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# The Death of a Yogi

The Relation between Yoga, Death and Liberation  
in Early Śaiva Traditions. With Specific Reference to the  
*Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa*



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## Abstract

This thesis aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the relation between yoga and death in the early Śaiva tradition of the Pāśupatas, based on two Pāśupata texts: the *Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa*. The thesis presents an analysis and interpretation of textual passages that treat the last moment of the life of a Pāśupata ascetic in order to find out whether or not his death can be interpreted as a form of ‘self-induced yogic death’. The inquiries start with introducing the philosophical and religious environment wherein the *Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa* were written. After that, the relation between yoga and death in upaniṣadic and epic sources is treated, thereby referring to early manifestations of *utkrānti* (rising upwards, ‘yogic suicide’). The pivot of this thesis is a translation, analysis and discussion of fragments of the *Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa*. With regards to both texts I discuss the possibility of interpreting the death of a Pāśupata as a self-induced yogic death. This is followed by a conclusion. Following the analysis of the primary sources, it will become clear that yoga and death stood in a much closer relation than one might expect; this thesis claims that the death of a Pāśupata can be interpreted as an early form of self-induced yogic death.

## Key words

Pāśupata · Śaivism · yoga · *utkrānti* · death · Sāṃkhya · *Skandapurāṇa*



You would know the secret of death. But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?  
... For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun? And what is it  
to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and  
seek god unencumbered?

*The Prophet*, Khalil Gibran (1923)





## Preface

This thesis is a combination of my many loves: Sanskrit, religious studies, philosophy, and of course *merā pahlā pyār*, India. When I first travelled through India I was nineteen. As a true teenager I was against almost everything my mother liked, including yoga, which I associated with in dungarees hoisted middle-aged new age women. Not that my mother was such a person, that is to say: she was not new age. Well, now I know better about yoga (and my mother). Yoga has caught me. Not so much, as most people would expect, as a practice, but rather as a phenomenon. I love practicing yoga, but what I find truly fascinating is the development of yoga over the course of roughly two and a half millennia; its practices have radically changed, yet there is some essence that seems unchanged.

I have always liked a bit of controversy, so when I first read Peter Schreiner's article "Yoga – Lebenshilfe oder Sterbetechnik" I instantly felt an enthusiasm to write my thesis about the apparent paradox of yoga and death. Fortunately, my professor was at least as enthusiastic, especially when I decided to limit the thesis to yoga and death in Pāśupata Śaivism—his academic expertise and I dare say passion.

Let me therefore first and foremost express the deep gratitude I feel for my teacher, my guru, professor Peter Bisschop, who has supervised me not only with regards to my thesis but during my entire academic forming at Leiden University. He has always been extremely encouraging (and encouragement is needed when first studying Sanskrit texts).

During professor Bisschop's academic sabbatical, I was blessed that he was replaced by the over-talented dr. Daniele Cuneo, whose enthusiasm for Sanskrit was extremely contagious. La Sorbonne is very lucky to have brought in such a brilliant young scholar.

I would also like to thank professor Jonathan Silk. Without him I would have never started studying Sanskrit. He has encouraged me to be critical and taught me that creativity is an important aspect of academic work. His door was always open.

Of course, this thesis could have never been written without the support of my friends and family. I would like to thank my parents, Arnold and Grieteke and my brothers, Jeroen, Floris and Julius, who always support me in the choices I make. They belong to the few people that never asked what I could 'do' with Sanskrit. Instead, they have shown nothing but pride, which has been very encouraging.

Lastly, I thank my dear Sjors from the deepest of my heart, for the unrivalled amount of attention he has given me. He has been my foremost support. Not only has he cooked my meals and dealt with my occasional moments of despair, but he has also always been prepared to discuss the bottlenecks I was struggling with. I owe him a great debt of gratitude.



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## I. Introduction

“So...what is your thesis about?” “About yoga and death.” In the past few months, the numerous times when I answered this question, the questioner responded with amazement and confusion: “Yoga...and death?” I must admit it was rather amusing. However, such confusion is understandable: nowadays, at least in the West, yoga is mainly associated with health-enhancing body practices and ideas concerning mindfulness. But most modern traditions of yoga bear little resemblance with early traditions of yoga that were “bound up with an ascetic lifestyle and worldview very different from the concerns of the modern western urbanite.”<sup>1</sup>

The (historical) ‘goal’ of yoga was not particularly a mindful life, but rather the ultimate liberation (*mokṣa*) from the on-going cycle of transmigration of one life to the next (*saṃsāra*).<sup>2</sup> In various yoga texts we hence find instructions on practices that enable an advanced yogi to voluntarily abandon his life and never to return. Seen from this perspective, yoga was not primarily about the ‘art of living’ but especially about ‘the art of dying’. It is precisely this apparent paradox—first brought to my attention by my guru, professor Bisschop—that triggered me to write about yoga and death.

Although the relation between yoga and death has been studied, it is far from exhausted. Until now, most scholars have focused on fragments of the *Mahābhārata* (especially the apotheosis of Droṇa is studied extensively<sup>3</sup>), the Upaniṣads and various tantric texts. In tantric texts (from the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE onwards) we find detailed instructions concerning the ways a yogi can induce his own death, especially through a practice called *utkrānti* (‘upward progression’/‘self-induced yogic death’<sup>4</sup>). But already in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (one of the earliest Upaniṣads, ca. 700–500 BCE) there are passages that instruct one to meditate on the syllable *om*, when progressing up from the body (*śarīrād utkrāmati*), thereby securing entrance into the *brahmaloka*s.

Some practices that are now commonly understood to be yogic practices, such as *āsanas* (postures), and *prāṇāyāma* (breath-restraints), draw “heavily from *hathayoga* doctrines and practices” that emerged from

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<sup>1</sup> Richard King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 67.

<sup>2</sup> James Mallinson and Mark Singleton, *Roots of Yoga* (London: Penguin Classics, 2017), xiii.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g.: David Gordon White, “Utkrānti: From Epic Warrior’s Apotheosis to Tantric Yogi’s Suicide,” in *Release from Life – Release in Life. Indian Perspectives on Individual Liberation*, ed. Andreas Bigger et al. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 291–302; Peter Schreiner, “Yoga - Lebenshilfe Oder Sterbetechnik,” in *Hinduismus Reader*, ed. Angelika Malinar (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 137–48.

<sup>4</sup> A more popular English term that I have encountered is ‘yogic suicide’. Although it is much catchier than ‘self-induced yogic death’ I have, however, decided to choose the more neutral term of ‘self-induced death’. I did so, because I have understood that some people take offence in the term ‘suicide’, since it is associated with a life ending due to passion, whereas the techniques prescribed here on the contrary are an act of complete *aparigraha* (detachment).

<sup>5</sup> ChU 8.6.4.

ca. the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>6</sup> Some of these *haṭhayoga* practices, however, “bear a close similarity to ascetic practices first mentioned in the latter half of the first millennium BCE, shortly after the time of the Buddha.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, among academics, it is indeed generally accepted that the yoga described in *haṭhayoga* texts originally derives from ascetic practices.<sup>8</sup> One tradition with such ascetic practices is Pāśupata Śaivism.

Studies on the relation between yoga and death in the early centuries of the Common Era have been limited, as well as studies on yoga teachings in the Purāṇas.<sup>9</sup> A study of the relation between yoga and death with regards to early Śaiva traditions is near to absent. With this thesis I aim at contributing to reducing this hiatus. I seek to explore if and how, in the early yoga Śaivite tradition of the Pāśupatas the yogi actively participates in the moment of death, or even inclines his own death, with the intent to become liberated. More specifically, it researches the relation between yoga and death as appears in two Pāśupata texts, namely the *Pāśupatasūtra* (from now on referred to as PS) with reference to Kauṇḍinya’s *Pañcārthabhāṣya* (PABh, ca. 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>10</sup>) and the *Skandapurāṇa* (SP, ca. 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century). Both texts, I argue, contain fragments that deal with the last moment of the life of a Pāśupata ascetic, in which the ascetic is instructed to execute various yogic practices and to ultimately discharge his life in order to achieve the highest goal: reaching the end of suffering (*duḥkhānta*) through union with Śiva (*śivasāyujya*).

The main questions with which I approach the *Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa* are: How is death defined in relation to yoga in Pāśupata Śaivism? What are the practices of self-induced yogic death, with other words, how is a self-induced yogic death achieved in Pāśupata Śaivism? And how is such a yogic death related to liberation?

I begin this enquiry by positing a few considerations related to my usage of the primary and secondary sources. In chapter 2 the broader religious and philosophical context of the PS and the SP is given. After having sketched this context, in chapter 3 I discuss the relation between yoga, death and liberation, based on epic and upaniṣadic sources. Then, in chapter 4, I introduce Pāśupata Śaivism, their praxis and their doctrines, along with an introduction of the PS and the SP. Next, I present relevant fragments of the PS and the SP, including a full translation of chapter 182 of the SP, and I return to the main questions of this thesis. In chapter 5 I summarise my findings in a conclusion.

Despite the fact that yoga practice has changed drastically over the last two millennia, I was curious to find out whether there are still remnants of practices concerning yoga and death in modern-day India. To this end, I have executed fieldwork in northern India in January-February 2018. In the epilogue of chapter

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<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism* (London: Continuum, 2004), 8.

<sup>7</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, xx.

<sup>8</sup> See for example Phillip Maas, ‘Transformation of Yoga’ Paper, Vienna, 2013

<sup>9</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, xxv.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Bisschop, “Pañcārtha Before Kauṇḍinya,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42 (2014): 27–37.

6 I present the results of this fieldwork. During the fieldwork I tried to discover what ideas about a ‘yogic way of dying’ are (still) known by modern-day yogis. The fieldwork was brief, and its results limited, however remarkable and relevant. Due to the qualitative nature of this fieldwork, its results will be presented as a narrative epilogue, rather than an analytical overview. It is foremost intended as an invitation to subsequent research.

### § 1.1 Academic and Popular Embedding

“Early Indological research was at best not particularly interested in Yoga,” because of “the negative presentation of yogis in early European travel accounts of India, as well as with the negative view of European scholarship towards the practice of *hatha* yoga.”<sup>11</sup> This is certainly no longer the case. Especially since the 1990s, yoga has gained immense popularity on both a popular and an academic level.<sup>12</sup>

Yoga has never been a static phenomenon but is—as is characteristic for nearly every cultural or religious phenomenon—dynamic, soothing the needs of people. The last two centuries, ‘traditional’ Indian forms of yoga have radically changed, both inside and outside India. The ‘yoga tradition’ of today (in its countless manifestations) is no longer only an Indian tradition: as a result of, and in response to globalization, yoga has been adapted to the needs and wishes of people worldwide. In Amsterdam, where I live, the amount of yoga studios keeps on increasing. Yoga for pregnant women, yoga for couples, yoga for Christians, yoga in the gym, yoga amongst goats with a concluding goat-hugging-session; it is all possible. And yet, “a clear understanding of its historical contexts in South Asia, and the range of practices that it includes, is often lacking.”<sup>13</sup>

On an academic level, this thesis attempts to contribute to the understanding of the historical context wherein yoga was practiced and its range of practices, namely in this case practices concerning death and (consequential) liberation. Although plenty academic scholarship has been executed in the field of yoga, scholarship on yoga in the early centuries of the common era is remarkably limited and the relation between yoga, death and liberation is near to absent. Researching the historical developments of yoga may add to our understanding of Indian religion specifically, and more broadly of history as a whole. As philosopher Karl Jaspers eloquently states: “No reality is more essential to our self-awareness than history. It shows us the broadest horizon of mankind, brings us the contents of tradition upon which our life is built, shows us standards by which to measure the present, frees us from unconscious bondage to our own age, teaches us to see man in his highest potentials and his imperishable creation. . . We can have a better understanding of our present experience if we see it in the mirror of history.” If yoga practice is

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<sup>11</sup> Phillip Maas, “A Concise Historiography of Classical Yoga Philosophy,” in *Periodization and Historiography of Indian Philosophy*, ed. Eli Franco (Vienna: Sammlung de Nobili, Institut für Südasiens-, Tibet- und Buddhismuskunde der Universität Wien, 2013), 56.

<sup>12</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, ix.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

anything aside from practicing postures, it is, as will become clear, especially to broaden one's self-awareness. Therefore, in the light of Jaspers words, researching the roots of yoga can in a sense be seen as a yogic practice on its own.

### § 1.2 Note on Primary Sources

Analysing fragments of the PS and the SP in the broader context of the development of yoga is important for several reasons. Although it is “notoriously difficult to date Indian texts,”<sup>14</sup> the *Pañcārthabhāṣya* (PABh)—the commentary of the PS—was probably written around the same time as the *Patañjalayogaśāstra* (PYŚ, ca. 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century CE). Because of this assumed simultaneity it is interesting to see how yoga is defined in the PS and the PABh, and to what extent it differs or agrees with the yoga of Patañjali (I will return to this in § 4.4). In general, there is an emphasis to study classical texts such as the PYŚ and yet various Purāṇas, such as the SP, are filled with interesting treatises on yoga too, that can shed light on the historical development of yogic practice.

The SP is younger than the PS, probably dating from ca. the 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century CE. The SP, written during the heydays of Pāśupata Śaivism, proclaims that the only path to salvation is Pāśupata yoga. In the time the SP was composed, the first tantric texts were composed too. Especially in (later) tantric texts we find various treatises on *utkrānti*. It is hence interesting to focus attention to a non-tantric text that is from the same broader Śaiva tradition that mentions such a practice too.

As Pollock argues: “Philology is, or should be, the discipline of making sense of texts,”<sup>15</sup> and it is precisely this ambition that I have. But to make sense of texts that have been written more than a thousand years ago is not an easy task. This is certainly the case with Purāṇas such as the SP. Opposed to *sūtras*—that were composed exclusively for male initiated Brahmins—purāṇic literature was composed for a broader, lay public too. Purāṇas are not accompanied by a commentary and as such ideas and practices mentioned in a Purāṇa often lack (a comprehensive) explanation. Indeed, the meaning of the material of the SP on yoga is not always clear. In the parts of the SP that I have translated (chapter 4), occasionally it feels as if some explanation is missing. It is possible that some ideas and practices were commonly known at the time of composition of the SP and needed no further elaboration yet leaving us puzzled. How to make sense of certain ambiguous fragments is the philological challenge of this thesis.

The Śaivite material I have studied stems for a large part from the Sanskrit fragments that are gathered in handouts of Alexis Sanderson's class ‘The Yoga of Dying’ (2004) at Oxford University, including the SP material presented here. Sanderson's efforts to collect passages on yoga and death have been of great value for this thesis. As regards the SP, Sanderson has transliterated this material from Bhaṭṭarāi's edition

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., xxxix.

<sup>15</sup> Sheldon Pollock, “Future Philology? The Fate of a Soft Science in a Hard World,” *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 4 (2009): 934.



of the SP (see further § 4.2). The parts of the SP that are analysed here have so far not been critically edited, translated or studied.

As regards the presentation of my translation: for the sake of clarity I have chosen to present the translation along with my commentary on the text. The translation is hence interrupted.

Finally, when quoting texts other than the Pāśupata material I have occasionally relied on available translations. Whenever I use someone else's translation, this is indicated. The full references of the editions and translations I used are listed in the bibliography (§ 7) along with a list of abbreviations (§ 7.1).

### § 1.3 Note on Secondary Sources

In order to gain an understanding of the history of yoga, I have made use of Mallinson & Singleton's *Roots of Yoga*. It gives a clear overview of the historical development of yoga from a renouncer-tradition to the yoga "that prevailed on the eve of colonialism"<sup>16</sup> and it presents textual references for all the topics that it covers.

Especially in the preliminary research-phase of this project I have made extensive use of David G. White's work. His research on *utkrānti* in the *Mahābhārata* and in tantric sources has been of great value. The fact that he has not treated the relation between yoga and death, and the notion of *utkrānti* in early yoga traditions, such as Pāśupata Śaivism, has partly given rise to the topic of this thesis. In his monograph *Sinister Yogis* White pays quite some attention to the concept of 'yogic suicide', but he analyses this in the context of tantric texts.<sup>17</sup> However, as Mallinson has pointed out with cutting clarity, *Sinister Yogis* has some problems, especially with regards to the grand unifying theory it seeks to present.<sup>18</sup> I have used this work with the appropriate reservation.

Alexis Sanderson's broad knowledge of Śaivism, contained in numerous articles and book chapters has been of great value for my understanding of the development of Śaivism as a whole. The works of Hans Bakker and Peter Bisschop have helped gain understanding of Pāśupata Śaivism and the composition of the *Skandapurāṇa*. Although various aspects of (early) Śaivism have been studied, the presence of self-induced yogic death in early Śaivism has so far been understudied. This thesis delves into that gap.

Aside from these secondary sources, for textual study I have made extensive use of Monier-Williams' Dictionary and Grimes' *Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy*.

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<sup>16</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, xi.

<sup>17</sup> See: David Gordon White, *Sinister Yogis* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 113 ff.

<sup>18</sup> James Mallinson, "The Yogīs' Latest Trick." Review Article, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24, no. 1 (2014): 165–80.

## § 1.4 Note on Orthography and Terminology

All Sanskrit words are written in Roman script, with use of diacritics, according to the standard of the International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration. Sanskrit words are italicised, except for the words ‘yoga’ and ‘yogi’ (a practitioner of yoga). When quoting others, I have chosen not to alter the author’s choices regarding orthography and use of italicisation (e.g. Śabdabrahman instead of *śabdabrahman*).

As regards the word yoga, when I refer to Yoga as a philosophical system, it is capitalised. When I refer to yoga as a practice, it is not capitalised nor italicised. When I am referring to a specific usage of the Sanskrit noun *yoga*- it is italicised.

## 2. The Post-Vedic Religious and Philosophical Landscape of Northern India

In this chapter I present a general philosophical and religious framework that helps understand the context wherein the *Pāśupatasūtra* and the *Skandapurāṇa* were written. The religious concepts of *saṃsāra*, *karma*, *dharma* and *mokṣa* form an essential part of Pāśupata Śaivism, yet these concepts are not unique to nor invented by the Pāśupatas: they are characteristic for Indian religious traditions in general. An introduction of these concepts helps understand the content of the Pāśupata material. I choose to write this historical introduction in such a manner that it is not only comprehensible for Indologists and Sanskritist, but also for students of Religious Studies. Therefore, for some readers its content is familiar.

As concerns philosophy, the system of Sāṃkhya lies at the base of Yoga philosophy, and the PS and the SP also draw extensively upon its thought. Therefore, a good part of this chapter is devoted to sketching the contours of this philosophical system.

### § 2.1 The Rise of New Doctrines

The PS and the SP were composed in a time when the religious atmosphere of India had slowly changed. “[T]he role of the sacrifice within religion and of the vedic branches within Brahmanical learning became less significant.”<sup>19</sup> Instead, the religious milieu was characterised by devotion to one god. This transition was influenced and partly caused by the rise of religious groups of ascetics (*śramaṇas*), from which not only Buddhism and Jainism, but also yoga originates.<sup>20</sup>

Asceticism was—at least partly—inspired by a desire “for a wisdom which the four Vedas could not give.”<sup>21</sup> This desire for knowledge entailed the desire to understand the ontology of this universe we live

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<sup>19</sup> Patrick Olivelle, *Upaniṣads*, Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 32.

<sup>20</sup> Johannes Bronkhorst, *The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism*, vol. 13, Schweizer Asiatische Studien: Monographien; Vol. 13 (Bern [etc.]: Peter Lang, 1993), 92.

<sup>21</sup> Arthur L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims*, Evergreen Encyclopedia, Vol. 1 (New York: Grove Press. Inc, 1954), 247.

in, the nature of our soul, the mysteries of death, and so forth. The Upaniṣads manifest this desire, as well as some early Buddhist and Jain scriptures from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE onwards.

During these centuries the contours of some new doctrines became visible that are now considered to be fundamental doctrines in virtually all Indian religions, namely the concepts of *saṃsāra*, *karma*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*.

### § 2.2 *Saṃsāra* and its Relation to *Karma*, *Dharma* and *Mokṣa*

In (older) vedic thought it was believed that after death human beings would temporarily stay in the abode of ancestors, after which one would return to earth. The length of this stay was determined by a person's accumulated merit of sacred rites."<sup>22</sup> With the emergence of the doctrine of *saṃsāra*, however, this changes. According to this doctrine it is believed that the individual soul is trapped in an endless cycle of transmigration (i.e. *saṃsāra*, lit. 'roaming through'), transmigrating from one life to the next. This involves not only human beings (from whatever status and rank), but all forms of life, including gods, animals, and even plants, who are all subject to the same law: the law of *karma*.

How is *karma* related to *saṃsāra*? In a nutshell the law of *karma* dictates that the production of *karma* always leads to a rebirth and moreover that the sort of *karma* one accumulates determines whether its rebirth will be better or worse in comparison to the past life. Since in this new concept all kinds of action—not just ritual action—counted towards the accumulation of merit ('good' *karma*), or the lack of it, the doctrine of *karma* "provided a satisfactory explanation of the mystery of suffering;"<sup>23</sup> it was the result of one's own behaviour.

