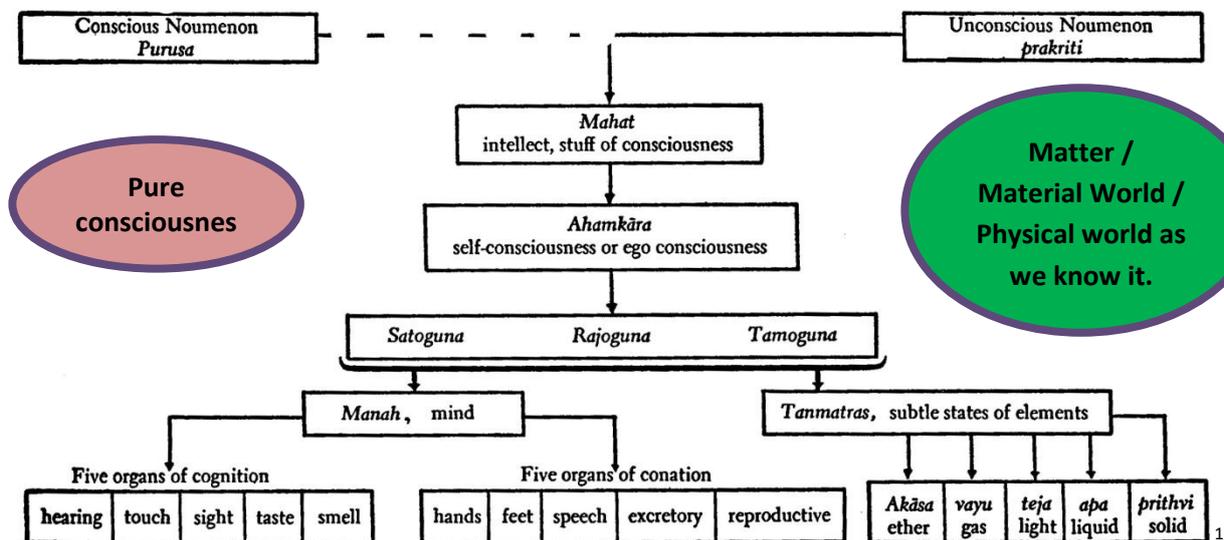


Yoga = Yuj = yoke, tie together, join, unite.

- ★ Yoga is any practice that brings union between the sense of individuality and a sense of universality. Anything that stops one from feeling alone and leads to feeling all one.
- ★ Different practices (which are all called yoga) are utilised by different philosophical schools.
- ★ There are six main philosophical schools, called darsana, within what has evolved to be called Hinduism.
 - Nyaya, Vaisheshika, **Sankhya, Yoga**, Mīmāṃsā, **Vedanta**.

Although Yoga is listed as a separate darsana it is more consistent to recognise that it is a crucible for the ideas expressed in Sankhya and Vedanta. Therefore a rough understanding of the central tenets of these two darsana will enhance our understanding of the practices called yoga.

Sankhya



An epistemological system concerned with knowledge of the universe, and how we know the universe; what is there to be known, how can we know it? Dualistic: the universe consists of two noumenons (inalienable truths, things which exist regardless of human perception). Purusa is the pure consciousness which infuses all matter (Prakriti). In this context 'consciousness' can be equated with the energy that causes all matter to vibrate as postulated by quantum physics.

Matter is understood through the intellect, which exists in the context of the individuating principle (the bit which makes me think I'm me and you think you're you), which translates the three components of matter, into the world as we know it.

All matter is made up of varying quantities of three components: Clarity, Agitation, and Lethargy. The nature of everything is dependent on the ratio of these qualities. For example a solid object like a table has more lethargy than agitation, whereas fire has more agitation than lethargy.

The practices of yoga increase clarity to stop identification with matter and facilitate union with consciousness.

¹ Diagram adapted from The Textbook of Yoga Psychology; a definitive translation and interpretation of the yoga sutras of Patanjali, Ramamurti S.Mishra, M.D, Baba Bhagvandas Publication Trust, 2010.

Not one cohesive system of thought.

Vedanta

Limited scholarly agreement that collectively Vedanta shares a view that the universe as we see it is in a constant state of flux, perpetual motion and change.

Only the presiding energy is consistent. This is called Brahman or Atman.

Advaita Vedanta

Literally = Not Two. A-Dvaita.

Brahman and Atman are synonymous. Atman is the part of Brahman that resides in matter. They are the same in essence.

tat tvam asi (that you are)

Oldest form of Vedanta most clearly expounded in the Mukhya Upanishads (12 most studied). Clearest statements of advaita Vedanta are found in the [Aitareya](#), [Mandukya](#), [Chandogya](#), and [Brihadaranyaka Upanishads](#).

Through reflection, study of the sacred texts for vidya (knowledge) and of the way the mind works (svadyaya) we conclude that our true nature is divine.

Sat-cit-ananda (truth-consciousness-bliss)

Emphasis is placed on the realisation that we are Brahman (energy and divinity) as this realisation brings moksha (liberation from suffering)

Builds on and borrows from Sankhya in its description of the formation of the universe.

In some of the Upanishads Purusa is used as a synonym with Brahman or Atman.

The range of ideas about existence and the universe which arose following the Vedas (Four collections of poems, known to have been composed more than 5000 years ago). Vedanta takes form in the texts called the Upanishads.