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evil and may indeed lure us into conforming to the world. We have been challenged to let God's Spirit purify our cultures, so that they may be ennobled and transformed.

We have become deeply aware of the fact that we have nothing we can really call our own. Everything belongs to our Lord, and we are to be His faithful stewards. We are therefore challenged to care for His creation. This means, among other things, that many of us should live more simply in order that others, including unborn generations, may simply live. We humbly confess that we have often acted as though the earth's resources and what we call our possessions are for us to use and squander at will, not realizing our dependence upon and responsibility to others.

An Invitation to Partnership

Finally, brothers and sisters, we confess our utter dependence upon God. He sends *us* into the world, but the mission remains *His*. It is He who enlists us—the Kingdom community—in His agenda for the world. To this end, He has given us His Spirit, to enlighten us and be our Counsellor, to impart His many gifts to us, and to equip us for our ministry. We move forward—trembling yet confidently—and we invite you to move with us, as we prepare for that day when Christ will return and every knee will bow before Him and every tongue confess Him as Lord of all.

PRAISE HIS NAME! [p. 38](#)

Yoga as a Method of Liberation

Moti Lal Pandit

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The modern guru movements that have captivated thousands if not millions of Westerners have one thing in common—the practice of yoga. The increasing flood of propagandist literature on yoga generally misleads people about its ultimate purpose. Yoga is not simply meditation; its goal is to liberate man from his own humanity and from the created world. The ideology of yoga determines the meditational techniques used by the gurus.

The importance of this article is that it does not deal just with the praxis of yoga but gives a rigorous scientific analysis of its philosophic roots. It is the most penetrating analysis this editor has ever read. It is pure science and herein lies its importance for Christian apologetics. Too often Christian apologetics deal primarily with the phenomena and are weak on the theoretical base. This article is pre-theology; it has no reference to Christian doctrine at all. But reflection on it in the light of biblical dogmatics will be of immense value for those who are serious in seeking to understand the dynamics of Hindu spirituality and who want to expound a radical alternative that leads genuine seekers after inner peace to salvation in Jesus Christ—the only true liberator.

(Editor)

INTRODUCTION

There are four main interdependent concepts which comprise Hinduism, and one can approach Hinduism from any one of them. These four concepts are *karma*, *maya*, *mukti*, and *yoga*. These four interconnected ideas have been the source and strength of Hindu spirituality from the post-vedic times, that is, from the Upanishadic period (700 B.C.).

(i) KARMA is a universal law of causality, and this law binds man with the world of becoming, and thereby chains him to eternal process of becoming (transmigration).

(ii) MAYA is a mysterious and unfathomable creative power, a power which enables the cosmos to make its appearance, and thereby exist. It is because of this power that the eternal return of life is made possible. This creative power is considered to be real by the man who is enmeshed in the world of becoming, and thereby suffers from [p. 39](#) ontological ignorance about the nature of reality. In fact, this creative power is only an appearance, an illusion.

(iii) MUKTI signifies deliverance or liberation from the process of becoming. It is an unconditioned mode of existence. In and through *mukti* the Absolute is realized within, and is called *brahman-atman*.

(iv) YOGA is a methodology or technique of meditation the aim of which is to realize the state of liberation within, that is, to realize the original unity within the Absolute. Yoga, as a corpus of techniques, is employed in the service of liberation.

Having these four concepts in mind, we can understand the Hindu search for truth and meaning. When we speak of truth, it has not to be understood as something which has value in itself. Truth is meaningful in so far as it is existential, in that it is through truth that man realizes liberation from becoming. A Hindu is not so much concerned with the possession of truth as much as his attention is concentrated on liberation. It is liberation or deliverance which has meaning. To have freedom means to have another form of existence. Freedom means to appropriate another mode of existence which transcends the human condition. In other words, freedom is achieved through metaphysical knowledge or gnosis, a knowledge which allows man to die to his human condition, and thereby be reborn in an unconditioned mode of existence.