Whether an action is proper or improper is determined by another concept: *dharma*. The Sanskrit noun *dharma* is derived from  $\sqrt{dhr}$ , meaning something like 'to uphold' or 'to support'. In post-vedic times *dharma* becomes a concrete model of behaviour concerning all aspects of life. As a result, the various forms of personal, social, religious and political life, from life at home with the family to the royal life of a king, are structured according to *dharma*.

The doctrine of *saṃsāra* provided the framework for the concept of liberation (*mokṣa*): it is this endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth that one aspires to be liberated from, because "even when devoid of the major sorrows, [life] was drab and inadequate."<sup>24</sup> In various traditions *mokṣa* hence became a central point of attention, and it is indeed in practices towards attaining this *mokṣa* that we find the first contours of yoga.

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<sup>22</sup> Michael Witzel, "Vedas and Upaniṣads," in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, ed. Gavin Flood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2003), 84.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Basham, *The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims*, 243.

In the centuries prior to the beginning of the Common Era, various cultures of philosophical contemplation had crystallised into the great Indian systems of philosophy.<sup>25</sup> Among these were the closely related systems of Sāṃkhya and Yoga, to which the PS and the SP thank much of their ontology, and soteriology. “Although Pāśupata Śaivism considers the Sāṃkhya philosophy as such as inferior, it does not usually condemn it since its doctrine is acknowledged as the basis of its own system. This is explicitly the case in the *Skandapurāṇa* chapters that deal with the Pāśupata yoga.”<sup>26</sup> The chapters that Bakker refers to contain the fragments that are treated here. The PS too draws extensively on Sāṃkhya thought. Let me therefore now turn to the school of Sāṃkhya. In the following paragraph I introduce its basic concepts; concepts that are also fundamental for the philosophical system of Yoga and its praxis, yoga.

### § 2.3 The Duality of Sāṃkhya

The classical Sāṃkhya text, Īśvarakṛṣṇa’s *Sāṃkhyakārika* (SK), is of a relatively late date: it is probably composed around 350–450 CE, when Sāṃkhya philosophy already flourished as a prominent independent school of thought. However, Sāṃkhya thought is much older than the SK: we already find early articulations of Sāṃkhya ideas in parts of the *Mahābhārata* as well as in various early Upaniṣads.<sup>27</sup>

Sāṃkhya philosophy has had a tremendous impact on the development of Indian philosophy and religion. Its concepts were trans-sectarian: various sects, among others the Pāśupatas, made use of Sāṃkhya concepts on which they based their theological systems.<sup>28</sup> An understanding of its fundamental principles therefore helps comprehend the content of the PS and the SP.

Sāṃkhya ontology is purely dualistic: the cosmos consists of two separated ontological realities that are both eternal, namely *puruṣa* (‘man’) and *prakṛti* (‘primordial matter’). *Puruṣa* is pure consciousness and incapable of acting (*akartā*). *Prakṛti*, on the other hand, is active, though it lacks consciousness (*acetana*, which I believe is best expressed by the German ‘ungeistig’). The entire history of the world comes into existence because of this connection between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* whereby *puruṣa* ‘animates’ *prakṛti* and *prakṛti* on its turn provides *puruṣa* with potency.<sup>29</sup>

*Prakṛti* is unmanifested and as such independent (*avyakta*). It is the cause of all manifestations that are all consequently dependent. *Prakṛti* is omnipresent: everything originates from it and ultimately returns to it, except for *puruṣa*. Mental activities too belong to the realm of *prakṛti*. From *prakṛti* three internal

<sup>25</sup> The *āstika* schools of Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mimāṃsā and later Vedānta, and the *nāstika* schools of Buddhism and Jainism.

<sup>26</sup> Hans Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 8.

<sup>27</sup> King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought*, 63.

<sup>28</sup> For an excellent and full disquisition of Sāṃkhya philosophy, although slightly outdated, please see: Erich Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie. I. Band. die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos der Buddha und der Jina, das Samkhya und das klassische Yoga-System* (Salzburg: Otto Müller Verlag, 1953), 275–450.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 350.

(i.e. psychic) instruments evolve: the intellect (*buddhi*), the ego (*ahaṃkāra*) and the mind (*manas*). Furthermore, there are a twenty other *tattvas* (principles): five sense-organs, five organs of action, five subtle elements and five gross elements. In the Pāśupata material, as will become clear, when liberation is achieved, all manifestations, including the mental instruments, return to *prakṛti* too.

*Prakṛti* consists of three *guṇas* (qualities), namely *sattva* (purity, harmony), *rajas* (lightness, action) and *tamas* (heaviness, inaction), which are described in SK 12:

*prītyapṛitiviśādātmakāḥ prakāśapṛavṛttiniyamārthāḥ |*  
*anyo'nyābhāvāśrayajanānamithunavṛttayaś ca guṇāḥ || SK 12*

The *guṇas* possess the nature of pleasure, pain and dullness; serve the purpose of illumination, activity and restraint; and perform the function of mutual domination, dependence, production, and consociation. (Translation Sinha 1915: 12.)

The *guṇas* are not emanated from *prakṛti*, but “are the fundamental strands”<sup>30</sup> of *prakṛti*. When the *guṇas* reside in *prakṛti* itself, they are perfectly balanced. However, in all emanations of *prakṛti*, the three *guṇas* are imbalanced. The predominance of one *guṇa* over the other changes continuously, giving rise to the countless variations of appearances in the world. But if *prakṛti* in its original state is in perfect equilibrium then why are there such numerous manifestations of it? Now *puruṣa* enters the stage (figuratively, of course, since it is *akartā*). The conscious principle confuses itself with the *buddhi* (intellect) and therefore experiences everything that in reality belongs to the *buddhi*. The *puruṣa* believes it suffers: it imagines that it is entangled in all the suffering of existence, although in reality this is alien to *puruṣa*. It is not truly affected by anything.”<sup>31</sup> This idea is also expressed in BhG 13.21:

*puruṣaḥ prakṛtiṣtho hi bhūṅkte prakṛtijān guṇān |*  
*kāraṇaṃ guṇasaṅgo 'sya sadasadyonijanmasu || BhG 13.21*

For the spirit (*puruṣa*), abiding in the material nature (*prakṛti*), experiences the qualities born of material nature. Attachment to the qualities is the cause of its birth in good and evil wombs. (Translation Sargeant in Chapple 2009: 549.)

Because of this entanglement, *prakṛti* is moved towards a specific goal. It is in the interest of *puruṣa* that *prakṛti* comes into action: *prakṛti* becomes active in order to release the *puruṣa* from its bondage. Its vigour is activated by *puruṣa*, who strives to return to its true nature of eternal isolation (*kaivalya*).<sup>32</sup> This state of isolation is liberation.

How does this all relate to human life and death? According to Sāṃkhya, the human body is two-fold: it has a gross body and a subtle body. The gross body is produced again at every birth, and decays after

<sup>30</sup> King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought*, 65.

<sup>31</sup> Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie. I. Band. die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos der Buddha und der Jina, das Samkhya und das klassische Yoga-System*, 378.

<sup>32</sup> King, *Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought*, 182.

death. The subtle body, that includes the internal organ of intellect, ego and mind, on the other hand transmigrates from one gross body to the next.

How is liberation achieved? According to Sāṃkhya, the faulty connection between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* comes into existence due to ignorance (*avidyā*): *avidyā* is the cause of suffering and bondage. Knowledge, on the other hand, brings salvation. *Puruṣa*, confusing itself with *buddhi*, has to realise that it is completely different from it. “Dann erlischt das Interesse der Seele am Treiben der Materie. Sie betrachtet nicht mehr die Materie, und diese zeigt sich ihr nicht mehr . . . Die Verbindung zwischen Seele und Materie ist unterbrochen und die Seele erlöst.”<sup>33</sup>

Many of the concepts described above, or varieties on it are also found in Pāśupata Śaivism. However, an important difference is that Sāṃkhya thought does not incorporate a notion of ‘god’ (*īśvara*) into its system. The system of Yoga does incorporate god into its ontology.

#### § 2.4 Yoga: Sāṃkhya Triality — *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and *Īśvara*

Just as Sāṃkhya, the system of Yoga<sup>34</sup> makes a distinction between the gross and subtle body, whereby only the latter transmigrates from one life to the next due to the law of *karma*. Patañjali reduced the various psychic organs to just one, namely consciousness (*citta*, comparable to the Sāṃkhyan *buddhi*).<sup>35</sup> *Karma* leaves impressions (*saṃskāra*) on the *citta* and sooner or later these impressions will come into force and bear fruit. At the end of life, the totality of impressions clings together into a unit. This unit of impressions determines the quality of the next life and its length.

Ultimately one has to come to the realisation that the *citta* is completely separated from *puruṣa*. As Georg Feuerstein puts it: “this correlation [between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*] is the real source of all human malaise . . . because it gives rise to the illusion that we are the individuated body-mind, or personality complex, rather than the transcendental Self. Thus, spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*) is at the root of our mistaken identity as the finite egoic body-mind.”<sup>36</sup> Because of this false collaboration the *puruṣa* is trapped in the circle of transmigration (due to the law of *karma*) and believes it actually suffers. One has to realise that all entanglements in the circle of life actually take place in the sphere of matter: none of this truly

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<sup>33</sup> Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie. I. Band. die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos der Buddha und der Jina, das Samkhya und das klassische Yoga-System*, 379.

<sup>34</sup> It must be noted that when we speak of ‘the system of Yoga’ we actually speak of this system as it is expounded in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* of Patañjali.

<sup>35</sup> I follow Phillip Maas’s suggestion that the *Yoga Sūtra* along with its *bhāṣya* is a unified whole that is composed by Patañjali, as opposed to the idea that the first and most important *bhāṣya* was written by a scholar named Vyāsa. Hence, I refer to the the *Yoga Sūtra* and its *bhāṣya* as the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. Please see: Phillip Maas, *Samādhipāda. Das erste Kapitel des Pātañjalayogaśāstra zum ersten Mal kritisch ediert. (Samādhipāda. The First Chapter of the Pātañjalayogaśāstra for the First Time Critically Edited)*, Indologica Halensis. Geisteskultur Indiens, Bd. 9. Texte und Studien (Aachen: Shaker, 2006); Maas, “A Concise Historiography of Classical Yoga Philosophy,” 57 ff.

<sup>36</sup> Georg Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition. Its History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice* (Prescott: Hohm Press, 1998) Chapter 10: The Philosophy and Practice of Pātanjala-Yoga, I. The Chain of Being—Self and World from Patanjali’s Perspective, iBooks.

affects the soul. Coming to such insight, *karma* is no longer capable of fruition. When the physical body ultimately dies the *citta* dissolves itself in *prakṛti* and so the chain of reincarnation finally comes to an end.

The renowned opening of the PYŚ is as follows:

*atha yogānuśāsanam ||*  
*yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ || PYŚ 1.1-2*

Now, the teaching of yoga.

Yoga is the cessation of activities of the mind.

The state of yoga is achieved when the activities of the mind are completely suppressed. In this state, the *citta* can no longer influence the *puruṣa*, because there is no action to be followed. Since the PYŚ has been studied extensively and it is not my intention to repeat what has been said elsewhere,<sup>37</sup> I limit myself to a few notes on the path of Yoga towards liberation which shows similarities to the Pāsupata yoga.

How is this state of yoga attained? Some scholars, such as Feuerstein, believe that the PYŚ instructs the yogi to practice *aṣṭāṅgayoga* (lit. eight-auxiliary-yoga) in order to achieve *cittavṛttinirodha* (i.e. yoga).<sup>38</sup> *Aṣṭāṅgayoga* consists of *yama* (control), *niyama* (restraint of mind), *āsana* (posture) *prāṇāyāma* (restraint of breath), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal of the senses), *dhāraṇā* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation) and *samādhi* (enstasy<sup>39</sup>). I follow Sanderson's suggestion to interpret *aṣṭāṅgayoga* as yoga by means of eight auxiliaries:

The term *yogāṅgam* is commonly translated 'limb of Yoga' or 'constituent of Yoga'. However, it is a technical sense of *āṅgam* that is intended here, namely 'auxiliary' or 'ancillary'. The eight Yogāṅgas . . . are not 'the constituents of Yoga' but the actions by means of which one is able to accomplish Yoga.<sup>40</sup>

Although Sanderson discusses the term in relation to the *Mṛgendrantra*, I think his argument counts for the yoga of Patañjali as well. *Cittavṛttinirodha*, then, is the constituent of yoga, and not the auxiliary. Such an interpretation leads to the suggestion that (in early manifestations of yoga) yoga is a goal and not

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<sup>37</sup> Numerous works have been written on the PYŚ. Some very accessible works are: David Gordon White, *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Edwin Bryant, *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* (New York: North Point Press, 2009); Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, *An Introduction to the Yogasutra* (Delhi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakasana, 1985). The two best scholarly works, whose authors differ greatly in their scholarly attitude are: Michel Angot, *Pātañjalayogasūtram: Le Yoga-Sūtra de Patañjali. Le Yoga-Bhāṣya de Vyāsa: Vyāsabhāṣyasametam: avec des Extraits du "Yoga-Vārttika" de Vijñāna-Bhikṣu*, Collection Indika (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2008); Maas, *Samādhipāda. Das erste Kapitel des Pātañjalayogaśāstra zum ersten Mal kritisch ediert. (Samādhipāda. The First Chapter of the Pātañjalayogaśāstra for the First Time Critically Edited)*.

<sup>38</sup> Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition. Its History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice* Chapter 10: The Philosophy and Practice of Pātanjala-Yoga, II. The Eight Limbs of the Path of Self-Transcendence, iBooks.

<sup>39</sup> As is common to Sanskrit terms, *samādhi* is not easy to translate. *Samādhi* is often translated with 'trance' or 'meditative absorption', but in my opinion Mircea Eliade's translation of *samādhi* as 'enstasy' is still most accurate.

<sup>40</sup> Alexis Sanderson, "Yoga in Śaivism. The Yoga Section of the Mṛgendrantra. An Annotated Translation with the Commentary of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha," Unpublished Draft, 1999, 31.

a means. This is indeed my point of view. In chapter 3 I present various upaniṣadic and epic fragments that support this idea.

Before commencing *aṣṭāṅgayoga* one has to perform preparatory exercises called *kriyāyoga*, including the practice of austerities (*tapas*), the study of the Vedas and attention for god (*īśvara*). With the introduction of god we embark upon a remarkable difference between classical Sāṃkhya and Yoga: the latter incorporates god into its soteriology. In the first chapter of the PYS god—quite suddenly—enters the stage:

*īśvarapraṇidhānād vā ||  
kleśakarmavipākāśayair aparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ ||* PYS 1.23–24

Or [*samādhi* is attained] through devotion to god.

God is a distinct *puruṣa*, untouched by the dispositions of the defilements, action and the fruition of that action. Or: untouched by the dispositions from the fruition of action [that are caused by] the defilements.

The commentary tells us that even when a soul is liberated he is not equal to *īśvara*, for *īśvara* has never and will never have any relation to the bondage that is *samsāra*. Consequently, even though there are numerous *puruṣas*, there is only one *īśvara*. The insertion of god in the PYS seems a bit odd. In fact, god is quite useless: the existence of the world is completely independent of god, as well as its sustenance (which is a result of the interference of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*). As regards liberation, if god wants to, he can help those who are in search of it. But his grace is not necessary; it is merely an aid. We will see later that this is an essential difference with the soteriology of the Pāśupatas, wherein *īśvara* plays a crucial role not only in attaining liberation, but also in the creation and sustenance of the universe.

Why, then, has Patañjali incorporated god to begin with? There are at least two possible reasons that are to a certain extent related to each other. First of all, at least by the time the PS was written, new religious systems with a pronounced theistic character—such as Pāśupata Śaivism—pushed away the ancient philosophical systems that left out god as an explanation for the existence of the universe. To incorporate a god was, as Frauwallner calls it, “der Zug der allgemeinen Entwicklung.”<sup>41</sup> Was it indeed *en vogue* to incorporate god? Feuerstein, acknowledging the ill fit of a god image into the dualistic Sāṃkhya system, proposes another reason. He argues that Patañjali’s inclusion of god might come forth from a psychological need to explain the mystical yogic experiences.<sup>42</sup> It is not impossible that amidst the rise of theistic systems, a godless soteriology was not fitting the religious needs of that time. As will become clear, although Pāśupata Śaivism bases itself on both Sāṃkhya and Yoga philosophy, it gives a more prominent role to their god: Śiva.

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<sup>41</sup> Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie. I. Band. die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos der Buddha und der Jina, das Samkhya und das klassische Yoga-System*, 426.

<sup>42</sup> Georg Feuerstein, “The Concept of God (*Īśvara*) in Classical Yoga,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 15, no. 385–397 (1987): 391.



### 3. Yoga, Death and Beyond

Although the impact of the yoga of Patañjali cannot be denied, Patañjali did not invent its content. The PYŚ appears to be based on an amalgam of practices and texts, both vedic and non-vedic “representing an early Brahmanical appropriation of extra-vedic, Śramaṇa techniques of yoga.”<sup>43</sup> In this chapter I wish to discuss such earlier practices of yoga, for just like the yoga of Patañjali, it will become clear that the yoga of the Pāśupatas also bases itself on various (older) techniques of yoga. In various Sanskrit sources it appears that early yoga practices were skilfully connected with death, probably because of the prevalence of the ideal of *videhamukti* (bodiless liberation). That giving up the body is a condition in order to become liberated is indicated in two ways: in some sources we find phrases such as *muktvā kalevaram* (‘after having released the body’ BhG 8.5). And in some sources we find (variations on the word) *utkrānti*, whereby the soul is believed to pierce through the orbit of the sun, thereby reaching the realm of the immortals. In § 3.4 I discuss the meaning of *utkrānti* in the PYŚ 3.38 and its possible indication of ‘self-induced yogic death’.

#### § 3.1 Yoga as Liberation

What is yoga? The question is straightforward, the answer is not: to present an unambiguous definition of yoga, even if I restrict myself to early yoga traditions, is impossible. In some texts such as the SP to which we will return later, yoga as a practice and yoga as a goal are both apparent. Despite this ambiguity, yoga in early sources in general tends to designate a goal, and not so much a practice. What this goal is varies from tradition to tradition. I do not wish to elaborate on the difficulties of defining yoga, for this has been done abundantly,<sup>44</sup> but will present a few passages from early sources that indicate what early understandings of yoga and its different forms are.

The Sanskrit noun *yoga-* is derived from  $\sqrt{yuj}$  which, according to the famous Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini, must either be understood in the sense of ‘yoke’/ ‘connect’ or in the sense of ‘*samādhi*’. These two meanings are related to one another: Pāṇini terms *samādhi* as the practice of yoking on a subtle level, namely, the practice of yoking the mind to an object of meditation “to the point of complete identification with that object.”<sup>45</sup> In most early sources yoga should be understood in terms of the second meaning: the subtle act of yoking or uniting the mind/the self/the soul with something. Whenever I chose to translate *yoga-*, I translate it as ‘union’ or variations on it, though most times I leave it untranslated.

In § 2.1 I discussed how, from ca. 500 BCE onwards, the search for true knowledge regarding ontology and soteriology gained prominence in the religious milieu of Northern India: the search for this mystical

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<sup>43</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, xi.

<sup>44</sup> See, e.g.: Ibid., 3 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Mark Joseph McLaughlin, “Lord in the Temple, Lord in the Tomb. The Hindu Temple and Its Relationship to the Samādhi Shrine Tradition of Jñāneśvar Mahārāj” (PhD diss., University of California, 2014), 134.

knowledge is testified in the various Upaniṣads. It is not surprising that in the context of upaniṣadic texts, especially ones that draw on Sāṃkhya thought, yoga is frequently described in the sense of discovering such mystical knowledge, often in terms of self-realisation or self-knowledge. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (KU) contains one of the earliest references to yoga. In accordance with Sāṃkhya thought it states that liberation (here: immortality) comes forth from knowing *puruṣa* that resides in the self:

*indriyebhyaḥ paraṃ mano manasaḥ sattvam uttamam |  
sattvād adhi mahān ātmā mahato 'vyaktam uttamam ||  
avyaktāt tu paraḥ puruṣo vyāpako 'līṅga eva ca |  
yaṃ jñātvā mucyate jantur amṛtatvaṃ ca gacchati ||  
na saṃdr̥ṣe tiṣṭhati rūpam asya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam |  
bṛdā maṇiṣā manasābhikṣpto ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti || KU 6.7–9*

Higher than the senses is the mind; higher than the mind is the essence; higher than the essence is the immense self; higher than the immense is the unmanifest.  
Higher than the unmanifest is the soul,<sup>46</sup> pervading all and without any marks.  
Knowing him, a man is freed, and attains immortality.  
His appearance is beyond the range of sight; no one can see him with his sight;  
with the heart, with insight, with thought, has he been contemplated—those who know this become immortal. (Translation Olivelle 1998: 401.)

