

Yogic Mindfulness: Hariharānanda Āraṇya's Quasi-Buddhistic Interpretation of *Smṛti* in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* I.20

Ayon Maharaj

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Abstract This paper examines Swami Hariharānanda Āraṇya's unique interpretation of *smṛti* as “mindfulness” (*samanaskatā*) in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* I.20. Focusing on his extended commentary on *Yogasūtra* I.20 in his Bengali *magnum opus*, the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* (1911), I argue that his interpretation of *smṛti* is quasi-Buddhistic. On the one hand, Hariharānanda's conception of *smṛti* as mindfulness resonates strongly with some of the views on *smṛti* advanced in classic Buddhist texts such as the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and Buddaghośa's *Papañcasūdanī*. On the other hand, he also builds into his complex account of the practice of *smṛti* certain fundamental doctrines of Sāṃkhyayoga—such as mindfulness of the Lord (“*īśvara*”) and mental identification with the *Puruṣa*, the transcendental “Self” that is wholly independent of nature—which are incompatible with Buddhist metaphysics. I will then bring Hariharānanda's quasi-Buddhistic interpretation of *smṛti* of *Yogasūtra* I.20 into dialogue with some of the interpretations of *smṛti* advanced by traditional commentators. Whereas many traditional commentators such as Vācaspati Miśra and Vijñānabhikṣu straightforwardly identify *smṛti* of I.20 with “*dhyāna*” (“concentration”)—the seventh limb of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* outlined in *Yogasūtra* II.28–III.7—Hariharānanda argues that *smṛti* is the *mental precondition* for the establishment of *dhyāna* of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.

Keywords Buddhist *sati* · Hariharānanda Āraṇya · Mindfulness · Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* · *Smṛti*

A. Maharaj (✉)
Departments of Philosophy and English, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University,
P.O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah, West Bengal 711202, India
e-mail: ayon@berkeley.edu

In sūtra 20 of “*Samādhipāda*,” the first book of *Yogasūtra* (hereafter YS), Patañjali prescribes five practices for Yogis intent on achieving “*asampraññātasamādhi*,” the highest state of concentration in which all mental fluctuations cease: “faith, energy, *smṛti*, concentration, and right knowledge” (*śraddhā-vīrya-smṛti-samādhi-praṇṇā*) (YPP, p. 50).¹ The term denoting the third practice, *smṛti*, derives from $\sqrt{\text{smṛ}}$ (“to recollect”), so it might be tempting to follow many recent translators in rendering *smṛti* as “recollection” or “memory.”² However, in the Indian philosophical context, the word *smṛti* sometimes carries connotations and semantic nuances quite different from recollection, such as mindfulness, self-awareness, and vigilance.³ In the specific context of YS I.20, the meaning of “*smṛti*” has proven especially difficult to determine—which is why I leave the term untranslated.

Indeed, if *smṛti* does mean recollection in I.20, then it is far from clear what the Yogi is advised to recollect. Unfortunately, Vyāsa, to whom the first commentary on YS is traditionally attributed, refrains from glossing the word “*smṛti*” in I.20 (YPP, p. 49). In part because of Vyāsa’s silence on this issue, subsequent commentators proposed a variety of conflicting interpretations of *smṛti* in YS I.20, including meditation, recollection of the scriptures, and (more recently) mindfulness. It is fair to say, however, that the majority of traditional commentators on YS—including Vācaspati Miśra, Vijñānabhikṣu, Rāmānanda Sarasvatī, and Nāgōjī Bhaṭṭa—identified *smṛti* in I.20 with “*dhyāna*” (“unbroken meditation”), the seventh “limb” of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* (“eight-limbed Yoga”), introduced later in YS II.28–III.7.⁴

In a striking departure from traditional commentators, Swami Hariharānanda Āraṇya (1869–1947), a Bengali Sannyāsin and practitioner-scholar of Sāṃkhyayoga, interpreted *smṛti* in YS I.20 not as “*dhyāna*” but as “*sadā samanaskatā*” (“continuous mindfulness or watchfulness”) and explicitly credited the Buddha and his followers with having stressed and popularized the notion of *smṛti* as mindfulness. Hariharānanda, now widely regarded as one of the most important modern interpreters of Sāṃkhyayoga, wrote a number of works in Bengali and Sanskrit not only on Sāṃkhyā and Yoga but also on traditional Indian scriptures such as the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad Gītā* and on the philosophies of Vedānta and Buddhism. In fact, he wrote no fewer than three book-length commentaries on YS at different points in his life: the early work, *Yogakārikā* (Hariharānanda Āraṇya

¹ All references to Patañjali’s *Yogasūtra* and Vyāsa’s Sanskrit commentary on the *Yogasūtra* are included as parenthetical citations in the body of the text. Parenthetical citations refer to the page number of Hariharānanda’s *Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali with Bhāsvatī* (YPP). References to Hariharānanda’s *Pātañjaljogdarśan* (PJD), his Bengali commentary on the *Yogasūtra*, are also included as parenthetical citations in the body of the text, first citing the page number of PJD and then the page number of P.N. Mukherji’s English translation in YPP. Throughout this essay, all translations of passages from Bengali and Sanskrit texts are my own, though I often consult the cited translations. It should be noted that Mukherji’s translation of PJD is often unreliable, as it omits many phrases and even whole sentences from the original Bengali text.

² See, for instance, YPP (1963/2000, p. 50) (“repeated recollection”), Taimni (1961/2007, p. 48) (“memory”), Yardi (1979/1996, p. 130) (“memory”), Vivekananda (1896/2006, p. 137) (“memory”).

³ Gyatso (1992, pp. 1–19), Cox (1992), Wayman (1992), and Larson (1993) offer very thorough discussions of the wide range of meanings of *smṛti* in Buddhist philosophical literature.

⁴ Section 3 of this essay will discuss in more detail the traditional interpretation of *smṛti* of YS I.20 as “*dhyāna*.”

1892; written in Sanskrit verse, with a Sanskrit gloss and a Bengali autocommentary); his *magnum opus*, *Pātañjaljogdarśan* (PJD. Hariharānanda Āraṇya 1911; written in Bengali); and *Bhāsvatī* (1934; written in Sanskrit).

Unfortunately, Hariharānanda's sophisticated and often startlingly original interpretive commentaries on YS have not received the sustained scholarly attention they deserve. For instance, while a number of recent commentators on YS—including Gerald James Larson and Michele Marie Desmarais—have taken Hariharānanda's lead in interpreting *smṛti* as “mindfulness,” no scholar in any language has discussed in detail Hariharānanda's groundbreaking interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20, which played such an important role in inaugurating this reading of *smṛti* as mindfulness in the first place.⁵

This paper seeks to address this long-standing lacuna in scholarship on YS by examining Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20. Since Hariharānanda explicitly appeals to the Buddhist concept of *smṛti* (Pāli, “*sati*”) in his discussion of *smṛti* in I.20, I will first discuss briefly in Sect. 1 some key aspects of his complex stance toward Buddhist philosophy. At various points in his work, Hariharānanda expressed great reverence for the Buddha and his teachings and also argued for the intimate relationship—both historical and philosophical—between Sāṃkhyayoga and Buddhism. On the basis of his remarks on Buddhism, I will outline briefly Hariharānanda's general account of the doctrinal similarities and differences between Sāṃkhyayoga and Buddhism.

This background will set the stage for Sect. 2, which examines in detail Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20. I will focus on Hariharānanda's extended discussion of *smṛti* in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, but I will also refer occasionally to his briefer discussions of *smṛti* in the *Yogakārikā* and the *Bhāsvatī* as well as in two essays written in Bengali, “Meditation on the *Ātman* and Restraint of Inner Speech” (“*Ātmadhyān o Nirbākyatā*”) (1930) and “Watchfulness or the Practice of *Samprajanya*” (“*Samanskatā bā Samprajanya-Sādhan*”) (1935). Since Hariharānanda explicitly links his interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20 to the Buddhist concept of *smṛti*, I will attempt to identify both affinities and divergences between Hariharānanda's views on *smṛti* and classical Buddhist views on *smṛti/sati*, as found especially in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* from the Pāli *Tiṭṭhaka*, Buddhaghōṣa's Pāli commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* in *Papañcasūdanī* (c. 400), and Śāntideva's Sanskrit *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (c. 700). I will argue that Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20 is “quasi-Buddhistic”: while his conception of *smṛti* as mindfulness comes very close to the Buddhist view of *smṛti*, he also builds into his complex account of the practice of *smṛti* certain fundamental doctrines of Yoga philosophy—such as mindfulness of God (“*īśvara*”) and mental identification with the *Puruṣa*, the transcendental “Self” that is wholly independent of nature—which are incompatible with Buddhist metaphysics.