The Meaning and Significance of Yoga

In this scheme of things, let us now deal with the basic ideas of Yoga. Etymologically, the word yoga is derived from 'yuj', which means 'to bind together', 'to yoke'. However, as a general concept yoga signifies a methodology of meditation and an ascetic practice. Therefore, any form of ascetical practice or meditational technique is considered to be yoga. But the main themes of yoga are contained in the *Yogasutras* of Patanjali. Alongside the classic yoga, there are numerous other forms of yoga which are not as systematic as the yoga of Patanjali. They mainly depend, for the elaboration of their ideas, on the *Yogasutras*, and most of them dabble in magic, witchcraft, ritual, etc. The yoga of Patanjali is free from these contradictory and folkloric elements.

Although the term yoga means to bind, its fundamental aim is to break the bond which ties man to his condition. This conceptuality has to be understood from a metaphysical point of view. The world of becoming is misery, and therefore the aim of yoga is to disengage man from that which binds him. By delivering him from the net of bondage, yoga aims at *isolating* the spirit of man from all that which causes bondage. The state of isolation is at the same time a state of original [p. 40](#) unity, in that the spirit returns to its pristine state. The term has, therefore, to be understood from its double function: on the one hand, it disengages man from his environment by isolating him from his human condition, and on the other, it re-unites man to his original state of being, which is free from temporality.

From this it is clear that there is no possibility of liberation, of original unity, if one is not detached from the world. In not conquering oneself, one's environment, and thereby the world, there is no possibility of beginning the practice of yoga. Yoga, therefore, signifies, on the one hand, complete rupture from the human condition, and on the other, a reversion to the state of non-condition.

Yoga does not have only a practical side; it has an initiatory dimension also. Yoga cannot be learnt by oneself, or through books. It has to have a guru: a master who can teach the disciple the way of yoga. The initiatory character of yoga expresses itself as a detached mode of existence, that is, through the process of initiation a yogi cuts the threads of relationship. While giving up his ties with the world of becoming, a yogin is guided by a guru, and thereby he tries to go beyond the milieu of the human condition. By detaching himself from the world, a yogin thus engages in the process of dying to himself, to the world, and to everything that surrounds him. And through initiation a yogin actualizes the possibility of a new body, a new being, a body which is of mystical character. Having a mystical body, the yogin enters into a non-temporal, non-becoming mode of existence; it is a mode of existence which is beyond good and evil, which is not concerned with the miseries of man.

Yoga is not simply a method of meditation. It is also a philosophy, as set out in the *Yogasutras* of Patanjali. It is believed that Patanjali created the system of yoga philosophy. However, it is not true. Patanjali did not invent either the philosophy or the techniques of yoga. He himself admits the fact that he is only correcting and codifying the system (*Yogasutra*, i.1). Even before Patanjali, esoteric yogic techniques were known to the ascetics. It seems he retained only such practices as had been testified by experiences as authentic. As far as philosophy proper is concerned, Patanjali merely handles the Samkhya system. The philosophy of yoga and Samkhya are so closely allied to each other that the affirmations of the one are meaningful to the other. The main differences between the two are:

(1) Samkhya is atheistic and yoga is not;

(2) Samkhya believes that there is only one way to liberation, and that is, metaphysical knowledge. Yoga, on the other hand, gives much importance to the techniques of meditation. p. 41

Existence is Pain

The world, in the scheme of yoga philosophy, is real. Although the existence of the world is not unreal, it exists, or is there, because of metaphysical ignorance of the soul. The world exists to the extent that the soul is under the influence of ignorance. It is because of this metaphysical ignorance that the soul is enslaved to the process of becoming, of transmigration. The world will cease to exist, or rather will reverse to its unmanifest state, the moment the last soul is awakened from his slumber (ignorance) by metaphysical knowledge through the techniques of yoga.