And the means to reaching this knowledge is (KU 6.18) ‘the whole method of yoga’ (*yogavidhiṃ kṛtsnam*), which is explained as follows:

*yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha |  
buddhiś ca na viceṣṭati tām ābhuḥ paramāṃ gatim ||  
tām yogam iti manyante sthirām indriyadhāraṇām |  
apramattas tadā bhavati yogo hi prabhavāpyayau || KU 6.10–11*

When the five perceptions [i.e. the senses] are stilled together with the mind, and not even reason bestirs itself; they call it the highest state.  
When senses are firmly reined in, that is yoga, so people think.  
From distractions a man is then free, for yoga is the coming-into-being, as well as the ceasing-to-be. (Translation Olivelle 1998: 401.)

This stilling of the mind first of all reminds of Pāṇini’s subtle meaning of  $\sqrt{yuj}$  and second of all of the most famous definition of yoga, found in PYŚ 1.2: ‘yoga is the cessation of activities of the mind.’ Indeed, among the Upaniṣads, the BhG, the PYŚ, and other classic texts, yoga as self-restraint is the most common sense.<sup>47</sup> Why should the mind be stilled? Stilling the mind allows one to approach the mystical insight that the true self is *brahman*. Although, as said, it is not possible to give one straightforward definition of yoga, this stilling of the mind is the common thread that links the various manifestations of yoga together.

<sup>46</sup> Olivelle translates *puruṣa* as person, but I prefer soul.

<sup>47</sup> Stephen H. Phillips, *Yoga, Karma, and Rebirth. A Brief History and Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 80.

No longer afflicted by fluctuations, one can realise the true self, which can be named *puruṣa* or *brahman* or the like. Then the individual soul is no longer bound to *samsāra*, with other words, is released.

In the *Maitrāyaṇa Upaniṣad* (MU, 400 BCE–early centuries CE) we find an early articulation of attaining yoga by means of six auxiliaries as opposed to Patañjali’s eight auxiliaries.<sup>48</sup>

*tatra prayogakalpaḥ – prāṇāyāmaḥ pratyābhāro dhyānaṃ dhāraṇā tarkaḥ samādhiḥ śaḍaṅgā ity ucyate yogaḥ* | MU 6.18

Following is the arrangement for the achievement (of unity communion with Brahman): control of breathing, withdrawal of the sense-organs, meditation, fixing of the mind, controlling of the same (mind) and sinking into trance [*samādhi*]—this is called the six-fold yoga.<sup>49</sup> (Translation Deussen 1980: 359.)

The MU states that through this six-fold yoga one can attain the highest knowledge of *brahman*, leading to the union with *brahman*:

*anena yadā paśyan paśyati rukmavarṇam kartāram īśam puruṣam brahmayoniṃ tadā vidvān puṇyapāpe vibhāya pare ’vyave sarvaṃ ekīkaroti* | MU 6.18

Through this it occurs that “when the seer sees him, shining like an ornament of gold, him, the creator, lord and spirit, the cradle (source) of Brahman, then the wise man gives up good and evil and unites everything in the eternal, highest one.”<sup>50</sup> (Translation Deussen 1980: 360.)

Interestingly, the yoga of the MU shows a similarity with Pāsupata yoga, namely unity with *brahman*, which, in the PS and the SK is understood to be Śiva or Rudra.<sup>51</sup>

In the *Mahābhārata* (MBh, one of the two major classic Sanskrit epics) terms derived from *√yuj* appear nearly nine-hundred times, of which hundred instances are found in the *Bhagavad Gītā* (BhG).<sup>52</sup> In the BhG the importance of knowledge of the self is stressed once again. Moreover, it states that Sāṃkhya yoga is one of the means of gaining such knowledge:

*jñeyam yat tat pravakṣyāmi yaj jñātvā ’mṛtam aśnute* |

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<sup>48</sup> The dating of the *Maitrāyaṇa Upaniṣad* is a point of debate: its pronounced articulation of yoga might indicate either that it is propagating a very early articulated form of yoga—prior to the yoga of Patañjali— or, to my opinion more likely, that its date of composition should be postponed to the first centuries of the Common Era.

<sup>49</sup> Original German translation: “Folgendes ist die Ordnung zur Werkstellung derselben [der Einheit]: Anhalten des Atems, Zurürckziehung der Sinnesorgane, Meditation, Fixierung des Denkens, Kontrolierung deselben und Versenkung; dieses wird der sechsgliedrige Yoga genannt.” (Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishad’s des Veda*, 344.)

<sup>50</sup> Original German translation: “Hierdurch geschieht es, daß ‘Wenn ihn der Seher schaut, wie Goldschmuck strahlend, den Schöpfer, Herrn und Geist, die Brahmanwiege, dann giebt der Weise Gutes auf und Böses, Einsmachend alles in dem Ew’gen, Höchsten.’” (Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishad’s des Veda*, 344.)

<sup>51</sup> Note the similarity with the tantric *śaḍaṅgayoga*, ultimately originating from Atimārga (or Pāsupata) Śaivism, consisting of exactly the same auxiliaries.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Schreiner, “What Comes First (in the Mahābhārata): Sāṃkhya or Yoga?,” *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft* 53, no. 755–777 (1999): 756; John Brockington, “Yoga in the Mahābhārata,” in *Yoga. The Indian Tradition*, ed. Ian Whicher and David Carpenter (London: Routledge, 2003), 13.

*anādimat param brahma na sat tan nāsad ucyate* || BhG 13.12

*dhyānenātmani paśyanti kecid ātmānam ātmānā |*  
*anye sām̐khyena yogena karmayogena cāpare* ||BhG 13.24

I shall explain that which is to be known. Knowing this one obtains the nectar of immortality. It is the beginningless supreme *brahman*, which is said to be neither existent nor non-existent.

Some perceive the self [i.e. brahman] in the self by means of the self through meditation, others through the Sām̐khya yoga and others through the yoga of action.

As has become clear, yoga in early traditions denotes a state rather than a means: yoga itself is the goal one wants to achieve by means of auxiliaries such as meditation. In case of Patañjali this yogic state is the disjunction (*vi-yoga*, which paradoxically is the opposite of yoga as union) of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, leading to isolation (*kaivalya*) of *puruṣa*. Although in other sources quoted here that draw on Sām̐khya thought this disjunction too has to take place, the result of such disjunction is often union (*yoga*) with the supreme, often referred to as *brahman*.

### § 3.2 Yoga, Death and Liberation: *Jīvanmukti* vs. *Videhamukti*

As we have seen, reaching the state of yoga is often equalled with liberation. In this paragraph I would like to address the question how, in early sources, liberation and yoga stood in relation to death. One may have noticed that in the above presented passages of both the KU and the BhG immortal[ity] (*amṛta[iva]*) is promised as a result of yoga. What does this immortality entail? Does it mean that one will never die, thereby living forever, or does it mean that one will not be reborn, and a such will never die again?

With this question we embark on two different ideas with regards to *mokṣa* that should be discussed, namely on the one hand the idea that liberation is achieved in life, and on the other hand the idea that liberation is achieved only after death. The former will later become known as *jīvanmukti* (liberation-whilst-living) and the latter as *videhamukti* (bodiless liberation). Although these terms do not appear in any of the Upaniṣads, nor in the BhG, questions regarding the nature of liberation (namely in life or after life) are addressed.

The ideal of *jīvanmukti* changed over time. Ultimately, from ca. 1000 CE onwards, it took on the meaning of living forever, in the sense that one who is liberated during life will gain immortality and escape death forever. But this is not how *jīvanmukti* was perceived before. For example: in the *bhāṣya* of the SK *jīvanmukti* is given as an option (though not literally called *jīvanmukti*), but there it does not mean that one will continue to live forever. In the SK it is stated that one can attain liberation whilst living but nevertheless remains burdened with the body until the body is released. One should realise that the eternal soul has always been immortal, despite its embodiment. But final liberation (i.e. *kaivalya*) is only attained after release of the body:

*samyajñānādbigamād dharmādīnām akāraṇaprāptau |  
 tiṣṭhati saṃskāraśāc cakrabhramavad dṛtaśarīrah ||  
 prāpte śarīrabhede caritārthatvāt pradhānavinivṛttau |  
 aikāntikam ātyantikam ubhayaṃ kaivalyam āpnoti || SK 67–68*

Through attainment of complete knowledge, *dharmā* and so forth, being deprived of their power as causes, [*puruṣa*] remains invested with a body because it is [still] subdued to [the works of] *saṃskāra*, like the whirling of the potter’s wheel.  
 When [ultimately] separation [of *puruṣa*] from the body takes place, and there is cessation of activity of *prakṛti*, because she has fulfilled her purpose, it attains both absolute and final isolation.

In “To Be Liberated while Still Alive or to Die in Order to be Liberated” Mislav Ježić researches to what extent the ideals of *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti* are present in the BhG. Ježić discerns six different text-layers in the BhG and argues that the Bhakti layer (*adhyaṅgas* 7-12) is the youngest layer of the BhG that synthesises all previous teachings in the light of *bhakti* (devotion).<sup>53</sup> As regards *mokṣa* Ježić argues that “the Bhakti layer starts from the prospect of liberation after death . . . but also includes the liberated state while alive . . . in which a *bhakta* is liberated both from sins . . . and from death,”<sup>54</sup> thereby basing himself on BhG 12.6–7. But I find his evidence unsatisfying. The BhG seems to solely proclaim *videhamukti*. This is also supported by BhG 8.5—that belongs to Ježić’s Bhakti layer:

*antakāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram |  
 yaḥ prayāti sa madbhāvaṃ yāti nāsty atra saṃśayaḥ || BhG 8.5*

And he, who at the end of his life, dies thinking only of me, after having released the body, he goes to the state of my being. There is no doubt about this.

The realisation that our soul is immortal could be interpreted as a form of *jīvanmukti* (although this term never literally appears), but to me it seems clear that ultimate liberation is only realised after the impermanent body has been given up. What role does yoga play in achieving such liberation? The BhG states the following:

*prayānakāle manasācalena bhaktyā yukto yogabalena caiva |  
 bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak sa taṃ paraṃ puruṣam upaiti divyam || BhG 8.10*

At the hour of death, with unmoving mind, endowed with devotion and through the power of yoga, having established *prāṇa* completely between the two eyebrows, he reaches this divine supreme soul (*puruṣa*).

<sup>53</sup> Mislav Ježić, “To Be Liberated While Still Alive or to Die in Order to Be Liberated — in the Jñāna, Karma and Bhakti Yoga of the Bhagavadgītā — According to Different Text Layers,” in *Release from Life – Release in Life. Indian Perspectives on Individual Liberation*, ed. Andreas Bigger et al. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 105. Ježić posits his six text-layers without providing arguments for his distinctions between the various layers. To experts of the BhG the distinction between the various text-layers might be evident, but to me it is not; an elaboration on his distinction would have been welcome, for this lack weakens his argument.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

*sarvadvārāṇi samyamya mano hr̥di nirudhya ca |*  
*mūrdhny ādhāyātmanaḥ prāṇam āstbito yogadhāraṇām ||*  
*om̐ ity ekākṣaram brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran |*  
*yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṃ sa yāti paramām gatim || BhG 8.12–13*

Restraining all the gates [of the body] and the mind in the heart, having placed his own *prāṇa* in the head, engaged in yoga concentration, uttering the single-syllable ‘*om̐*’ that is *brahman*, meditating on me, he who goes forth, renouncing the body, goes to the supreme goal.

From these passages it seems to be quite clear that the body has to be released in order to achieve the supreme goal. This is indicated not only in BhG 8.10 by the use of *prayānakāle* (at the hour of death), but also by *tyajan dehaṃ* (8.13, renouncing the body). These verses (and others) indicate that *videhamukti* prevails over *jīvanmukti* in the BhG, contradicting Peter Schreiner’s study of the BhG in which he states: “Die Bhagavad-Gītā stellt sich [...] als ein Text dar, der den Übergang vom Ideal des *videhamukta* (‘Entkörperert-Erlösten’) zum Ideal des ‘Lebend-Erlösten’ (*jīvanmukta*) markiert.”<sup>55</sup> Bronkhorst convincingly questions Schreiner’s argument, arguing that there are no mentions in the BhG of expressions of “‘liberated’ or some similar term in connection with people who are still alive.”<sup>56</sup> Based on the many fragments of the BhG that clearly indicate that liberation is achieved after renouncing the body, I do not see reason to accept Schreiner’s proposition.

It appears that to a broad extent the belief prevailed that one has to release the body in order to attain final *mokṣa*. It is not surprising that, as a result of such ideal, practices emerge that allow a yogi to take the final steps towards liberation by releasing his body. Or, in more morbid terms: kill himself.

### § 3.3 *Utkrānti*: Upaniṣadic and Epic Antecedents

If rebirth is the results of karmic retribution, there is only one way to escape rebirth; put an end to all activities that give rise to *karma*, both mental and physical. This idea is not only formulated in Brahmanical traditions, but also in Jainism and Buddhism. In *Greater Magadha*, Johannes Bronkhorst points out that early Jain ascetic traditions aimed precisely at putting an end to all activities, thereby freeing themselves from the cycle of rebirths.<sup>57</sup> Bronkhorst refers to *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* that seems to describe a form of self-induced yogic death through starvation.<sup>58</sup>

Aside from suicidal practices such as starvation, another more obscure practice is attested, namely the practice of *utkrānti*. As mentioned, the SP describes a practice of *utkrānti*. However, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (CU) and the MBh contain one of the earliest fragments that speak of *utkrānti*. These *utkrānti*

<sup>55</sup> Peter Schreiner, “Bhagavad-Gita. Wege und Weisungen” (Zürich: Benziger, 1991), 30.

<sup>56</sup> Johannes Bronkhorst, “Who Is Liberated? The Notion of Liberation While Alive in Some Selected Indian Texts,” *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft* LXIV, no. 2 (2010): 275–90.

<sup>57</sup> Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha. Studies in the Culture of Early India*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section Two, India (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 15.

<sup>58</sup> See, e.g. *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* 1.8(7).7.2–8, tr. Walther Schubring, quoted in: Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 16–17.

practices differ from the practices we find in tantric sources and differ from the PS and the SP, but show some interesting similarities that are worth mentioning.

The cosmology found in early Upaniṣads still bears much resemblance to vedic cosmology, but ideas concerning soteriology alter. In vedic cosmology the universe consisted of three different spheres (*loka*): “the earth, the sky or firmament, and the space between these two.”<sup>59</sup> New conceptions with regards to rebirth are connected to this vedic tripartite structure of the universe, whereby the universe is seen as “a prison with walls above (firmament) and below (earth).”<sup>60</sup> However, there is one opening through which a liberated individual can escape this prison, namely the sun, that functions as a lid that closes the universe. Correct knowledge allows an individual to pierce through the orbit of the sun where one finds the realm of immortals (and is as such liberated). It is in this image of piercing through the orbit of the sun that the term *utkrānti* appears.

The allegory of a liberated soul who pierces through the sun thereby gaining immortality is found in various Upaniṣads and various parts of the MBh. In this context we find a combination of on the one hand variations on  $\sqrt{kram}$ , such as *utkrānti*, and on the other hand variations on  $\sqrt{yuj}$ , such as yoga, or practices that come across as yogic.

With regards not only to early yoga practices, but also to the relation between yoga and death, the CU contains various interesting passages. Chapter 8 of the CU states that everything that can be achieved by any external form of ritual (such as *yajña*) can be achieved internally too, namely through the acquisition of sacred knowledge. As regards liberation we find:

*sa yāvad asmāc charīrād anutkrānto bhavati | tāvaj jānāti ||  
attha yatrāitad asmāc charīrād utkrāmati | athaitair eva raśmibhir ūrdhvam ākramate |  
sa om iti vā hod vā mīyate | sa yāvat kṣīpyen manas tāvad ādityaṃ gacchati |  
etad vai khalu lokadvāraṃ viduṣāṃ prapadanaṃ nirodho 'viduṣāṃ ||  
tad eṣa ślokaḥ |  
śataṃ caikā ca hrdayasya nāḍyas tāsāṃ mūrdhānam abhiniḥṣṭaikā |  
tayordhvam āyann amṛtatvam eti viṣvaṇṇi anyā utkramaṇe bhavanti utkramaṇe bhavanti ||  
CU 8.6.4cd–6<sup>61</sup>*

As long as he has not departed (*anutkrānto*) from the body, he would recognize them. But when he is departing (*utkrāmati*) from this body, he rises up (*ākramate*) along those same rays [of the sun]. He goes up with the sound ‘om.’ No sooner does he think of it than he reaches the sun. It is the door to the farther world, open to those who have the knowledge but closed to those who do not. In this connection, there is this verse:

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<sup>59</sup> Olivelle, *Upaniṣads*, xlvi.

<sup>60</sup> Patrick Olivelle, *The Early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 21.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. KU 6.16.

One hundred and one, the veins of the heart.  
 One of them runs up to the crown of the head.  
 Going up by it, he reaches the immortal.  
 The rest, in their ascent, spread out in all directions.  
 (Translation Patrick Olivelle 1998: 279.)

According to Olivelle's translation,  $\sqrt{kram}$  on the one hand denotes the departing from the body and on the other hand the rising upwards along the rays of the sun. The sun forms the lid that covers the universe. But the CU gives more information, for it says that only when advancing upward through the crown of the head, one reaches liberation (here, once again: immortality). Furthermore, the CU states that knowledge is the key to liberation (as we have also seen in e.g. the BhG and the KU). This knowledge, the CU argues, entails that (CU 8.6.1.2) the true self (*ātman*) resides in the heart and is as vast and expanding as the earth and the sky together. It is this true self that one has to discover (CU 8.6.7.1). Such descriptions of a self, that does not decay or die, reminds us of the Sāṃkhya division of a subtle and a gross body. By the time the CU was composed, Sāṃkhya philosophy was not yet systematised, but in fragments such as these we do see the beginnings of various philosophical attitudes emerge.

Aside from this emphasis on knowledge, CU 8.6.4cd-6 tells that the aspirant has to give up his body in order to enter the *lokadvāra*, indicating that liberation is achieved after death (*videhamukti*). Although the CU does not articulate practices that one would associate with yoga per se, we do find elements that could be regarded as yogic. For example, the passage gives much importance to pronouncing the syllable *om* at the right time: it seems as if pronouncing *om* is a necessary condition in order to gain immortality (cf. BhG 8.13). But next to that, this is one of the earliest passages known that mentions the *nāḍīs* in the body, directly linking it to Yoga physiology. In Yoga theory, *nāḍīs* are believed to be some sort of *prāṇa*-arteries, through which the various life breaths flow through the body. The *nāḍīs* will reappear in the fragments of the SP that will be treated in § 4.5.

The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (MuU) also contains a passage that contains various elements discussed above:

*tapahśraddhe ye hy upavasanty aranye śāntā vidvāṃso bhaikṣyacaryāṃ carantaḥ |*  
*sūryadvāreṇa te virajāḥ prayānti yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hy avyayātmā || MuU 1.2.11*

Those, however, who practice in the forest the life of austerities and faith, calm, full of knowledge, living on alms, they pass unpolluted (*virajāḥ*) through the portal of the sun, to that place where there is the immortal [*puruṣa*], the changeless Ātman.<sup>62</sup> (Translation Deussen 1980: 576.)

<sup>62</sup> Original German translation: Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*, 549: "Doch die im Wald Askese und Glauben üben, beruhigt, wissend, nur vom Bettel lebend, die gehen staublos durch der Sonne pforte zum ewigen Geiste, zum wendellosen Ātman."



Again, the immortal realm (that is here specified as the realm of *puruṣa*) is situated outside this universe. The sun—that functions as the portal of that universe—should be trespassed.

In various Upaniṣads a relation between what we could call yogic practices and yogic death thus seems present, indicating that a relation between yoga and death was extant in early yoga traditions. It is, however, in the MBh where most variations on a combination of  $\sqrt{kram}$  and  $\sqrt{yuj}$  are found.<sup>63</sup> As White has shown, many of these passages concern not so much a sage who is engaged in some sort of yogic practice, but rather a warrior who pierces through the orbit of the sun with his chariot, when he is no longer able to fight (and therefore can no longer live up to his *dharmā*?). Because such instances have been studied quite extensively (see n. 3), I limit myself to a few remarks.

According to White, when looking at the narrative “descriptions of the practice of yoga in the great epic, one finds a remarkable uniformity, with the practitioner of yoga either entering into the sun or penetrating the body of another being.”<sup>64</sup> In MBh 7.118 the chariot-warrior Bhūriśravas is no longer able to fight. At the moment of death, White notes that he is called *yogayukta*:

*yīyāsūr brahmalokāya prāṇān prāṇeṣv athājuhōt ||*  
*sūrye cakṣuḥ samādhāya prasannaṃ salile manah |*  
*dhyāyan mahopaniṣadaṃ yogayukto bhavan muniḥ || MBh 7.118.17cd–18*

Desiring to go to the world of *brahman* he thereupon offered the breaths into [his] breaths. He composed his eye on the sun with his mind placid, in internal acquiescence. Contemplating his great final rest (*mahopaniṣad*), that silent one (*muni*) was ready to hitch up his rig (*yogayukto bhavat*). (Translation White 2010: 295.)

