

THE PSYCOANALYST AND THE YOGA LESSON

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Text from Graduate Memory for The Certification of Yoga Professor (EFY Paris) :

“The carpet’s invited”:
Me, I, We - Death, Sex - And The Great Self



"Divine Power, Energy-Lovée shines like the stem of a young lotus; Like a snake, curled up on herself, she holds her tail in her mouth and rests, slumbering, in the Mûladhâra."
(Yogakundalinî Upanishad 82, in *Upanishad of Yoga*, J.Varenne, p.104)

Summary

This dissertation, centered on the Hatha yoga course, develops a reflection from three initial questions, stemming from the readings and practices of yoga, the experience of the carpet (hence its title). These are: the recurrent attack of the Ego, the absence of the group, and the absence of sexuality, in a reflection on the teaching of yoga. During this journey, the question of death was invited, it is addressed in the introduction. These questions have led to questions about the processes that allow us to move from the physical to the spiritual (such as sublimation), and the composition of the framework to ensure engagement in these processes (such as tempo). The theoretical references used are mainly those of yoga literature, and group psychoanalysis.

Keywords: yoga, group, sexuality, yoga teaching, spirituality, death, setting and process.

Summary

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Group-lung

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Every yoga class starts with... a carpet

For me already the opportunity of a misunderstanding because there are carpets and carpets ... When I thought I was on a gym mat, I was actually on a yoga mat! Confused... I stayed there!



Alone on my carpet... Quiet

But the more I took classes... the more people I found on MY carpet! Me (my personality), I (my subjectivity), death, sex, and the great Self... I even saw a Us!

At first it was only Me,
The carpet was not very big so it was better ...
And then there was an attack, in the accepted way, of the Ego.
I had to keep a low profile.
Part of Me dissolved to the edges of the carpet, or even beyond,
Letting I appear: "I exist!" he said.
The echo answered... There was an Us,
At first discreet - atmospheres, vibrations, smells, breaths, tunes!
And then everything rushed, death to begin with,
The Sexe and the great Self then imposed themselves...
We had to make room! The carpet has grown thicker...

Introduction: Death invites itself

I came to this training (a four years training to be yoga professor) in a very interrogative way. And for me it was a journey of many questions, a flourish. I first experimented a lot with the paradoxes of yoga, and read a lot in search of answers. For this brief, I decided to take up some of the first, and insistent, questions.

Most of these thoughts are associated with my training at EFY Paris, mainly with Patrick Tomatis, but also Gianna Dupont and Boris Tatzky. This is the student's experience questioning the teacher to come.

I started from three initial observations/questions about:

What we talk about too much: the Ego,

Which resists: the group

This we hardly talk about: sexuality

Death, on the other hand, has invited itself!

And the great Self has joined the Self...

I will begin this reflection with an experience, one that, from the course "followed" to the "given" course, brings about a radical change of "posture": change of scenery, change of status, from the student to the teacher.

From Ceilings to the battlefield:

The yoga classes, of all orientations, had accustomed me to the sight and observation of the ceilings (real or false) of the various rooms attended. With my eye more or less open/closed, nothing escaped me from mouldings, plasters, paintings, beams, woodwork etc... for this exercise the posture of *shavâsana* is indeed the queen posture!

Once the master's voice appeared, I was "all hearing" ... But one day, during the usual course, I had to get up, preparing for the tests (for the final exam). Still totally engaged, with pleasure, in the posture itself, I had to suddenly distance myself, open my eyes to this very particular environment... Alone standing, in front of me bodies, limbs spread all their length on the ground, stretch, yawn, sigh without any restraint... They have their eyes closed (or towards the ceiling) and seem lost in their inner world.

Imagine the show for a "normal" teacher! No eye contact, no face-to-face (rather facing the feet), the elementary rules of proprieties... He is very much alone, standing in this maximum distance (difference in level!), how can we imagine

"teaching" in these conditions?

Moreover, it is not a "group" demonstration that, by behavior, would express angry, or claims... No, this "show", because it is spectacular for the sighted, is not an attempt at group communication, no... just individuals, moreover very heterogeneous by their bodies, ages, paths and their levels in yoga, individuals spread out on the ground.

With forty years of face-to-face teaching, I really didn't expect to find myself in such a situation... I was missing "the return" (as they say on the radio), it was necessary to speak without return, without the glances to guide, without verbal interventions, questions ... Without coded behaviors of listening, interest or withdrawal, boredom.

In fact I will have to learn to decipher from body signs, to "hear" silent students, and to support my teaching at all costs ...

DESCONCERTED (descontained)

The first group class, the group scene:

The teacher standing alone in front of bodies lying down, lined up... like a battlefield! Not the glorious group, no, the "dead", lonely, lined up on the carpet. The resulting death is reinforced by the designated posture, posture of the dying, from the corpse (RFY 20, p.167), *shavâsana* शवासनः Patrick Tomatis writes:

"At the beginning of a session, the practice of this posture will invite the person to die in her/his state of dispersion, as well as in all her/his habits, "preparing for a change of state." Like the dying who transits from one state to another, relaxation, by radically altering body and psychic attitudes, makes it possible to make the transition from the outside to the inside. It consists of firmly discarding what is cluttered by the experience of the "empty" in order to open oneself to "fullness" (RFY, 24, p.133)

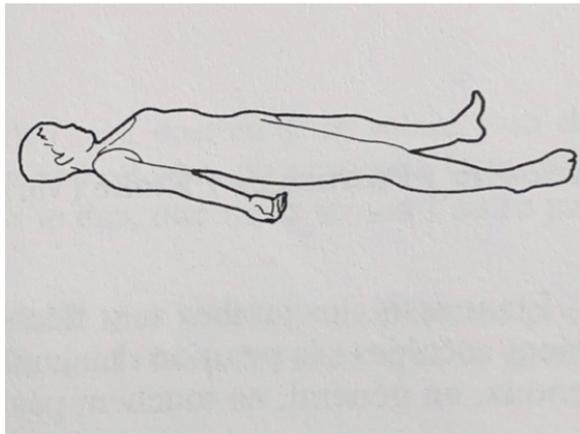
These evocations of "lying bodies" are already aroused, below the posture, by the situation of relaxation itself, as observed by Mr. Meyer (2005), relaxologist, they "appear especially during the first sessions, in the fragility induced by the situation of passivity and by the threat that the group can pose to the unity of the self, before a safe envelope is formed." (p.181). The posture of *shavâsana* thus repeats, from these first moments, a group effect on which we will return.

Personally, in front of this scene, what I perceived at that moment was that I was going to have to **ANIMATE**, in the literal sense, this group, or rather this grouping of individuals. Faced with this task of re-animation not of one person but of a fortnight I felt, that day, really helpless! (Probably related to personal resonances). This observation brought me back to my first impressions of the three other pedagogies proposed by the EFY. I was particularly struck by the place given to group animation techniques in the Durkheim approach. These exercises that give an "integrative" aspect to this pedagogy seemed to me out of

context. I now see them as a response to the anguish of death. It is in a proactive way to create "group illusion" (D.Anzieu) - we will come back to this concept - to be well together, to comfort each other. I now also understand the bias of the Madras orientation to start standing and to finish lying down, or even, in the yoga of energy, by a sitting, like that of delaying (preparing?) this confrontation. The Nil Hahoutoff/Patrick Tomatis approach confronts this issue from the outset and regularly returns to it in the course.

We learn that the goal of yoga would be to tame one another at death (S.Legrand, 2010, p.230), to work the stop of the inspiration and still the awareness of this end.

Accompanied by the OM - AUM - ॐ, moving from the emergence, to the expansion, and the resorption of life, or even to live the polyphony of these moments.



1/ Me, the Ego, the Self

"It's Ego!" **selfie**

"It's Ego!" they say and is often red in yoga in a very pejorative way. In reality this too much ego (which does not deserve a capital letter!), considered from a psychological point of view, is only a manifestation of difficulty. Tapping it is inappropriate at best. Especially when we consider that our society is marked, on the psychopathological level, by a narcissistic fragility (we speak of "false self" cf. D.W.Winnicott, and, more recently, "narcissistic pathologies", or "borderline states"). Selfies, precisely, are just a symptom. I was able to observe

their invasion in a yoga session.