It is in this belief—that man and the world exist because of ignorance—that in Indian spirituality constant indifference is shown towards the world, and towards the man of the world. This negative attitude, however, does not lead to nihilism because it is realized that there is something more real and authentic than this life of becoming, of temporality. In other words, Indian religiosity rejects the temporal aspect of life as well as of the world. This rejection is based on the idea that there is a mode of existence which is affected neither by history nor by time-space.

Since the world is becoming, is history, it is the centre of sorrow and pain. In the words of Patanjali: 'All is suffering for the seer' (*Yogasutra*, ii.15). Before Patanjali this doctrine was propounded by the Buddha in similar terms: 'All is sorrow, all is impermanent'. All

metaphysical thinking and techniques of yoga find their justification in the belief that everything is but the dark shadow of pain. As one of the commentators (Aniruddha) of the *Samkhya-sutras* writes: 'The body is pain, because it is the place of pain; the senses, objects, perceptions are suffering, because they lead to suffering; pleasure itself is suffering, because it is followed by suffering' (*Samkhya-sutra*, ii. 1). Although there is sadness in Indian philosophy, there is no nihilism in it. It is the knowledge of pain which creates the desire for emancipation, for liberation. Thus suffering plays a positive role in Indian spirituality. It reminds a Hindu that there is only one way to achieve liberation, and that is in withdrawing from the world, in going deep into oneself. Pain is not something which man alone is made to experience. It is an ontological necessity, in that every form of existence, whether it be that of an animal, or insect, is condemned to suffer. But man has the possibility of going beyond the condition of pain.

Since there is possibility for emancipation, knowledge has value in so far as it serves the purpose of liberating man from pain. Therefore, in this 'world, the audience listens only to the preacher, who sets forth facts whose knowledge is necessary and desired. To those who set p. 42 forth doctrines that no one desires, no one attends, as comes to pass with fools or with men of the herd, who are good in their practical affairs but ignorant of the sciences and arts' (*Tattva-kaumudi*, p.1). Vacaspatimisra, in his commentary on the *Vedanta-sutra-bhasya* of Sankara, repeats this very theme about the significance of knowledge: 'No lucid person desires to know what is devoid of all certainty or what is of no use ... or of no importance' (*Bhamati*, p. 1).

The Nature of the Self

The problem of yoga has been defined in clear terms: the source of suffering is the ignorance of the soul or self (*purusa*). To remove the sheaths of ignorance of the soul, and thereby seek liberation, yoga seeks the way of meditational techniques. The centre of this ignorance lies in the self. The self, in the philosophy of yoga, is conceived of as autonomous and independent; it is Buddhists and materialists alone who have denied the reality of the self (*purusa*). In the terminology of Patanjali's yoga the self or soul is spoken of as *purusa*. The self is said to be free from attributes as well as from relations. It is a passive entity. The only thing that can be said about the self is that it knows and is.

This self, being attributeless, is ineffable, unfathomable, beyond description, beyond thought: 'The self is that which sees (*saksin*), it is isolated (*kaivalyam*), indifferent, mere inactive spectator.' These are the words of Isvarkrsna, the author of the *Samkhya-karika* (*Samkhya-karika*, 19). Being passive and attributeless, the self is without intelligence (*ciddharma*) (cf. *Samkhya-sutras*, i. 146), and therefore without desires. As desires are ephemeral, they do not belong to the Self.

There are some difficulties with such an understanding of the self. If the self is pure, attributeless, relationless, without desires and intelligence, then how is it that the self leads an embodied existence, an existence which is seen as pain and sorrow? It is this problem, the link between *purusa* (self) and *prakrti* (matter), which forms the core of yoga thinking—and the techniques devised by yoga are meant to sunder this link.