White argues that the compound *yogayukta* should be understood as ‘hitched to his rig’, but Mark McLaughlin proposes that yoga in the *Mahābhārata*, even in a warrior context, might be understood in the sense of *samādhi*. He suggests a subtler understanding of *yogayukta*, namely as ‘united in *samādhi*’—thereby following Pāṇini’s second, indeed more subtle meaning of  $\sqrt{yuj}$ . “[T]he very practices in which these *yogayuktas* are engaged at the time of their apotheosis” such as forcing together the breaths and being “hitched to his *prāṇa* (his subtle chariot)” suggest that yoga in this context could be understood as *samādhi*.<sup>65</sup>

Whoever may be right, it appears that in the MBh dying is considered to be a yogic event. Indeed, Peter Schreiner suggest that we should understand manifestations of yoga in the MBh as a whole in the sense of a technique to die. With regards to Droṇa’s warrior apotheosis in the MBh he consequently argues: “Wenn ein großer brahmanischer Held als Yogin stirbt, erklärt sich dies im Kontext der Episoden nicht

<sup>63</sup> White, “Utkrānti: From Epic Warrior’s Apotheosis to Tantric Yogi’s Suicide,” 295.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 294.

<sup>65</sup> McLaughlin, “Lord in the Temple, Lord in the Tomb. The Hindu Temple and Its Relationship to the Samādhi Shrine Tradition of Jñāneśvar Mahārāj,” 134.

erst aus sektarischen Ausgestaltungen, sondern eher aus einer von Redaktor empfundenen Korrelation von erlösender Sterbesituation und Yoga.”<sup>66</sup>

### § 3.4 *Utkrānti* in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*

The *sūtras* of the PYŚ do not contain any literal references to death, nor do they speak of renouncing the body. However, in the *Vibhūtipāda*—the chapter on (supernatural) powers—there is one *sūtra* that contains the word *utkrānti*:

*udānajayāj jalapaṅkakaṅṭkādīṣv asaṅga utkrāntiś ca* || PYŚ 3.38

Because of mastery over the rising upwards-breath (*udāna*), there is no contact [for the yogi] with water, mud, thorns, etc., and there is ascension (*utkrānti*).

Should *utkrānti* here be interpreted in the light of a self-induced death, or should it be interpreted as the ability to levitate, or both? The *Vibhūtipāda* speaks about the various powers or perfections (*siddhis*) a yogi can attain, such as entering somebody else’s body (PYŚ 3.37). The exterior meaning of PYŚ 3.38 seems quite obvious: mastery over the *Udāna* breath enables a yogi to walk on water and trespass muddy grounds without hindrance. Moreover, he is not hurt by thorns, because he endures no pain. But as we know, obscurity is inherent to *sūtras* and it is often the interior meaning of *utkrānti* that we have to understand. The commentary of the PYŚ says:

*eṣāṃ pradhānaṃ prāṇaḥ udānajayāj jalapaṅkakaṅṭkādīṣv asaṅga utkrāntiś ca prāyaṅakāle bhavati tāṃ vaśītena pratipadyate* || *Bhāṣya* PYŚ 3.38, line 4–5 of *bhāṣya*

Among these [the various breaths], the *prāṇa* is the principal (breath). Because of mastery over the *udāna* there is no hindrance from water, mud, thorns, etc., and at the time of departure [i.e. death] there is ascension (*utkrānti*). He secures this through his yogic power (*vaśīva*).

The commentator appears to be familiar with *utkrānti* as something related to death, for he explains *utkrānti* with regards to the moment of death. Aside from this, no information is given by the commentary of Patañjali,<sup>67</sup> and it is therefore not clear if this type of *utkrānti* should be taken as some sort of self-induced death. The *sūtras* surrounding 3.38 do not give any other information either. The *siddhis* are attained as a result of the practice of *saṃyama*—a simultaneous practice of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyaṇa* and *saṃādhi* focussed on a particular object—which leads to knowledge of the nature of things. It gives the yogi knowledge of past, present and future (PYŚ 3.16), the movements of the moon and the stars (3.27), and so forth. If and how this should be related to *utkrānti* is not clear. The topic has not been

<sup>66</sup> Schreiner, “Yoga - Lebenshilfe oder Sterbetechnik,” 141.

<sup>67</sup> See n. 35 for my motivation with regards to the authorship of the *sūtra* and ‘Vyāsa’s’ *bhāṣya* of the PYŚ.

discussed in the literature on yoga. Interestingly, White does not mention the presence of *utkrānti* in his work on the PYŚ either, even though he is well familiar with its epic antecedents.

Although I cannot draw conclusion on the base of this passage, the fact that *utkrānti* appears in the utmost popular text on yoga is worth mentioning. Further research may shed light on this issue.

#### 4. Yoga and Death in Early Śaivism

In the previous paragraphs I have sketched an image of the relation between yoga and death as it appears in various Upaniṣads and the MBh and the PYŚ. Although this sketch is far from exhaustive, a few things have become clear. In early yogic practices, the state of yoga was often equalled with the state of *mokṣa*. Although various sources do indicate the possibility of *jīvanmukti* (such as the SK), this *jīvanmukti* should be understood as a temporary state of being; final liberation is *videhamukti*. The relation between yoga and death is demonstrated by various references to e.g. giving up the body, or the more obscure practice of *utkrānti*.

Having set these preliminaries, now let me return to the main question of this thesis, namely: what is the relation between yoga and death in early Śaivism? To this end, I present fragments of two sources of Pāśupata Śaivism, namely the *Pāśupatasūtra* and *Skandapurāṇa*. Both texts deal with the last moments of the death of a Pāśupata. I am interested in the following questions: can the death of a Pāśupata ascetic be described as yogic? Is this death self-induced? And finally, how is such a yogic death related to liberation?

Before discussing these questions, let me first introduce the beliefs and practices of Pāśupata Śaivism and introduce the textual material. This is followed by a paragraph on the relation between yoga and Pāśupata asceticism. Then, in § 4.4 and § 4.5 I present the selected fragments of the PS and the SP, along with a translation and analysis. It will become clear that yoga and death stood in a close relation in the ascetic stream of Pāśupata Śaivism.

##### § 4.1 The Rise of (Pāśupata) Śaivism: *Asceticism* and the *Pāśupatasūtra*

As discussed in chapter 2, at the time the PS and the SP were written, the religious milieu of northern India had changed from one that revolved around vedic ritualism to one that emphasised devotion to one god, or as White calls it, Hindu theism.<sup>68</sup> As regards Śaivism, we already find early epigraphic evidence of the existence of Śaiva devotees in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (ca. 100–200 CE). Archaeological evidence indicates that early cults worshipping Śiva emerged at least as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE.<sup>69</sup> We also find

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<sup>68</sup> White, *Sinister Yogis*, 39.

<sup>69</sup> Alexis Sanderson, “The Impact of Inscriptions on the Interpretation of Early Śaiva Literature,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56 (2013): 223.

references to new religious ideas concerning Śiva in the latest layers of the *Mahābhārata*. However, it was not until the fall of the Gupta Empire (ca. 550 CE) that Śaivism rose to its prominence.<sup>70</sup>

The term Śaivism refers not to one, but “to a number of distinct but historically related systems comprising theology, ritual, observance and yoga, which have been propagated in India as the teachings of the Hindu deity Śiva.”<sup>71</sup> In broad terms, the oldest branch of the teaching of Śiva (*śivaśāsana*) is called the Atimārga (outer path), which is further divided into two divisions, namely that of Pāśupata asceticism and Lākula asceticism—the latter having developed from within the former.<sup>72</sup> The Atimārga, which “came into existence probably no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE”<sup>73</sup>—was only open to ascetics and aimed at attaining *mokṣa*. The second path—the Mantramārga (mantra path)—grew out of the Atimārga, but opened the Śaiva tradition for lay people, making Śaivism much more accessible. The Mantramārga, from which the Śaiva tantric traditions emerged, was mainly concerned “with the quest for supernatural experience”<sup>74</sup> and to a much lesser degree with liberation. In this jungle of different Śaivite branches, question arises: what kind of Śaivism do the PS and the SP praise?

The content of the PS makes it very clear that it was composed for a Pāśupata ascetic, who aimed at attaining liberation (i.e. eternal union with Śiva or, as he is called in the PS, Rudra). The *sūtra*, without the younger *bhāṣya*, was probably composed when the Mantramārga path had not even (fully) developed; only the Atimārga form of Śaivism was extant. The SP too proclaims Pāśupata religion (though not exclusively the path of asceticism). Here we are thus interested mainly in Pāśupata Śaivism, to which I, for the sake of brevity, will confine myself. Let me summarise its beliefs and practices.

Pāśupata Śaivism is the oldest major Śaivite school known. Although Pāśupata Śaivism is now extinct, in the first millennium CE it gained enormous influence and grew out to be a wide-spread religion across the Indian subcontinent.<sup>75</sup> The Pāśupata philosophy is attributed to Lakulīśa who, according to the tradition, is considered to be an incarnation of the god Rudra (Śiva). The myth tells us that Rudra entered the body of a young Brahmin who was cast into a cremation ground.<sup>76</sup> Rudra reanimated this Brahmin as Lakulīśa, who then gave out the teachings contained in the *Pāśupatasūtra*, to his disciples. The *Pāśupatasūtra* (Sanderson suggests the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE<sup>77</sup>) is the earliest Pāśupata text known and

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<sup>70</sup> Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*, 15.

<sup>71</sup> Alexis Sanderson, “Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” in *The World’s Religion*, ed. Stewart Sutherland et al. (London: Routledge, 1988), 660. Sanderson’s article gives a good overview of development of the various branches of Śaivism.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 664–65.

<sup>73</sup> Alexis Sanderson, “Śaiva Texts,” ed. Knut A. Jacobsen, *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism. Volume VI: Index, Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section Two India* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 12.

<sup>74</sup> Sanderson, “Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” 665.

<sup>75</sup> That is to say, the tradition the we know from Pāśupata epigraphical and textual material is now extinct. However, in § 6 I discuss a modern yoga movement started by Svami Kṛpalvānanda who appropriated a linkage with the Pāśupatas.

<sup>76</sup> Sanderson, “Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” 664.

<sup>77</sup> Sanderson, “Śaiva Texts,” 12.

considered to be the root text of the tradition. The PS consists of five chapters with a total of a hundred and sixty-eight *sūtras* containing the doctrines of Pāśupata asceticism. It is full of terms that are associated with yoga: meditation (*dhyāna*), non-harming (*ahiṃsā*) and carefulness (*apramāda*<sup>78</sup>), just to name a few.

At least as important as the *sūtra* is Kauṇḍinya's commentary, the *Pañcārthabhāṣya* (ca. 400–550 CE).<sup>79</sup> This is the only known commentary and “has played a key role in the systematization of Pāśupata doctrine.”<sup>80</sup> But its influence is not limited to Pāśupata Śaivism only: “Kauṇḍinya brings in all his scholarly acumen to present the teachings of the *Pāśupatasūtra* as more than just a set of ascetic prescriptions, revealing a systematic theology underneath. Many aspects of this theology, such as the distinction between god (*paśupati*), bound souls (*paśu*) and the material world (*pāśa*), remain characteristic for Śaivism up to the present day.”<sup>81</sup> Kauṇḍinya is clearly influenced by Sāṃkhya and Yoga thought; his commentary is filled with its ideas and terminology.

The life of a Pāśupata ascetic was a life of austerity. The goal of the Pāśupata ascetic was to achieve the end of suffering (*duḥkhānta*) through union with Rudra (*rudrasāyujya*): the lord of the cattle (Paśupati).<sup>82</sup> Whereas an ‘ordinary’ vedic Brahmin would pursue the social norms of adherence to duties regarding caste and stage of life (*varnāśrama-dharma*) the Pāśupata ascetic—who must nevertheless be a brahmin in order to be initiated—transcended these orthodox classifications to a higher or perfected stage (*siddha-āśrama*).<sup>83</sup> To enter this *siddhāśrama*, the aspirant undertook a vow of observance (*vrata*) in five *avasthās* (phases). The number five reappears in different aspects of Pāśupata Śaivism: “Their whole universe of discourse was described into five categories [*padārtha*], and it is from this peculiarity that the sect gained the nickname of *pañcārtha* [five principles].”<sup>84</sup> The five categories are: “(1) Kārya: effect (= worldly existence); (2) Kāraṇa: cause (= God); (3) Yoga: union (with God); (4) Vidhi: prescribed regimen (= ritual praxis); (5) Duḥkhānta: end of suffering (= the goal).”<sup>85</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Many translators have rendered *apramāda* as ‘mindfulness’, but I was kindly reminded by professor Bisschop and dr. Deszö that ‘mindfulness’ has a very strong connotation nowadays that does not fit the Pāśupata doctrine. I therefore translate *apramāda* with carefulness.

<sup>79</sup> Minoru Hara, “Materials for the Study of Pāśupata Śaivism” (Harvard University, 1966), 130.

<sup>80</sup> Bisschop, “Pañcārtha Before Kauṇḍinya,” 27.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> The PS consistently uses the archaic epithet of Śiva; Rudra. In the context of the PS I therefore choose to do likewise.

<sup>83</sup> Sanderson, “Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” 665.

<sup>84</sup> Hara, “Materials for the Study of Pāśupata Śaivism,” 2. Note that this nickname also appears in the *bhāṣya*: *Pañcārthabhāṣya*.

<sup>85</sup> Bisschop, “Pañcārtha Before Kauṇḍinya,” 28. Although the generally accepted scholarly view is that the *pañcārtha* refers to the *padārtha* as distinguished by Kauṇḍinya, Bisschop argues that (p. 30) “Kauṇḍinya himself does not explicitly connect these five principles with the name Pañcārtha” and that “[h]e may well have had good reasons for this, for there can be no doubt that Kauṇḍinya was introducing major changes to the Pāśupata cult, turning it from an ascetic regime into a doctrinal system of thought.” The term *pañcārtha* was (p. 30) “not coined by Kauṇḍinya himself but was already in use by the Pāśupatas before him.” Bisschop argues that the pre-Kauṇḍinyan *padārtha* did not refer to the five categories (Kārya, Kāraṇa, etc.) but to the means by which union (yoga) is

Without going into details of the entire life-course of the Pāśupata ascetic, it suffices to say that by entering every successive *avasthā* the Pāśupata ascetic renounced worldly affairs to a greater extent. Where in the first *avasthā*—which is entered only after a process of initiation—the Pāśupata took an initial step in retreating from the world by living in a temple, in the fourth *avasthā* the Pāśupata ascetic was supposed to live on a cremation ground and live from whatever was available. Finally, on this cremation ground, the Pāśupata ascetic entered the fifth phase: liberation from *samsāra* by being eternally united (yoga) with Rudra. As such, in the context of Pāśupata Śaivism, yoga again denoted a state of liberation. I will return to the yoga of the Pāśupatas in § 4.3.

§ 4.2 The Spread of Pāśupata Śaivism: A Broader Community and the *Skandapurāṇa*

Pāśupata Śaivism was not only confined to asceticism. In the course of the first millennium of the Common Era the Pāśupatas set up an infrastructure of temples, monasteries and religious centres in various holy places, such as Vārāṇasī (which is still an important Śiva pilgrim place) that was connected by a network of travelling *sādhus* (holy men or ascetics).<sup>86</sup> The textual Pāśupata material does not indicate such ‘mundane’ activities. At this point I should indeed note that the PS and the SP are almost exclusively prescriptive, and not descriptive. Both the PS and the SP are religious texts, describing ideals, not events. Epigraphic records have indicated that in the course of the first millennium CE the circle of initiated Pāśupata Brahmins became rich and gained power. This is hard to harmonise with the ascetic rules laid out in the Pāśupata religious literature.<sup>87</sup>

Also noteworthy is Bakker’s comment that one “of the peculiar facilities offered to the community of *laukikas*, by at least some of these Pāśupata ascetics, was to extend services in and around the cremation grounds.” And that “[l]iving in the cremation ground was a highly acclaimed strategy within Pāśupata asceticism.”<sup>88</sup> Bakker’s comment raises the question to what extent practices of self-induced yogic death were actually pursued amongst Pāśupata ascetic. It is beyond the scope of this paper to research to what extent such ideals were put into practice. Let me just repeat here that the conclusions I draw based on the texts are to be understood as prescribed ideals.

Although the SP too describes an ideal, its content nonetheless reflects the religion of a much larger Pāśupata community. Where *sūtras* were only meant to be understood by initiated Brahmins, purāṇic literature was accessible for lay devotees as well. As Elizabeth Cecil argues “the use of *purāṇa* as the medium . . . signals the growth of the Pāśupata community from ‘an elitist faith of ascetic virtuosi’ to a

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achieved, namely *vāsa* (dwelling), *dhyāna* (meditation), *akḥilakaraṇanirodha* (restraint of senses), *smṛti* (mindfulness) and *prasāda* ([god’s] grace).

<sup>86</sup> Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*, 14.

<sup>87</sup> Sanderson raises this issue in: Sanderson, “The Impact of Inscriptions on the Interpretation of Early Śaiva Literature,” 226.

<sup>88</sup> Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*, 14.

considerably more inclusive movement by situating the Pāśupata movement . . . within broader Indian and intellectual currents.”<sup>89</sup>

The SP I refer to here should not be confused with the other, younger *Skandapurāṇa*. This younger ‘*Skandapurāṇa*’ consists of a set of texts that all claim to be *khaṇḍas* (parts) of the original SP. However, over the course of time the original SP was lost, and the later set of texts collectively came to be known as the *Skandapurāṇa*. In 1988 the Nepalese scholar Kṛṣṇaprasāda Bhaṭṭarāi published a work called ‘*Skandapurāṇasya Ambikākhaṇḍah*’ which in fact turned out to be the original *Skandapurāṇa*. However, the edition went largely unnoticed. In the beginning of the 1990s, Rob Adriaensen, Hans Bakker and Harunaga Isaacson re-discovered the original SP, and initiated the *Skandapurāṇa Project* that aims to present a critical edition of the full text. This project is still ongoing and will continue for quite some time.<sup>90</sup>

The SP consists of a hundred and eighty-three *adhyāyas* (chapters) that are transmitted by three Nepalese manuscripts.<sup>91</sup> The oldest Nepalese manuscript is dated 810 CE, which is relatively old; most Indian manuscripts are, due to Indian weather conditions, not older than a few hundred years. Considering the fact that the text was once believed to be completely lost, this manuscript is a very extraordinary source of information.

Although the oldest manuscript is dated 810 CE, Bakker argues that the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century is a more plausible *terminus ante quem* for composition of the SP. He bases his argument on the fact that the text barely exposes knowledge concerning typical Mantramārga texts, rituals and ideas.<sup>92</sup> Despite its ‘broader currents’ the SP does not seem to be a Mantramārga text, because it does not instruct one to perform certain rituals; it merely promises liberation to the initiated Pāśupatas—as will become clear.

What is the texts about? I see no reason to try and paraphrase Adriaensen, Bakker & Isaacson’s excellent summary:

With the proclaimed intention of relating the birth and deeds of Skanda, the text gives us a cycle of Śaiva mythology, which deviates in several respects from myths of Śiva known so far. In dealing with this god’s various deeds and manifestations the Purāṇa appears to be quite original. With occasional

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<sup>89</sup> Elizabeth A. Cecil, “Seeking the ‘Lord with a Club’: Locating Lakulīśa in the Early History of Pāśupata Śaivism (Sixth to Ninth Century CE),” *South Asian Studies* 30, no. 2 (2014): 145. See further Bakker’s *The World of the Skandapurāṇa* for a more complete overview of the socio-political context wherein the Pāśupata traditions developed and the SP was written.

<sup>90</sup> After publishing Volume 1 of the text in 1998, several scholars joined the project, including Peter Bisschop, Yuko Yokochi, Diwakar Acharya and Judit Törzsök. See for more information: Rob Adriaensen, Hans T Bakker, and Harunaga Isaacson, *The Skandapurāṇa Volume I: Adhyāyas 1–25. Critically Edited with Prolegomena and English Synopsis* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998); Peter C. Bisschop, *The Skandapurāṇa Project* (Groningen), accessed May 9, 2018, <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/research/research-projects/humanities/the-skandapurāṇa-project#tab-1>.

<sup>91</sup> Aside from the Nepalese recension, for the critical edition additional recensions are used: the Indian Revākhaṇḍa and Ambikākhaṇḍa recensions.