Moreover, I observed a real difficulty of vocabulary in the writings as in the use of concepts, and that of capital letters. Overall I will say that we sail with impunity in very diverse epistemological fields, unidentified. This leads to a confounding morality and spirituality, morality and psychology, not without doing damage, strengthening conditioning rather than bringing liberation. Too much morality stifles spirituality and can lead to putting yoga, an ideal of absolute, under a lead weight!

To clarify these concepts would go beyond the object and limits of this little memory. Especially since, after a long search, I ended up finding some articles and a book on the subject. So they will prevent me from developing it.

Hatred of the Ego

I fully subscribe to the article by Robert Gaudin (2010) who writes "Is it useful to consider as an "affliction" the human person and his awareness of the "I"?" (p.79). This author further clarifies the differences between the ego in Hinduism and the ego in the West (p84-86).

Ysé Tardan-Masquelier (2002) notes:

"The "Me" is the number one enemy of the Western yogis of the sixties. One can only be struck, by rereading the literature of the time, the frequency of the messages concerning "death," or "dissolution of the ego," and giving "the state without mind," "liberated from the mind," as the supreme bliss. (p.39-50).

That's well said... I add this true "cry of the heart" of Gîtât Mallasz:

"What if the ego was sacred? What if the ego was also my master? By reading various spiritual teachings, I had the conviction that I had to get rid of my ego. Fortunately for me, I was never able to! ». This author continues" "I finally understood the importance of the ego in its rightful place! I clearly saw that, until now, I had mistreated and disgraced him like so many generations before me! This attitude is part of our heritage. (1990, 172-173).

Certainly yoga can also be developed into "false self" (D.W.Winnicott), and by the "powers" sought to inflate the ego, the reference texts all emphasize it. Since Freud, in psychoanalysis, there has been a strengthening of the interest in the Me - a psychic instance - in its relationship to the body (R.Kaus, 2002). In 1922 Freud considered the Self "a mental projection of the surface of the body," and in 1925 he insisted, "The Self is above all a bodily self." Since then this reflection was developed by D.Anzieu with his concept of "Moi-peau" (The "ego skin") in 1974 (p.148).

If the Self takes such a place in the context of yoga, it may be in relation to this central presence of the body. Yoga contributes, through body work, to the construction/reconstruction of the Self. But the Self is also the interface between

the subject and his environment. Precisely, in the course, it is what ensures this interface with the group... The attack of the Ego in the texts of yoga therefore also goes with the lack of consideration for the group. But the Self is built from the group, from which it keeps traces of the multiple; group analysis refers to "internal groupality."

In *Upanishad* one reads that the individual self is only an illusion: *ahamkâra* "the sense of selfish separativity that makes each being think of itself as a personal and independent entity." (Shri Aurobindo, 2012, p.28)

"We must therefore conceive of Unity as the "Me" and the essential nature of the Being; multiplicity as the representation of the "Me" and its future. (idem p.40) The goal of "simultaneously kissing *vidyâ* and *avidiyâ*, "the One and the multiple, is still found in *Ishâ Upanishad*. to live in the world, but to change its mortal terms in terms of immortality" (verses 9 to 14, p.58).

As we can see, in this Indian thought, there is no Me without a (great) Self.

From the Me to the Self:

F.Roux writes: "Yoga techniques are made to remove the layers that cover our interiority, so complex" (2002, p.10)... .

Finally I would say that the ego fought, is not unrelated to a confusion, psychoanalytically, between the concepts of Me, Ideal Me (which I associate here with The God Me), and Ideal of the Self; only the latter offering an openness to spirituality. I am well aware that these confusions, for the reader, are also related to the difficulties of translating Sanskrit.

It is, finally, the great work that Michel Hulin devoted to the subject of the ego in Indian thought (1978), which provides an indispensable insight. This author emphasizes the interest of a notion that highlights "the affirmation of the constructed, therefore artificial, and therefore fictitious, nature of a certain form, reputed for us natural, of self-awareness." (p.2) That's more interesting.

Aham: I - *kâra*: performing अहम्कार

"*Ahamkâra* here refers to all behaviours in which the individual practices his tacit assertion of the unique and incomparable character of his own person, where he consents for himself to exorbitant exceptions to the moral or social rules he recognizes on another level." (idem p.3). It is a tacit, natural, self-overestimation, a form of psychological and metaphysical self-centeredness. But this author warns a little later: "If there is an Indian notion from which it is impossible to get close to, even superficially, the slightest Western notion, it is that of *ahamkâra*" (idem p.7). This observation justifies the 375 pages he devotes to it!

We understand it when we learn that this expression, I -*Aham* is:

"The great mantra, the great formula that condenses the whole language and, by the same, contains all reality in power. It is the "alpha and omega" in the sense that "a" represents the first phoneme of the Sanskrit alphabet and "ha" the last." A" designates *Shiva* as it is beyond the manifestation (the *Anuttara*) and "HA" its manifestation in the form of universe through its *Shakti*. As for the nasal resonance (*anusvâra*)- which is not normally counted among the phonemes - it represents the fact that *Shiva*, despite its effusion in manifestation, remains undivided and transcendent". (idem p.337).

Nothing to do with our moral, psychological or psychoanalytic concepts of Me. It would be prudent, for example, to distinguish selfishness (moral) and egocentrism (psychological), which concern the behavior, from the Self, a psychic component, or the metaphysical dimension that makes the pass from the self to the Self.

THE SELF

Quote from Shrî Sankarâcâya: "Everything the yogi perceives is its own Self." (In F.Chenique, 2004, p.271)

"svâtmânâṃ sarvaṃ-îksate" स्वात्मानम् सवर्म् ईक्षते

What is this Self? It will have been understood, not the self of the "to oneself" ("quant à soi"), not the Anglo-Saxon self (and the Ego psychology), nor the Jungian Self, as Jean Marchal (1990) points out. So what are we talking about? (On these concepts see E.Roudinesco and M.Plon, 1997).

Ysé Tardan-Masquelier (2002), evoking the craze for yoga in our time, writes:

"The very ancient Indian notion of *âtman*, of Self, of pure presence to oneself, without claiming any scientific consistency, appears today as one of the appropriate language figures to say this sacred intimate. Given experience rather than concept, the *âtman*, also known as the "witness", is a spirit in the double sense of the word: both a breath that inspires life and an instance, upstream of consciousness, of the processes by which it manifests itself and of the contents of which it is the seat. (p.39-50).

Ramana Maharshi further states: "When the false identification with a body ceases, it will be realized that the master is nothing but the Self." (In D.Goodman, 1988, p.123). Then, I will complete this first approach of the concept, by this representation of a large body- Self in the *Mundaka II/4*:

"Fire is his head and his eyes are the sun and moon and the cardinal points are his hearing organs and the revealed scriptures are his word; the air is a vital breath and the universe is its heart and the earth is at its feet. He is the inner Self in all creatures. (Shri Aurobindo, 2012, p.276-77).

We have gone from the individual, from the self/Self, to the cosmos. But what about the relationship to the other, and precisely, in the context of the course, of the group? We have seen that the attack of the Self, is an attack of what manages the interface between the subject and its environment, here the group, precisely. Let's go back to that

2/ We, a group?



"Go to the posture as if in a walk...!" repeats Patrick Tomatis, a group walk!

In this reflection we will distinguish the social group (object of social psychology and sociology) from the preconscious and unconscious groupal psychic functioning, to which group psychoanalysis gives its full attention.

- Carpets... which draw a group

The placement on the carpet seems to me paradigmatic of all the questions posed by the framework and the setting of this practice of yoga. A brief could easily be devoted to it. The preparation of the room, the reception, the care taken to ensure that everyone can find his place... I use this term "care" because I think it is one, in view of the fragility created by this particular group setting. In practice I was able to experience, before the School, all the places (starting with the middle - lost in the mass -, then the side, emboldening me, the front... It's the group's interest to give the possibility to tame oneself!) I was also able to observe up to carpet battles! The framework being overtaken, unable to ensure this reception. When making a place becomes THE primary concern (managing the tensions, even the aggressiveness generated) it is superfluous to talk about relaxation and energy circulation!