Man always thinks that the self is bound by the psycho-mental life. We think the self to be bound because we view reality from a human, and therefore empirical, viewpoint. But the self, when seen from the transcendental perspective, is not bound; it is free and unchained. The self appears to be a doer, and therefore bound. In reality, the self is said to be only a spectator (*saksin*). The self is a spectator in the same way as liberation is nothing more nor less than becoming conscious of the eternal freedom and autonomy within.

The sense of pain and bondage exist because of the 'I', and for this [p. 43](#) reason I say: I am bound, I am thin, I am fat. These qualities—bound, thin, and fat—are superimposed upon the eternal self due to ignorance, due to wrongly identifying 'ego' with 'self'. But the moment there is awakening, there is realization that the 'I' is nothing more than the product of matter (*prakṛti*). During this awakening, I realize that existence, in its temporal aspect, has been a constant chain of suffering and that the self has been impassively contemplating the drama of personality. It means that person, as a unique entity, simply does not exist. What we take to be the 'I', is simply a conglomeration of psycho-mental experiences. The personality ceases to be the moment the revelation of the self as autonomous and unconditioned being takes place.

Although the self in itself is free, it, however, allows itself, though in an illusory fashion, to be associated with matter. If existence is viewed in this fashion, then human life seems to be meaningless. In order to avoid this difficulty, Buddhism did away with the self. Vedanta (that is, the Upanishadic philosophy), on the other hand, does away with the reality of the world in order to avoid the difficulty of relationship between the self and the world. Yoga is not willing to destroy the ontological reality either of the world or of the self. It is for this reason that yoga philosophy has been attacked by Sankara, the father of Indian monism, and his followers.

The yoga philosophy believes in the plurality of selves. It believes that there are as many independent selves as there are human beings. A self is a monad, and lives in complete isolation from other selves. The world is inhabited by these monads, and each monad is free and eternal. Yoga philosophy postulates the plurality of selves precisely because, had there been one self, emancipation would have been an easy matter, in the sense that, once the self realized its true nature, all human beings would simultaneously realize liberation.

A person who has realized liberation does not, in so far as he lives his temporal existence, cease to act. After awakening, the liberated person's actions do not belong to him; they are mechanical and objective. He performs these actions without any motive for fruit. His actions are not characterized by the consciousness of 'I'; they are constituted by the consciousness of 'it'.

Means to Liberation

Yoga does not believe that gnosis in itself can lead to liberation (*mukti*): it can prepare the person for the acquisition of freedom. Emancipation, according to yoga, has to be a forced one; it has to be won or conquered. This freedom has to be appropriated through ascetic techniques [p. 44](#) and meditation. The aim, therefore, is to do away with the normal mode of consciousness. The new form of consciousness has to be qualitatively different from the normal one. It is this form of consciousness which is able to comprehend the subtle truth of metaphysical knowledge. This transformation of normal consciousness is not achieved easily. This can be actualized only 'by suppressing the states of consciousness' (*Yogasutra*, i.2). It means that yoga techniques presuppose the knowledge of various kinds of normal modes of consciousness, which are secular, unilluminated, limited, and transient. These normal states of consciousness are said to be numerous, but they can be reduced to three main categories (see Vyasa's commentary on the *Yogasutras*):

- (i) A state of consciousness which is characterized by dreams, illusions and errors.
- (ii) A form of consciousness which is the sum total of all experiences.
- (iii) A consciousness in which experiences of occult nature are awakened by the yogic exercises.

According to Patanjali, each form of consciousness has its own science which explains the limits of experience, its nature and function. The theory of knowledge, for instance,

tells us how to avoid conceptual confusion. Since, according to yoga, every psychological experience is the product of ignorance about the nature of the self, it is but evident that they are false from a metaphysical viewpoint. They may be real when seen from a psychological point. Therefore, metaphysics recognizes that knowledge as real and valid which is of the third category.

The aim of yoga, therefore, is to abolish the first two forms of consciousness or experience, and thereby lead us to a form of consciousness which is non-rational, beyond sense perception, and of para-psychological nature. This form of knowledge, according to yoga, is gained in the state of *samadhi*—a state which is beyond becoming, and thereby the state of absolute freedom is affected.