In Sect. 3, I will bring Hariharānanda's quasi-Buddhistic interpretation of *smṛti* of I.20 into dialogue with some of the interpretations of *smṛti* advanced by traditional commentators on YS. I will focus on the interpretive problem of how to explain the relationship between the practice of *smṛti* in YS I.20 and the

⁵ For translations of *smṛti* in YS I.20 as “mindfulness,” see, for instance, Larson (2008, p. 95) and Desmarais (2008, p. 129).

aṣṭāṅgayoga outlined in YS II.28–III.7. Whereas many traditional commentators straightforwardly identify *smṛti* of I.20 with *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, Hariharānanda argues that *smṛti*—understood as mindfulness—is the mental *precondition* for the establishment of *dhyāna* of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. Moreover, Hariharānanda’s syncretic philosophical outlook and thorough knowledge of Buddhist texts enabled him to discern important similarities between the practice of *smṛti* in YS and the Buddhist practice of *smṛti* that were overlooked or suppressed by traditional commentators.

Hariharānanda’s Views on the Relation Between Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga

Hariharānanda studied thoroughly not only the Buddhist *Tiṭṭaka* but also a variety of later Buddhist philosophical texts. He published two translations of Buddhist works: a Sanskrit translation of the Pāli *Dhammapada* (Hariharānanda Āraṇya 1905) and a Bengali translation of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Hariharānanda Āraṇya 1918). He was able to read Pāli in a variety of scripts, including Burmese and Sinhalese.⁶ In this section, I will draw on five of his essays concerning Buddhism and its relation to Sāṃkhyayoga (all of which were written in Bengali, except for his English-language introduction to his translation of *Dhammapada*): his introduction to *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, his introductions to his translations of *Dhammapada* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and his two essays, “The Doctrine of No-Self and the Doctrine of Self” (“*Nairātmabād o ātmabād*”) and “The Foundation of Buddhist Religion” (“*Bauddha dharmer bhittī*”), both of which are included in his translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

Hariharānanda repeatedly claims that the ancient Sāṃkhya philosophy—first expounded by Kapila—preceded the advent of Buddhism.⁷ He bases this historical claim on two assumptions. First, he points to the near consensus among scholars that Sāṃkhya is the oldest of all the known Indian philosophical systems.⁸ Second, Hariharānanda points out that in Aśvaghōṣa’s *Buddhacarita*, a classic biography of the Buddha, Āḷaḍa Kālāma, one of the Buddha’s gurus, is identified as a follower of Sāṃkhya.⁹ It should also be noted that in the *Ariyapariyesanasutta* from the *Majjhima Nikāya* of the *Tiṭṭaka*—a *sutta* containing what is traditionally considered to be one of the earliest autobiographical accounts of the Buddha’s spiritual practices undertaken prior to his enlightenment—it is suggested that the ascetic Āḷaḍa Kālāma taught to the Buddha five spiritual practices which correspond exactly to the five practices mentioned in YS I.20: “*saddhā*,” “*viriyam*,” “*sati*,”

⁶ See pp. i-ii of the publisher’s Preface (“Prakāśaker Nibedan”) to Hariharānanda (1918/1965).

⁷ For instance, Hariharānanda (1918/1965) claims, “The great sage Kapila and the doctrines of Sāṃkhyayoga were much older than the Buddha” (p. 185; my translation). As Larson (1989) points out, some older Western scholars including Jacobi and Garbe argue similarly that “Sāṃkhya and Yoga are archaic, non-brahmanical systems that deeply influenced, and possibly even occasioned, the rise of Buddhism...” (p. 129).

⁸ See Hariharānanda (1918/1965, p. 185). More recently, Larson and Bhattacharya (1987) have claimed that Sāṃkhya philosophy was “an older sibling of the first philosophical efforts in South Asia (including Jain, Buddhist, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā, and Yoga traditions)” (p. 43).

⁹ Hariharānanda (1918/1965, p. 185).

“*samādhi*, “*paññā*.”¹⁰ It is likely that Hariharānanda had read this *sutta* from the *Majjhima Nikāya*, since he makes repeated references to Ālāḍa Kālāma in his discussions of the Buddha’s life and teachings.¹¹

Hariharānanda further speculates that even YS was likely composed before the spread of Buddhism in India.¹² He provides two main reasons for this claim. First, he points out that YS “does not contain any references to, or refutations of, other philosophical schools,” which suggests that YS preceded other Indian philosophical schools (besides, of course, Sāṃkhya) (PJD, p 11).¹³ Second, although he admits that certain passages from Vyāsa’s commentary on YS could easily be read as an attempt to refute certain Buddhist doctrines—such as Vyāsa’s commentary on YS IV.16, which challenges the doctrine of momentariness (*kṣaṇikavāda*)—Hariharānanda seconds the commentator Bhojarāja’s suggestion that these apparent refutations of Buddhist doctrines “likely belong to Vyāsa’s commentary alone,” not to YS (PJD, p. 11). Based on these assumptions, Hariharānanda concludes that “it can be inferred that Patañjali’s *Yogasūtra* was composed before Buddhist philosophy became widespread.”¹⁴ It is worth noting the tentativeness and qualified nature of Hariharānanda’s claim. He suggests that it is plausible to assume, for the reasons just stated, that YS was not influenced by Buddhist thought, *even if* YS was composed after the time of the Buddha himself.

Interestingly, Hariharānanda often stresses numerous philosophical affinities between Sāṃkhyayoga and Buddhism, in spite of his conviction that neither Sāṃkhya nor Yoga philosophy was influenced in any way by Buddhist philosophy. In fact, since he believes that at least one of the Buddha’s gurus was a Sāṃkhyan, Hariharānanda suggests that the striking philosophical affinities between Sāṃkhyayoga and Buddhism reflect the influence of Sāṃkhya philosophy on Buddhism, and not vice-versa. He goes so far as to argue that “there is no doubt that the foundation of Buddhism was based on the ancient Sāṃkhyayoga doctrine.”¹⁵ While it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine in detail his various arguments in support of this rather controversial claim, I will highlight briefly those aspects of his argument that bear directly on his interpretation of YS I.20.

¹⁰ In the *Ariyapariyesanasutta*, the Buddha declares: “Not only does Ālāḍa have faith [*saddhā*], but I, too, have faith. Not only does Ālāḍa have energy [*viriyam*], but I, too, have energy. Not only does Ālāḍa have mindfulness [*satī*], but I, too, have mindfulness. Not only does Ālāḍa have concentration [*samādhi*], but I, too, have concentration. Not only does Ālāḍa have right knowledge [*paññā*], but I, too, have right knowledge” (Trenckner, ed. 1888, p. 164; my translation).

¹¹ It is somewhat surprising that Hariharānanda, as far as I am aware, does not explicitly mention this remarkably direct link between the practices taught to the Buddha in the *Ariyapariyesanasutta* and the practices mentioned in YS I.20.

¹² Hariharānanda’s view on this matter is rejected by the majority of recent scholars. As I will discuss at the end of Sect. 3, most scholars agree with Larson (1989, p. 133) that “the *Yogasūtra* is heavily dependent on Buddhism.” At the end of this paper, however, I will argue that Hariharānanda’s general interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness is separable from his dubious historical claim that YS was not influenced by Buddhism.

¹³ “*tāhāte anya kono darśaner mater ullekh bā khaṇḍan nai.*”

¹⁴ “*ata eb buddhamat pracārita hoybārow pārbe pātāñjal jogdarśan racita tāhā anumita hoyte pāre.*”

¹⁵ “*ata eb prācīn sāmkyajogger ūpar je buddhadharmer bhitti sthāpita tadbiṣaye samśay nai*” (Hariharānanda 1918/1965, p. 184).