It is well understood that "making a place" in a group, each refers to multiple experiences, and first of all to the family. So it can't be trivial. It is necessary to be able to live a safe space to enter the experience of yoga, a group experience, subject to a regressive process. At this level, we observe different behaviors: the systematic delay which is a way to get noticed, but also to question and interpret... Because there is often no more room free at late arrival (echo to a masochistic part). There is also vagrancy, or still the collage (always too close to one or more other carpets) etc. Creating a space without encroachment, "at a good distance" is a big deal... not always accessible at first sight to the participant. Hence the need for the teacher to pay attention and "care" to this prerequisite.

- For my part, at the School the idea of the place in front of the closet door in the back of the room (where the carpets were stocked) came to me quickly, to avoid having to ask myself the question at each class, it was a quiet place because unenviable. Then came the question of the comrades of proximity, and the qualities of the vibrations I received.

In terms of prerequisites, we should also talk about the dress because the yoga outfit is quite a program, in connection with the group - the body in a group - with the teacher. Try to go unnoticed, or be noticed, choose a loose outfit to feel comfortable, rather used clothes (report to the ground), more or less layers to protect /secure, a dedicated yogi outfit, etc. Coming from gymnastics I didn't ask myself too many questions for the first classes. But observing that the teacher was making some corrections, despite the number of participants, and appreciating their precision and accuracy, I opted for a close-to-the-body outfit in order to benefit from this precision. The teacher can pay attention to these clues (if too many layers... abstain!).

- The transmission of yoga... group

During my second stay in India, I was invited to Bhopal for an international meeting of musicologists. The question was whether it was appropriate to move from individual teaching, master-pupil, to a collective teaching of music, and if so how?

I think the issue is also at the center of the transmission of yoga. The texts refer to this master-pupil situation, in this context, no question of group (or a small group of disciples each enjoying a privileged relationship with the master). The relevance of the transition from the individual to the collective, in this type of transmission must have arisen, even if I did not find any trace of such a debate. What I have observed in the field is a form of resistance to consider the situation: the teacher in front of a group of students. So I read a lot more, until I found some allusions to the group.

From a historical point of view, on the other hand, Ysé Tardan-Masquelier comments on the part of Individual:

"Indeed, Indian yoga has also been marked by an enormous effort of individualization, the emergence of an archaic and mythical human personality of the Great Mother Nature, and out of a conditioning community because based on castes." (2005, p.250).

The individual is therefore a conquest (as in the Middle Ages in the West), a release of the mass, and it is understood that it is highlighted. However, with regard to practice, in this same book, this author devotes a paragraph to "the individual and the group" and points out that "there is too much tendency to devalue group work" whose fruitful effects she sees (idem p.62), broadening her

reflection to situations of internships, seminars. She still observes "the symphonic work of this momentary little sibling that becomes the course regularly followed" (the same p.63): orchestra and/or family?

P.Delhumeau (2019) questioning the limits of practice concludes his article with this observation:

"Solidarity and mutual support are necessary to be able to continue this path of transformation under conditions conducive to letting go, while maintaining a balance." p.142.

The group would therefore be a facilitation and a security. The promotion, in which I started this training (social group), was clearly a motley assemblage of individualities, avoidance behaviors (delays or departures before the end). Particularisms were emphasized: somatic, cultural, characterful. In total, therefore, a "non-group" in the sense of a group process: that is, a grouping of strongly affirmed individualities, one of the first requests of which, at the end of the year, was ... to have a personal relationship with teachers. The wide dispersion of subsequent choices confirmed this observation. It is not enough to bring people together to "group" from a psychic point of view. Certainly the small number could play an inhibitory role by strengthening physical proximity (recall of the sibling group), a rapprochement that can frighten (or reassure) and cause this form of flight. W.R.Bion (1961) referred to these cases as a "basic (unconscious) assumption of a leak attack." There was also a representative of the "attack" face towards the teachers regularly put in trouble. In contrast, therefore, to the pleasure of the fusion expected in the "group illusion" defined by D.Anzieu (1981). This author showed that these two demonstrations - attacks - leakage/fusion - are the two opposite sides of the same phenomenon: the response to the situation created by the grouping of individuals who do not know each other, defense mechanisms in view of the anxieties aroused, grouping being traumatogenic.

Would this knowledge of groupal (mostly unconscious) psychic functioning be of any use to the yoga teacher? I think so, but my teaching experience is still very limited, so I can only suggest it. All traditional texts develop the relationship of the individual, microcosm, to the cosmos, to the Self, to the divine. Relationships "to others" are evoked, in a very general way (such as "do no harm", for example) and gathered in the notion of "benevolence", quite distant in fact!

I will therefore repeat here the formula of Jean-Claude Rouchy (1998) **the group is the "missing link" of yoga**, a notion of which he will make the title of his article(2005, p.51- 60), then addressing psychoanalytic theory. So, the title of Béatrice Bouchillou's article "How to Start a Group Course" (2001, p.133-141) has, of course, caught my attention: finally, we are talking about teaching a group... This is not the case because the article deals with the relationship to the

student, therefore singular. No group, disappointment!

Alongside some reflections on the usefulness of the group, vibration sharing (P.Bonnet 2006, p.28) and emulation and empathy (A.Van Lysebeth 1983, p.53-55), the only article I found to deal with the group was that of Y.Millerand (1985). Indeed, this author presents the peculiarities of teaching to a group. She considers the influence of the group's volume and evokes, in this regard, a reflection of Nil Hahoutoff:

"A few years ago, our late friend Nil Hahoutoff told us that he had never been able to have a close relationship with three students and he saw it as effect of a psychological reason, even though he was "fulfilling" a larger group." p.48
A friendly wink!

Y.Millerand also emphasizes the teacher's factor: her/his "psychic scope" and "beneficial influence". She observes the influence of a female majority (p.50), but does not specify her thought.

I come to the end of my brief, when I receive the number 61 of the *Revue Française de Yoga* (January 2020) and find two articles about the group! Surprise, rather unpleasant: my subject was hacked! And then I praise the awareness.

These two articles are contrasted, one recounts the experience of a think tank on the subject (I.Blanchard-Teissier, F.Cappelle and C.Villiers, 2020), while the other offers an informed general presentation of social psychology (M.-P. Sicard Devillard, 2020). What is this form of resistance to the group in yoga literature? To the reasons already mentioned (the master-pupil relationship, the attack of the Self, the relationship Me- cosmos, etc.), I will add the concept of "non-attachment" which undermines everything that makes connection, precisely. Yet the group, the source of the "group illusion" is the fastest way to live this fusion moment, the unity emerging from the multiple, so sought after in the philosophy of yoga!

- Is there some Unconscious in the room?

What interests group psychoanalysis is what escapes social logic and the mastery of relationships. The unconscious does not stop at the individual... The unconscious psychic functioning of a group uses the individual unconscious, and more goes through it and produces particular effects, as it also passes through the institution in which this group takes place. The job is therefore to listen beyond the social level, failures, questions, repetitions etc. It is a question of questioning the synchrony of the different institutional, groupal and individual levels: a polyphonic listening. Here I will talk about some of the effects of the unconscious that I have observed, from within the groups of students, during my training.

Some manifestations of the group unconscious in the yoga class:

o Atmosphere and "group rustle"

The "atmosphere" of a place, a group, a course is the "immediate connection" that R.Kaës (1984) speaks of. I found, alongside the thesis devoted to this topic by C.Bittolo (2007), a relatively important development, in the practice of energy yoga and *the Vocabular* published by this orientation.

Distinguishing external/internal atmosphere, Jean Pierre Laffez speaks of the atmosphere of the room (1998, p.14-19) but also of the importance of the teacher's inner attitude:

"Especially in an atmosphere where "joy and harmony" manifest themselves, the course's message borrows less from the mind than from a subtle channel, using more of the interiority than the vocabulary." (idem p.7).

Roger Clerc and Lucien Ferrer's definitions and comments on this subject can be also found in this publication. These authors insist: "In energy yoga, the detection and appreciation of all these evolving, constantly changing, environments are of considerable importance." (idem p.16)

In my research on the sound experience, I proposed to call "group rustle" ("bruissement de groupe") the sound part of these atmospheres (Lapoujade C, Lecourt 2001, and Lecourt, 1991, 2000, 2003, 2004). These are sound links that are interesting to observe from the sounds of corridors, locker rooms... Because the "rustle" gives an idea of the present state of the group to which we will address. We can detect the density of the group, tensions/aggressiveness/excitement, or calm, energy or apathy, tempo... His listening puts us in touch with the intimacy of the group, and makes a first tuning.

o The lung group: a group traveled by breath and its sound manifestations...