Yoga is a method or technique which believes in the experimental form of knowledge. There is no possibility of any form of experimental knowledge without asceticism—and this is the leitmotif of yoga literature. Books 2 and 3 of the *Yogasutras* are devoted to this activity: purification, bodily attitudes, breathing techniques, etc. In order to reach the state of *samadhi*, yoga techniques are indispensable.

The Nature of the Mind

There are, according to Patanjali's yoga, five states which create the **p.45** normal psycho-mental activities of consciousness, and they are: ignorance (*avidya*), the sense of personality (*asmita*), passion (*raga*), disgust (*dvesa*), and the will to live (*abhinivesa*). All these states of consciousness are of a painful (*klesa*) nature. Taken together, human experience is nothing but pain and sorrow.

The yogin, one who follows the path of yoga, has to eradicate these states (*vruttis*) from the mind, since they constitute the normal psychomental stream of consciousness. These states form the subconscious, as it were, of the mind. The subconscious forces raise two kinds of obstacles on the way of liberation: on the one hand, subconscious sensations (*vasanas*) feed continuously the psycho-mental activity of the mind, and on the other, these subconscious sensations, by virtue of their function, constitute obstacles on the way of liberation, because their very nature is elusive and difficult to control.

The origin of these subconscious sensations according to Vyasa, the commentator on the *Yogasutras* (iv.9), is memory. Human life is seen as a continuous flux of subconscious sensations, and these sensations express themselves in the form of states of consciousness. In other words, it means that life is seen as the actualization of these subconscious forces of the mind through experience. Whatever kind of specificity an individual has, it is determined by the subconscious forces.

Since the psycho-mental activity of the mind is characterized by the subconscious forces, which are of a painful nature, it is difficult for the mind to experience such states of consciousness which are pure. Even if pure states of consciousness existed, it would be difficult for man to renounce his subconscious sensation. It is this pain of the subconscious which humanity in general shares. Pain, therefore, is a common datum of experience of humanity, and there are few who have the strength and courage to renounce this world of pain. In so far as the subconscious sensations are not eliminated, it is of no use to attempt to change the direction of the states of consciousness. The aim of yoga, therefore, is to enable man to destroy the *vasanas*, and thereby change the states of consciousness.

The Nature of Yogic Techniques

To overcome the subconscious sensations of the mind, methods and techniques have been devised. The basic method is that of concentration (*ekagrata*), and concentration has to be on a single point, whether it be on the space between the eyebrows, or on God. The concentration is realized by integrating the stream of consciousness (*sarvarthata*). The

function of concentration is to bring the mind under [p. 46](#) control, to keep it away from distractions. Concentration presupposes control over the senses (*indriyas*) and on the functions of the subconscious. Control means to intervene at will. In other words, it means to realize discontinuity of psycho-mental life at will.

To achieve *ekagrata* (concentration), certain bodily techniques have been devised. It is for this purpose that emphasis upon breathing, bodily postures, etc, is laid. The aim of the techniques is to suppress the normal states of consciousness through concentration. To facilitate the state of concentration, and thereby elimination of the states of consciousness (*citvritti*) the help of eight 'limbs' (*angas*) is sought. They are: restraint (*yama*), discipline (*niyama*), bodily postures (*asanas*), breathing exercises (*pranayama*), freedom from sense activity (*pratyahara*), concentration (*dharana*), yogic meditation (*dhyana*), and *samadhi* (an undifferentiated state of consciousness).

