There are five in number: avidyā¹¹⁵, asmitā¹¹⁶, rāga¹¹⁷, dveṣa¹¹⁸ and abhiniveśa¹¹⁹ (Patañjali, II.3). Hariharānanda writes, “When Kleśas become active, they infiltrate into both latent and overt parts of Citta, and strengthening the sway of the Guṇas they tune the mind to worldly activities” [sic!] (II.3).

II.5: Avidyā consists in regarding a transient object as everlasting, an impure object as pure, misery as happiness and the not-self as self.

Avidyā, is known as ignorance/nescience and is the breeding ground of the other kleśas (whether dormant, attenuated, interrupted or active) (Patañjali, II.4). The previous sūtra, II.4, reveals that ignorance is the main impediment, the ground where all the other impediments thrive. This indicates that the other kleśas depend on ignorance. By attacking ignorance, the other impediments will be affected as well. The previous verse indicates that kleśas can be in four different states: Dormant kleśas are those that are still present in the mind of a yogin who has left his/her body but will soon reemerge in another form (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, II.4). Weakened kleśas are those that are gradually weakening due to the practice of yoga and the last two categories, interrupted, manifested, occur when a yogin is attached to worldly objects. For instance, if I am angry with a friend, I am not calm with him (or calm). If I am calm, then I am not angry with him. In the first case, calmness is interrupted and anger is manifested. In the second case, anger is interrupted and calmness is manifested. Both can reemerge when the kleśas contact the sense object.

¹¹⁵ Misapprehension about the real nature of things
¹¹⁶ Egoism
¹¹⁷ Attachment
¹¹⁸ Aversion
¹¹⁹ Fear of death
Avidyā has four crucial components. First, a citta in avidyā sees a transient object as permanent. The example given by Vyāsa is of seeing the moon, stars, world, sky and heavenly beings as permanent, however, in time, all of these have to pass. The next component includes seeing an impure object as pure. This refers to the body itself as disgusting because “…of its place (of origin), of its germinal source (1), of its constituent factors, of its secretions, of its disintegration and of its adventitious purity” (II.5). The body itself is unclean and impure: Vyāsa provides an example of seeing a maiden who is very beautiful with an amazing body as pure, but in truth, is not the case because this beauty will fade. It is seeing misery as happiness: Vyāsa explains that all worldly objects are painful and sorrowful, because they cause suffering due to the nature of the gunas which produces changes (2.5).

The final component of avidyā is seeing the ‘not-self’ as self. This is a crucial component to avidyā. The self or puruṣa is eternal, changeless, infinite, etc. When one looks upon the material world and considers objects or even the mind as a part of one’s self, then one is considering the not self to be the self. Avidyā is the most important kleśa that needs to be weakened because all other impediments are weakened when avidyā is. Once again the kleśas need to be eliminated in order to still the mind, because by nature, the kleśas are impediments to yoga. It is important to note here that with reference to the final point, avidyā is similar to ‘non-discrimination’ in Sāṃkhya. Avidyā involves seeing the ‘non-self’ as the self, and ‘non-discrimination’ involves seeing prakṛti as puruṣa.

With regards to centralization, Vyāsa writes “So also it is Avidya when one looks upon things as one’s own, when these are not so. For instance, people look upon external objects, other persons, animals, even one’s own body and mind, which are the seat and
instrument of experience, as constituting one’s own Self or Purusa, while in reality these are not so” (Vyāsa, II.5). Applying the phenomenon of ignorance to an individual’s perception is enough to indicate the process of personalizing. This is due to the ‘I’ being introduced in the form of one’s possessions. Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes “Those who are engaged in the performance of actions (as the means of attaining Yoga) have their afflictions weakened. In the case of those who are attached to worldly objects, their afflictions are either interrupted or manifested” (II.4). Kleśas are essentially a combination of the guṇas, they are purely metaphysical. An impersonal definition of kleśa can simply be ignorance. However, both Vyāsa and Rāmānanda Sarasvati extend the definition of kleśa to refer to an individual’s point of view. This is centralized because he is directly attributing this erroneous cognition (metaphysical kleśa) to people.

(II.6): Asmitā Is tantamount to the identification of puruṣa or pure consciousness with buddhi.