In the Course Nil Hahoutoff/Patrick Tomatis, yawning in the group is a way to become on the same wavelength. That was one of my first observations. Sighs, yawns find their places before the chorus of deep breaths. They act as a first tuning, as for orchestral instruments, it is here the bodies that adapt themselves in tune with the breath tempo. Indeed, there can be a gradual tuning (for new ones) in volume, timbre, and vocal registers (according to an implicit rule specific to each group).

The silent refrain of deep breaths, after each posture, maintains this tuning, a moment accessible to all regardless of the state of the moment. Each new posture benefits from this support that gives time to be attuned to the sensations, and in tune with the group.

o Thank you, an end of course, classes with, classes without... I will now address another "group effect" that struck me, the question of thank you at the end of the course. I observed a great variability according to the courses,

according to the teachers, according to the situations (courses or seminars). In this transmission, where there is a lot of talk on gratitude and thankfulness, this social convention takes on its strong meaning in the master-pupil relationship in groups. Some teachers have instituted this thanks with an end-of-course ritual: a way to deal with the issue and perhaps to spare surprise or disappointment. But when this is not the case, when freedom is left to the students... I was struck by the ends of the course without any "Thank you", a silence that I perceived as "cold" and sometimes also "massive" (the first time I had the word cut off). Well this sign of gratitude is also the return to social - always this social dimension that stumbles... This observation led me to consider that the "thank you" can testify to a state of the group.

To say "thank you": you have to be able to distinguish and think about a person who has had a role, here the teacher. Depending on the level of regression in the group, the state of dependence, the more or less fusional fantasy, this re-knowledge is possible or not. Moreover, with dependence one must think of the presence of a certain depressivity (cf. W.R.Bion, 1961), affect which incites little to this "dynamic of recognition". Of course the teacher's attitude also has an impact on this behavior: more or less proximity/distance, need for recognition...

In the expression of my "thank you" (life taught me its value), when without echoing, I find myself confronted with the silence that follows, it is not always clear to me, whether the group leaves me alone, or if, rather, my voice is used as a "spokesman", the atmosphere, at that moment, can respond to it.

These observations lead me to clarify this particular conception of the group from the unconscious point of view, I will mention just three authors.

- From the individual to the "one" to the "we"

To "be group" at the psychic level, it is not enough to bring people together (social group), we need "unconscious alliances", a concept developed by my master, René Kaës (1993, 1999, 2007):

"Unconscious alliances are the cement of the psychic matter that binds us to each other, in the common psychic space shared by members of a family, a couple, a group or an institution. They pre-exist to the newborn and produce their effects beyond the subjects, the circumstances (...) (2012 p.112). They constitute "a group matrix of narcissism; a relationship of mutual support "the subject must satisfy the narcissistic requirements which are those of the ensembles of which he is a part and the ensembles are the founders of the narcissism of the subject." (p.120)

Here we find an echo of the problem of the ego (of our first part), to highlight a situation more complex than it seems since there is no ego without a group:

"The opposition between the Self and the group thus loses its radicality if we consider that they maintain from the beginning of psychic life relationships of correlations that manifest themselves in a common and shared psychic space. The nature of this double investment of the Self by the group and the group by the Self is narcissistic in nature. Narcissism is one of the knotting points of these spaces and one of the nodes of their conflict. p.121. (This author uses P.Aulagnier's notion of a "narcissistic contract").

It is precisely in this "common and shared" psychic space, a transsubjective level, that the yoga class is located. And, in the group, the unconscious narcissistic contract participates in the formation of identifications and identifying cues. C.Neri speaks of a "slight depersonalization" in the group by "greater permeability of the psychic skin" (2017, p.24). This notion of depersonalization is found in the texts of yoga, but in a deliberately individual approach, even though the group could offer useful support for this approach. As for the difficulty of "grouping" I would add that the body here highlighted, exposed, is what separates the most and has the most differences (sex, age, race...). Egalitarian, the "group illusion" (D.Anzieu, 1981), is, moreover, a defence against these differences and the problems they raise, by the illusion of being one (by merging by the force of fantasy).

From this point of view one could consider the group illusion as a step in the yogic journey, since it offers fusional pleasure, the experience of one in the multiple beyond the individual. With a difference in interpretation since, the individual is here as dissolved in a whole, identified to the whole. Often euphoric, can this group experience that erases all otherness, and therefore any conflict, not be seen as a prelude to the idealized goal of fusion with the cosmos?

W.R.Bion (1961; a summary of the theory can be found in O.Avron, 1996, or E.Lecourt 2008, p.80-92) proposes to distinguish three levels:

- The "working group" level (conscious), the group is task-centered: in our case, learning yoga;
- The underlying (non-conscious) groupal emotional level, where there are archaic fears, anxieties, fantasies related to the current group situation (recall of lived situations, fear of losing one's identity, fantasies of engulfment, destruction, devouring by the group, etc.);
- And, at an even more regressive level, this author hypothesizes a "protomental" where psyche/soma/mental is not yet differentiated. I think the latter is close to the level of functioning evoked in yoga. The body is predominant, as in the baby who does not yet benefit from these differentiations (somatic manifestations can pass through the group).

One of our comrades reported a teaching situation that illustrates this concept. In this course came a new participant. The group was with their eyes closed.

During a posture she did not understand well and positioned her arm in an incorrect way. At that moment the teacher was very surprised, and even touched, to observe that all had made this same movement, even the regulars (who knew the posture well). This unison that seems "magical" is typically an effect of the groupal unconscious in its form of the "group illusion". It can be interpreted on a superficial level as a way of integrating the new. At the unconscious level it is a defense against the threat posed by the difference, represented by this intruder, and its incorrect movement. The group's merging cohesion must be maintained at all costs.

This phenomenon can also be compared to what D. Widlöcher (2007) writes of the associative process, "The "copensée" can be considered as the vehicle of communication from unconscious to unconscious." (p.31). I have had several times of these "magical" situations with the sound communication groups I have conducted. As at this congress in Rio, where, in the workshop, the twenty participants, eyes closed, all opened their mouths at the same time and produced a harmony held in improvisations during the ten minutes that the experience lasted (a performance I would never have obtained if I had asked them to do it voluntarily).

There is, therefore, what is observed in terms of the behaviours and roles taken in the group (the social), and behind this functioning, these unconscious underpins/basement which, like the lapses of individual analysis, can have effects at the obvious level (for those who know how to "hear" them).

It should be noted that, if it is this fantasy basis of union ("group illusion" D. Anzieu) that provides the basis for a "group" at the unconscious level, cement of all therapeutic work in groups, the ultimate goal in the case of therapy as in the case of yoga class, is not the group, but that everyone finds his way, namely unbundling (cf R. Kaës). The group is the means, not the goal, but a powerful means!

The yoga class engages participants in intimate bodily involvement that violates the rules of propriety. There is an important part of provocation in yoga that questions the limits. I wonder about the impact of these characteristics on unconscious group psychic functioning. In psychoanalysis groups it is a rule instituted from the beginning, recalled by C. Neri in the article he devotes to this question (2017): The rule of respect for privacy subjects, a rule that concerns not just the teacher. For the yoga class in town, in particular, it would be worth explaining. Of course, it is implied that the *yamas*... But who knows about it and in what interpretation? The next chapter will allow us to come back to that.

- Empathy, rhythm, touch:

With the group dimension, we have addressed the regressive process associated

with this situation of teaching in groups (and in a school), with R.Pratt (2007) let's see what the analysis of early relationships can bring to the understanding of what is being played out in groups:

"The articulation of the personal rhythm to that of the other is what allows us to experience the encounter on the deepest plane of each person's intimacy, as close as possible to the reunion with the aspects of the primitive symbiosis. Subsequently, this will correspond to the experience of internal harmony, appeasement and security, linked to contexts specific to each. This will provide a real bottom line of trust and security in the intersubjective relationship. This forms the basis of interpersonal communication in relation to the processes that allow one person to receive primary emotions from the other. The projective identification mechanism, conceptualized by Bion in its "normal" aspects, forms the psychic basis of what is commonly called empathy: emotional touch thus takes over from physical touch. This rhythmic interpretation achieves a relationship where each aspect of one is received, taken and contained by the other in a relationship of portage, psychic holding (...) (p.108).