As I have already mentioned, Hariharānanda claims that the Buddha's guru, Ālāḍa Kālāma, was a Sāṃkhyan. He also claims that after the Buddha learned and practiced the teachings of Sāṃkhya under Ālāḍa Kālāma, the Buddha proceeded to learn the corresponding practice of Yoga from his next guru, Rudraka. Extrapolating presumably from vague hints about the Buddha's practice under Rudraka in the *Tipiṭaka*, Hariharānanda claims: "After being taught by Rudraka, the Buddha practiced *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, etc. in order to achieve *samādhi* [i.e. the 'eight-limbed Yoga' outlined in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*]. Therefore, Rudraka was an adept in Yoga."¹⁶ Hariharānanda goes on to point out that while the Buddha explicitly criticized the schools of the Ājīvikas, the Jains, and the Cārvākas, the "schools of Ālāḍa Kālāma and of Rudraka were never criticized by the Buddha."¹⁷ He concludes that "it is necessary to admit that the Buddha was sympathetic to the schools of Ālāḍa Kālāma and Rudraka."¹⁸

Apart from these speculative historical claims about the influence of Sāṃkhyayoga on Buddhism, Hariharānanda identifies numerous affinities in doctrine and practice between Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga. In his English-language introduction to the *Dhammapada*, he claims that the "means for the attainment of Nirvana are the same in both" Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga.¹⁹ Hariharānanda specifically points out that the spiritual practices described in *Dhammapada* X.16 and those described in YS I.20 are remarkably similar:

In Dharmapada, Ch. X. 16 we find Shraddha (love and admiration for the path), Sheela (virtuousness), Veerya (incessant effort), Smriti (constant remembrance), Samadhi (state of meditation in which the object meditated upon is only apprehended, and when all other apprehensions are absent), and Dharma-pravinischaya (wisdom about the higher Dharma) are spoken of as the means by which Nirvana can be attained. Patanjali also says the same thing. In Pada I, Aphorism xx of his book, Shraddha, Veerya, Smriti, Samadhi and Prajna are spoken of as the means....Hence it must be clear that since the path is the same, the goal must be the same.²⁰

For Hariharānanda, the practice of *smṛti* in YS I.20 is closely akin to the Buddhist practice of *smṛti/sati* mentioned in *Dhammapada* X.16. As many scholars of Buddhism have noted, when Buddhist texts such as the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and the *Dhammapada* mention *smṛti* in the context of spiritual practice, *smṛti* almost invariably means mindfulness rather than recollection.²¹ Indeed, it is now widely acknowledged that the early Buddhists were responsible for popularizing the

¹⁶ "arāḍer nikaṭ sāmkhya śikṣā kariyā 'biśeṣ' śikṣār janya siddhārtha rudraker nikaṭ jaṅgyā bahukāl śikṣā karen. śikṣā śeṣ kariyā āsan prāṇāyām prabhṛti samādhisādhan karen." (Hariharānanda 1918/1965, p. 185).

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁸ "ata eb oy dui sampradāy buddher abalambya o anukūl chila tāhā abaśya svikārjya" (Hariharānanda 1918/1965, p. 186).

¹⁹ Hariharānanda (1905/1988, p. x).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See, for instance, Anālayo (2003, pp. 46–66), Griffiths (1992, p. 111), and Conze (1962, pp. 51–52).

interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness and for making the practice of mindfulness central to spiritual practice.²² If *smṛti* means mindfulness in the context of the *Dhammapada*, why does Hariharānanda gloss *smṛti* in English as “constant remembrance”? As we will see in the next section, he conceives *smṛti* as “remembrance” not in the sense of recollection of something in the past but in the sense of present mindfulness of self and constant vigilance—what he calls, in Sanskrit, “*sadā samanskatā*” (“constant mindfulness”).²³

Hariharānanda’s claims about the affinities between YS and *Dhammapada* have to be understood in the context of Hariharānanda’s historical claims about the roots of Buddhist philosophy in the ancient doctrine of Sāṃkhyayoga. As far as I am aware, Hariharānanda nowhere takes a stand on the question of whether *Dhammapada* or YS was composed first. From Hariharānanda’s perspective, however, it is unnecessary to resolve this historical question, since he believes that there are a variety of independent reasons for believing that Sāṃkhyayoga directly influenced Buddhism—one of which, as we have seen, is that (according to Hariharānanda) two of the Buddha’s gurus, Āḷāḍa Kālāma and Rudraka, were early practitioners of Sāṃkhya and Yoga respectively.

According to Hariharānanda, not only the “path” but also the “goal” of Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga are one and the same. As he puts it, “[t]he names Nirvana, Vimoksha, Kaivalya, Shanti, Mukti...are indiscriminately used by both the Ārshas (*i.e.*, followers of the Rishis) and the Buddhists.”²⁴ Buddhist *Nirvāṇa*, Hariharānanda argues, is not a state of “total annihilation” but one of “the greatest bliss,” a phrase he borrows from *Dhammapada* XV.6–7.²⁵ He then goes on to provide a precise definition of Buddhist *Nirvāṇa* in the technical terminology of Sāṃkhyayoga: “Nirvana is the last stage of Samadhi in which the Chittam, that portion of the mind which knows, wills about, and retains the impressions of non-self objects: [*sic*] (Vedana, Vijnana etc. of the Buddhists) being without the least activity[,] returns to its inconceivable potential state, while the self-conscious principle in us seems unclouded by non-self apprehensions.”²⁶ In other words, Hariharānanda identifies Buddhist *Nirvāṇa* with *asamprajñātasamādhi*, the highest state of spiritual realization in the system of Sāṃkhyayoga.

It will be important to keep in mind in the next section that when Hariharānanda appeals to the Buddhist doctrines of *smṛti* and *samprajanya* in his explication of *smṛti* in YS I.20, he does not mean to imply any kind of Buddhist influence on YS. Rather, he works from the assumption that the doctrines of Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga are so intimately related both historically and doctrinally that their respective philosophical doctrines and practices mutually illuminate one another.

²² As Conze (1962) puts it, “in Buddhism alone mindfulness occupies a central position....Mindfulness is not only the seventh of the steps of the holy eightfold path, the third of the five virtues, and the first of the seven limbs of enlightenment. On occasions it is almost equated with Buddhism itself” (p. 51). See also Anālayo (2003), esp. pp. 266–277.

²³ See Hariharānanda (1892/1991, p. 28) and YPP, p. 442.

²⁴ Hariharānanda (1905/1988, p. ix).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. x.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

As he puts it, Buddhism and Vedic philosophies such as Sāṃkhyayoga “are the branches of the same tree, and though after the lapse of ages they look like different trees, yet the same roots nourish them both.”²⁷

Despite the various affinities in doctrine and practice between Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga, Hariharānanda does emphasize one basic difference in their respective metaphysical principles. He points out that while Sāṃkhyayoga accepts the reality of a transcendental Self called “*Puruṣa*,” the Buddhists uphold the doctrine of “*anattā*” (Sanskrit, “*anātmā*”), which denies the reality of an enduring self of any sort.²⁸ As we will see, certain aspects of Hariharānanda’s account of the practice of *smṛti* presuppose distinctive concepts of Yoga philosophy—such as the transcendental *Puruṣa* and *īśvara* (“the Lord”)—which find no place in classical Buddhist philosophy.

Hariharānanda’s Interpretation of *Smṛti* in YS I.20

Hariharānanda’s earliest interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20 is contained in verse I.53 of the *Yogakārikā*: “I am practicing *smaraṇa* of the desired object of meditation, and I will always continue to practice *smaraṇa* of it’—this attitude of continual mindfulness, which is established through intense effort and ardor, is called *smṛti*” (*varttā ahaṃ smariṣyamśca smarāṇi dhyeyamityapi | pratitiṣṭhet smṛtirviryāt sadā yā samanaskatā*).²⁹ Although the first line of the Sanskrit verse is somewhat ambiguous,³⁰ Hariharānanda clarifies its meaning in his Bengali autocommentary (*byākhyā*), where he suggests that *smṛti* is a state of “continual mindfulness” (*sadā samanaskatā*) involving two subtly different mental attitudes: a first-order mindfulness of the fact that “I am always aware of the object of meditation” and a second-order resolve “always to remain mindful of the object of meditation.”³¹ It is worth noting that Hariharānanda clearly conceives *smṛti* as awareness or mindfulness—what he calls “*samanaskatā*”—rather than as memory. As we have seen in Sect. 1, the interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness was pioneered and popularized by the Buddhists; interestingly, however, Hariharānanda makes no explicit reference to Buddhism in the *Yogakārikā*. Moreover, he does not seem to privilege the practice of *smṛti* in any way vis-à-vis the other practices mentioned in YS I.20 or elsewhere in YS.

Almost two decades later, Hariharānanda devotes a disproportionately long section of the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* to a detailed explication of the practice of *smṛti* in YS I.20. In a notable departure from the *Yogakārikā*, he begins his discussion of

²⁷ Ibid., p. xiv.

²⁸ Hariharānanda (1918/1965, p. 155).

²⁹ Hariharānanda (1892/1991, p. 28). For an English translation of Hariharānanda’s *Jogakārikā*, see Hariharānanda (2008).