<sup>92</sup> Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*, 4.

touches of undeniable humour, the text delineates a godhead fond of disguises and tricks which often bewilder the other gods, and who is perhaps most frequently described as laughing. His darker and more destructive side is not neglected though, and the text also leaves no doubt that it is he who is ultimately the real creator of and power in the universe. The text, entirely permeated by ascetic and yogic values, of which Śiva is made the supreme personification, contains numerous references to ‘Pāśupata-yoga’ or a Pāśupata *vrata* and concludes with a section on Pāśupata yoga.<sup>93</sup>

Because I am interested in the relation between yoga and death, I present a translation and analysis of *adhyāya* 182 and fragments of *adhyāya* 179 and 181 wherein such relation seems to exist. This part of the SP has not been critically edited yet.<sup>94</sup> I rely on Sanderson’s transliteration of Bhaṭṭarāī’s edition.<sup>95</sup> Sometimes Sanderson corrects Bhaṭṭarāī’s edition. If I have taken over Sanderson’s correction on Bhaṭṭarāī, Bhaṭṭarāī’s original is indicated as, e.g.: ‘15a *bhedāḥ*: Bhaṭṭarāī’. Occasionally, I suggest a correction of my own. This is indicated as, e.g.: ‘39a *yogāspadam*: Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāī’.

That being said, before presenting the textual material, I wish to make a few remarks on the relation between Pāśupata Śaivism and yoga.

### § 4.3 Pāśupata Śaivism and Yoga

Yoga is one of the fundamental concepts of Pāśupata philosophy. Minoru Hara argues that:

Despite a different outlook in the present form, which is fashioned by the Pāśupata theologians, there is no doubt in that the Yoga supplied the basic framework (Grundgerüst) for the formation of the Pāśupata theology. It can be said that the Pāśupata Śaivism tried to distinguish itself from the ‘Yoga’ as a philosophical system, while taking full advantage of the ‘yoga’ as a common heritage (Gemeingut) of Indian culture.<sup>96</sup>

What is the yoga of the Pāśupatas? Stilling of the mind is not defined as yoga but presented as a characteristic of yoga. Yoga itself, as will be discussed later more elaborately, is defined as the union of the self and the lord (PABh 1.1.43: *atrātmeśvarasaṃyogo yogaḥ*). Elsewhere Minoru Hara argues that this Pāśupata definition of yoga as union alters, for, according to him, it is not found in purāṇic literature:

Often we meet the word *pāśupata-yoga* in Purāṇic literature. The meaning assigned to it, however, is not that of the original Pāśupata scriptures. The *pāśupata-yoga* of Purāṇic literature is a system of disciplines such as breath-control, sitting postures, etc., and sometimes a group of supernatural powers. The *yoga* as defined in the *Pāśupata Sūtra* and Kaṇḍīya’s *bhāṣya*, on the contrary, is the

<sup>93</sup> Adriaensen, Bakker, and Isaacson, *The Skandapurāṇa Volume I: Adhyāyas 1–25. Critically Edited with Prolegomena and English Synopsis*, 327.

<sup>94</sup> Until now (2018), chapters 1-69 have been published in three volumes. Volume 4 is forthcoming.

<sup>95</sup> Alexis Sanderson, “The Yoga of Dying. The Śaiva Saiva Atimārga. Week 5: Handout, 9 November, 2004, [Unpublished Lecture Handout.], 2004.

<sup>96</sup> In his article Minoru Hara researches the *siddhis* (supernatural powers) of the Pāśupatas in the PS and the PABh and the *siddhis* of the PYŚ. The texts show interesting similarities, suggesting that both texts at least partially drew on a common tradition. See: Minoru Hara, “Pāśupata and Yoga: Pāśupata-Sūtra 2.12 and Yoga-Sūtra 3.37,” *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft* 53, no. 3 (1999): 593–608.



union of the individual soul with God, and this original concept seems to be foreign to the Purāṇic authors.<sup>97</sup>

But this idea is obsolete: Bisschop has indicated that especially in chapter 180 of SP, yoga is not only described as a practice, but also as something which is given by Śiva, thereby approaching the yoga of the PS and the PABh.<sup>98</sup> We find, for example, in SP 180.22cd-23ab:

*dīkṣito brahmabhasmabhyāṃ śivayājī munir bhavet ||  
śiḡhram eva param yogaṃ prāpya mucyeta bandhanāt | SP 180.22cd-23ab*

One who is initiated by [being purified by] sacred ashes and the *brahma*-mantras may be a sage who is a worshipper of Śiva. Swiftly obtaining the supreme union (*param yogaṃ*), he may be released from bondage.

Bisschop's observation is supported by chapter 182 that is treated below. As will become clear, chapter 182 speaks of yoga (1) in terms of what could be called yogic practice, such as stilling of the mind and breath-restraint and (2) in terms of a goal, namely union with the lord (*rudrasāyujya*).

We have encountered these elements—or variations on it—in other sources. The Pāśupatas clearly based themselves on existing practices that were not limited to Pāśupata Śaivism but were practiced in a broader context. The theological framework may have differed but the yogic practices might have been quite homogenous.

#### § 4.4 Yoga and Death in the *Pāśupatasūtra*

Now it is time to turn our attention to the textual material of the Pāśupatas. In this paragraph I discuss the last moments of the life of a Pāśupata ascetic as described in the PS and the PABh. What, according to the PS, happens to the Pāśupata in the last moments of his life? In the following, concluding passage of the PS, the ascetic is in the fourth stage of his life and lives on a cremation ground:

*yathālabdhopajīvakaḥ || labhate rudrasāyujyaṃ || sadā rudram anusmaran || chittvā doṣāṇāṃ  
betujālasya mūlam || buddhyā || svam cittam<sup>99</sup> || sthāpayitvā ca rudre || ekaḥ kṣemī san vītasokaḥ ||  
apramādī gacched duḥkḥānām antam iśaprasādāt || PS 5.32-5.40*

Living from that which is acquired by chance [i.e. food], he [the Pāśupata aspirant] obtains union with Rudra, at all times keeping Rudra in his mind. Having cut the root of the net of causes of faults by means of his intellect and having fixed his own mind on Rudra [continuously], alone, secure,

<sup>97</sup> Hara, "Materials for the Study of Pāśupata Śaivism," 14.

<sup>98</sup> Peter C. Bisschop, *Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa. Sects and Centres*, Groningen Oriental Studies XXI (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2006), 39.

<sup>99</sup> I take Sanderson's correction from the hapax *saṃcittam* to *svam cittam* which syntactically seems more likely and has been found in similar fragments. See: Sanderson "The Yoga of Dying. The Śaiva Atimārga. Week 5: Handout, 9 November, 2004, [Unpublished Lecture Handout] 2004.

free from sorrow, careful, he may reach the end of suffering, because of the grace of the lord.<sup>100</sup>

The compound *yathālabdhopajivakāḥ* suggests that the Pāśupata was living on offerings on the cremation ground. Was it normal to offer food to the deceased, and could the Pāśupata live of these offerings? I have not been able to find specific information about mortuary rites from around the first centuries of the CE. Nevertheless, inferred from vedic mortuary rites, an abundance of food on the cremation ground is unlikely, for food offerings do not take place on a cremation ground.<sup>101</sup> If any food would be available on the cremation ground, *yathā* (PS 5.32) could imply that merely food that would actually be given to the Pāśupata would be his supply. This seems to be the case in the next passage, discussed below.

Kauṇḍinya comments that the aspirant is not supposed to go off the cremation ground to acquire food, because staying alive is not the highest attainment for a Pāśupata. He infers this from PS 5.33: ‘he obtains union with Rudra’ (*labhate rudrasājuyjam*). The union with Rudra is the highest goal to be achieved. By keeping Rudra in his mind continuously (PS 5.34), the last bit of karma is consumed, thereby allowing the aspirant to escape the endless cycle of transmigration.<sup>102</sup> From the PABh it becomes clear that the aspirant is not there to continue to live for a very long time. This idea is articulated clearer in a section of another classical Pāśupata text, Bhāsarvajña's *Gaṇakārikāratnaṭīkā* (GKRT), which “arranges the various key elements of the teaching pertaining to initiation and the stages of the post-initiatory discipline contained in the *Pañcārthabhāṣya*.”<sup>103</sup>

*caturthāvasthasya yathālabdham vṛttiḥ | śmaśānadeśāvasthiteṇaiva divase divasadvaye traye vā tad  
annapānaṃ prāpyate tad yathālabdham ucyate | pañcamāvasthasya tu śarīrābhāvād eva  
vṛtṭyanupapattir iti || GKRT p. 5, lines 18–20*

Food acquired by chance is the mode of life for one who is in the fourth stage [of life]. Food acquired by chance is said to be food and drink which he is to receive in one day or two or three days, as he resides *only* in a cremation ground. But for that one who is in the fifth stage there is no relevance for a mode of life, because he has no body.

From this passage a few things become clear. First of all, the GKRT suggests that the Pāśupata has to live from very little food. The passive form *prāpyate* emphasises the inactiveness of the aspirant: the aspirant is not even active in receiving food. If I think these steps through logically, it seems that the Pāśupata is

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<sup>100</sup> This is not Kauṇḍinya's interpretation. His interpretation, as Hara also indicates in “Materials for the Study of Pāśupata Śaivism” (p. 432) is complicated and does no justice to the syntax: “Having cut off from the soul-complex (first) the faults, [and then] the cause, [viz., the unmanifest *adharma*], and the [resultant] network [viz., the manifest *adharma*] which are the root [of the connection of the faults with the soul-complex].”

<sup>101</sup> David M. Knipe, “Sapiṇḍikaraṇa. The Hindu Rite of Entry into Heaven,” in *Religious Encounters with Death. Insights from the History and Anthropology of Religions*, ed. Frank E. Reynolds and Earle H. Waugh (London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), III.

<sup>102</sup> Hara, “Pāśupata and Yoga: Pāśupata-Sūtra 2.12 and Yoga-Sūtra 3.37,” 431.

<sup>103</sup> Sanderson, “Śaiva Texts,” 12.

intentionally striving towards death: he eats once in every one to three days, and he probably will not drink enough water either, which in fact is a faster invitation to death than a lack of food. And why should he not strive towards death? All that is left for him is the eternal union with Rudra.

Another passage of the GKRT gives more specific information about the moment of union with Rudra:

*caturtham lābham āha sthitir iti | doṣahetuḥjālasya<sup>104</sup> mūlākhyānivr̥ttau cittasya rudre 'vasthānam atyantaniścālatvaṃ sthitir ucyate | ... anurudhyamānacittavr̥ttitvaṃ nityātmatvaṃ | ... śarīrādiviyuktatvaṃ ekatvaṃ | ... yogasyātyantokṣṛṣṭattvapatipādanārtham uktāni | GKRT p.16, lines 3–11*

He [the author] speaks of the fourth attainment, fixedness. Fixedness is when the mind, upon the destruction of what is called the root of the network of causes of faults comes to rest in Rudra and is absolutely immovable . . . The state of being of constant soul is the state where all action of thoughts (*cittavr̥tti*) is overcome . . . The state of being alone (*ekatva*) is when the body is separated [from the soul] and so forth . . . These characteristics are mentioned in order to illustrate the extreme eminence of [this] union.

The characteristics of this Pāśupata yoga is that the soul is in a state of utter stillness: all the action of thoughts (*citta-vr̥tti*) is overcome (*anurudhyamāna*). This is familiar: in § 3.1 we have seen that in early yoga traditions yoga, the idea of stilling of the mind in order to attain the state of yoga was a common thread that linked various traditions together. Nonetheless, yoga itself was not, as in the PYŚ, described as stilling of the mind (*cittavr̥ttinirodha*).<sup>105</sup> In the GKRT we see the same trend: yoga itself is not the stilling of the mind, but a stilled mind is a characteristic of Pāśupata yoga; it is a necessary condition. This characterisation is also found in the PABh:

*atra nityatvaḥviśeṣaṇenānityatvaṃ nivartate || nityatvaṃ nāma satī vibhutve puruṣeśvarayor manasā saba gatasyātmatābhāvasya vr̥ttyākārasya viśayaṃ prati kramo 'kṣopo 'vasthānam vṛkṣaśakunīvat || tasmin nirvr̥tte maheśvare yukto nitya ity ucyate || ātmā iti kṣetrañnam āha || PABh 5.3:1–4*

Here by virtue of the specification of constancy non-constancy is ruled out. Now as regards constancy, although the soul (*puruṣa*) and god are both omnipresent, the aspect of the soul where it takes the form of perception, since it is there linked to the mind, comes to rest on objects of perception only successively, like a flock of birds on a tree. It is when god has become such an object and the soul is thus joined to god that the soul is called 'constant'. When this [constancy] is achieved one is united with the Great Lord and thus called constant. The soul means a knower of the field. (Translation Hara 1966: 381. The passage remains obscure.)

Leaving aside the obscurity of this passage, it does show how Kauṇḍinya draws on Sāṃkhya and Yoga philosophy. The soul is confused by perception of the sensory world, which is ever moving and ever

<sup>104</sup> I take this correction from Sanderson (2004); *doṣahetuḥjālebhyaścinnasya*: Dalāla.

<sup>105</sup> Note, however, the similarities in terminology between *cittavr̥ttinirodhaḥ* (PYŚ) and *anurudhyamānacittavr̥ttitvaṃ*: the GKRT makes use of the same *√rudh* and the compound *cittavr̥tti*.

changing. To achieve union the mind has to be stilled. In order to attain this stilled, constant mind, one has to fully fix the mind on god. The stilling of the mind is thus an auxiliary of yoga. But this is not the end yet: from the previous passages of the GKRT it is clear that the Pāsupata ascetic must physically die before he is united with Rudra. The question remains: can his death be interpreted as a self-induced and moreover yogic death? This is clearer in the following passage of the GKRT:

*dhyāyan eva tam īśānaṃ yadi prāṇān vimuñcati | tasya dehāntakāle vai dadyād īśaḥ parāṃ gatim ||*  
GKRT p. 21, lines 3-4

If he discharges his breath just as he is meditating upon the lord, right at the moment of his death will the lord give him the highest goal.

From this it becomes clear that the aspirant dies, and even must die in order to become united with Rudra, for it says: *right* at the moment of his death will the lord give him the highest goal. Death does not overcome the aspirant, nor is he unprepared for death. On the contrary, engaged in deep meditation upon Rudra he *discharges* his final breath, in order to die and become united. The verb *vimuñcati* stands in the active voice, suggesting that the Pāsupata actively discharges his final breath.

Such a clear indication of yogic death is not found in the PS and Kauṇḍinya's *bhāṣya*. Nonetheless the above mentioned *sūtra* 5.35 (*labhate rudrasāyujyam*) along with its commentary does suggest that the Pāsupata marches towards death. A deeper reading of the surrounding *sūtras* supports this:

*chittvā doṣānāṃ hetujālasya mūlam || buddhyā || svam cittaṃ || sthāpayitvā ca rudre ||* PS 5.35–38  
*apramādī gacched duḥkhānām antam īśaprasādāt ||* PS 5.40

Having cut the root of the net of causes of faults by means of his intellect, having fixed his own mind on Rudra [continuously], careful, he may reach the end of suffering, because of the grace of the lord.

What is meant with this cutting of the root of the net of causes of faults? The *bhāṣya* explains that (PABh 5.34.16–19) the five sense-objects of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell are the net of causes of faults (*doṣānāṃ hetujālasya*) because they give rise to feelings such as desire and other defilements, thereby creating *karma*. Sāṃkhya philosophy resonates in this *sūtra*: one should turn inwards and pursue the supreme knowledge that the self (*puruṣa*) is not truly connected to the faults that keep the self in bondage. If we take Kauṇḍinya's explanation of *mūlam* (PS 5.35) as the five sense-organs than this *sūtra* could also indicate a more abrupt cutting, namely of the bodily functions. Having then cut of his bodily functions, at the moment of death 'he may reach the end of suffering' (PS 5.40). As one may have noticed, my translation indicates that the cutting of the net of causes of faults (5.35) is done with the intellect (5.36 *buddhyā*). Alternatively, *sūtras* 5.35–38 could be translated as: 'Having cut the root of the net of causes of faults, having fixed his own mind *by means of his intellect* on Rudra.' However, as I have shown on the base

of various upaniṣadic fragments, correct knowledge and through that the destruction of ignorance was the key to liberation. Liberation is intellectually achieved. I therefore believe that we should interpret this ‘cutting’ to be an action that is intellectually initiated.

It is plausible to understand the death of the Pāśupata ascetic as a form of a self-induced yogic death. Why would the Pāśupata continue to live? After all, there is nothing beyond the category of *duḥkhānta*. One could wonder: were the five *avasthās* that the Pāśupata has consequently gone through not increasingly life-denying? Renouncing one’s family, renouncing society, renouncing property, renouncing food, what is left for the ascetic to live for? In the course of such a life, ultimately renouncing life as a whole seems logical. Moreover, the prescribed practices (such as living from food that is available on the cremation ground) weaken the Pāśupata. Its death can be considered yogic because of the yogic practices of meditation, stilling of the mind, and concentration on Rudra, and because right at the moment of death the Pāśupata attains yoga, namely union with Rudra and thereby *mokṣa*. The twofold description of yoga as a practice and as a state hence also returns with respect to the death of the Pāśupati yogi. The GKRT describes a similar event of the ascetic who retreats to the cremation ground yet gives more detailed instructions such as discharging the breath. It literally instructs to give up the body. Such practices hence support my suggestion to interpret the death of the Pāśupata ascetic as a form of self-induced yogic death.

The PS does not contain a literal reference to giving up the body. But when read on a deeper level, there are various reasons to presume that the Pāśupata has to die in order to become liberated. The idea of a physical death is congruous with Pāśupata cosmology: there is nothing beyond union with Śiva; there is nothing beyond the fifth category of *duḥkhānta*.

The fact that Kauṇḍinya does not speak about death at all is surprising, for various other Pāśupata sources seem to be so clear about the necessity of giving up the body in order to be liberated. But as Hara has shown, Kauṇḍinya occasionally “gives a lengthy comment deviating from the obvious sense of the original *sūtra*.”<sup>106</sup> Kauṇḍinya may have had reasons not to mention death in any way, but what these reasons were, in the present state of knowledge, remains unclear.

#### § 4.5 Yoga and Death in the *Skandapurāṇa*

The purpose of this paragraph is twofold. First of all, the purpose is to research how yoga is defined in relation to death in the SP, and if we can speak of a self-induced yogic death. Interestingly, where neither the PS nor the PABh mentions *utkrānti* or variations on the word, in the SP *utkrānti* is present. The second purpose is to present a translation of the thus far untranslated *adhyāya* 182 of the SP, along with some other relevant fragments of the SP that have not yet been translated. The loose style that is

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<sup>106</sup> Hara, “Materials for the Study of Pāśupata Śaivism,” 127.

characteristic of purāṇic texts generally complicates translation and interpretation (see § 1.2 on my note on purāṇic sources). Next to that, possible corruptions of the text may at least partly explain why some verses are unclear. The critical edition might lead to new insights. This translation is therefore by no means intended as an end-station.

Before I present the translation and the commentary of *adhyāya* 182, I present a few fragments of *adhyāya* 179 and 181. The fragments of these chapters are relevant because in these fragments the notion of voluntarily abandoning the body is present.

In *adhyāya* 179 Sanatkumāra explains to Vyāsa the supreme path that leads to union with Śiva (i.e. *mokṣa*) and what steps a Pāśupata yogi should go through in order to realise that Maheśvara (lit. ‘the great lord’ i.e. Śiva) resides in the heart. He furthermore explains that union with Maheśvara is the supreme goal.

*Skandapurāṇa* 179.39–51

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39 *yogāt padam samādhāya pūrvoktam guṇavarjitam |*  
*dhāyīta hṛdi tam devam viśvaṃ viśveśvaram vibhum ||*  
 40 *ab anādhinidhanam śantaṃ traiguṇyaparivarjitam |*

39a *yogāspadam*: Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāi; 39c *guṇavarjitam*:  
 Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāi

Deprived of attributes, being engaged, through yoga, upon the state (*padam*) that has been talked about before, he should meditate on god in his heart, the all-pervading omnipresent lord of the universe, who is without beginning and end, peaceful, void of the three attributes.

40 *cd tālau jhivām samādhāya*  
*dantair dantān na ca spṛśan ||*  
 41 *indriyāni manaś caiva paramātmani yojayet |*  
*kṛtvā manasi tat sarvaṃ prāṇāpānau niruddhya ca ||*

Having placed the tongue on the palate, while not touching his teeth with his teeth, he should join his senses and his mind with the highest self, having performed all of that in the mind and having blocked the inward and outward breath.

42 *omkāram tv asakṛd dhyāyan*  
*saṃhṛtyāṅgāni kūrnavat |*  
*śarīraṃ sarvaṃ āpūrya vikṣīpet sarvaṃ ātmani ||*

As he is meditating continuously on the syllable *om*, having drawn together his limbs like a tortoise,<sup>107</sup> having filled his entire body [with *prāṇa*] he should disperse it all in the [highest] self.