I kept this long quote because I find that the main thing is said: the intimacy and the great confidence of this relationship, the "primary" emotions summoned (which we find at the emotional level of group studied by W.R.Bion), empathy and its relationship to "touch", finally, the rhythmic dynamics of the relationship. Jacques Cosnier (1994), who has experimented with care relationships, speaks of "body echoation activity."

Ophelia Avron, a group psychoanalyst, has questioned the in/of group relationship a lot and proposed the concepts of "rhythmic interliation", "participatory rhythmic emotion" (body and psyche interacting), and hypothesizes an "interliation drive" in complementarity of sexual drive (1996, 2017), all living being is set in motion by the presence of others.

These reflections lead us to the notions of transfer/countertransfer, which, although far from their original terrain (the individual relationship in a psychoanalytic situation), are very useful to reflect on what is at stake in the group. Remember that the transfer is always a misunderstanding in time (old, infantile memories carried over to the present situation), and in space (a familiar figure, projected onto a person present: the teacher, for example). In a group situation, the interest is also what makes the situation complex: there is the central transfer on the teacher, but also lateral transfers, between the members of the group, and a possible transfer to the group as an entity, as well as for the counter-transfer (which is caused by these transfers to the teacher). We speak of "diffraction" of the transfer (R.Kaës). This opens up the possibilities of identification, frees from the face-to-face (and a possible grip), multiplies the movements, but complicates the analysis!

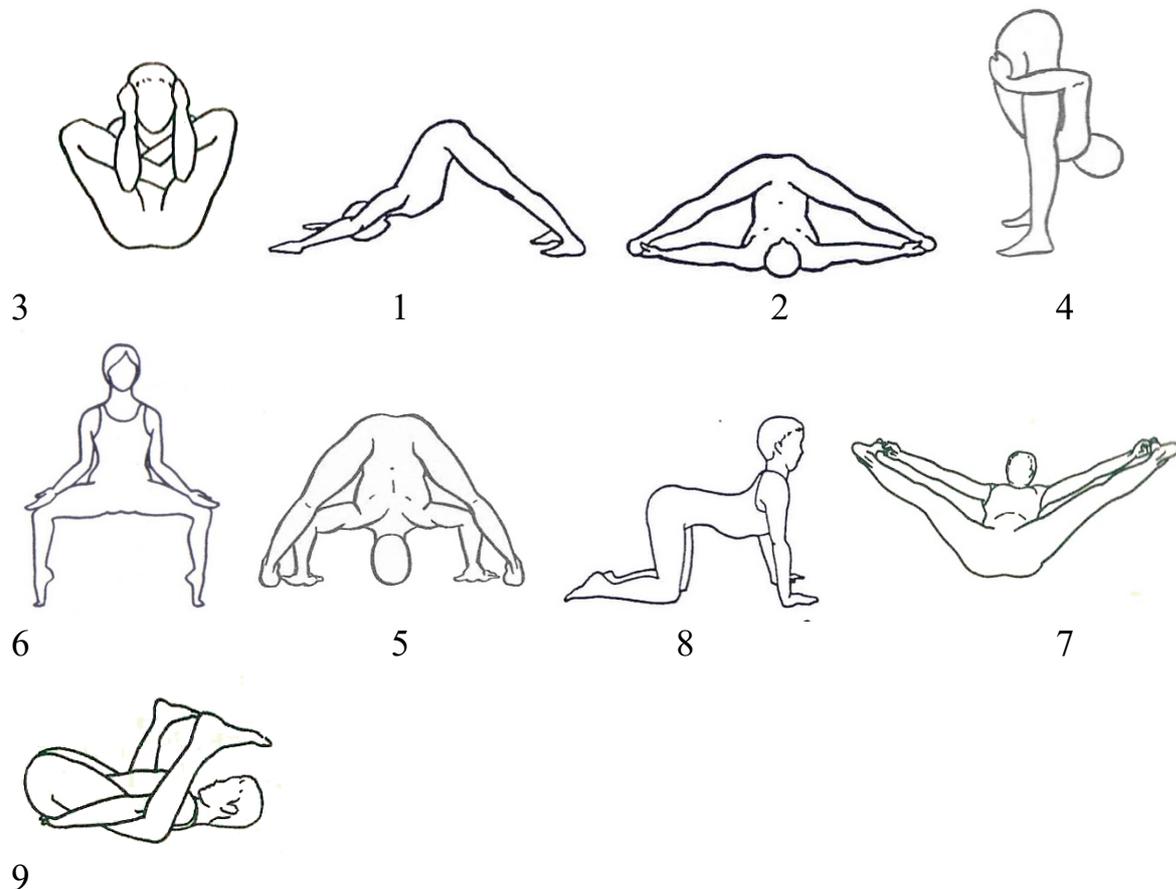
I will end this paragraph with this quotation which concerns very precisely the relationship by the body, of the "touches" evoked by R.Pratt, which seems to me to apply well to the teaching of yoga:

"A touching gesture does not seek to take or give, but opens the patient, through his own sensation, access to the metaphor of his body" Pierre Fedida (1995, p.101).

Finally, the "grouping" in yoga can be held back by the strong bodily presence of this situation, the sexual fantasy it arouses. The quest for the "*sunya*" can struggle to defuse unconscious sources. That is what we will address now.

3/ From the sexual to the spiritual? Sexuality in the yoga class...

Some compromising postures... (List Appendix 1)



N.Hahoutoff "The Sexual Problem Seen From Top": What "Problem"? (Was he answering a question?) "seen from above" be at great distance with "bottom" ... This wording illustrates the difficulty of talking about it, answering explicit or implicit questions.

Yoga Kundalinî Upanishad: verse 60; among the "prohibitive" obstacles to yoga is "the sexual appetite that leads to the worst disorders" (J.Varenne, 1971, p.101)! We find here, as in the very repetitive quest for repentance, echoes to a very guilty morality too well known!

Talk about it or not... Introducing a group unspoken, an unconscious alliance, "community of denial", co-refoulement (R.Kaës, 2012)...

I am thinking here mainly of the training of the teacher who will actually be confronted with this "problem". How to prepare her/him? We are talking about bodies and postures (already equivocal term) in a collective, and therefore social situation. In the yoga class, the physical intimacy and psychological intimacy are tested by the relationship with the teacher and the group.

Here are some anecdotal but significant observations: end of my very first class, in the locker room, two young women exchange: "You saw all these phallus!" at first surprise! I understand that they are also news, they saw "a show": about thirty participants in "*sarvangâsana*" (I did not see, absorbed in the posture). Years later I am invited with an EFY representative for a debate in a rather popular environment, on yoga, music therapy and other approaches. Time for open questions, a man from the back of the room asks us about sex in yoga. He introduces himself to "Papa Eric Coach Lover", and adds "my God is my sex!" ... I propose to answer him because, behind the provocation, there is a real question. How do I talk about it? Is there a clear representation of the place of sex in the yoga class? What can these postures induce, arouse in students? I'm actually talking to him about drive and sublimation. But I know that I do not have the right answer, that it is the work that remains to be done.

In my second year of classes in the city, the teacher insisted on a posture that "mobilizes the perineum", I can't remember which one, or exactly in what terms and tone he spoke. Once in the posture I feel a certain excitement, which leads me to wonder "But what is he getting at ? " (and that I remember!) I strongly feel the opposition between the social context of the group and this practice that touches on the most intimate (physical and psychic), the opposition between this invitation, the permissiveness it seems to offer, and the work centered on mastery. How to manage? Is the teacher aware of what he is driving at? And why does he do it? Does he have control over it? Another teacher (always in town) obviously goes through difficult periods in his sex/love life, so that several liaisons explicitly cross the course over time. He is, at this moment of fragility, objectively placed in front of this show of "women in postures", not easy!

I will finally mention the apprentice yoga teacher who, practicing with female classmates, becomes entangled in an equivocal sensuality...