³⁰ The ambiguity stems from the fact that the two phrases in the first line of the Sanskrit verse seem quite similar in meaning and the main verbs of both phrases—“*varttai*” and “*smarāṇi*”—are in the imperative (*loṭ*) tense.

³¹ “*sadā abhiṣṭa dhyeya biṣoy smaraṇ karitechī ebong tāhā smaraṇ karite thākiba*” (Hariharānanda 1892/1991, p. 28).

smṛti by privileging *smṛti-sādhana* over the other practices in YS I.20, such as *śraddhā* and *vīrya*: *smṛti*, he declares, is “the paramount spiritual practice” (*pradhān sādhan*) (PJD, p. 68; YPP, p. 50). He then goes on to define *smṛti-sādhan* in terms reminiscent of his definition of *smṛti* in the earlier *Yogakārikā*:

Smṛti-sādhan consists in persisting, again and again, in mindful awareness of the already experienced object of meditation as well as in persisting in the mindful awareness of the resolve, ‘I have been mindful of the object of meditation, and I will continue to be mindful of it.’ When the practice of *smṛti* is perfected, the state of *smṛti* proper is established. (PJD, p. 68)

[*anubhūta dhyeyabhāber punaḥ punaḥ jathābath anubhab karite thākā ebang tāha je anubhab karitechi o kariba tāhāo anubhab karite thākār nām smṛtisādhan. Smṛti sādhitā hoyle smṛtyupasthān hoy.*]. (YPP, p. 50)

Here, as in *Yogakārikā* I.53, Hariharānanda claims that the practice of *smṛti* involves first- and second-order forms of mindful awareness: my first-order awareness of a given object of meditation and my second-order awareness both of my first-order awareness itself and of my resolve to continue to be aware of the object of meditation at all times. Recall, however, that in *Yogakārikā* I.53, Hariharānanda characterizes *smṛti* as the cultivation of “*smaraṇa*” of the desired object of meditation. Describing *smṛti* as “*smaraṇa*” is not entirely helpful, since—as we have seen—*smaraṇa* is an ambiguous term that can mean recollection in certain contexts and mindfulness or awareness in other contexts. In *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, Hariharānanda resolves this ambiguity in *Yogakārikā* I.53 by using the familiar Bengali verb “*anubhab karā*,” which derives from the Sanskrit *anu* + *√bhū*, “to experience or to be aware.” His choice of the unambiguous word “*anubhab*” makes clear that *smṛti* should be understood as mindful awareness rather than as recollection.

Moreover, Hariharānanda now acknowledges deep affinities between his conception of *smṛti* in YS I.20 and the Buddhist conception of *sati* as mindfulness. In fact, he recasts his earlier *Yogakārikā* account of *smṛti* in explicitly Buddhist terms:

For the purposes of developing and preserving *smṛti*, *samprajanya* is necessary. When, in the process of practicing *samprajanya*, watchfulness [*satarkatā*] becomes effortless, then *smṛti* becomes firmly established. In my definition of *smṛti* in the *Yogakārikā*—“*varttā ahaṃ smariṣyaṃśca smarāṇi dhyeyamityapi*”—it is to be understood that:

“*varttā ahaṃ smariṣyan*” = *samprajanya*; and “*smarāṇi dhyeyam*” = *smṛti*.

The paramount importance of *smṛti* has also been appreciated in the Buddhist scriptures. These scriptures also point out that without *smṛti* and *samprajanya* (which has affinities with the concept of *samprajñāna* of the Yoga scriptures), the mind cannot be arrested at will. The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* defines *samprajanya* as follows:

“*etadeva samāsenā samprajanya lakṣaṇam
yatkāyacittāvasthāyāḥ pratyavekṣā muhurmuḥ.*”

[This, in brief, is the definition of *samprajanya*: constant watchful observation of the states of the body and mind.]

That is, *samprajanya* denotes constant watchful observation of the body and mind in whatever states they are in. By this means, forgetfulness of Self [*ātmabismṛti*] is destroyed, the slightest distractions of the mind are noticed, and the power to stop these distractions is gained. One is thereby able to concentrate on the *tattvas* [constituent principles], especially those pertaining to the Self.

(PJD, pp. 69–70; YPP, p. 52)³²

The term “*samprajanya*,” which Hariharānanda invokes repeatedly in this passage, is not found anywhere in Sāṃkhya or Yoga texts. In fact, the Sanskrit word “*samprajanya*” derives from the Pāli word “*sampajanna*” or “*sampajāna*,” which—as we will see—often occurs in the Buddha’s teachings on mindfulness in the *Tiṭṭhaka*. The Pāli “*sampajāna*” derives from the Sanskrit *√jñā*, “to know,” and the prefix “*saṃ*” (“together”) serves as an intensifier. Hence, for the Buddhists, “*sampajāna*”—or the Sanskrit equivalent, “*samprajanya*”—is a special kind of knowledge or awareness associated with the practice of mindfulness. Hariharānanda mobilizes this Buddhist notion of *samprajanya* as a framework for reinterpreting his own earlier account of the two basic aspects of *smṛti* in the first line of *Yogakārikā* I.53. As he puts it, when “watchfulness [*satarkatā*] becomes effortless” through the assiduous practice of *samprajanya*, *smṛti* “becomes firmly established.” *Samprajanya*, he suggests, is the *active effort* to remain mindfully aware of the object of meditation, while *smṛti*—which is achieved through the intensive practice of *samprajanya*—is the *effortless* state of being continually mindful of the object of meditation.

Tellingly, Hariharānanda goes on to point out that “the paramount importance of *smṛti*” has been emphasized especially in the “Buddhist scriptures.” He refers specifically to the definition of *samprajanya* in verse V.72 of Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, a classic Mahāyāna Buddhist text: *samprajanya* is “constant watchful observation” of the states of the body and mind. In light of his approving reference to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the fact that he translated the entire text into Bengali, one might expect Hariharānanda’s own understanding of the relationship between *smṛti* and *samprajanya* to derive from the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. However,

³² “*smṛti-rakṣār janya samprajanyer ābaśyak. samprajanya sādhan karite karite jakhan satarkatā sahaḥ hoy takhanī smṛti upasthit thāke. ‘Jogakārikā’stha smṛtilakṣaṇe ‘bartā ahaṃ smarīṣyaṃśca smarāṇi dhveyamityapi’ ihār madhye—*

‘bartā ahaṃ smarīṣyan’ = samprajanya; ebong ‘smarāṇi dhveyam’ = smṛti.

Bauddha śāstreyo ey smṛtir prādhānya grhīta hoyyāche. tāhārō balen je, smṛti o samprajanya (jogaśāstrer samprajñāner sahī sādṛśya ache)—byātit citter jñānpūrbak rodh hoy nā. samprajanyer lakṣan eyrūp ukta hoyyāche:

‘etadeva samāsenā samprajanya lakṣaṇam yatkāyacittāvasthāyāḥ pratyavekṣā muhurmuḥ.’ (5.108)

arthāt śarīrer o citter jakhan je abasthā tāhār anukṣaṇ pratyabekṣār nāmī samprajanya. ihāte atmabismṛti naṣṭa hoy, ebong citter sukṣmatama bikṣepo dṛṣṭa hoy o tāhā rodh karār kṣamatā hoy. kiṅca tattvajñāne biṣeṣataḥ ādhyātmik tattvajñāne samāpanna hoybār sāmārthya hoy.’

while Śāntideva does refer repeatedly to both *smṛti* and *samprajanya* in the fifth chapter of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the precise distinction Śāntideva draws between these two terms remains far from clear. While Śāntideva provides a clear definition of *samprajanya* in V.72 of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, he nowhere provides an equally clear definition of *smṛti*.³³ Perhaps the closest Śāntideva comes to making a firm distinction between *smṛti* and *samprajanya* is V.33: “*Samprajanya* comes and, once come, does not go again, if *smṛti* stands guard at the door of the mind” (*samprajanyam tadāyāti na ca yātyāgataṃ punaḥ | smṛtiryadā manodvāre rakṣārthamavatiṣṭhate*).³⁴ Here, Śāntideva conceives *smṛti* as the watchful guarding of the mind, which involves the active effort to restrain the senses and to prevent unwholesome thoughts from entering the mind. The assiduous practice of *smṛti*, according to *Bodhicaryāvatāra* V.33, culminates eventually in the achievement of *samprajanya*, which seems to be a more spontaneous and effortless state of watchfulness of the body and mind.