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What seems to be prescribed here is a sort of implosion: everything is inwardly drawn together, the breath is restrained and, constantly meditating on the syllable *om* and thinking of the lord, who resides in his

<sup>107</sup> Cf. BhG 2.58 *yadā saṃharate cāyaṃ kūrmo ṅgānīva sarvaśab | indriyāṇindriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhītā ||*

‘And when he withdraws together the senses from the objects of the senses, as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, his wisdom stands firm.’ (Translation Sargeant in Chapple 2009: 143.)

heart ‘he should disperse it all in the [highest] self.’ The practice described in 40cd seems to be a practice that in haṭhayogic texts comes to be known as *kbecarīmudrā*. In *haṭhayoga* traditions *kbecarīmudrā* becomes an important practice that “involves the freeing and lengthening of the tongue of the yogin in order that it might be turned back and inserted above the soft palate to break through the *brahmadvāra*, the door of Brahmā, so that the yogin can drink the *amṛta*, the nectar of immortality, which is stored behind it.”<sup>108</sup> However, forerunners of the haṭhayogic *kbecarīmudrā* are found in various Buddhist texts, Upaniṣads and tantras.<sup>109</sup>

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43 *tat samhṛtya munir bhūyo vyāpi bhūtaṃ pravistr̥tam |*  
*nāḍīvāyupracāreṇa bhūyo bhūyas tathārabhet ||*

The sage, having drawn together again that expanding and pervading being (i.e. the body), should practice again and again through the flow of the breath inside the *prāṇa*-arteries.

44 *sa pūrvāpararātre tu sāttvikam ceta ucyate |*  
*madhyāhne cāparāhṇe ca kṛṣṇaṃ dhyāyīta tāmasam ||*

[The mind] is called the *sattva* mind during the first and the last part of the night. The sage should perform meditation, concentrating on the dark *tamas* in the midday and the end of the day.

45 *sandhyayor ubhayor nityam rājasam dhyānam*  
*ācaret |*  
*taijasam sarvataś cāpi dhyānād evaṃ jayed guṇān ||*

At both dawn and sunset he should perform meditation on what relates to *rajas* and at all times he should perform the meditation on what relates to *tejas*. In this way through meditation one conquers the *guṇas*.

45d *dhyānad*: Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāi

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The practice described here should not be practiced once, but continuously (*bhūyo bhūyas*). The instrumental *nāḍīvāyupracāreṇa* (43) is not clear. It could mean that the outward and inward breath can be stopped by means of control over the interior breaths.

Verse 44 and 45 suggest that the *cetas* takes on different forms during different parts of a natural day.<sup>110</sup> We once again see aspects of Sāṃkhya philosophy: the yogi should meditate on the three *guṇas* and fully understand them, in order to ultimately become liberated from these *guṇas*. The text emphasises that at

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<sup>108</sup> James Mallinson, *The Kbecarīvidyā of Ādinātha A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of an Early Text of Haṭhayoga* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 3.

<sup>109</sup> See for various examples: *ibid.*, 17 ff.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. *Nīśvāsataṭvasaṃhitā Uttarasūtra adhyāya 5: 37 ūrdhvaṇṇo hy ahaś caiva apāno rātrir eva ca | suṣumṇā uttaram jñeyam iḍā vai dakṣiṇāyanam || 38 madhyadeśe yadā hy ātmā viṣuvaṃ taṃ vidur budhāḥ | calate gacchate caiva madhyadeśe yadā pumān || 39ab saṅkrāntir iti vikhyātā śaktiṃ caiva nibodha me | NS Uttarasūtra 5.37-39b. ‘The upward breath is taught to be ‘day’ and the downward breath is ‘night’. [The subtle tube called] Suṣumṇā should be known to be the northward [movement of the sun]; Iḍā is the southern movement. When the [life-breath that in some sense carries and is therefore identified with the] ‘soul’ is in the centre [between the two above-mentioned tubes], then the wise know this to be ‘equinox’. When the ‘soul’ comes and goes [from or] into the centre, then this is taught to be ‘transition’. Hear from me also about śakti.’ (Translation Goodall et al. 2015: 395.)*

all times one should meditate on *tejas* (also known as *rajas*), suggesting that overcoming *tejas* ultimately leads to conquering the *guṇas*. In the first half of verse 45 the author speaks of *rajas*; in the latter he speaks of *tejas*. Why he switches terminology is not clear.

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46 *sadaivam dhyayato vyāsa tad aiśvaryaṃ pravartate |*  
*yena śadvimśakam buddhvā hṛdayasthaṃ mabeśvaram ||*  
47ab *svecthayā svatanuṃ tyaktvā tasminn eva pralīyate |*

Oh Vyāsa, for one who is meditating like this constantly, lordship occurs, Because of this [occurrence of lordship] (*yena*), having realised that the twenty-sixth principle that resides in the heart is the great lord, and after abandoning his own body according to his own will, one is absorbed in that very [*Maheśvara*].

47cd *paramātmā param brahma kāraṇam puruṣo mahān ||*  
48 *īśvaro nirguṇo bhoktā śadvimśaḥ samudāhṛtaḥ |*  
*yac cāsat sadasac caiva bhūtibhūto vibhuḥ paraḥ ||*

The lord, who is the supreme spirit, the superior brahma, the cause, the great soul who is without attributes, the enjoyer; all this is known as the twenty-sixth principle, who is both non-existent and existent, and non-existent, who is mighty, omnipresent, supreme.

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As discussed, Sāṃkhya philosophy argues that universe consists of twenty-five principles. The system of Yoga adds another principle, *īśvara*. Patañjali does not literally refer to *īśvara* as the twenty-sixth principle, but he does state that ‘*īśvara* is a distinct *puruṣa*’ (PYS 1.24 *puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ*), thereby setting *īśvara* aside from the other principles. Referring to *īśvara* as the twenty-sixth principle is characteristic for the SP.

It appears that by practicing the above the yogi can acquire or recognise a quality of *īśvara* (*aiśvarya*) who resides in the heart. The recognition of *īśvara* within the heart allows the yogi to be absorbed in the lord. This is also emphasised by the relative pronoun *yena*. Aside from recognising that *īśvara* resides in the yogi himself, another condition for absorption with the lord is not only to abandon the body (*svatanuṃ tyaktvā*), but to do so according his own will (*svecthayā*). What precisely happens though, is not clear. In verses 39–42 is stated that first the inward and outward breath should be stopped and then the *prāṇa* should be dispersed within the self, suggesting some sort of self-induced asphyxiation.

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49 *jāgarti svapate bhunkte samtiṣṭhati dadāti ca |*  
*sa sraṣṭā sa ca saṃhartā guṇātīto mabeśvaraḥ ||*

He is the one who wakes, he is the one who sleeps, he enjoys (for himself), he holds [the universe] together and he is the one who gives. He is the creator as well as the destroyer, the one who is beyond attributes, the great lord.



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50 *ity etat kathitaṃ sarvaṃ sarvayoganidarśanam |*  
*yogaṃ pāśupataṃ tubhyaṃ ādyaṃ mokṣagatipradam ||*

Thus is fully told the teaching of all yogas [namely,] the Pāśupata yoga that is the unparalleled path to liberation for you.

51 *sarvaprasaṅgarahitaṃ haravaktraviniḥṣṛtam |*  
*sūkṣmaṃ tat paramaṃ jñānaṃ pravakṣyāmi tavānagha |*  
*yasya samyakparijñānād vijñeyaṃ nāparam bhavet ||*

Oh sinless [Vyāsa], I will proclaim to you that subtle supreme knowledge, originating from the mouth of Hara which is void of all attachment, thanks to the proper realisation of which there is nothing more to be known.

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This is the end of *adhyāya* 179. Sanatkumāra explains to Vyāsa that the path of Pāśupata yoga is the only path to liberation. In the following chapters (180–182) Sanatkumāra expounds on this path to liberation, ultimately culminating in chapter 182. Before chapter 182 there is another verse that indicates that giving up the body is a condition for attaining liberation.

*Skandapurāṇa* 181.29c–30b

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29cd *nirmamā yogaviduṣaḥ śaṅkaravratam āsthitāḥ ||*  
30ab *gacchanti svatanuṃ tyaktvā hitvā māyāṃ paraṃ*  
*padam |*

Those who are free from all worldly connections, who are wise in yoga, who abide to the vow of Śaṅkara,<sup>111</sup> after having discharged their own body and abandoned the world of illusion, they go to the supreme state (*padam*).

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The emphasis on the necessity to give up the body possibly indicates that the composer wishes to make clear that *mokṣa* is by no means attained when the soul is still embodied (*jīvanmukti*). Another necessary condition presented in this verse is that one has to abide to the vow of Śiva (*śaṅkaravratam āsthitāḥ*). As we have seen in SP 179.50, the unparalleled path to liberation is Pāśupata yoga. Indeed, I assume that this Śaṅkara vow refers to the Pāśupata vow, which would indicate that the path to liberation is reserved for Pāśupata ascetics only. We will come across this notion again at the end of *adhyāya* 182.

As has become clear, the SP speaks of abandoning the body as a condition for liberation various times. Now, let us finally turn attention to *adhyāya* 182, the second to last chapter of the SP. Below I present translation of the entire chapter, interrupted by my commentary on the verses.

At the beginning of *adhyāya* 182 Vyāsa is talking to Sanatkumāra. He explains that Śiva is the source of everything and that he is the cause for liberation.

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<sup>111</sup> Śaṅkara is an epithet of Śiva.

1 *bhagavan sarvayogīśa sarvāmaranamaskṛta |*  
*aho jñānaṃ tvayākhyātam ajñānavinivartanam ||*  
2ab *adyāhaṃ gatasamdeho mahādevaṃ paraṃ prati |*

Oh blessed one, lord among all yogis (i.e. Sanatkumāra), who is worshipped by all the gods, the supreme knowledge that brings ignorance to an end has been declared by you, I am now free from doubt with regards to the supreme great god.

2cd *śaṅkarāt prakṛtir jātā brahmaviṣṇu tādātmakau ||*

Matter is produced from Śaṅkara. Brahma and Viṣṇu have that [matter] as their nature.

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The beginning of the chapter expresses that (1) all matter is produced from Śiva; he is the source of the universe and the supreme god, and that (2) Brahma and Viṣṇu belong to realm of matter, thereby being subordinated to Śiva. Śiva is not only the saviour, but also the creator: *prakṛti* is his creation, and Brahma and Viṣṇu belong to the realm of *prakṛti*. This idea is also formulated in the PABh:

*sāṃkhyayogena ye muktāḥ sāṃkhyayogevārś ca ye |*  
*brahmādayas tiryagantāḥ sarve te paśavaḥ smṛtāḥ ||* PABh 1.1:41

Those who are liberated by means of *sāṃkhyayoga* and those who are masters of *sāṃkhyayoga*, all beings, from Brahma to the animals are known as ‘cattle’.

This verse indicates that those beings who are ‘liberated’ by means *sāṃkhyayoga* are in fact not truly liberated, as they are still cattle (*paśu*). Śiva is the lord of cattle (Paśupati), including the god Brahma.

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3 *jñātvā śaḍvīmśam īśānaṃ mucyate bandhanād iti |*  
*sarvayogapathāt pūrvam uktvā sakalasamhitām ||*  
4 *niṣkalaṃ sakalaṃ jñānaṃ ko ’nya evaṃ prabhāṣate |*  
*śravaṇād asya viprendra dehaṃ muktam abodhiṣam ||*

It is said (*iti*): “After realising that the twenty-sixth element is Śiva (*īśānaṃ*) one is released from bondage.” Having declared the entire collection (*sakalasamhitām*) of teachings before the path of all yoga, who else [can] declare in such a way the knowledge that is [both] undivided and that consists of parts? Because of his revelation, oh chief of Brahmans, I understood that the body is released.

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The syntax of verse 3 is not clear. I am not sure whether *sakalasamhitā* refers to the Vedas or to the entire teaching of the SP. The Pāśupata doctrine claims to be in accordance with the Vedas, and we know from the PS that the Pāśupata *vrata* can only be taken by initiated Brahmans. In line with this, this verse

possibly denotes that Sanatkumāra is praised as the supreme teacher who has previously taught the entire Veda and now teaches the path of yoga.

In *pāda* 4d we find *dehaṃ muktam abodhiṣam* ('I understood that the body is released'). In line with what we have read in *adhyāya* 179, I think once again the idea is expressed that release from bondage is achieved without the body.

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5 *tvatprasādād ahaṃ tāta prāptajñāno mahāśubhaḥ |*  
*viśamdeho 'bhavaṃ śāntaḥ praṣṭavyaṃ kiṃcid asti me ||*

Thanks to your grace, oh venerable one, having realised knowledge that is very eminent, being without doubt, I have become at peace.  
[Now] there is [still] something that I need to ask.

6 *tat tvāṃ vijñāpayāmīdaṃ niṣṭhām ākhyātum arhasi |*  
*evaṃ vijñānasampannaḥ prāptayogo munir mune ||*

I inform you about it: please tell me about death. In this way, a sage who is fully endowed with knowledge, obtains union (*yoga*), oh sage.

7 *vinā kleśaṃ tanuṃ tyaktvā yogī yogabalānvitaḥ |*  
*katham āpnoti tad brahma niṣkalaṃ parameśvaram ||*

Having renounced the body without anguish, the yogi who is endowed with yogic powers, how does he reach that *brahma*, that is the undivided supreme lord?

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In verse 6 the definition of yoga as union appears. In the SP we thus find a synthesis of on the one hand yogic practices and on the other hand the definition of yoga as union. In order to obtain this union, one apparently has to have full knowledge of death. In verse 7, then, it seems as if Vyāsa is now specifically asking about the method through which one should discharge his body, in order to reach *brahma*. As will become clear in what follows, that method is *utkrānti*. It should be noted that the *brahma* in this verse is not the deity Brahma, expressed by the masculine *brahman-* that was mentioned in a composite with Viṣṇu (180.2d). Here, we are dealing with the neuter *brahman-*, referring to the self-existent universal spirit (*puruṣa*).

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8 *īśvarādhārasamprāpter upāyaṃ mokṣalambhanam |*  
*kathayasva munisreṣṭha praṣṭavyaṃ nānyad asti me ||*

Oh most splendid among sages, you must explain to me the means of obtaining the support of *īśvara*, by which one obtains *mokṣa*. There is nothing else that I have to ask.

9 *evam uktaḥ sa śiṣyeṇa vyāseṇa sumahātmanā |*  
*kathayām āsa viprendraḥ śivasiddhāntaniścayam ||*

Addressed thus by the disciple Vyāsa, whose soul is great, the chief of Brahmans explained the conviction of the doctrine of Śiva.

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*sanatkumāra uvāca*

10 *śṛṇu vyāsa paraṃ jñānam īśvarādhāraṇam |*  
*svecchayā yena mucyante yogino jñānatatparāḥ ||*

10b *īśvarādhānakāraṇam*: Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāi

11 *tridhotkrāntim imāṃ jñātvā mubur abhyasya caiva hi |*  
*svadehaṃ ripuvat tyaktvā ṣaḍviṃśe layam āpnuyāt ||*

Sanatkumāra said:

Vyāsa, you must learn about the supreme knowledge that is the cause of the support of *īśvara*, by means of which the yogis, who are dedicated to knowledge, are liberated, according to their own will.

Having learned this three-fold *utkrānti* and practicing it suddenly and [then] having abandoned his own body like an enemy, one may obtain absorption in the twenty-sixth element (i.e. Śiva).

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Verse 10 states that liberation can be achieved according to the will of a yogi if he has correct knowledge, namely that the lord is the twenty-sixth element that resides within the heart. In order to be absorbed into the lord, the yogi has to practice the performance of a three-fold *utkrānti*. In 179.<sup>43</sup> we saw that the yogi has to practice breath-restraint again and again. On the contrary, the three-fold *utkrānti* appears to be practiced just once—expressed by *mubur*. This seems logical, because with the accomplishment of *utkrānti* the yogi abandons the body and then finally reaches union with Śiva.

Then, in the following verses, we encounter a technical description of the *nāḍīs*. We have encountered the *nāḍīs* in relation to *utkrānti* in CU 8.6.4cd–6 (§ 3.4) where it was stated that one of the *nāḍīs* passes up to the crown towards immortality.

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12 *yā nāḍyo vāyavaṣṭabdhāḥ saṃvaranti śarīriṇam |*  
*śataṃ tāsāṃ śatānāṃ tu karṇikāmadhyam āśritam ||*

The hundreds of thousands of *nāḍīs* that are supported by the life breath enclose the embodied soul (*śarīriṇam*) and resort to the middle of the pericarp.

13 *tam āśṛityāsthītā nāḍyo nābhyaṃ pādeṣv adhogatāḥ |*  
*śirobaddhāḥ smṛtāḥ bhūyas tā eva karam āsthitāḥ ||*

The *nāḍīs* dwell in it and resort to it (i.e. the middle of the pericarp). They descend through the navel to the feet. Furthermore, they are known to be tied to the head [and] they dwell in the hand.

14 *karam āśṛitya tā bhūyaḥ karṇikāṃ punar āśritāḥ |*  
*dvisaptatisahasrāṇi nāḍīnām aparā mune ||*

The *nāḍīs*, having clung to the hand, then again resort to the pericarp. Oh sage, there are seventy-two-thousand *nāḍīs*, no more.

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15 *tāsām ekaikaśo bhedāḥ sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāḥ smṛtāḥ |*  
*tāsu saṃcarate prāṇaḥ karṇikāvvyomasambhavaḥ ||*

Their divisions are known to be ever more and more subtle. In them dwells the *prāṇa*, arising from the space of the pericarp.

16 *tatrātmā sūkṣmasaṃlakṣyaḥ prāḡ uktas tiṣṭhati dviḥja |*  
*yā prabhā durdr̥śā tasya tāṃ bhajed yogavin munīḥ ||*

There dwells the soul (*ātman*), which is to be recognised as subtle, according to what has been said before, oh twice-born. The sage, who is a knower of yoga, should enjoy that splendour of the soul that is difficult to be seen.

17 *tat tejaḥ sarvanāḍīṣu vibhaktam sarvadehinām |*  
*tena nāḍyo bahiḥsparśān manaḥ kurvanti viśṛtam ||*

That splendour is distributed among all *nāḍīs* of all the embodied souls. Through this [splendour] the *nāḍīs*, being in touch with the external, make the mind pervasive.

18 *tat tejaś cakṣuṣā hr̥tvā sarvanāḍīsamāśritam |*  
*mana ekagatam kuryāt tac cātmani niyojayet ||*

Having seized that splendour with the eye, it is assembled in all the *nāḍīs* and should make the mind focused and fastened to that *ātman*.

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Let me rephrase what seems to be happening here. All *nāḍīs* move through the body, though they reside in the pericarp. The *prāṇas* too move through the body using the *nāḍīs* as their mount. The soul (*ātman*) resides in the pericarp.<sup>112</sup> Its splendour moves through the body because it is distributed among the *nāḍīs*.

From 16cd it becomes clear that the yogi is capable of experiencing the *ātman* through its splendour. But how are the *nāḍīs* in touch with the external world, as stated in 17c? Here we need to rely on some Sāṃkhya philosophy that has been introduced in § 2.3. We know from Sāṃkhya thought that the *puruṣa*, which is in reality omnipresent, should realise its independence from *prakṛti*. In Pāśupata Śaivism, this *puruṣa* is the *ātman* that resides in the pericarp. The splendour of *ātman* flows through the body, reaching from the toes to the crown and the very end of the fingertips. The presence of *ātman* in the *nāḍīs* and the internal organs, such as the *manas*, allows the *manas* to make contact with the outer world. The passage explains the relation between body and soul: because the splendour of the *ātman* moves through the body, it can be perceived and it makes perception possible. One has to recognise the splendour of the *ātman* and then fully focus the *manas* on that splendour and connect with it. The Pāśupatas maintained the Sāṃkhya doctrine of a plurality of internal organs as opposed to Patañjali's reduction to only one psychic organ, most often referred to as *citta*.

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<sup>112</sup> Cf. again NS *Uttarasūtra* 37-39b, see n. 110.

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19 *vāyur dhanañjayo nāmnā yo hṛdi sphurate sadā |*  
*trīṇi tasya mukhāny ābuh śīro nābhi hṛd eva ca ||*

For the wind named Dhanañjaya that always trembles in the heart they say there are three openings, namely [in] the head, the navel and the heart.

20 *ye 'nye prāṇā navākhyātā vāyavaḥ kīrtitā mayā |*  
*dhanañjayasya sarve te vaśagās tannibandhanāḥ ||*

The other nine *prāṇas* that I have declared, and the other winds that are mentioned by me: all of them are dependent on and joined with the Dhanañjaya wind.

21 *tadvaśād utkramanty ete tasmimś tiṣṭhati saṁsthitāḥ |*  
*nābhībāndhanam āsādyā nāḍīnāṃ vaktram āsthitam ||*  
22 *ab dvitīyaṃ karṇikāyāṃ tu tṛtīyaṃ tālusaṁsthitam |*

Dependent upon it they move upwards (*utkramanti*) and they remain still while [the Dhanañjaya wind] remains still. The first opening of the *nāḍīs* is located in the bond of the navel (?). The second abides in the pericarp and the third in the palate.