The next kleśas is ego, known as asmitā. Vyāsa states that ego is seeing the puruṣa and buddhi as the same. He states that puruṣa is absolute awareness and buddhi is an instrument of knowing. One is confusing pure awareness and the most subtle instrument of knowing (2.6). When they appear united, this is called experience. Hariharānanda states that this false identification of puruṣa and prakṛti leads to misapprehensions like “I am happy,” “I am in distress.” These misapprehensions lead people to bhoga (experiencing pleasure and pain). In this misapprehension, what people strongly believe to be the state of puruṣa/the self, is in reality the experience of the buddhi being presented to puruṣa. Once someone understands the difference between

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120 In Sāṁkhya, the word ego is translated is ahaṃkāra. Note the difference between asmitā and ahaṃkāra.
these two, these false identifications of “I am this” and “I am that” disappear and no longer arise. Desire and aversion no longer enter the mind.

Asmitā (I am’ness) itself is the process of centralizing. The word “I” is in the language. One could argue that centralizing is “ahaṃkāra’ing” or “asmitā’ing”. Vyāsa adds a quote by Āchārya Pañchaśikha: “When one fails to see that Purusa is different from Buddhi by virtue of his immaculateness, immutability and metapsychic consciousness, one regards Buddhi as the true self through delusion (2)” (Vyāsa, II.6). Here, the example of asmitā is seen from the point of view of a person. This adds further to the effect of personalizing.

II.7: Attachment is that (modification) which follows remembrance of pleasure.

Attachment (rāga) is the thirst/hankering after pleasure (Vyāsa, 125). Rāga is specifically the act of desiring. This strong desire/hankering comes from a previously experienced pleasure which is most probably in the form of a saṃskāra. In order to have rāga, one must have had a previous experience of that which one is desiring. For example, in order to have a chocolate craving, one must have previously experienced the pleasure of chocolate. Furthermore, Hariharānanda writes that when one experiences pleasure, the experience itself leaves a subliminal imprint in the form of vāsanā (491). This vāsanā bring forward a memory of pleasure in the mind (making it keen) and subsequently creates rāga for that object. This verse is already centralized as Vyāsa refers to an individual chasing pleasure due to a metaphysical kleśa which exists in the citta.

II.8: Aversion is that (modification) which results from misery.
According to Vyāsa, “…aversion is the feeling of opposition, mental disinclination, propensity to hurt and anger towards misery or objects producing misery.” Much like rāga, this occurs when one has experienced such a misery before. From recollection of this misery, one has created a strong sense of aversion towards the object of misery. According to Hariharānanda, with aversion, one feels an urge to exterminate this past sorrow and what had brought it about.

Hariharānanda describes a type of aversion known as Pratigha which originates in Pratighāta (obstruction) which is the “…urge to retaliate and get rid of what had stood in one’s way earlier” (Hariharānanda, II.8). He goes on to say that when one has no aversion, one has nothing to oppose, but with aversion, opposition is at every step. Although subtle, there is personalizing because the act of aversion is not only associated to the mind but is also associated to the individual’s mind.

II.9: As in the ignorant so in the learned the firmly established inborn fear of annihilation is the affliction called abhiniveśa.

This kleśa is known as having the craving “Let me never be non-existent; let me be alive.” According to Vyāsa, much like rāga and dveṣa, abhiniveśa must be present in a person who has experienced death before because it is most likely linked to samskāras. Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes that “Excessive clinging for life consists in anxiety due to fear which is well-known and spontaneous and which is found in the learned one too (as in the ignorant)” (II.9). Abhiniveśa contributes to anxiety and fear, and clearly acts as a hindrance to the path of yoga. One’s intelligence does not necessarily affect one’s fear of death. Furthermore, the commentator makes it clear that fear of death implies that the

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121 A learned and unlearned person are both affected by this. Here intelligence should not be used synonymously with buddhi-intellect because if it was, a developed intellect would only serve to clear abhiniveśa rather than harbor it. Thus, the word intelligence here must be of some other type of intelligence. (find the Sanskrit)
self is different from the physical body (II.9). One is clearly afraid of losing the body, therefore, this also indicates that avidyā (identification with the body and mind) is the root of the fear of death.

Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes “Abhinivesa is the fear of death present in every living being whether learned or ignorant” (II.9). He also writes that the fear of death exists both in the ignorant and wise ones. The kleśa of abhiniveśa is highly centralized by relating the psychological state to an individual. The citta (a metaphysical entity) is being viewed by a psychological microscope by being individuated. In Hariharānanda’s commentary, the words ‘one’ is used frequently along with ‘I’. One can even witness abhiniveśa attributed to a worm, which is a form of subtle centralization but in this case, does not contribute to agency because it is too distant of a species for an aspirant to relate to.