Hariharānanda, however, conceives the relation between *smṛti* and *samprajanya* in almost exactly the opposite way as Śāntideva does. For Hariharānanda, the assiduous practice of *samprajanya*, which involves active mental restraint,³⁵ is the precondition for the establishment of *smṛti*, a state in which “watchfulness [*satarkatā*] becomes effortless” (PJD, pp. 69–70; YPP, p. 52). Hence, while Hariharānanda clearly accepts Śāntideva’s conception of *samprajanya* in V.72 of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Hariharānanda reverses Śāntideva’s account of the *relationship* between the practices of *smṛti* and *samprajanya*. For Śāntideva, the active cultivation of *smṛti* seems to be the precondition for *samprajanya*; for Hariharānanda, by contrast, the active cultivation of *samprajanya* is the precondition for *smṛti*.

I would suggest, however, that Hariharānanda’s conception of the relationship between *smṛti* and *samprajanya* is not merely idiosyncratic but in fact finds support in aspects of Buddhaghoṣa’s interpretation of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the foundational text of Buddhist *satī* practice (contained in the *Majjhima Nikāya* of the Pāli *Tipiṭaka*). Buddhaghoṣa’s commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is contained in his *Papañcasūdanī*, an influential Pāli commentary on the *Majjhima Nikāya*. As far as I am aware, Hariharānanda does not refer specifically either to the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* or to Buddhaghoṣa’s commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* anywhere in his voluminous corpus. However, it is evident from his scholarly work on Buddhist philosophical texts that Hariharānanda studied thoroughly not only the *Tipiṭaka* but

³³ Since the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* does not explicitly define *smṛti*, various translators of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* have differed dramatically in how they render the relationship between *smṛti* and *samprajanya*. For instance, Poussin (1907, p. 67) translates *samprajanya* as “surveillance” (“watchfulness”) and *smṛti* as “‘mémoire’ de la loi du Bouddha” (“memory of the law of the Buddha”). By contrast, Crosby and Skilton translate *samprajanya* as “awareness” and *smṛti* as “mindfulness” (Śāntideva 2002, p. 50).

³⁴ Bhattacharya (1960, p. 60).

³⁵ Hariharānanda repeatedly emphasizes that the preliminary stages of *smṛti-sādhana* involve active restraint of the mind. As he puts it at one point, the practitioner of *smṛti* should adopt the resolve, “As I constantly watch the mind, I will not allow any extraneous thoughts to enter it” (“*cittake sarbadā jena sammukhe rākhīyā darśan karite karite tādāte kono prakār saṃkalpa āsīte dība na...*”) (PJD, p. 69; YPP, p. 51).

also a wide variety of Pāli and Sanskrit commentaries on the *Tipiṭaka*. Hence, it is highly likely that when he refers to “Buddhist scriptures” in his discussion of *smṛti* in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, Hariharānanda has in mind not only later Buddhist texts such as the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* but also the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the earliest known text on the practice of mindfulness. Moreover, in his translation of the *Dhammapada*—one of the most famous texts in the *Majjhima Nikāya*—Hariharānanda repeatedly cites passages from Buddhaghōṣa’s commentary on the *Dhammapada* in the *Papañcasūdanī*.³⁶ It is, therefore, quite possible that Hariharānanda was also familiar with Buddhaghōṣa’s commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* in the *Papañcasūdanī*. However, the philological question of whether Hariharānanda was directly influenced by Buddhaghōṣa’s commentary on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is perhaps unresolvable. In any case, my aim in the remainder of this section is not philological but philosophical: I hope to demonstrate that there are deep conceptual affinities between Hariharānanda’s interpretation of *smṛti* and *samprajanya* in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* and Buddhaghōṣa’s interpretation of *sati* and *sampajañña* in the *Papañcasūdanī*.

The final three components of the Buddha’s “Noble Eightfold Path” (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) are “right effort” (*sammā vāyāma*), “right mindfulness” (*sammā sati*), and “right concentration” (*sammā samādhi*). The *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is a lengthy discourse on the various facets of the seventh component of the Noble Eightfold Path, the practice of “right mindfulness.” The beginning of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* summarizes the four basic types of mindfulness and indicates briefly both the nature and aim of mindfulness practice in general:

Monks, this is the direct path for the purification of beings [*ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*], for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of *dukkha* and discontent, for acquiring the true method, for the realization of *Nibbāna*, namely, the four *satipaṭṭhānas*.

What are the four? Here, monks, in regard to the body a monk abides contemplating the body, diligent, fully aware, and mindful, free from desires and discontent in regard to the world [*idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam*]. In regard to feelings he abides contemplating feelings, diligent, fully aware, and mindful, free from desires and discontent in regard to the world. In regard to the mind he abides contemplating the mind, diligent, fully aware, and mindful, free from desires and discontent in regard to the world. In regard to *dhammas* he abides contemplating *dhammas*, diligent, fully aware, and mindful, free from desires and discontent in regard to the world.³⁷

Three basic aspects of this passage are especially relevant to our discussion of Hariharānanda’s interpretation of *smṛti* and *samprajanya*. First, as a number of commentators have pointed out, the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is one of the earliest known texts in the Indian philosophical tradition to conceive *sati* as present awareness or

³⁶ See, for instance, the reference to Buddhaghōṣa’s *Papañcasūdanī* in Hariharānanda (1905/1988, p. 9).

³⁷ Anālayo (2003, pp. 3–4) (translation slightly modified). For the original Pāli, see Trenckner, ed. (1888, pp. 55–56).

mindfulness rather than as remembrance.³⁸ According to the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, *sati* is the act of “observing” or “contemplating” (*anupassī*) the body, feelings, mind, and *dhammas*. Recall that Hariharānanda, in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, similarly conceives *smṛti* not as recollection but as a present “experiencing” (*“anubhab karā”*) of the various states of the mind. I would suggest that Hariharānanda’s key interpretive move of conceiving *smṛti* as mindfulness, which has no precedent in any texts from the Sāmkhyayoga tradition, can be traced to the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*.

Second, this passage from the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* describes the practice of *sati* as the “*ekāyano maggo* for the purification of beings.” Many recent commentators have interpreted the phrase “*ekāyano maggo*” straightforwardly as “the only way,” which amounts to an exclusivistic insistence on the practice of mindfulness as the *one and only* means of attaining *nibbāna*.³⁹ Buddhaghosa, however, points out that this exclusivistic reading of “*ekāyano maggo*” as “the only way” (*ekasmiṃ ayanoti ekāyano*) is just one of five possible interpretations of the ambiguous phrase. The interpretation that Buddhaghosa seems to prefer is that “*ekāyano maggo*” means simply the path that is single, clear, and direct, instead of forked or confusing (*ekamaggo ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo na dvedhāpathabhūtoti evamattho daṭṭhabbo*).⁴⁰ Hence, even if “*ekāyano maggo*” does not imply that the practice of mindfulness is the *only* way to *nibbāna*, it nonetheless does suggest that it is the *clearest* and *most direct* way to *nibbāna*.⁴¹

Strikingly, Hariharānanda repeatedly insists in his commentary on YS I.20 in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* that the practice of *smṛti* is the “primary *sādhana*” (*pradhān sādhan*) (PJD, p. 68) and the “foremost means of attaining tranquility and purity of mind” (*cittaprasād bā sattvasuddhilābher mukhya upāy*) (PJD, p. 69). It is worth noting that Hariharānanda’s distinct privileging of the practice of *smṛti* here is unprecedented in the Sāmkhyayoga tradition. Indeed, as I already pointed out, Hariharānanda’s earlier *Yogakārikā* does not place any special importance on *smṛti*. In the *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, by contrast, he conceives the practice of *smṛti* as one of the central practices for attaining both purity of mind and the ultimate goal of spiritual liberation. I would suggest that Hariharānanda’s unusual privileging of *smṛti-sādhana* in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* in fact reflects a strong Buddhist influence. In particular, Hariharānanda’s assertion that the practice of *smṛti* is the “primary” and “foremost” means of attaining mental purity comes very close to—and may even have been inspired by—the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*’s declaration that the practice of *sati* is the “*ekāyano maggo*,” a phrase interpreted by Buddhaghosa to mean the clearest and most direct path to attain purity and, ultimately, *nibbāna*.

Third, the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* makes a somewhat cryptic distinction between *sati* and *sampajañña*: the practitioner of mindfulness is not only “diligent” but also “*sampajāno*” and “*satimā*.” While most commentators agree in general that

³⁸ See Anālayo (2003, p. 47, fn. 18).

³⁹ Gethin (2001, p. 60, fn. 132) refers to some of the scholars who adopt an exclusivistic reading of “*ekāyano*.”

⁴⁰ VRI (2013).