21b *tiṣṭhanti*: Bhaṭṭarāi

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The SP declares the Dhanañjaya wind to be the most important wind, but what is this Dhanañjaya wind? Sāṃkhya philosophy distinguishes five types of breath or wind, namely Prāṇa (which is both the name of one of the winds and a generic name), Apāna, Vyāna, Samāna and Udāna.<sup>113</sup> Pāśupata Śaivism maintains ten types of winds. The primary set of five winds is supplemented by Dhanañjaya, Nāga, Kūrma, Devadatta and Kṛtaka. These supplementary winds also appear in the *Niśvāsātattvasaṃhitā* (NS)—although only the first three are mentioned by name. The NS *Nayasūtra* states:

*aṅguṣṭhajānuhṛdaye locane murdhni saṁsthitāḥ |*  
*nāgādya bahurūpāś ca karma teṣān nibodha me ||*  
*āhlādanodvejanaś ca śoṣaṇas trāsakas tathā |*  
*nidrātandrīkaraś cānyo yojako hi dhanañjayah ||*  
*śvāsasaṅkocac chede ca ghurughurusyotkrameti ca (?) |*  
*nāgādīnān tu pañcānām mṛtyukāle [*<viceṣitam>*] ||*  
*<na> {caiva yāti} cotkrāntyā kūrmaś caikas [tu] tiṣṭhati |*  
*akuñcayati vai kūrmaḥ śoṣaye ca kalevaram || NS Nayasūtra 4.126-129*

In the big toes, the knees, the heart, the eyes and the head are the [five subsidiary breaths] beginning with Nāga, which have various forms; hear from me their function[s]. [The first four] produce pleasure, excitement, drying terror. The other, Dhanañjaya, who joins [the soul to its next embodiment], produces sleep and weariness. At the time of death, the functions of Nāga and the others are [respectively]: the [leaving of the] breath; shrinking [of the breath?]; cutting(?); the death-rattle(?) (*ghurughurusya?*); and exit [of the body] (*utkrameti ca*). The Kūrma alone remains [at death] and does not leave by exiting [the body] (*utkrāntyā*). The Kūrma causes the corpse to contract and dries it out. (Translation Goodall et al. 2015: 495.)

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<sup>113</sup> Mallinson and Singleton, *Roots of Yoga*, 173–74.

From the translation of Goodall et al. of the NS *Nayasūtra* it appears that only the Kūrma wind remains, and not the Dhanañjaya.

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22cd *kṣurikā paraśuḥ śūlāṃ trividhotkrāntir ucyate ||*  
 23 *śūlāṃ hr̥di kṣurāṃ nābhyāṃ tālau paraśur āstbitaḥ |*  
*tāluke hr̥di vā baddhaṃ trayāṃ nābhyāṃ*  
*pratiṣṭhitam ||*

*Utkrānti* is said to be three-fold: the razor, axe, and spear (?). The spear(-type) is performed in the heart, the razor(-type) in the navel [and] the axe(-type) is performed in the palate. Or bound together the three are performed in either the navel, the palate or the heart (?).

24 *tālau viyojitaṃ sarvaṃ prāṇam eva vimuñcati |*  
*ākṣiptaṃ tritayaṃ nābhyāṃ karṇikāyāṃ viyojitaṃ ||*

One releases the entire *prāṇa*, that is disjoined from the palate. The third is thrown down in the navel, disjoined from the pericarp (?).

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Apparently, there are three types of *utkrānti*: the razor-*utkrānti*, the axe-*utkrānti* and the spear-*utkrānti*. I have not encountered this elsewhere. Verse 24 is not clear: in verse 23 is stated that the *utkrānti* is performed in the navel, axe or heart, but in verse 24 a reference to the heart is missing.

I have tried to find other sources that speak of these ‘yogic’ weapons but so far my inquiry has been unsuccessful, with one exception: the *Kṣurikā Upaniṣad* (KṣU) speaks of a ‘knife-concentration’ (*kṣurikāṃ dhāraṇāṃ*) and has some remarkable similarities with the SP. It opens as follows:

*kṣurikāṃ sampravakṣyāmi dhāraṇāṃ yogasiddhaye |*  
*yāṃ prāpya na punarjanma yogayuktaḥ sa jāyate || KṣU 1*  
 ...  
*kūrmo’ṅgānīva samhr̥tya mano hr̥di nirudhya ca || KṣU 2cd*  
*mātrādvādaśayogena praṇavena śanaīḥ śanaīḥ |*  
*pūrayet sarvaṃ ātmānaṃ sarvadvārān niruddhya ca || KṣU 3*

I will proclaim the knife-concentration for accomplishing yoga.  
 Having obtained this, for the one who is joined to yoga there is no rebirth.  
 Drawing together the limbs like a tortoise, confining the *manas* in the heart  
 through the yoga of the twelve moras by the uttering of *om* quietly and softly<sup>114</sup>  
 having blocked all the doors [of the body] he fills his entire body with breath.

Following, the KṣU states that one should (KṣU 9) focus on the Suṣumnā-*nāḍī*, which is the subtlest of all *nāḍīs*. Following this *nāḍī*, situated in the area of the spine, one enters (KṣU 10) ‘the great abode of the *puruṣa* that resembles a red lotus.’<sup>115</sup> Then, going upwards even further (KṣU 11) one seizes the knife of the

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<sup>114</sup> Cf. SP 149.42.

<sup>115</sup> The pericarp, wherein according to the SP the *ātman* resides, is often described as a lotus.

mind, ‘shining bright with knowledge.’ KṣU 11–17 describes how this knife of the mind cuts through everything, all the forms and names, starting from the legs and limbs, except for the Suṣumnā artery (KṣU 18). The Suṣumnā artery is stuffed with all *karma*, both good and bad. In this way the *prāṇa* cannot go back into the body. In the concluding verses of the KṣU is then stated:

*pāśaṃ chittvā yathā haṃso nirviśaṅkaḥ kham utkramet |*  
*chinnapāśas tathā jīvaḥ saṃsāraṃ tarate sadā ||*  
*yathā nirvāṇakāle tu dīpo dagdhvā layaṃ vrajet |*  
*tathā sarvāṇi karmāṇi yogī dagdhvā layaṃ vrajet ||*  
*prāṇāyāmasutīkṣṇena mātṛādhāreṇa yogavit |*  
*vairāgyopalaghr̥ṣṭena chittvā tantuṃ na badhyate ||* KṣU 20–22

Just as the goose, having cut the bond, fearlessly may rise up (*utkramet*) to the sky,  
 likewise the embodied soul, his bonds cut, escapes *saṃsāra* for eternity.  
 Just as a flame that, burned out at time of extinction (*nirvāṇakāle*), dissolves,  
 likewise the yogi, having burned all actions, dissolves.<sup>116</sup>  
 The knower of yoga, having cut the cord with support of the moras,  
 sharpened by breath-restraint and whetted on the stone of renunciation, is no longer bound.

From the KṣU it also seems that the yogi not only has to detach himself from external objects, but from his body as well. Ultimately the soul, whose bonds are cut, rises up from *saṃsāra*. The tool to ‘cut’ everything is the mind that has the function of a knife. Deussen observes that this is contradictory because “the Manas is locked up in the heart [KṣU 3], and at the same time it is supposed to be a razor (*kṣura*) with which one cuts off the individual parts of the body.”<sup>117</sup> But this apparent contradiction does provide a possible explanation for SP 182.24, where the *prāṇa* is cut off from the palate and the navel, but not from the heart. The SP instruct the *manas* to tie itself to the *ātman* (SP 182.18). We know that this *ātman* resides in the heart. In that sense, the *manas* should tie itself to the heart. Possibly the *manas* is positioned in the heart and acts from there, destructing everything—by practice of *utkrānti*. This scenario is congruent with the KṣU. The following verse of the SP then seems to make sense too:

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25 *sthitam (?) ātmani saṃyojya vikṣīped ūrdhvato manaḥ |*  
*prayogād asya viprendra mucyate tatkṣaṇān munīḥ ||*  
 26ab *svacchandatanusanṭyāga eṣa te parikīrtitaḥ |*

Having joined the *manas* that abides in the self (*ātman*), one releases it upwards. Because of this practice, oh best of brahmins, the sage is released exactly at that moment.

This voluntary renunciation of the body has been proclaimed to you.

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<sup>116</sup> Note the similarity with the Buddhist concept of *nirvāṇa* that is often being described as a flame that has extinguished: release from *saṃsāra* is visualised as a complete extinction.

<sup>117</sup> Paul Deussen, *Sixty Upaniṣads of the Veda*, trans. V.M. Bedekar and G. B. Palsule (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), 671.



Just as in the KṣU, after everything is destroyed, the *manas* is finally released in an upward progression, whereby liberation is achieved. In 26ab it is once more made clear that the above involves giving up the body.

Now Sanatkumāra continues with a disquisition of the various types of death.

26cd *dharmādharmanibaddhais tu karmabhiḥ*  
*prāganuṣṭhitaiḥ ||*  
27ab *yathā jīvo na baddhyeta yoginas tad idam śṛṇu |*

Now hear from me how the individual soul of the yogi should not be bound by the *karma* that is accomplished earlier, and that is tied to *dharmā* and *adharmā*.

27cd *bāhyaḥ śarīrajaś caiva mṛtyur dvoividha ucyate ||*  
28 *viśaśastrāgniyogais tu sarpadaṁṣṭrimarujjalaiḥ |*  
*bāhyo mṛtyur iti khyātaḥ śarīraṁ tu nibodha me ||*

Death is said to be twofold, namely external death and death arising from the body.

External death is known to be the one due to contact with poison, a weapon or fire, or by a snake, a tusked animal, the wind, or water [e.g. tornados and floods]. But now here from me about the death caused by the body [namely interior death].

28d *śarīraṁ*: Bhaṭṭarāi

29 *rogajaḥ kālajo vāpi mṛtyur ābhyantaro bhavet |*  
*kālajo jarayā prokto rogajo vyādhisamkṣayāt ||*

Interior death may be death produced from sickness or simply from time. [Death] produced from time is said to be a result of old age, death from sickness is said to be a result of decay through sickness.

30ab *durlabho mṛtyur anyo ’yam yogasamdhānajo*  
*mune |*

[But] the death that is hard to obtain, oh sage, is another death, [namely the one], that is produced by joining in union.

30a *anyonyam*: Bhaṭṭarāi

30cd *yogopāyakṛto yaś ca yaś ca kālakṣayāgataḥ ||*  
31 *tayor bhedavikāre tu śṛṇu vyāsa samāsataḥ |*  
*kālakṣayād bhavaty eko dviṭīyo manasepsitaḥ ||*

Learn here, oh Vyāsa concisely, about the distinction between those two, namely the one that is accomplished by means of union and the one that appears by the decay through time. One is due to the decay through time, [but] the second is desired by the mind.

Initially Sanatkumāra distinguishes between two types of death, namely exterior and interior. Then in 30cd–31 he furthermore argues that interior death can be categorised into death caused as a result of decay of time, and death caused by one’s own desire. Death that is *desired* by the mind is death that is ‘joining in union’: yoga in this verse is once again defined as ‘union’. Now the text continues to describe what technically happens when the body dies as a result of decay.

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32 *yo 'yam āghoṣajāḥ śabdāḥ śrūyate śrotrasaṃdhitāḥ |  
sa pūrvam līyate kūrme tena vahniḥ tyajet prabhāṃ ||*

This [subtle] sound that is produced from invocation [of *om?*] that is heard in between the ears, first of all dissolves into the Kūrma wind; thereby the fire abandons its light.

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Possibly this sound refers to a sound called *a-śabdabrahman*, which is, according to Deussen, attained through yoga: “one attains from the Śabdabrahman (i.e. the syllable Om, in a wider sense, the whole Veda) to *śabdabrahman* which is no longer knowable, but which, according to some, is directly perceivable in the whizzing sound in one’s ears, or in the warmth of the body.”<sup>118</sup> Indeed, in many passages presented so far we have seen that uttering and meditating on the syllable *om* is essential to yoga. I hence suggest that the invocation in verse 32 should be understood as an invocation of *om* (the hearable *śabdabrahman*), and the subtle sound as the *śabdabrahman* that arises from that invocation.

As regards the rest of the verse, I am not sure what happens. The syntax indicates that the sound that is first uttered and then only heard finally dissolves in the Kūrma wind, which causes the fire to abandon the light. Probably when the fire abandons the light, the physical body dies: form and essence are separated. This description seems to be congruent with NS *Nayasūtra* 4.126-129 (see p. 54) that states that only the Kūrma remains after death.

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33 *niṣprabhāḥ sa tato vahniḥ śabdāyogād viyujyate |  
śabdasparsaḥ sa tato rūpayogam vimuñcati ||*

Thereupon, this fire which is free from light, is disjoined from the union with sound. Free from attributes of touch and sound, he unloosens the union with form.

34 *evam agnau praṇaṣṭe tu sarva evānilās tataḥ |  
ekato yogam ṛchchanto marmāṇi vinikṛntate ||*

When the fire has thus been disappeared, then all the winds reaching the union all together cut through the vital organs.<sup>119</sup>

34c *icchanto*: Sanderson/Bhaṭṭarāi

35 *kūrmāro devadattaś ca kṛkaro nāga eva ca  
udānenāśu saṃyujya karṇikāyāṃ viśanti hi*

Having quickly connected the Kūrmāra wind, the Devadatta wind, the Kṛkara wind and the Nāga with

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 359.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. MBh *ūsmā prakupitaḥ kāye tivravāyusamīritaḥ |  
śarīram anuparyeti sarvān prāṇān ruṇaddhi vai ||  
atyarthaṃ balavān ūsmā śarīre parikopitaḥ |  
bbhinatti jīvashānāni tāni marmāṇi viddhi ca ||* MBh 14.17.15–16

‘Urged on by the wind which becomes violent, the heat in the body, becoming excited and reaching every part of the body one after another, restrains all the (movements of the) vital breaths. Know truly that excited all over the body, the heat becomes very strong, and pierces every vital part where life may be said to reside.’ (Translation Gaṅgolī 1981: 27.)

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the Udāna-breath, they enter the pericarp [of the lotus in the centre of the heart].

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So first the subtlest of subtle (the *aśabdabrahman*) dissolves into the Kūrmāra (i.e. the Kūrma wind), and then subsequently the other elements are being disjoined: starting with the subtle elements (namely *sparsā*, ‘touch’ and *śabda*, ‘sound’) ultimately union with form (*rūpayogaṃ*) is released. Why the other subtle elements of *rasa* (taste) and *ghanda* (smell) are not mentioned is not clear.

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36 *tata ūrdhvo bhavec chvāso manojīvavinirgamah |*  
*tato jyotir yad akṣibhyāṃ tat somaṃ viśati drutam ||*

Then the breath, leaving the embodied soul and the mind, goes upwards [and] then the fire of the two eyes, quickly enters the *soma*.

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The breath itself is believed to be immortal; when a person dies the breath thus leaves, but does not die itself.<sup>120</sup> Here, the breath leaves behind the soul. Which breaths the text refers to is not clear.

What is meant by the fire that enters the *soma*? In verse 34 it was stated that the fire had disappeared, so it is unclear why the fire reappears here. From the Veda we know that the gods Agni, Soma and Vāyu together empower life. Indeed, in the next verse the *vāyu* reappears:

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37 *indriyāṇi mano yānti manaḥ prāṇavinirgamam |*  
*teṣu sarveṣu līneṣu prāṇān vāyur nipīdayet ||*

The senses go to the mind (?). The mind departs from the *prāṇa*. When they have all vanished, the *vāyu* compresses together the *prāṇās*.

38 *pīḍyamānās tataḥ sarve te bhavanty ekato ’nilāḥ |*  
*svaṃ svam tyaktvā tataḥ sthānaṃ yac ca karma*  
*yadātmakam||*  
39ab *ekasthā vāyavaḥ sarve pūrayanti dhanañjayaṃ |*

All these airs that are being pressed together become one. Then, having each abandoned their [usual] place and their activity that is their essential nature, assembled together they fill the Dhanañjaya wind.

39cd *śeṣas tatra hi kūrmaro jīvaṃ tyaktvā sa tiṣṭhati ||*

There the remaining Kūrmāra wind, having abandoned the embodied soul, resides.

40 *mano buddhir ahaṃkāraś ceto jīvas tathaiva ca |*  
*niṣkramanti tato dehāt tvaritaṃ vāyuneritāḥ ||*

The mind, the intellect, the ego, the consciousness and the soul, then leave the body swiftly, impelled by the wind.

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<sup>120</sup> See, e.g. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.5.21: ‘The central breath alone, however, death could not capture’ and 1.6.3: ‘Clearly, the immortal is breath . . .’

We saw that the Dhanañjaya-breath guides the embodied soul from one body to the next. In verse 38, I therefore assume that the *karma* that is left behind should be understood in a literal sense of the activity that belongs to each specific wind, and not in the sense of the *karma* that determines the quality of a later rebirth, for here death through decay is described and therefore the mind will be reborn. The winds are assembled in the Dhanañjaya-breath. Now, with all breaths except for the Kūrma assembled in the Dhanañjaya, two breaths remain: the Dhanañjaya and the Kūrma. Before death came, the soul was present in all the winds through its splendour. But now (39cd) the Kūrma wind no longer possesses this splendour. As it seems, (40) the Dhanañjaya impels the mind, the intellect, the ego, the consciousness and the embodied soul to leave the body, ready for re-embodiment elsewhere. Probably the Dhanañjaya leaves the body together with the other breaths.

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41 *prāgupāttas tato 'syānyo dehaḥ sūkṣmo vijāyate |*  
*sa tatra saṁdhito jīvo bhūyo mūḍhaś ca tiṣṭhati ||*

Then acquired earlier [as a result of the accumulation of his *karma*] another subtle body is produced for him. There the soul resides in between [two lives] and is again ignorant.

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In between two lives, the soul becomes ignorant again. This is why, when we are reborn, we cannot remember anything of our past lives. With verse 41 the description of death caused by decay through time is completed. Now Sanatkumāra states that only through yoga one can escape this miserable death that always ends in rebirth.

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42 *evaṁ kālakṛtā hy eṣā sarvabhūtagaṇasthithiḥ |*  
*vinā yogaṁ na jīyeta sūkṣmaṁ māheśvaraṁ padam ||*

In this way, the duration of life of all beings is determined by time. Without yoga one may not conquer the subtle state of Maheśvara.

43 *upaviṣṭaḥ prasupto vā utkrāntyabhyastasaṁyamah |*  
*svecchayā mucyate vyāsa jñātvā taṁ tu maheśvaram ||*

Oh Vyāsa, one who has practiced self-constraint in stepping out (*utkrānti*) either seated or sleeping, having realised that Maheśvara, he is released according to his own will.

44 *kṣurikāṁ paraśuṁ vātha śulam vā dhārayen munih |*  
*tataḥ sarve 'sya līyante vikārāḥ karaṇaiḥ saba ||*

The sage may perform either the razor or the axe or the spear [type of *utkrānti*]. Then all of his transformations (namely the mind, the intellect, the ego and the consciousness, but not the soul) are absorbed [in *prakṛti*], along with the organs.

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45ab *vīkṣate ceśvaram brahma śaḍviṃśaṃ svatanuṣṭhitam* | And one observes the lord, *brahman*, the twenty-sixth element, present in one's own body.

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Unfortunately, the SP has not explained comprehensively what is meant with the various types of *utkrānti*. So far, the above given fragments of the KṣU seem to give most information, though only on the *kṣurikā*-type of *utkrānti*. However, the proposed dates of composition I have encountered vary from 100 BCE to 1100 CE, making it difficult to signify its relevance in relation to the SP. I think the KṣU is more likely written towards the end of that period, for such detailed description of *utkrānti* are generally of a later date. Nonetheless, it is possible that the threefold *utkrānti* in the SP denotes a similar practice as the one described in the KṣU, although I do not have an explanation on how *utkrānti* can be three-fold (182.22cd–23). The purpose of *utkrānti* is to first conquer the various *prāṇas* and then send them away together with the Dhanāñjaya through one of the openings. This practice is performed with the mind, which has resorted to the heart and clung itself to the *ātman*. It is possible that the mind can function as a weapon, just as in the KṣU. If we interpret the mind as a weapon that is capable of cutting the vital organs, then this could also support my reading of PS 5.36: *buddhyā* as the instrument that cuts ‘the net of causes of faults’ (PS 5.35).

Verse 42 indicates that *utkrānti* is a way to escape rebirth that is accomplished according to one's own will. Verse 43 seems to indicate that, as opposed to verse 40—where the mind, the intellect, the ego and the consciousness (*vikāra*) leave the body, ready for re-embodiment—in case of *utkrānti* these manifestations of *prakṛti*, together with the bodily organs, return to *prakṛti*. This is clearly Yoga-inspired soteriology.