II.10 The subtle kleśas are forsaken (i.e. destroyed) by the cessation of productivity (i.e. disappearance of the mind).

Subtle kleśas (specifically weakened impediments in a mind with discriminative knowledge) are eliminated by the dissolution of the mind. In a mind with discriminative discernment only a small portion of ego (asmitā) can exist, but when the mind is dissolved, asmitā is dissolved with it. Discriminative knowledge ends volition and sensation in the mind, and the latent kleśas become weaker. According to Hariharānanda, the final act is the renunciation of discrimination. When this occurs, the kleśas are completely destroyed. The mind merges back into its cause, asmitā (ego) and the latent impressions disappear (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, II.10). The subtle kleśas disappear when the mind merges back into ego. Therefore, the weakened kleśas are only removed when the mind and ego dissolve back into their causes by discriminative
knowledge. Hariharānanda writes that once discrimination occurs “…the final curtain comes down on mind and with it the death blow for the Kleśas” (II.10). In this sūtra, there is weaker centralization because there is more of a metaphysical sense.

**Aṣṭāṅga Yoga**

II.28 When impurities are destroyed through the practice of the different accessories to yoga enlightenment dawns, culminating in discriminative enlightenment (1).

Vyāsa states that when practicing aṣṭāṅga yoga, the five forms of ignorance (impurities) are reduced or destroyed and subsequently true knowledge manifests (Vyāsa, 11.28). Also the distinction between puruṣa and the guṇas is known. An analogy is given that practicing the limbs of yoga removes the impurities like an axe severing wood. Consistent practice of the limbs will give discriminative knowledge. Hariharānanda states that increase of knowledge is directly proportional to the decreasing of impurities. Thus, the path of yoga, along with kriyā yoga and practice and detachment in Chapter 1 all move towards the greater goal. However, note that aṣṭāṅga yoga specifically creates discriminative enlightenment. This indicates a highly important detail: The results of one’s actions are visible and thus, contributes to a ‘sense of agency’. He writes “As the practices are performed, the impurities are attenuated and correspondingly the lustre of knowledge increases until discriminative enlightenment is attained, i.e. the true nature of the distinction between Purusa and the Gunas is known” (II.28).

It is important to note the difference here between Sāṃkhya and Yoga. In Sāṃkhya, discriminative knowledge is the ultimate means. However, in Yoga, after one attains discriminative knowledge, one is required to surrender that last vṛtti and still the
mind. The stilling of the mind is an extra step after discriminative knowledge. The practice of āṣṭāṅga yoga itself is personalizing because it is a providing path that cultivates the metaphysical vṛtti of discrimination within the citta. Thus, this metaphysical process is being directly applied to the individual and transformed into a psychological process. The following sūtras will allow the reader to get a personal and centered feel of the text compared to the Sāṃkhya Kārikā.

II.30 Ahiṃsā (non-injury), satya (truth), asteya (absention from stealing), brahmacharya (continence) and aparigraha (abstinence from avariciousness) are the five yamas (forms of restraint). [sic!]

The first step of the path to discriminative knowledge is the five yamas. Ahiṃsā represents non-violence or the abstention from hurting any being at all times. The other yamas\(^\text{122}\) are based off of this one. Satya refers to telling the truth in speech. One should speak only for the purpose of communication with lack of deceit, delusive and meaningless intentions. Words should only be uttered for benefit and not to inflict harm. Asteya refers to refraining from stealing things that belong to others. Brahmacharya is suppressing one’s sexual activity (celibacy). Aparigraha is refraining from wanting things (non-coveting) because according to Vyāsa they create trouble and decay.