In a few strokes, here is the table planted ...

C.Dejours (2001) insists, our body is relationship, we do not experience the biological body, from the beginning the latter was subverted by the sexual.

- **About postures:**

Marie-Christine Leccia emphasizes the evocative richness of postures: "The practitioner lives and experiences in himself all the manifestations of life: the mineral, the plant, the animal, the human, as well as the elements (earth, water, fire, air). (...) He marries in his body and in his psyche all the special qualities of the *Prakriti*, of the phenomenal world. By the more external, the form, he tries to approach its mystery and essence. (...) On the other hand, when the student finds himself lying on his stomach, on all fours, sitting or standing, he goes through the different stages of his humanity... regressive return, mobilization of traces in a state of "observant consciousness" ... to "perhaps remove the prints." (2010, p.25-26).

I would add that sexuality is very directly part of this journey, of these traces and of these prints. And this journey is also a form of bare laying that leads beyond the social personality, social rules, an unveiling, an exhibition, in group, of the body parts usually protected, hidden, intimate (for example: a woman must not spread the legs, how many hesitate -when asked- to do so in class!)

Specifically, anatomically: fascias

On fascias, Jean Pierre Laffez explains:

"A set of fascial membranes unites the three diaphragms. That is, the floor pelvic, respiratory diaphragm and neck area". (2010, p.34), and again: "The sacrum is the meeting place of the musculo-fascial forces of the body as a whole." (2010, p.112)

Yoga brings us to live the body through the experience of a wealth/anthology of sensations, resounding postures in the form of aches, relaxation, functional pleasure, energy circulation, new perceptions, discriminations... I wonder to what extent this functional pleasure is related, to the exercise of fascias mobilized in all our breaths and postures.

It seems to me that fascias can be the intermediate relays in an eroticization of the whole body, (see J.Laplanche and C.Dejours) of its functioning. Of course *bandha* and, especially, *mula bandha*, also have an important place in these effects.

Mula bandha: contraction of the perineum (pelvic and anal areas, of the root, base) "In the breath retentions, contraction, pressure caused by the air contained in the lungs causes an arousal of the pelvic plexus, complete arousal when there is practice of other *bandha* by stretching the bulb and spinal cord." Laffez J.P. (2004 p.37).

The richness of the sensations implemented in postures (it should also be said a word of the chest) would thus participate in a generalization of pleasure, an enjoyment starting with sexual areas, and beyond. Could the current craze for yoga, especially among women, be partly related to it?

Another consideration is that, in the course, suggestive postures and the lifting of prohibitions, feed the fantasy activity, sometimes to the detriment of learning, of understanding: hence the long path often observed between the teacher's word and the student's understanding, even for seemingly simple instructions. The imagination of the body is particularly solicited in this work. F. Ansermet and P. Magistretti (2010) have a fine analysis of this form of "parasitization":

"The amygdala will not only provide information from the fantasy scenario directly to working memory, but also modulate the perception of external reality at the earliest stages, thus potentially influencing the nature of the information transmitted by sensory relays to working memory." (p.197)

- Yoga in education

Yoga, in traditional education, seems to me, on this point, on the side of testing, from resistance to excitement. Daniel Roumanoff develops traditional education, guru-student, in India, he clarifies the notion of *brahmacârya*, the student "who moves in Brahman":

"The connotation is indeed religious since *brahmacârin* must be a continent and *brahmacârya* by extension means continence, chastity. Studies involve the use of all available energy and early on, in India, sexual intercourse has been considered a loss that prevents further spiritual activities, studies or practices(*sâdhâna*). (1990, p.86-87).

However, this treatment of the body, via postures, in an exclusively male environment, does not avoid the sexual dimension (homosexual in particular). There is tension between body exposure, arousal and asceticism (a bit like a forced exercise of sublimation). Sexuality here is reduced to an amount of energy (Y.S.II, p.38).

I imagine yoga in the education of young Brahmin boys as a method to curb aggression and expression of sexuality. In this context one can conceive of the place given to provocation. But what about adult education? T.K.V.Desikachar quoting Katha Upanishad writes: Yoga is defined as "*sthiram indriya dhâranâm*": the ability to restrain the senses in the presence of very strong stimuli" (1994, p.12), this is a good way to do just that.

A.Van Lysebeth observes that the conception of yoga is the work of men, and has a "drastic" character (1983, p.51). It's also a male sexuality. How do think of it as feminine?

So there are several questions: what is the place of sexuality in yoga teaching? How to teach a group? How to adapt yoga teaching to predominantly female groups?

- Sexuality and spirituality...

It is of course on the side of tantrism that we turn. To read these texts, the question arises of the desired purpose: physical pleasure, the encounter/union with the other, or the search for a particular state of consciousness, for which the sexual act would be only a means, and "the" partner too... it would still be necessary to ensure the first, no "sexual pleasure insurance" in the multitude of Insurance contracts marketed! As for the level of consciousness reached, "enjoyable", this philosophy, attributes to it a much higher value ... Sylviane Legrand in her comments of yoga-sutras goes so far as to speak of a "sexual function of Awakening". She writes "the sexual act, the first unconscious step towards "meditation" can in her "perfection" prepare for higher states of consciousness." (2010, p.218). And she goes on:

It constitutes "a liberating act" insofar as it reveals our potentialities, our capacities to surpass, to acquire other planes of consciousness, when the three levels (intellect, emotional, psychic) of being participate, merge, foreshadowing in their fleeting union the openness that later, further enlarged, will initiate the ultimate Liberation. (idem p.219) And she concludes that "when the conditions are not met to make the sexual act a sacred act, it is better to abstain momentarily. (Idem p.224).

These comments remind me of the positions of A.Maslow (1971), founder of "humanist psychology" in search (and even accounting!) of "peak experiences" of which orgasm is part. They still remind me of W.Reich (1936) and his quest for the "orgone" in order to appropriate this enjoyable energy, to market it even! Two authors at extremes, one with more ecstasy, the other towards more materialization, but both focused on performance !

More broadly, yoga, for us Westerners, gives a place to the body that looks for us a foreign. P. Maillard (1979) points out this aspect:

"Perhaps the most decisive contribution of yoga to the man of the West will have been to give back his body: not only the body he has—for health, pleasure, power—but the body that he is for a more being, in a greater presence to himself, to the cosmos, to others, to God." (p.43). And he adds: "The hesychase tradition speaks of the first movement, from the head to the heart, but not from the second, from the belly to the heart: of the bowels one does not speak, it is the infernal place, the seat of evil instincts and desires; there is not even a word in the Hebrew Bible for sex... (p.48)

His reflection here joins the energy circuit of *the Kundalinî*, from *Mûlâdhâra*, to *Sahasrâra* and finally *Anâhata*. Openness to the intelligence of the heart: Love, "true love, devoid of any possessiveness, equal to each one, who nourishes others as much as the one who dispenses it, and which constitutes this extraordinary **magnetization** to Divine Life. It is "the attraction of everything by the All, and of all things between them." It is really at this level the openness to the "intelligence of the heart." (P.Tomatis, 1992, 98).

- **Sexuality, group and unconscious**

As we have seen, the course addressed to a group of individuals, requires a reflection on what work from the body produces in a social situation.

Unfortunately, this is still only underway even among group analysts (E.Lecourt, 2004). M.Nitsun, (2006) devotes a book in which he finds that the influences of parameters such as genders/sexes in the composition of the group, gender/sex of analysts, are not studied. In general, the therapeutic group is considered by both men and women as a female activity, so Foulkes, founder of the Anglo-Saxon group-analysis, like many authors, represented the group as a female body. M.Nitsun considers that the problem of bisexuality is particularly acute in the group situation and produces intense anxieties in both sexes. There is also a silence on the erotic dimension, especially homo-erotic in the transfero-countertransference relationship.

Finally, it was agreed that the group reactivates the unconscious fantasies of parental union, the primitive scene, in participants and therapists (the latter's fantasies may unwittingly induce the group process) (p.102). The experience of the siblings should be added here (R.Jaïtin, 2006, 2007).

Thus, Mr. Nitsun considers that the anti-group would be linked to both negative associations of the primitive scene and an anti-libidinal conception of the family group. Finally, J.Chasseguet-Smirguel (2001) observed the idealization of sexual practices in group, sometimes considered mystical experiences.