The yoga proper begins with the third limb, namely, with that of *asana* (bodily posture). The aim of the *asana* is to reduce the bodily activity to non-activity, and thereby create a condition of immobility. The same purpose is served by *pranayama*, in that conscious life is transformed into a kind of plant life. By achieving motionlessness, by having rhythmic breathing, and by deep concentration, a yogin, through the process of immobilization of both mind and body, transcends the normal modality of life. This immobility is said to be an autonomous form of existence in relation to the external world. In this new autonomy, a yogin is supposed to be insensible to heat and cold, to thirst and hunger, to light and darkness. It is a process of killing the life of sensations, and thereby creating an alternative form of inner sensations.

While a yogin progresses on this path, the sensations of his body become dead. All the states of his consciousness get narrowed down to one point: immobility of mind and body. According to Patanjali, through immobility there is concentration. Once concentration takes place, the withdrawal of senses from the external influences becomes evident.

This withdrawal of senses is spoken of as *pratyahara*. At this stage para-psychological phenomena take place, that is, as said above, consciousness is reduced to the inner world of sensation. At this stage all the activities of the conscious mind are suspended. In this state of non-consciousness, there is the experience of light in the heart, or, as the mystics say, it is light from the lotus of the heart. So we are introduced to an occult physiology.

From this account it should be clear by now that the yogic meditation is quite different from meditation as we normally understand it. By [p. 47](#) meditation, we understand reflection, reflection by the mind. In the yogic terminology, meditation signifies non-reflection, destruction of the psycho-mental activities of the mind. According to yoga, meditation is neither subjective nor objective, it is beyond both.

The Nature of Samadhi

The last three limbs, namely, *dhyana*, *dharana*, and *samadhi*, represent states of consciousness, and are spoken of as *samyama* (controlling together). The realization of *samyama* means the simultaneous experience of concentration (*dharana*), yogic meditation (*dhyana*), and *samadhi* (non-conditioned state of consciousness).

To go from the level of concentration to that of yogic meditation needs no new technique or method. In like manner, no new yogic exercise is needed by a yogin once he has achieved the plane of concentration and yogic meditation: *samadhi* is bound to take place. *Samadhi*, therefore, is the crown and apex of all yogic ascetic practices, that is, the realization of freedom as a mode of existence which is non-conditioned.

There are various difficulties in understanding the meaning of *samadhi*, even if we concentrate our attention on the explanation of Patanjali and his commentators alone. To

explain samadhi in precise terms is difficult on account of its being indescribable. Also the meaning is difficult to explain precisely because there are various modalities of it.

Let us describe the meaning briefly. Samadhi is a state of consciousness in which the form of an object is directly grasped, that is, consciousness does not make use of categories and of imagination (*kalpana*). It is a state in which the object reveals itself as it is (*svarupa*). It is a state in which a yogin is supposed to suspend the operation of all mental faculties, and thereby the distinction between the act and the object of meditation is obliterated. It is a state in which there is identity between knowledge and object. The object no longer presents itself to consciousness as that which delimits the horizon of consciousness, and thereby the phenomenon is defined. There is, therefore, no distinction between illusion and imagination, between fact and fiction, as they are done away with. In the words of one of the commentators on the *Yogasutras*, namely, Vijñānabhikṣu: the state of samadhi is arrived at 'when dhyana is freed from the separate notions of meditation, object of meditation, and meditating subject, and maintains itself only in the form of the object meditated on.'

Samadhi is most probably different from hypnosis. Indian thinkers seem to have been clear on this point. Hypnosis, according to Indian [p. 48](#) thinking, is an automatic damming of consciousness, and is not to be considered as concentration. The process of hypnosis is spoken of in these terms: 'Uniting (*samyojya*) the rays of his own eyes with the rays of her eyes, he made his way into her body, as wind makes its way through the air.' (*Mahabharata*, xiii. 40, 56–57).