The commentary of this sūtra is highly centralized as the words ‘one’, ‘others’ ‘brāhmaṇa’, ‘self-restraint’ ‘person’ ‘women’, ‘her’ are used in relation to conduct. In fact, it is highly difficult to speak in a metaphysical sense by separating these codes of conduct from the individual. The yamas are clearly rules and conduct that an individual must follow indicating a drastic difference from the instructions of the Sāṃkhya Kārikā. There are plenty of examples of visible results from one’s actions because one can see

\(^{122}\) Yamas are universal (II.31)
character traits after the practice of *yamas*. For instance, when the *yogin* is firm in *ahimsā*, sentient beings in his presence cease to be hostile (Patañjali, II.35). When *satya* is cultivated, the *yogin’s* words become true (Patañjali, II.36). When one tells another to be *virtuous*, the latter becomes virtuous (Vyāsa, II.36). When the *yogin* cultivates non-stealing, everything naturally comes to him/her (Patañjali, II.37). When celibacy is established, the *yogin* attains power (Patañjali, II.38). There are verses that can directly contribute to one’s *sense of agency* by clearly explaining the results of one’s practice.

**II.32: Cleanliness, contentment, austerity (mental and physical discipline), svadhyaya (study of scriptures and chanting of mantras) and devotion to god are the niyamas (observances). [sic!]**

Vyāsa states that *cleanliness* is external\(^{123}\) and internal\(^{124}\). *Contentment* involves being satisfied with one’s basic necessities and not desiring anything more than needed. *Austerity* involves the ability to handle conditions of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, standing/sitting calmly and sometimes, the absence of speech and fasting for religious vows. *Study of scriptures* involves studying śāstras (for liberation) and repeating *OM*. Finally, *devotion to God* means surrendering all actions to *Iśvara*.

The reader might have noticed how the first three *niyamas* are the same as the steps in *kriyā-yoga*. Hariharānanda clarifies that *cleanliness* involves eating pure food (not stale or rotten food). He states that “Uncleanliness imbibed from contact with external objects also makes the mind dirty” (II.33). Thus one must maintain external *cleanliness* so the *mind* can also maintain its *cleanliness*. Internal *cleanliness* involves removing negative emotions (impurities of the mind) like “…arrogance, ego, inability to endure others’ prosperity, jealousy, ascribing faults (where there are none) wrongly to

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\(^{123}\) (Daily washing, eating pure food)  
\(^{124}\) (removal of impurities of the mind)
others, bearing ill will etc.” (II.33). According to Vyāsa, the aspirant who practices cleanliness gets heart purification leading to mental bliss/joy. Following this bliss comes one-pointedness following subdued senses. After the senses are subdued, the buddhi becomes firm in the ability to realize the self (II.41).

Not only are these verses centralized, but they also provide the aspirant with a sense of agency through cause and effect. For example, when one practices cleanliness, one develops an aversion towards one’s body and other bodies (Patañjali, II.40). Once again, through cleanliness, mental bliss and joy emerge (II.41). From practicing contentment, unsurpassed happiness is gained (II.42). Also, when impurities are destroyed and austerities are practiced, the perfection of the body and organs results (II.43). By study and repeating mantras, one can communicate with one’s desired deity (II.44). Finally, from devotion to Īśvara, samādhi is attained (II.45). Clearly, the niyamas indicate a cause and effect relationship where the practitioner gets a ‘sense of agency’ indicating that if he/she puts in effort, these results may occur.

What happens when one finds opposition to the yamas and niyamas in the form of disturbing thoughts? Patañjali suggests that the individual should actively find contrasting (more positive) thoughts to overcome the intrusive pervasive thoughts (II.33) For instance, Vyāsa states that if one has the thought, “I shall speak untruth,” he should think “I took refuge in the virtues of yoga by promising security to all living beings” (II.3). This functions to act as a reminder of one’s conviction towards non-violence and the path itself. It seems that while practicing the yamas and niyamas, oppositions may arise and one should constantly and vigilantly have countering thoughts. It seems that Patañjali is suggesting that with the goal in mind, one should to have these thoughts or
create these *vṛttis* in order to neutralize or weaken the previous *vṛttis*. Opposing *vṛttis* must be neutralized because they can potentially pose a threat to the path. This *sūtra* offers the practitioner a ‘sense of agency’ because he/she is actively thinking of counteracting *thoughts*. By one’s effort and creativity in producing these *thoughts*, one has the opportunity to witness one’s result.¹²⁵

**Results of Personal Effort**

**I.21: Yogins With Intense Ardour Achieve Concentration And The Result Thereof, Quickly (Patañjali). [sic!]**

This *sūtra* indicates a straightforward principle: the aspirant who is vigilant and hardworking will achieve results more quickly. In other words, more input equals more output. Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes “…supra-cognitive trance is at hand in the case of yogin-s who have intense detachment and pursue the means in an abundant measure” [sic!] (I.21). If performed intensely, the cause is effort and the result is the goal of *yoga*.