Now the text surprisingly returns to describing a ‘regular’ death (that leads to rebirth):

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45cd *manas tīvram jaḍam jantoh prayacchati vipadyataḥ* || It makes the mind of the dying person exceedingly dull (?). Being deluded through  
46ab *sa rujā moham āpanno jñānavastu na vindati* | disease he does not find true knowledge (?).

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Initially this verse seemed rather misplaced to me: we are at the most mystical moment in the text and then suddenly death through decay is discussed again. But if we reverse the order of 45cd and 46ab, then 45cd becomes the result of 46ab. In this case the text makes more sense: ‘Delusion through disease makes the mind of the dying person exceedingly dull. Being deluded through disease he does not find true

knowledge.’ In such a reading, the verse functions to emphasise the importance of *utkrānti*. This makes sense with the next verse:

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46cd *anena karmaṇā vipra sarvarukparivarjitaḥ* ||

Oh sage, [but] he who is deprived of all disease, through his action (namely *utkrānti*),

47 *sukham ārohati brahma harmyaṣṭhatalād iva | padārthaṃ pañca vijñāya duḥkḥāntapariniṣṭitaḥ* ||

he happily rises up to *brahma*, as if from the roof of a palace. Having realised the five categories, he has reached the end of suffering.

47b *harmyaṣṭhaṃ talād*: Bhaṭṭarāi

48 *pañcabhir brahmabhiḥ pūto bhasmanā dīkṣito dvijaḥ | śaṃkaraikamanā yogī jñānam etad avāpnute* ||

Initiated by ashes, purified by the five *brahmas* (i.e. the brahma mantras), the twice-born yogi, whilst concentrating upon Śaṃkara (Śiva) attains this knowledge, namely that this Maheśvara-type of union is undivided [and] the cause for liberation.

49ab *maheśvaram imaṃ yogaṃ niṣkalaṃ muktikāraṇam* |

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Until now, the text seemed to describe a purely yogic process. But from 182.47cd onwards we are quite suddenly confronted with classical Pāśupata terms. At the near end of the entire SP everything is (somewhat artificially) linked to and reserved for the ascetic Pāśupata practice as it is presented in the PS and its *bhāṣya*. In this way the technical treatise concerning yoga is contextualised in the broader narrative of Pāśupata Śaivism: the path of Pāśupata Śaivism is the only path to salvation, and Vyāsa is hence instructed to follow this path. Classical terms such as *duḥkḥānta* (the end of suffering) and the five categories (*padārtaṃ pañca*) come out of nowhere, but instantly make clear that in the end one can only be liberated if one is initiated and adheres to the Pāśupata *vrata*. SP 182.49cd affirms this:

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49cd *yatnād api na vindanti vratam aprāpya śaṃkaram* ||

Despite his efforts, not having obtained the Śaṃkara-observance [i.e. the Pāśupata vow], they not do obtain this [knowledge].

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By now, it is clear that the Śaṃkara vow, that we have also encountered in 181.30 refers to the Pāśupata vow. Verse 49cd states that one can practice the path of yoga as much as possible, but without abiding to the Pāśupata vow, it is impossible to obtain the true knowledge concerning Maheśvara, namely that union

with Maheśvara is the cause for liberation. Vyāsa is instructed to adhere to the *vrata* to become a true Pāśupata and strive for liberation.

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50 *sa tvam vyāsa mahābuddhe caran pāśupataṃ vratam |  
mahādevaparo bhūtvā jñānam etad avāpnuhi ||*

Oh Vyāsa, you who are of great understanding, having become dedicated to the supreme Śiva, observing the Pāśupata vow, you shall obtain this knowledge.

51 *naivam etat paraṃ brahma anye vindanti yoginaḥ |  
mahādevaṃ prapannā ye tān muktvā śivayoginaḥ ||*

No other yogis realise this supreme *brahma* as such, except for those who are Śiva-yogis, resorting to the great god.

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This fragment makes clear that there is only one type of yoga that leads to true liberation. That type of yoga is the Pāśupata yoga, which is reserved for the initiated Pāśupatas, who observe the Pāśupata vow. Here we near the end of *adhyāya* 182. The chapter concludes with asserting once more that the above described path is the path to liberation:

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52 *eṣa mokṣavidhiḥ kṛtsnaḥ sarvapratyayavarjitāḥ |  
niṣkalaḥ kathito vyāsa paro yasmān na vidyate ||*

This entire procedure of *mokṣa*, which is free from all conceptions, has been told completely; oh Vyāsa, there is nothing beyond this [teaching].

53 *evaṃ pāśupatā viprā niṣkalaṃ taṃ maheśvaram  
yogād āviśya mucyante punarjanmavivarjitāḥ*

In this way the Pāśupata *brahmins*, having reached the undivided Maheśvara, through union [with Maheśvara], are released and free from rebirth.

54 *sakalasyāspadaṃ divyaṃ brahmalokāt pare sthitam  
mahādevasya vakṣyāmi tadbhaktā yatra yānti te*

I will speak of the divine abode of Maheśvara (Śivaloka), consisting of parts, which is beyond the Brahmaloaka, where those who are his devotees go.

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Here ends the second to last chapter of the entire SP. The final verse announces the topic of the next, last chapter. Sanatkumāra has explained to Vyāsa that Pāśupata yogis are capable of reaching *mokṣa* through the (preparatory) practice of Pāśupata yoga, and the performing of *utkrānti*, which involves giving up the body voluntarily. The text makes clear that only Pāśupata ascetics who abide to the Pāśupata vow attain *mokṣa*. The lay devotees are on the other hand promised a life in the Śivaloka, which is situated at the top

of the Brahmāṇḍa (Brahma's 'egg', i.e. the universe), but not outside of it. Their prospects are prosperous, but they are still trapped in the realm of *samsāra*.

Although the goal of *utkrānti* is clear, its method is not. I am left with various questions. Let me summarise the method of *utkrānti* as is described in *adhyāya* 182. The text promises (verse 11) that mastery of three-fold *utkrānti* promises the end of suffering through *śivasāyujya* (union with the Śiva). In order to achieve this, (17) the yogi should see the splendour of the *ātman* in the *nāḍīs* and then fasten the mind to the *ātman*. The Dhanañjaya wind that leads all the other winds away and normally determines the quality of the rebirth (19) has three openings. (25) Ultimately the *manas* is released upwards. I think it is assumed that the *ātman* is isolated and hence not reborn but united with the *īśvara*, but the text does not make this clear. Then follows (31-41) a quite clear description of what happens with the body when death arises due to time. (40) All the internal organs, including the soul, are sent away, ready for re-embodiment. After this description it is stated that (43) *utkrānti* allows one to be liberated according to his own will (*svecchayā*). (44) All internal organs dissolve into *prakṛti*, but the *puruṣa* is united with the twenty-sixth element: *īśvara*.

It would have been enlightening if a description had been given of what happens in the body in case of death 'joining in union' as a result of *utkrānti*. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Such description could have explained what exactly happens with the various breaths. Moreover, the three-fold *utkrānti* is not explained completely. Especially verses 22cd–24 are vague. Hopefully the critical edition will bring some clarification, although the description remains very concise. The KṣU has given a possible explanation of these verses, though this explanation is not complete.

Aside from these ambiguities, some things are made very clear by the SP: the practice of *utkrānti* leads to union (yoga) with the *īśvara*. *Utkrānti* involves some kind of mastery of the breaths, although the text is not completely clear about this. As a result of this *utkrānti*, the body is given up. Liberation, or here: union, can only be achieved after the body has been abandoned. The SP thereby follows the ideal of *videhamukti*, which, as we have seen, was the common viewpoint until ca. 1000 CE. That union is only attained after death is indicated by numerous repetition of phrases such as *svatanuṃ tyaktvā* and varieties on this (see 179.47ab; 181.30ab; 182.3, 7, 11, 25). Since this is a Purāṇa, there is no reason to interpret such phrases as something else than their exterior meaning.

Interestingly, the last section of the chapter makes clear that this union can only be achieved by those who abide by the Pāśupata *vrata*. Practicing *utkrānti* would hence be useless not only for a Vaiṣṇava, but also for a non-initiated Pāśupata. It separates the yogis from the lay devotees, who go to Śiva's heaven but do not reach final liberation. The text makes a clear distinction between initiated and non-initiated Pāśupatas. The text is directed to lay Pāśupatas and explains to them what Pāśupata yogis do in order to attain *mokṣa*. The lay people attain something else, namely a life in heaven, which might be more attractive for most people.



The death of the yogi in the *Skandapurāṇa* is initiated by himself: having conquered all the *guṇas*, desirous to be united with his lord, after having cut himself of all worldly affairs, he performs the final cut: *utkrānti*. Again, his death is yogic on two levels: the practices that are required for the practice of *utkrānti* are yogic and death itself is yogic—reaching death is reaching union with Śiva. This final state of yoga is a positive state: not only are the Pāśupatas released from *samsāra*, but they reach the state of Śiva and take on his qualities.

## 5. Conclusion

In his description of the cultural world wherein the SP was written, Bakker states: “It is good to keep in mind that the above is, without any doubt, a much simplified picture of a very complicated historical reality.”<sup>121</sup> This statement is certainly applicable to the above sketched image of yoga and death. I want to emphasise this limitation once more. Ideal and reality should not be confused: the PS and the SP are both describing ideals, not actual events. To what extent practices of self-induced death were actually practiced remains unknown. Despite this limitation, the material presented in this thesis has led to a few observations.

Early practices of yoga (from ca. 500 BCE onwards) were aimed at attaining liberation, which was believed only to be attained after physical death (*videhamukti*). Indeed, as it appears from a vast number of Sanskrit sources, practices of yoga had much more to do with dying than with living. As such, it is not surprising that mystical practices of self-induced yogic death emerged. One of such practices was *utkrānti*, of which we find references as early as the CU.

In this thesis, special interest went out to the death of the Pāśupata yogi. The main questions with which I approached the Pāśupata material were: What is the relation between yoga and death in early Śaivism? Can the death of a Pāśupata ascetic be described as yogic? Is this death self-induced? And finally, how is such a yogic death related to liberation?

Let me begin with the last question. The SP, true to its purāṇic style, is very clear about the necessity to abandon the body: the Pāśupata has to die in order to become united with Śiva. A successful performance of *utkrānti* secures this liberation, though the text does leave us with some questions with regards to its actual method. The PS too seems to advocate (1) *videhamukti* and (2) a self-induced yogic death to achieve this *videhamukti*. The text lacks a literal reference to giving up the body, or performing *utkrānti*, but this can be explained by the obscurity that is inherent to *sūtras*.

The path towards salvation is, as a matter of fact, full of suffering: the Pāśupata suffers from a lack of food, probably a lack of water, he has no family nor possession, and so forth. Of course, the state of mind

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<sup>121</sup> Bakker, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*, 150.

of an advanced Pāśupata would not be as disturbed as a normal human being would be under such circumstances. On the contrary, it is the aim of the Pāśupata to withdraw from earthly desires, for they lead to ignorance. The Pāśupata's state of mind would be, I suspect, comparable to the mind of a Stoic, in the sense that happiness arises not from external objects but from an interior carefulness, or mindfulness (*apramāda*). Nonetheless life, and its numerous repetitions, was considered to be suffering, hence the term *duḥkḥānta*: death that is 'produced by joining in union' (SP 182.30ab) is the promised salvation that is the end of suffering. Pāśupatas are, unlike Stoics, believers: they rely on the grace of Maheśvara, who is the supreme object of salvation. Their goal is to attain the final yoga: *rudra-* or *śivasāyujya*. They thereby attain the state of Śiva and take on his qualities. However, according to the doctrine they do not become one with Śiva. This is congruent with the description of *īśvara* in PYŚ as 'a distinct *puruṣa*' (PYŚ 1.24): the Pāśupata *puruṣa*, even when united, is not the same as *īśvara*, who has never suffered from an entanglement with *prakṛti*—he is after all the cause of it—and as such never had to be released from suffering (*duḥkḥa*).

This central role of Maheśvara distinguishes the salvation of the Pāśupatas from the salvation of Sāṃkhya. The Pāśupatas believe that the Sāṃkhyan salvation (isolation; *kaivalya*) is not true salvation (PABh 5.46:47–48): only Maheśvara brings true salvation.

Then remain the questions whether the death of the Pāśupata is first of all yogic and second of all self-induced. In early yogic practice the stilling of the mind was an auxiliary to attain yoga. In Pāśupata Śaivism this stilling of the mind is found as well and it is presented as an essential condition for attaining yoga with the lord. Aside from this stilling of the mind, the Pāśupata has to perform various other 'yogic' practices before abandoning his body, such as conquering his *prāṇa*. As regards yoga as a practice, the death of the Pāśupata can hence be regarded as a yogic death. Moreover, the physiology, philosophy, and to a certain extent soteriology and cosmology of the Pāśupatas are largely based on Sāṃkhya and Yoga thought. In this sense, the death of the Pāśupata can also be considered 'yogic': conquering the *guṇas*, realising *īśvara*, leaving the physical body, the individual *puruṣa* is released from its bonds with *prakṛti* and united with *īśvara*, who is the twenty-sixth element. The death of a Pāśupata is not any death, it is a self-induced, yogic death.

## 6. Epilogue: Modern ‘Pāśupatas’, Yogis and Death

The apparent relation between yoga and death in early yoga traditions led me to the question to what extent such relation is still extant in contemporary yoga traditions. To this end, I executed fieldwork in India in January–February 2018. The fieldwork consisted of two projects: (1) researching the death of Svami Kṛpalvānanda (Kṛpalu) in Gujarat; (2) interviewing yogis in Rishikesh about yoga and death. In this epilogue I would like to mention a few interesting observations.

Svami Kṛpalu (1913-1981) became a prominent yoga-figure in the 1960–70s with a transnational community of devotees. Kṛpalu proclaimed a unique yoga style which consisted of three core elements: (1) *prāṇotthāna* (the partial awakening of *prāṇa*) through *śaktipāta dikṣā* (initiation); (2) spontaneous *yoga-kriyās*; and (3) the goal of the practice, namely the attainment of immortality or a divine body (*divya deha*).<sup>122</sup> His disciple Amrit Desai adopted Kṛpalu’s style and name and put both at the base of Kripalu Yoga, a modern yoga movement that grew out to be one of the biggest yoga movements in the USA.<sup>123</sup>

In 1956 Lakulīśa “appeared before [Kṛpalu] during meditation and gave a command to construct a new temple and work for the resurgence of Indian culture.”<sup>124</sup> Since then Kṛpalu claimed to be the spiritual heir of Lakulīśa and consequently of the Pāśupatas. In honour of Lakulīśa, he built the ‘Brahmeśvara Yoga’ temple in Kayavarohan where he instructed the entire PS to be inscribed in its basement.

In 1981 Kṛpalu died as a result of cancer. He thereby failed to attain the goal that his practice promised: to attain a divine body and thereby immortality. His disciple Rājarṣi Munī now leads the community of followers in India and is “the present Guru of the spiritual tradition founded by Lord Lakulishji.”<sup>125</sup> In 1983 he founded the ‘Lakulish International Fellowship’s Enlightenment Mission’ Centre in Limbdi, Gujarat, where I visited him on 20 January 2018. Currently, the centre has an ashram, a big temple, a cowshed, a library, the residency of Svami Rājarṣi Munī, and some other facility, covering ca. ten hectares of land.

Rājarṣi Munī has become a true guru himself. Every day at 2.00 pm the Svami gives a *darśana* to his followers. On top of the roof of his residence an extra minor roof of ca. two m<sup>2</sup> is built, where he appears and waves for about five minutes before he retreats in his residence again. A Canadian follower of the Svami had arranged an interview for me with him, which caused a certain amount of excitement on the grounds of the centre: since a few months the Svami had gone into silence so the fact that he wanted to

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<sup>122</sup> Ellen Goldberg, “Swami Kṛpalvānanda: The Man behind Kripalu Yoga,” *Religions of South Asia* 4, no. 1 (2011): 69.

<sup>123</sup> In 2008 their revenue was estimated 23.7 million dollars: *Ibid.*, 68; see also: “Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health,” accessed May 2, 2018, <https://kripalu.org/>.

<sup>124</sup> “Life Mission. Swami Kripalvanand,” accessed June 12, 2018, [http://www.lifemission.org/sl\\_sk.html](http://www.lifemission.org/sl_sk.html).

<sup>125</sup> “Life Mission. Swami Rajarshi Muni,” accessed May 17, 2018, [http://www.lifemission.org/sl\\_rm.html](http://www.lifemission.org/sl_rm.html).

meet was, according to various people, very extraordinary. The meeting was set right after the *darśana*, at 2.15 pm.

I asked the Svami whether he believed Kṛpalu attained his goal: a divine body. The Svami argued that he did not succeed: “My guru said: if I die, understand that I am not liberated.” According Rājarṣi Munī liberation is *jīvanmukti*: a divine body has to be achieved during life. Once dead, a rebirth has to take place. The cycle of rebirth can only be broken by not dying.

When I asked him how this idea of a divine body attained during life could fit into the Pāśupata doctrine, he surprisingly argued that there is no relation between Lakulīśa and the Pāśupatas. “Then why is the *Pāśupatasūtra* inscribed in the mandir in Kayavarohan?” I asked. He replied: “That is by mistake. I have told them to remove the *sūtras* from the temple. Lord Lakulīśa has not given the *sūtras*. Lakulīśa stated that the end of yoga is the divine body. Until then there is no liberation.” He further explained that once one has a divine body, one can choose to continue life on earth, or alternatively live in another realm. Union with god is also possible, though one always remains a separate entity.

Kṛpalu lived in the time of Yogi Bhajan (Kundalini yoga), B.K.S. Iyengar (Iyengar yoga), and so forth. His teaching seems to be based on a combination of various traditions. Probably Kṛpalu attempted to claim authority for his teaching by presenting himself as the heir of Lakulīśa. I think it is unlikely that Kṛpalu instructed to inscribe the PS “by mistake”. It is rather an attempt to express this authority. The connection with the Pāśupatas could be an expression of religious heritage. Claiming authority for one’s tradition by placing it in the lineage of another older tradition is characteristic for Indian religious culture. This is also reflected by the importance of the *guru–śiṣya* (teacher–student) relation and the importance of lineage (*parampara*).

The second project of my fieldwork took place in Rishikesh, where I interviewed the leading yogis of various ashrams about yoga and death. Interestingly, none of the yogis I spoke to believes in *videhamukti*; all of them believe that liberation takes place in this life. None of them had heard of *utkrānti* as a practice of self-induced death, and none of them believed that a yogi could decide to leave life himself, except for one. However, they all believed that advanced yogis could feel their death approaching, and they all told me miraculous stories about how their *gurus* had felt their death approach.

The one yogi that did believe a yogi-master could decide to die according to his wish told me a remarkable story. In his life, three gurus had died in front of his eyes. The yogi told me explicitly that he was not allowed to share the methods with me, but he could tell me what happened. With two of his gurus he had a similar experience: they announced their death, after which they went in meditation and died within a few hours. But the third death was different. “One tantric master did this [meditation leading to death], and then his head at the top was open. What that was, I cannot understand. How it happened that he had an injury. It happened in maximum ten minutes. He sat, and then there was a sound.” The yogi made the sound of cracking. When I asked the yogi if he knew what happened—I

thought of *utkrānti* but did not mention it to him—he said: “I don’t know what happened. I asked one master and this master said that he went forcefully. He chose to go, by force.” Later in the interview I told the yogi about the methods of *utkrānti* and he was sure that this was what his master had done, though he had never heard about *utkrānti* before. And so my fieldtrip ended with one story about yogic suicide. I have the presumption that practices and ideas concerning yogic suicide may still exist, but in traditions far away from the ashrams in Rishikesh, maybe amongst Nāṭh-yogis far up in the mountains, or Śaivites hidden in Vārāṇaṣi. This presumption can only be verified by profound fieldwork, which would be difficult, but very exciting.

The ideal of *videhamukti* came into existence in a time when the life of a yogi was very different from the life of contemporary yoga teachers. It is not unthinkable that contemporary yoga teachers—especially wealthy gurus—experience life as quite worthwhile. If there is no(t much) suffering, there is no need to end suffering either. Possibly the quality of life played a role in formulating the ideal of liberation first as something that happens after life and later as something that happens in life. The yogis I spoke to at least were eager to live, who knows . . . forever.

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## 7. References

### § 7.1 Abbreviations

The acronyms are ordered according to the Roman alphabet.

BhG	<i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>	MuU	<i>Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad</i>
CU	<i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i>	PABh	<i>Pañcārthabhāṣya</i>
GKRT	<i>Gaṇakārikāratnaṭkā</i>	PS	<i>Pāśupatasūtra</i>
KU	<i>Kaṭha Upaniṣad</i>	PYŚ	<i>Pātañjalayogaśāstra</i>
KṣU	<i>Kṣurikā Upaniṣad</i>	SK	<i>Sāṃkhyakārikā</i>
MBh	<i>Mahābhārata</i>	SP	<i>Skandapurāṇa</i>
MU	<i>Maitrāyaṇa Upaniṣad</i>		

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See *Pāśupatasūtra*

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