However, when we say that samadhi leads to liberation, to a non-conditioned mode of existence, it does not mean that every kind of *samadhi* possesses this power. Broadly speaking, samadhi has been classified into two categories: samadhi with aid, and samadhi without aid. When the state of samadhi is realized with the help of an object or idea, it is called *samprajnata*, that is, a differentiated state of consciousness. If samadhi is reached without the help of an object, it is called *asamprajnata*, that is, undifferentiated state of consciousness. The former may be said to be a means to liberation in so far as it makes possible the comprehension of truth. As far as the latter is concerned, it completely destroys the psycho-mental states of consciousness, and thereby the 'impression' carried by the subconscious. This state of consciousness arrests all mobility within man, and thereby complete immobility of thought and body is achieved. In the state of *samprajnata* samadhi, the immobility of all mental faculties is realized except that of the object on which one meditates.

There are several levels which comprise the differentiated samadhi. The states are the following: argumentative (*savitarka*), non-argumentative (*nirvitarka*), reflective (*savicara*), and super-reflective (*nirvicara*). Patanjali, while describing these levels, also uses a different set of terms, namely, *vitarka*, *vicara*, *ananda*, and *asmita*. However, these terms have a technical function, in that they are applied to different levels of consciousness. These levels present the ascent, as it were, of consciousness from the temporal horizon to non-temporal.

However, if one desires to achieve liberation, one has to go beyond these levels of consciousness of differentiated samadhi. Since one has to make use of support during these levels in order to ascend higher and higher, the states are spoken of as *bija* (seed) or *salambana* (dependent) samadhi. These levels are so referred to because they produce the future tendencies for consciousness, whereas undifferentiated samadhi is seedless (*nirbija*). Once all the four levels of differentiated samadhi have been realized, one reaches the level whereby one is able to have the faculty of absolute knowledge (*ritambharaprajna*) opened. It is an opening towards the seedless samadhi, as the ontological unity, in the form of undifferentiated consciousness, is realized, and thereby the distinction between being

and becoming, knowledge and the object of knowledge, ceases to exist. Being in this p. 49 kind of samadhi, consciousness has the revelation of the self (*purusa*), and thereby the mode of matter (*prakriti*) is transcended. In the transcendence of matter lies liberation—and to realize this transcendence in one's lifetime is the aim of yoga.

By now we have covered a tortuous road. The aim of yoga should be clear by now: it is to realize liberation from the human condition. To achieve this liberation, various methods have been devised: psychological, physical, mental, mystical, etc. All these methods are antisocial, and sometimes even anti-human, in that yoga prescribes a way of life which says: this life of ours is not worth living. Yoga refuses to live a natural life, and thereby aspires for a kind of life which is non-natural. In other words, yoga conceives the natural form of life as unfreedom precisely because it is characterized by a continuous flux of subconscious forces. On the other hand, a life which is beyond nature is free from the influences of the subconscious, and therefore is spoken of as freedom. This freedom is liberation, and in it lies the culmination of yogic techniques, ideology and methodology.

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Second Thoughts on Contextualization

Simon Chan

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This article explains why the author does not share his Third World colleagues' enthusiasm about contextualization. As a catalyst, he seeks to stimulate discussion on the issue which points to new areas of study and reflection that are important for pursuing our theological task.

(Editor)

It has become quite popular nowadays, particularly in the Third World, to begin the discussion on contextualization by accentuating the differences between East and West. Recent articles in the *Evangelical Review* bear ample testimony to this. The differences usually centre on two issues: the epistemological (the 'Hebrew' versus the 'Greek' way of thinking) and the cultural. The Western way of thinking, we are told, is abstract and rationalistic; it relies heavily on Aristotelian logic (the law of the excluded middle: the 'either-or'), and consequently, it is reductionistic. The Eastern way, on the other hand, is concrete and holistic; it employs the category of the 'both-and' and allows for paradoxes and mysteries.¹ A major task of contextualization is to extricate the biblical message from its 'Greek' trappings. After all, we are further told, the Hebrew mind-set has closer affinities with the Eastern way of thinking.

¹ J. Y. Lee, 'The Yin-Yang Way of Thinking', *What Asian Christians Are Thinking* (Quezon City, Phil., 1976).