⁴¹ Recent scholars who follow Buddhaghosa’s non-exclusivistic reading of “*ekāyano*” include Gethin (2001, pp. 60–68) and Anālayo (2003, p. 27).

sampajañña involves clear knowledge or understanding, they have failed to reach any kind of consensus on the precise difference between *sampajañña* and *sati*. In his commentary on mindfulness of the body in the *Papañcasūdanī*, Buddhaghosa distinguishes four types of *sampajañña*, the third type being “*gocara-sampajañña*,” “*sampajañña* relating to pasture.”⁴² According to Buddhaghosa, *gocara-sampajañña* involves the mindful resolve always to remain within one’s “pasture”—that is, within the bounds of one’s particular subject of meditation.⁴³ In a recent study, Anālayo has attempted to clarify Buddhaghosa’s notion of “*gocara-sampajañña*” by examining how terms relating to *sampajañña* are used in other discourses from the *Tipiṭaka*, including the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and the *Mahāsuññatasutta*. On this basis, Anālayo makes a convincing case that “clear knowledge in regard to ‘pasture’ refers in particular to sense-restraint.”⁴⁴

One might point out that active sense-restraint would more plausibly fall under “*sammā vāyāma*” (right effort), the sixth component of the Noble Eightfold Path, rather than “*sammā sati*.” Indeed, it is clear that the primary emphasis of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is not on active sense-restraint but on clear awareness of the wholesome and unwholesome states and tendencies of the body and mind.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* itself does seem to suggest that the practice of mindfulness also involves some form of self-restraint: the practitioner of mindfulness is “free from desires and discontent in regard to the world” (*vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam*). In his insightful discussion of this passage, Anālayo claims that the advanced practitioner of mindfulness can be expected to be “free” from desires and discontent altogether. However, for beginning and intermediate practitioners of mindfulness, this recurring statement from the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* is meant to be taken prescriptively rather than descriptively.⁴⁶ Hence, according to Anālayo, the initial stages of the practice of *sati* involve not only “bare *sati*” but also active self-restraint, the “deliberate effort in order to avoid or counterbalance desires and discontent.”⁴⁷ In other words, Buddhaghosa’s notion of *gocara-sampajañña* helps clarify one basic aspect of the complex relationship between *sati* and *sampajañña* in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*: while *sati* in the narrow sense denotes bare mindfulness, *sampajañña* means clear awareness combined with active sense-restraint. Accordingly, we might say that the practice of *sampajañña*, which combines mindfulness with sense-restraint, serves as a kind of bridge between “right effort” and “right mindfulness,” the sixth and seventh components of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Hariharānanda’s distinctive account of the role of *samprajanya* in the practice of *smṛti*, I would suggest, finds an early precedent not in any Sāṃkhyayoga texts but in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and in Buddhaghosa’s notion of *gocara-sampajañña*. In the *Pātañjaljogdarśan*, Hariharānanda makes a crucial distinction between two aspects

⁴² VRI (2013).

⁴³ VRI (2013).

⁴⁴ Anālayo (2003, p. 145).

⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 197.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

of *smṛti*: “*smṛti-sādhan*” (the “practice of *smṛti*”) and “*smṛti-upasthān*” (the “establishment of *smṛti*”). As he puts it, “once the practice of *smṛti* becomes perfected through practice, *smṛti* is established” (*smṛti sādhitō hoyle smṛtyupasthān hoy*) (PJD, p. 68; YPP, p. 51). Hariharānanda borrows the term “*samprajanya*” from the Buddhists to characterize what he calls “*smṛti-sādhan*,” the active practice of mindfulness that culminates in the establishment of an effortless state of *smṛti*. Moreover, Hariharānanda emphasizes that *samprajanya* involves not only mindfulness but also active restraint of the mind: “During the practice of *smṛti-sādhan*, one must always be mindful of whatever thoughts arise in the mind, and one must reject all distracting thoughts and maintain the mindful resolve to keep the mind undisturbed and devoid of all unwanted thoughts and desires” (PJD, p. 69; YPP, p. 51).⁴⁸ For Hariharānanda, *samprajanya* is a practice that combines mindful awareness of the various states of the mind with the mindful effort to reject unwanted thoughts and states of mind.

In the essay, “Watchfulness or the Practice of *Samprajanya*,” Hariharānanda makes even more explicit the relationship between *smṛti* and *samprajanya*. As he puts it, the practice of “*samanaskatā*” (watchfulness or mindfulness)—a term he borrows from *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I.iii.8—is synonymous with “what the Buddhists call ‘*samprajanya*’” (PJD, p. 924; YPP, p. 669). He then goes on to define *smṛti* as the state of effortless “mental awareness” (*bijñān-br̥tti*) and *samprajanya* (or *samanaskatā*) as the active “mental effort” (*ceṣṭā-br̥tti*) to maintain a desirable state of mind at all times (PJD, pp. 924–925; YPP, p. 669). Hariharānanda’s understanding of *samprajanya* as a practice that combines mindfulness with active mental restraint seems to resonate strongly with certain aspects of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and Buddhaghōṣa’s conception of *gocara-sampajañña*.

Evidently, the Buddhist subtext of Hariharānanda’s discussion of *smṛti* and *samprajanya* in the *Pātañjaljogdarśan* turns out to be more complex and extensive than Hariharānanda himself lets on. He often makes it seem as if the Buddhists merely provided convenient terms for a spiritual practice already fully articulated in the *Upaniṣads* and in ancient Sāṃkhyayoga texts. Hariharānanda seems to imply, for instance, that Śāntideva’s conception of *samprajanya* as constant mindfulness of the body and mind in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, far from being a distinctively Buddhist notion, is nothing more than a new name for an ancient practice of mindfulness that was already contained in the concept of *smṛti* of YS I.20 and in the concept of *samanaskatā* in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I.iii.8. It seems to me, however, that Hariharānanda’s explicit reference to the definition of *samprajanya* in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is, in certain respects, a red herring, for it deflects attention away from some of the more fundamental Buddhistic elements in Hariharānanda’s understanding of *smṛti* and *samprajanya*. As I have argued, there is simply no known precedent within the Sāṃkhyayoga tradition either for Hariharānanda’s interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness rather than as remembrance or for his repeated privileging of the practice of *smṛti* as the most effective and direct means of

⁴⁸ “*smṛtisādhanē citte je bhāb uḥriteche tāhā sarbadā anubhūta hoyā cai ebong bikṣipta bhāb tyāg koriyā abikṣipta bā saṃkalpahīn bhāb smṛtīgocar rākhite hoy.*”

achieving mental purity. Such a precedent is found only in various Buddhist texts like the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, Buddhaghoṣa's *Papañcasūdanī*, and Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Moreover, I have sought to demonstrate that Hariharānanda's specific interpretation of the relationship between *smṛti* and *samprajanya* resonates strongly with certain passages from the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and with Buddhaghoṣa's notion of *gocara-sampajañña* in the *Papañcasūdanī*.

In spite of the many clearly Buddhistic elements in Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20, I believe it would be more accurate to characterize his interpretation as *quasi*-Buddhistic, because he also builds into the concept of *smṛti* certain practices that are incompatible with Buddhist philosophy. Buddhist texts on mindfulness typically emphasize mindfulness of the various states of the body and mind. For instance, the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* elaborates mindfulness of the body, breath, feelings, and mental states. While Hariharānanda follows the Buddhists in emphasizing mindfulness of the body and mind, he also introduces two non-Buddhistic forms of *smṛti* based on some of the distinctive metaphysical principles of Sāṃkhya yoga. First, he elaborates what he calls "*bācya-bācak-smṛti*" (Sanskrit: "*vācya-vācaka-smṛti*"), in which the eternally emancipated Lord (*īśvara*) is the object of *smṛti*:

Bācya-bācak-smṛti will be established when, through the preliminary practice of continual mindfulness [*smaraṇ abhyās*] of the *praṇava* [the mantra "Om"] and of the co-relation between the name indicative of the Lord and the Lord Himself, the repetition—either mental or oral—of the *praṇava* brings before the mind the conception of the eternally emancipated Lord. Once this state is achieved, you should imagine that such a Lord resides in the heart-space or in your inner Self and engage mindfully in *japa* [repetition] of the indicative name, while at the same time remaining mindful that you are repeating the name and that you will continue to repeat the name. (PJD, p. 68; YPP, p. 51)⁴⁹