This is an evident *sūtra* indicating that one’s actions are related to the results. In other words, there is a direct cause-effect relationship between one’s sincere efforts and outcome of practice. There is nothing comparable to this in the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*. I will present six verses in succession that indicate efforts related to results. These statements can be viewed as a series of ‘if-then’ statements that involve the practitioner’s effort followed by his/her results. Thus, this verse can clearly provide the aspirant with a ‘sense of agency’.

¹²⁵ In this case, one can infer that a successful result is a counteracting thought that defeated the original disturbing thought. And, so once the original thought is defeated, the practitioner can say “I have defeated the previous thought.”
Once again, the purpose of listing the following sūtras is to provide the reader with a clear indication that the practitioner can get a predominant ‘sense of agency’ from witnessing tangible results.

I.33: The Mind becomes purified by the cultivation of feelings of amity, compassion, goodwill and indifference respectively towards happy, miserable, virtuous and sinful creatures. [sic!]

A mind full of serenity is one that has been cultivated with one-pointedness. A mind that has been cultivated with one-pointedness is one that is pure through the thoughts listed above. The practitioner must cultivate positive feelings towards the happy, compassion towards the suffering, and indifference towards the evil ones. This thought process requires one’s effort and practice. After sufficient practice the individual will experience a purified, content mind.

Hariharānanda writes:

“…even if the person is one’s enemy, the feeling should be one of elation as on seeing a friend happy. If feeling like envy or resentment appears at seeing someone prosper it has to be got rid of by conscious cultivation of feeling of amity. Compassion has to be practiced towards all those in distress, irrespective of whether they are friends or foes i.e. to practice being sympathetic towards people when they suffer and refrain from hardening up in cruel delight when suffers misfortune. Whether he belongs to the same sect or not, you should have goodwill for anyone who treads the path of virtue” (I.33).

Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes that when the individual acts in this manner the mind becomes clear by the removal of the rajas and tamas guṇas. The individual has direct control over the decreasing of these guṇas, and therefore, a clear ‘sense of agency’.

I.34: By exhaling and restraining the breath also (The Mind is calmed).

A practitioner may feel a ‘sense of agency’ by “…exhaling with special care so that the mind remains at the desired place during expulsion of the internal air…and so
“…continuing such practice without any break the mind is to be made one-pointed” (Hariharānanda, I.34). This sūtra is a great example of practice producing a result that the practitioner can personally witness. “By the control of vital airs, there results the control of the mind. It is because both are inseparable” (Rāmānanda Sarasvati, I.34). This inseparability can allow the practitioner to directly feel that by controlling his breath, he/she is controlling his mind. The practitioner is simply using a tool to control his/her mind, just as a gardener uses a shovel to dig through soil. Just as the gardener may feel that he/she is an agent by using a shovel to dig a hole, the practitioner can feel that he/she is an agent by using the breath to control the mind. 

I.35: The development of higher objective perceptions called Visayavati also brings the tranquility of mind.

This sūtra indicates that when a practitioner develops higher perceptions of smell, taste, touch and sound from meditating on specific areas on the body, this “…stabilizes the mind firmly, removes doubts and forms the gateway to knowledge acquirable through concentration” (Vyāsa, I.35).

Vyāsa also adds that when an individual has a direct perception of certain topics in the śastra126, then he/she will develop faith in other matters like salvation. As a result then the mind will gain faith, energy, remembrance and samādhi. In other words, concentrating on specific areas of the body will lead to super sensuous experiences, and this in turn will lead to a solid sense of faith (removal of doubts) in other matters mentioned in the texts. Thus, doubts are removed by one’s own effort. In addition, Rāmānanda Sarasvati writes that when a yogi experiences these things “…the yogin

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126 Sacred texts
strives to concentrate his mind upon an object although it is extremely subtle, with firm belief” (1.35). The practitioner gains a ‘sense of agency’ when he/she actively chooses to concentrate on a specific area and experiences the result as super sensuous experiences.

I.36: Or by perception which is free from sorrow and is radiant (stability of mind can also be produced).