Yoga, by its positioning, is "on the wire", boundary/articulation between the soma and the psyche: the exact place given to the impulse in psychoanalytic theory, an impulse that has the function of the representation of the somatic in the psychic. It is "built" in the relationship. Here we find once more the group, social dimension, as R. Kaës (2012) points out:

"The impulse is not only conceivable as a requirement of psychic work because of the relationship of the psyche with biological needs, it is also a requirement that is part of intersubjective links, in group affiliations, in social and cultural constraints" (p.137-138), as J.Laplanche (2003) also pointed out.

Elisabeth Haïch (2006) writes:

"Sexual energy is the driving force that helps man to set out, the very force to

rise ever higher and which, manifesting itself in the body at its lower echelon, represents the link between mind and matter. So we can't separate Yoga from sexual strength!" (p.28).

From this point of view, the yoga class is the creation of a common impulse and shared space, from unconscious alliances (whose forms will not be detailed, in this short text). This can be seen, for example, in the natural effects of seduction and their relational "management".

It is then important to note that "When the pact based on fundamental prohibitions and the contract for renouncing the direct realization of impulse goals are lacking, it is the settings for transforming impulses that are failing." (R. Kaës, 2012, p.150).

Finally, I notice that our culture emphasizes, at the spiritual level, the image of the Father, the filial father-son relationship, and a bequest (N.B. the Harward dictionary gives "to father" !) that bypasses the sexual path. While India always refers us to the Shakti/Shiva couple, and the sexual act as a path to spirituality.

o **Transformation, by what processes?**

What processes do we go through, from sexual pleasure (*shukha*), to bliss (*ananda*), to mystical grasping?

The terms used in the literature are multiple: renunciation/detachment, alchemy, transformation, transmutation, sublimation, transubstantiation, spiritualization, divination, sacralization... This list, which is not exhaustive, already shows the difficulty of conceiving what is being discussed. Y.Tardan-Masquelier observes the lack of verbal language to account for these phenomena (1994, p.106). Can we, should we practice it? Or prepare for it? Wait for Grace?

And what exactly are we looking for?

A questioning that can be found, in particular, in the introduction to the *Hatha-Yoga Pradîpikâ*, under the pen of T.Michael:

"How to use these fundamental impulses of enjoyment (*bhoga*), in order to transform their nature by **sublimating** them, to reverse the self-centered tendency, to open the finite and restricted consciousness to the Supreme Being-Consciousness- Infinite Beatitude, this is the central preoccupation of Tantra, who seek to **sanctify** and **transmute** human life in all its aspects and in all its functions, including nutritional and sexual functions." (1974, p.55) (highlighted by us). The following text lists the effects of this transformation. "(IV, 3-4, p.216-218).

The image of a vertical path, between low and high - from chakra to chakra -, found in all these texts. As F. Roux (2002) describes it:

"In the Indian tradition, the spine is the place of a mysterious **transubstantiation**, called *Kundalinî*, the result of creation, that is, the life force

that enters matter. This force enters our body from the sky to the base, where it falls asleep, curled up on itself. *Kundalinîs* is the coiled. The awakening that tantrism sees as the goal of yoga practices is this strength, *Shakti*, which goes back to consciousness, represented by *Shiva*. This journey back from energy to consciousness that passes through the different *chakras* is very long and very complicated." p.5

André Van Lysebeth (1983) points out that one must distinguish two sexualities, he describes a release of the species pole towards the individual pole, by "spiritualization" based on genital libido:

"For tantra, the energy of the "species" pole is activated and guided along the spine to the "individual" pole where it triggers the phenomenon of ultimate bliss and leads to a dazzling experience of cosmic consciousness." p.35

Each of these two sexualities "feeds and animates the other (...)" This is why tantra deliberately stimulates genital libido through all possible non-artificial procedures, but in a controlled manner. p.35 For this author, it is a matter of "**transcending** the ordinary sexual orgasm," "spiritualizing" sexuality and, in order to do so, "erotic imagination is "deliberately used".

M. Eliade talks about the process of transforming the human body into a cosmic body and speaks of **the transmutation** of secular activities into rituals (1975 p.124, 135):

"This is why the "living rite" plays a decisive role in the tantric *sâdhana*; this is why "heart" and "sexuality" serve as vehicles for accessing transcendence. (Idem, p.160). More generally, he considers that: "Any erotic phenomenon can express a hatayogic exercise or a stage of meditation, just as any symbol, any "state of holiness" can be affected by an erotic meaning." (Ditto p.172).

"Ordinary" sexuality is therefore a "vehicle" to access the human being's surpassing.

Among these processes: the practice of **paradox** is central:

"The yogin strives to "completely reverse" normal behavior: it imposes a petrified immobility of the body (*âsana*), the rhythmization and stopping of the breath (*prânâyâma*), the fixation of the flow-mental (*ekâgratâ*), the immobility of thought, the "stopping" of the semen. At all levels of human experience, he does the opposite of what life asks him to do. » (M.Eliade, 1975, p.177)

And finally, "All yogic techniques invite the same gesture: to do exactly the opposite of what human nature forces you to do." (idem, p.104).

One wonders if there is not there as a fascination for death ...

He continues: "Transforming the chaos of secular psychosomatic life into a cosmos, one guesses this ambition in all psychophysiological techniques, from *the âsana* to the *ekâgratâ*." (idem, p.105). But why talk about "chaos" here?

This is also what E.Haïch (2006) develops:

"Sexuality **and all its problems** (*emphasized by us*) concern only the body, not the real being, the mind, the Self. The spirit - the true ME - also called the SELF, has no sex (...)" (p.25-26). Man will "not only accelerate the pace of his spiritual evolution, but take in hand and hold under his yoke the life-giving force, the sexual force transformed into divine creative energy." (idem, p.29-30).

She talks about the "transformation" and "real **spiritualization** of sexual energy," all through the mastery of "sexual strength." (p32). This formulation evokes for me a lot of tension ...

For my part, I will leave the question of **sublimation** for an essay in Appendix 2, to focus on what a return to the regressive pole, in the individual, but also in the group, can still illuminate. I have chosen two authors to express this collusion, from the beginning, between biology and relational, in the physical care of young children. C.Dejours (2001) speaks of "libidinal subversion" which he defines as "a process leading to the formation of the erogenous body. It is not a natural process. It results from the specific relationship of the child to the adult around the care of the body. (p.168) Its failures are, for example, in uninhabited areas of the body (well known to yogis!).

C.Bollas (1989) finds, in adults, the source of requests for care and therapeutic expectations, in the experience of the "transformational object" of the infant ; the manipulation of the body, for example, at the time of the exchange: on the back, then on the belly, or on one side, then sitting..., experience, each time, of a complete transformation of the sensory universe (external and internal), not to mention the feelings of relief of tensions and pains. Yes, a change of position, at the origin of a small miracle... This author associates this state with the artistic experience of transformation.

I would tend to consider that the postures of yoga take up, echo, this experience of transformation and this impression of "new vision" (for example, extensions and inversions).

To conclude this paragraph, I will return to the *kundalinî*, with Patrick Tomatis' comment about the posture of the half-cobra (which takes place in the "greeting to the sun"):

"Re-welcoming the Breath in an opening position that happens however to be closer to the ground, in order to continue to mark its belonging to the Earth, the muscle and ligament brakes of the groin are remarkably released. This opening

of the pelvic belt is the first indispensable condition for the emancipation of the "animal tunic" that encloses man, and thus prepares him to live fully his condition as a human being in which he will let the spiritual dimension flourish. (RFY 26, p.120).

The path of yoga? Towards a deeply rooted spirituality, embodied in an inhabited body. This seems to me to be the great originality of yoga. The few processes mentioned would merit an important work of elucidation that goes beyond this brief. So I end with this recommendation, a seemingly very affordable process...

"The more you breathe while being conscious, the more subtle you become: it's all learning yoga!" (F.Roux, 2002, p.8) and the author continues "Consciousness is the future of the human being"

4/ The yoga class and its setting:

We will now reflect on what is "framework" in the EFY (French School of Yoga) so that the commitment, the "stakes" of previous processes are possible, safely. The concept of framework is fundamental in educational, clinical practices and therefore also for the teaching of yoga. It was agreed that the strength of the framework was the first condition for engaging processes towards expected objectives (J.Bleger, 1966). Previous reflections have emphasized the importance of what is potentially engaged, and put into play (literally), in a yoga class, in the teacher/student/student group relationship.