Like *smṛti* in general, "*bācya-bācak-smṛti*" involves both first-order mindfulness of a given object and second-order mindfulness of the fact that one is mindful of that object. In this form of *smṛti*, however, the object of mindfulness is not the body or mind but the Lord and His name ("Om"). Central to Hariharānanda's notion of *bācya-bācak-smṛti* is the practice of *japa*—mental or oral repetition of the Lord's name—which has a long tradition in India's *bhakti* traditions.⁵⁰ The concept of an eternally emancipated Lord, which plays such a prominent role in the philosophy of YS, plays no role at all in Buddhist philosophy. Moreover, Buddhist texts on mindfulness such as the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* do not

⁴⁹ "*praṇab ebong īśvarer bācak o bācya-sambandha prathame smaraṇ abhyās kariyā jakhan praṇab uccārita (mane mane bā byākta bhābe) hoyle kleṣādīśūnya īśvarbhāb mane asibe, takhan bācya-bācak-smṛti susthir hoibe. tāhā siddha hoyle tāḍṣa īśvarke ḥṛdayākāṣe athabā ātmamadhye sthīta jāniya bācakṣabda jappūrbak smaraṇ karite thākibe ebong tāhā je smaraṇ koritecha o korite thākibe tāhao smaraṇārūḍ rākhibe.*"

⁵⁰ It is not unusual for Hariharānanda to build *japa* into the practice of Yoga. In his commentary on YS II.1, Vyāsa claims that "*svādhyāya*" includes not only the "study of the scriptures of liberation" (*mokṣaśāstra-adhyayanam*) but also "*japa* of sacred mantras such as *Om*" (*praṇavāḍipavitṛāṇām japaḥ*) (YPP, p. 113).

emphasize *japa* as a component of the practice of mindfulness. Hence, it is clear that Hariharānanda's conception of *bācya-bācak-smṛti* tilts the Buddhist practice of mindfulness toward Sāṃkhyayoga.

Apart from *bācya-bācak-smṛti*, which involves mindfulness of the Lord and His name, Hariharānanda places special emphasis on what he calls "*bibek-smṛti*" (Sanskrit, "*viveka-smṛti*"), mindfulness based on the discrimination between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*:

Bibek-smṛti is the foremost *sādhana*. In this form of practice, one makes the mindful resolve: "As I watch the thoughts arising in the mind, I will not allow any extraneous thoughts to enter the mind, and I will always remain identified with my true nature as the *Puruṣa* or pure consciousness, the Seer-Witness of all thoughts and objects [*kebol grhyamān biṣayer draṣṭṛ svarūp hoyyā thakibo*]." This is the foremost means of attaining tranquility and purification of mind. The *Yogatārāvalī* states, "Watching nature with an attitude of detached indifference, one must uproot all thoughts with great care." This is the highest form of *smṛti-sādhana*. (PJD, p. 69; YPP, p. 51)⁵¹

This passage from Hariharānanda's *Pātāñjaljogdarśan* highlights a unique form of mindfulness practice based on the fundamental metaphysical distinction in Sāṃkhyayoga between *Puruṣa*, the transcendental Self, and *Prakṛti*, the realm of nature. According to Sāṃkhyayoga, liberation consists in "*kaivalya*," the state of "aloneness" in which one realizes that one is not the empirical body-mind but the *Puruṣa*, which is independent of the workings of nature (*Prakṛti*). Hariharānanda conceives *bibek-smṛti* as a practice of mindfulness in which one strives to identify at all times with the *Puruṣa*, which remains the Witness (*sākṣī*) to the workings of nature, including not only all external objects but also any thoughts that arise in the mind. Of course, the Buddhist practice of mindfulness also involves detached witnessing of the various wholesome and unwholesome states of the mind. However, as I pointed out in the previous section, the Buddhists deny the reality of an enduring "self" of any sort. Hence, in stark contrast to Hariharānanda, the Buddhists would reject the very possibility of grounding the practice of mindfulness in the metaphysical concept of a transcendental *Puruṣa* that witnesses the workings of nature. Nonetheless, at the level of practice, certain aspects of *bibek-smṛti*—including mental restraint and detached witnessing of the various states of the mind—are also present in the Buddhist practices of *smṛti* and *samprajanya*.

I hope it is now clear in what sense I take Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* in YS I.20 to be "quasi-Buddhistic": while his interpretation of *smṛti* is deeply indebted to the Buddhist conceptions of *smṛti* and *samprajanya*, Hariharānanda also elaborates two forms of *smṛti*—*bācya-bācak-smṛti* and *bibek-smṛti*—which presuppose philosophical concepts that are unique to Sāṃkhyayoga.

⁵¹ "*bibek-smṛti mukhyā sādhan. cittake sarbadā jena sammukhe rākhiyā darśan karite karite tāhāte kono prakār saṃkalpa āsite dība na ebong kebal grhyamān biṣayer draṣṭṛ svarūp hoyyā thākiba ey prakār smṛtisādhan ānubyaśāyik. ihā cittaprasād bā sattvaśuddhilābher mukhya upāy.*"

Smṛti and *Aṣṭāṅgayoga*: An Interpretive Controversy

In this final section, I will bring Hariharānanda into dialogue with traditional commentators on the question of how to interpret *smṛti* in YS I.20. Of course, a full assessment of Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* vis-à-vis earlier commentators is beyond the scope of this essay. I will discuss here only one specific interpretive issue on which Hariharānanda takes a subtly different stand from traditional commentators: the question of how the practice of *smṛti* in I.20 relates to the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* outlined in II.28–III.7.

Before addressing this issue, however, it is necessary to situate *smṛti* of I.20 within the broader context of “*Samādhipāda*,” the first book of YS. According to I.2–3, the aim of Yoga is to realize our true nature as the transcendental *Puruṣa* by means of the “restraint of mental modifications” (*cittavṛttinirodha*). I.5–11 classifies these mental modifications (*vṛtti*-s) into 5 types: “right knowledge” (*pramāṇa*), “error” (*viparyaya*), “verbal delusion” (*vikalpa*), “sleep” (*nidrā*), and “memory” (*smṛti*). According to I.12, these *vṛtti*-s can be restrained by means of “practice” (*abhyāsa*) and “dispassion” (*vairāgya*). Once one restrains all the *vṛtti*-s by means of the combined practice of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*, one achieves *asamprajñāta-samādhi*, the highest state of objectless mental concentration culminating in final liberation (*kaivalya*) (I.18). I.20 then enumerates five specific practices that together lead to *asamprajñātasamādhi*: “faith” (*śraddhā*), “energy” (*vīrya*), *smṛti*, “concentration” (*samādhi* of the *samprajñāta* variety), and “discriminative enlightenment” (*prajñā*) (PJD, p. 67; YPP, p. 50).

In this context, it is far from obvious what *smṛti* in I.20 means precisely. Neither the *sūtra* itself nor Vyāsa's commentary on it gives us much of a clue as to the meaning of the term “*smṛti*.” Instead of defining *smṛti* in I.20, Vyāsa only indicates the *consequence* of *smṛti*. According to Vyāsa, the establishment of *smṛti* is conducive to *samādhi*, the next practice mentioned in I.20: “with the establishment of *smṛti*, the undisturbed mind becomes concentrated” (*smṛtyupasthāne ca cittamanākulaṃ samādhiyate*) (YPP, p. 49). Most traditional commentators after Vyāsa attempt to find a clue to the meaning of *smṛti* by linking it to—or directly identifying it with—some other term elsewhere in YS that is explicitly defined. A few of these commentators interpret *smṛti* of I.20 as recollection by linking it (whether explicitly or implicitly) to the *smṛti-vṛtti* defined in I.11. However, the majority of traditional commentators identifies *smṛti* in I.20 with “*dhyāna*” (“unbroken meditation”), the seventh “limb” of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* outlined in YS II.28–III.7.

I.11 defines *smṛti* as the *vṛtti* involved in recollecting past experience (*anubhūtavaiṣayāsampramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ*). Taking their cue from I.11's definition of *smṛti* as recollection, commentators in the first camp define *smṛti* of I.20 as a special form of recollection that is conducive to liberation. The author of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstravivarāṇa* interprets *smṛti* in I.20 as the “recollecion of such things as scriptural knowledge” (*āgamajñānādiviṣayā dṛḍhatarā smṛtiḥ*).⁵² Similarly,

⁵² *Pātañjala-Yogasūtra-Bhāṣya-Vivarāṇam* (1952, p. 51). For an English translation of the entire text, see Leggett (1990, p. 105).

Bhojarāja explicitly interprets *smṛti* in I.20 in terms of I.11’s definition of the *smṛti* as the *vṛtti* of recollection; accordingly, he glosses *smṛti* of I.20 as “the recollection of past subjects” (*pāścātsu bhūmiṣu smṛtiḥ*)—“past subjects” including presumably the scriptures and perhaps *īśvara*.