By concentrating on the heart center, one attains knowledge of the buddhi, which is beautiful. Similarly, when one concentrates on pure I-sense, ego, which is made of pure sattva, one gets a similar vision. He/she attains the vision of “I am”. From this, his/her mind becomes stable. This sūtra has much more complexity that is not needed in the moment, but the same idea of the ‘sense of agency’ still stands.

I.37: Or (contemplating) on a mind which is free from desires (the devotees mind gets stabilized).

The practitioner who focuses his/her mind on an individual who has no passions will develop a mind that is desire-less. Rāmānanda Sarasvati gives examples of people like Vyāsa or Śuka127. The cause is meditation on a desire-less mind and the effect is a desire-less mind. The practitioner can feel a ‘sense of agency’ simply by choosing a role model figure. He/she may feel that he/she has achieved a stable mind by effort on an object, which he/she has freely chosen from a multitude of choices.

I.39: Or by contemplating on whatsoever thing one may like (the mind becomes stable).

The cause here indicates any object of meditation (suitable for yoga), and the effect is a stable mind. The practitioner voluntarily chooses an object like the moon, and from his/her choice followed by consistent practice, he/she can achieve a stabilized mind.

127 Sage
A ‘sense of agency’ can certainly emerge especially because the practitioner has chosen an object based his/her preference.

Clearly there are about six verses in succession showing that by one’s effort, one can still or calm one’s mind. In the Yoga Sūtras, there is an abundance of sūtras indicating that one’s actions are directly related to one’s results. In fact, almost the entirety of chapter three (supernatural powers), is dedicated to performing samyama on certain areas in the material world to attain these siddhis. These sūtras need not be explained, but they have a similar form to the verses mentioned above. I provides a few examples:

III.19: (By Practicing Samyama) On Notions, Knowledge of Other Minds is Obtained. [sic!]

III.23: Through Samyama On Friendliness (Amity) And other similar virtues, strength is obtained therein. [sic!]

III.24: (By Practicing Samyama) On (Physical) Strength, The Strength of Elephants Etc. Can be Acquired. [sic!]

A ‘sense of agency’ emerges when the practitioner is choosing where to perform samyama. Simply by the fact that the practitioner gets a choice, he/she is introduced to a sense of control. Then the practitioner is said to have various results based on the location of choice. Thus, a ‘sense of agency’ emerges from the particular results that have emerged from his/her choice.

Conclusion

This paper sets out to accomplish two functions,

1) To organize and understand the mind in Sāṃkhya & Yoga

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128 Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, Samādhi
2) To understand which school of thought provides more of a ‘sense of agency’.

This has been measured by frequency, the language of the commentators and results of personal effort.

‘Sense of agency’ refers to an individual’s subjective experience of feeling control over his/her actions. In answering how one feels a sense of control, I have referred to the three forms of measurement listed above. Through the principle of repetition, one can evidently see that the Sāṃkhya Kārikā provides more verses based on metaphysics while the Yoga Sutras provides more verses based on psychology and practice. This is important to understand because metaphysics alone, at least in this sense, cannot easily explain how the mind of an individual is affected from subjective points of view. Thus, there is reliance on the part of psychology to explain the various states of mind. Through the principle of the commentator’s language, the practitioner is constantly given responsibility through the concept of I’ness. Both metaphysical concepts and practices are personalized to the individual providing a ‘sense of agency’ that an impersonal reading cannot offer. In both texts, the verses demonstrating the mind and its functions are mildly to moderately centralized, however, Yoga beings to centralized more dramatically when the kleśas, practices, and siddhis are encountered. In addition, these egoic verses are repetitive which also creates a ‘sense of agency’. Through the visibility of results, the practitioner can witness the effects of his/her actions. By witnessing one’s results, one is able to feel more like agent. Yoga allows for the practitioner to feel that he/she has control over the results of his/her actions while Sāṃkhya barely allows for this.
One school of thought is not superior to the other. In fact, one can conclude there are always two readings of Sāṃkhya and Yoga: metaphysical\textsuperscript{129} and psychological\textsuperscript{130}. One can read almost any verse metaphysically and by simply adding a particular word one can then make it sound psychological. Perhaps this is why both are known as sister schools. Coming back our introductory quote, it is difficult to say whether both schools lead to the same goal. However, it is clear that both have substantially different focuses. In fact, they seem to function almost too perfectly as partners: metaphysically and psychologically.

\textsuperscript{129} Impersonal
\textsuperscript{130} Personal
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