Most traditional commentators, however, do not interpret *smṛti* of I.20 on the basis of I.11’s definition of *smṛti* as recollection. Michele Desmarais points out one probable reason for this: since the practices listed in I.20 are meant to *restrain* the *citta-vṛttis*, “it is unlikely that the *smṛti-vṛtti* [defined in I.11] could be the cause, or the instrumental means, in bringing about a state of control/cessation.”⁵³ Instead, most traditional commentators interpret the practices listed in I.20 in terms of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. For these commentators, “*samādhi*,” the fourth practice in I.20, is identical to the “*samādhi*” that comprises the eighth limb of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* mentioned in II.29. On the basis of this identification, they map the previous three practices listed in I.20 onto the previous limbs of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. According to Vijñānabhikṣu, for instance, “*vīrya*” of I.20 is “effort [*prayatnaḥ*] in the form of *dhāraṇā*,” the sixth limb of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, and “*smṛti*” of I.20 is “*dhyānam*,” the seventh limb of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.⁵⁴ Numerous other commentators—including Vācaspati Miśra, Rāmānanda Sarasvatī, and Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa—also identify “*smṛti*” of I.20 with “*dhyāna*” of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.⁵⁵

The underlying intuition of these traditional commentators seems to be that the overall coherence and clarity of YS both as a philosophical system and as a guide to yogic practice are threatened unless a tight connection between the practices of I.20 and the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* is demonstrated. If the practices of I.20 are different from the practices of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, then the interpreter is faced with the challenge of specifying precisely how these two sets of practices are related to one another. To avoid this problem, these traditional commentators take the interpretive route of simply *identifying* the first four practices of I.20 with the *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. Their identification of the *samādhi* of I.20 with the *samādhi* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* is not implausible, since the same term is used to denote both practices. However, their further attempt to equate *śraddhā*, *vīrya*, and *smṛti* of I.20 with the other limbs of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* seems strained at best, since the terms denoting these respective practices are not semantically or conceptually related in any obvious way. Moreover, these commentators fail to provide any convincing internal evidence from YS to justify their straightforward equation of these two sets of practices.

Hariharānanda’s interpretation of *smṛti* in I.20, I would suggest, constitutes an important intervention vis-à-vis these traditional commentators. Hariharānanda agrees with these traditional commentators on several crucial interpretive issues relating to *smṛti* of I.20. First, he agrees that *smṛti* of I.20 does not mean recollection and hence should not be understood in terms of the *smṛti-vṛtti* of recollection defined in I.11. Second, he agrees that “*samādhi*,” the fourth practice in I.20, is identical to

⁵³ Desmarais (2008, p. 129).

⁵⁴ Rukmani (2007, p. 119).

⁵⁵ For Vācaspati Miśra’s interpretation of *smṛti*, see Śāstrī (2007, p. 60). For the similar interpretations of Rāmānanda Sarasvatī and Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, see Śāstrī (2001, p. 26). More recently, Dasgupta (1920/1989, p. 112) has followed these traditional commentators in interpreting *smṛti* of I.20 as *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.

the “*samādhi*” of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. Hariharānanda makes both these points clear in his concise interpretation of *smṛti* of I.20 in the *Bhāsvatī*. Echoing the *Yogakārikā*, he defines *smṛti* not as “*dhyāna*” but as “*sadā samanaskatā*” (constant mindfulness) and then claims that “with the establishment of *smṛti*, the *citta* becomes composed and one-pointed, eventually culminating in *samādhi*, the pinnacle of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*” (*smṛtyupasthāne—smṛtau upasthitāyām anākulam—avilolaṃ cittam samādhīyate— aṣṭāṅgayogavad bhavati*) (YPP, p. 442). Here, Hariharānanda makes it very clear that he follows the majority of traditional commentators in identifying the “*samādhi*” of I.20 with the “*samādhi*” of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. Unlike traditional commentators, however, he refrains from mapping the previous seven limbs of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* onto *śraddhā*, *vīrya*, and *smṛti*—the three practices prior to *samādhi* listed in I.20. From Hariharānanda’s perspective, traditional commentators who identify *smṛti* with *dhyāna* are right to insist on an intimate connection between the practices outlined in I.20 and the *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. However, he rejects their underlying assumption that the most plausible way to establish such a connection is simply to identify the first four practices of I.20 with the limbs of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.

For Hariharānanda, while *smṛti* of I.20 is not identical to *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, it is nonetheless intimately related to *dhyāna*. He clarifies the subtle but important difference between *smṛti* and *dhyāna* in his Bengali explication of his account of *smṛti* in *Yogakārikā* I.53. As he puts it there, the practice of *smṛti* involves the mindful resolve, “I am always mindful of the object of meditation, and I will always continue to remain mindful of it” (*sadā abhiṣṭa dhyeya biṣoy smaraṇ koritechhi ebong tāhā smaraṇ karite thākibo*).⁵⁶ For Hariharānanda, while *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* is the first-order practice of unbroken meditation on a given object, *smṛti* of I.20 is the second-order practice of being mindfully aware of the object of meditation and resolving to continue to remain mindful of it at all times. In the final sentence of his Bengali explication of *smṛti* in *Yogakārikā* I.53, Hariharānanda explains the precise relationship between *dhyāna* and *smṛti*: by means of the practice of *smṛti*, “the object to be meditated on always remains fixed in the mind” (*dhyeya biṣay sadāy citte upasthit thāke*).⁵⁷ Instead of identifying *smṛti* with *dhyāna*, Hariharānanda claims here that the establishment of *smṛti* is the mental precondition for the achievement of *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*. Perfection in *dhyāna* presupposes the constant practice of *smṛti*, the higher-order mindful resolve always to keep the object of meditation uppermost in the mind. By establishing a direct link between *smṛti* of I.20 and *dhyāna* of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* without equating these two practices, Hariharānanda avoids the questionable interpretive move of mapping the practices of I.20 directly onto the limbs of *aṣṭāṅgayoga*.

The plausibility of Hariharānanda’s specific account of the relation between *smṛti* and *aṣṭāṅgayoga* depends in large part on how convincing we find his interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness. Of course, a full assessment of the plausibility of Hariharānanda’s interpretation of *smṛti* in all its details would require another essay. By way of concluding, I wish to highlight briefly some of the findings of a number

⁵⁶ Hariharānanda (1892/1991, p. 28).

⁵⁷ Ibid.

of scholars in the past century that may support—if indirectly—Hariharānanda's fundamental interpretive intuition that *smṛti* in YS I.20 should be understood as mindfulness. On the basis of careful philological investigation, scholars such as James Woods, Louis de La Vallée Poussin, and Gerald James Larson have identified remarkable similarities in the terminology of YS and the terminology of various Buddhist texts.⁵⁸ They argue that since YS was almost certainly composed after the spread of Buddhism in India, the terminological similarities between YS and Buddhist texts suggest a strong Buddhist influence on the philosophical system of YS. Many of these scholars specifically point out that the five practices listed in YS I.20—*śraddhā*, *vīrya*, *smṛti*, *samādhi*, *prajñā*—are found verbatim in a variety of early Buddhist texts such as the *Tipiṭaka* and Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* and *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.⁵⁹

Of course, as we have seen, Hariharānanda himself points to various terminological and doctrinal affinities between Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga. In stark contrast to most recent scholars, however, Hariharānanda maintains that YS was composed *before* the spread of Buddhism. On the basis of this historical assumption, he claims that the undeniable affinities between Buddhism and Sāṃkhyayoga stem largely from the fact that the Buddha's teachings were themselves profoundly influenced by the ancient doctrines of Sāṃkhyayoga (as transmitted to the Buddha through Ālāḍa Kālāma and Rudraka). However, the plausibility of Hariharānanda's interpretation of *smṛti* as mindfulness does not depend on his doubtful historical assumption that YS was not influenced by Buddhism. In fact, if scholars such as Poussin and Larson are correct in claiming that the list of five practices in YS I.20 derives from Buddhism, then Hariharānanda's Buddhist interpretation of *smṛti* of YS I.20 as mindfulness seems to be considerably more plausible than traditional interpretations of *smṛti* as either *dhyāna* or recollection.

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⁵⁸ See Woods' *The Yoga-System of Patañjali*, 1914, pp. xvii–xviii and *passim*, Poussin (1936–1937), Larson (1989), Larson (2008, pp. 42–43), and Senart (1900).

⁵⁹ See Woods' *The Yoga-System of Patañjali*, p. 45, Larson (1989, p. 138), Poussin (1936–1937), Key Chapple (1994, p. 89), and Senart (1900, p. 347).

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