I reflect here on what is part of the teaching I received at EFY Paris.

- - The first element and bearer of the framework is, of course, the **teacher** himself, and the solidity of his internal framework (at the School we insist on parentage/filiation, for example).
- - **The institution** in which the activity takes place (School, Association, care institution, Beauty Institute, etc.), its rules of operation, its values (on this institutional dimension see J.-C.Rouchy (2005))
- - **The material elements of the frame:**

o The yoga room (doing a class in a gymnasium, a dance hall, an art association room, etc.) requires a layout, an appropriation;

o The carpet, a well-defined private space: the individual carpet, the realization of limits. It plays a par exciting role in response to the co-existence created by the grouping.

- Explicit rules:

o Sound rather than visual: voice, listening

This is, in particular, the rule of avoiding demonstration, and thus imitation, in order to promote a work of concentration, of appropriation from the verbal accompaniment of work. This rule limits the spectacular dimension of group postures (and voyeurism), the student being often with his eyes closed, focused on his experience. For the teacher it is a requirement of a work on vocal quality and on the explanation, the pedagogy of postures.

The quality of listening and the act of presence:

François Roux develops the idea of yoga as a "school of presence":

"The encounter with the master is therefore, in the literal sense, a presence (bringing face to face), and the touchstone of his teaching, whatever it may be, is the disciple's increasing ability to be present, until it becomes perhaps, pure presence. This is the deep sense of spiritual teaching and initiation (*upadesha*) given by the guru." (1990, p.163).

o Sovereign speech (counter demonstration, model, exhibition):

Rather than show: open to distance and calm the seeds of excitement that this strong presence of the body arouses. The choice of a vocabulary studied, and neutralizing (anatomical precisions: such as, for example, talking about the "pelvic girdle"). The obligatory passage through speech, **the wording of the perceived body and the moving body** has a function of "pare-excitement" (Freudian concept).

o Touch to avoid/weight:

"The double forbidding of touch" as a precursor to the oedipal prohibition (D.Anzieu,1975), deals with sexual and aggressive urges. It applies to both protagonists.

"The double forbidding of touch conditions the renunciation of the primacy of skin pleasures, and the transformation of the tactile experience into basic representations from which intersensory correspondence systems can be established." (p.203).

The prohibition responds to the need for the psychic apparatus to differentiate itself, beyond, processes originating from attachment, gripping, hold. The Code of Ethics for Yoga Teachers contains the rule of respect and recommendations for caution and delicacy (20.10).

To these "safeguards" I would add those that concern in particular future teachers, professionalizing framework complements:

o Theoretical courses

o The place given to anatomy (and its vocabulary)

- o **The intervention of researchers, thinkers**
- o **The code of ethics.**

- The implicits that also make the framework:

I will still evoke two parameters, not always specified or even considered, but yet very present and effective in the yoga class: the tempo, the aesthetic dimension, because they are also "safeguards" ...

o Tempo: (rhythm, silence/pause) By its organizing role, regulator, the tempo participates in the function of pare-excitement (a very slow tempo can lead to falling asleep, a very fast tempo in trance...). It also intervenes directly on the regression process in the group. The ultimate goal of the postures is to bring the seat (âsana), it is a slow tempo that is privileged. It is known, in particular, that the lengthening of the tempo inhibits cognitive apprehension, calms the "mind". How do I get it? Impose it automatically? The ideal would be to start from the current tempo of the students (contact) - tempo of which we can hear the beginnings in the "group rustle" - to stimulate, accompany a slowdown, this in a progressive group tuning (cf. Appendix 3).

o **Aesthetics**, which is not the objective, significantly "sublimate" the body, offers a release, **playing** on the crest materiality/sexuality/spirituality, by a psychic ability to shape.

A.Padoux (2010) emphasizes its spirituality in tantric rites, "beauty, openness to the afterlife" (p.158 and 217).

And in the yoga class...?

F.Cheng (2016) writes: "Art, in its supreme state, is a piece of this both carnal and spiritual beauty of the living universe revealed by a human soul." p.46.

And, sharing Confucius' question: "How can we make the desire for virtue so exciting as carnal desire? F.Cheng responds in his 2016 book:

"In the name of the beauty of gesture, our virtuous desire can try to outdo carnal desire in passion. May some of the trees or flowers we cherish on daily manage to persuade ourselves. (p.87) And again: "Goodness is the guarantor of the quality of beauty; beauty radiates goodness and makes it desirable" (idem p.43).

For his part, M.Hulin (1978) emphasizes the interest of universality specific to aesthetic fiction, which lies between the individual and the mystical experience (this idea is also found in A. Ceballos' article, about theatre, 2006 p.13).

Referring to the atmosphere of the Indian festivals, he writes: "It is this climate of newfound innocence, this unanimistic joy that Abhinavagupta analyzes as the precondition for any aesthetic communion":

"Pure consciousness, the essence of all things, contracts according to the difference of bodies. But in large meetings, it flourishes (again) through mutual

reflection (individual consciences) gathered. The mass of rays of our own effervescent consciousness is reflected in those of others, as in so many mirrors. It then is blazed and effortlessly accesses universality (...) flourished, free from any obstacle, consciousness aggregates to bliss. p.342

Here we find elements that are similar to the "group illusion" studied above. The confrontation with the group, the crowd, traumatic shaking, erasing individual boundaries, in this case, mobilizes powerful defense mechanisms, creating a level of transsubjective functioning, which can, as we have seen, create a "magic moment" through access to a spontaneous, totally improvised collective creative impulse, whose engine is unconscious.

Art is "play," music, especially. C.Dejours (2001) argues that play, for children, is a way of emancipating themselves from biological and sexual subversion. It happens that, from the beginning, I've been hearing yoga as a breeze... As part of Bhakti yoga, yoga of love, Eveline Grieder repeats the lyrics of his Indian music master:

"Music is not the body, it floats around it, it penetrates it, but it goes straight to God. That's why I always tell you it's great Yoga." (1990, p.63).

And, for me, the movements of *Bach's Goldberg Variations* are like yoga.

In the teaching of yoga, in groups, all these elements are "framework" and ensure the proper functioning of learning.

In conclusion

M.Hulin (1978) emphasizes the interest of moments of surprise and even misdirecting, as flaws of ordinary consciousness, openness to another state of consciousness (see also S.Legrand, 2010 p.237). Already Freud worked on these escapes: dream, slips, witty words, all these flashes often despised as witnesses of "loosing hold". Mr. Hulin encourages us to take an interest in the interval created by the flaw, or even to expand it to settle there (p.313) because this is precisely where "The Realization flourishes in all its intensity." VBh *Vijnânabhairava*, Silburn's translation (p.104).

Returning now to my initial "**disconcertingness**", I would say that it is part of these moments, and that paying attention to them allows us to move forward on the path...

"Disappointed" during my first class, I "tasted" precisely the flaw ..., this brief tries to develop it.

Finally, I invite you, now, to give a look under the carpet...

Under the carpet... Dreams...

What if yoga is like a dream? *the Siddhi* are almost all there...

For example, the *Yogatattva Upanishad* verses 109-110 (J.Varenne, 1991, p.66)

"He can, if he so desires, travel the worlds through his powers such as moving at will; He can, if he wants to become God, and enjoy the pleasures of Heaven, or turn himself to his will into a man, an animal or a genius, become a lion, tiger, elephant, horse or even attain the status of Supreme Lord!"

Alice in Wonderland accompanied my first experiences of body transformation on the carpet! I regularly dreamed of postures, "inventing" them, imagining the transition from one posture to another... all this on the musical background that accompanies my nights as my days, based on heart rate and breaths!

And, Oh surprise! Beyond dreams, beyond these childhood dreams, beyond even deep sleep, without a dream, would lie, says A.Avalon (1920; see also E.Griender, 1994), **AN original SON!** For me who made the sound experience a specialty, it's a beautiful gift!

" *Kundalî* is a form of the Supreme *Shakti* that preserves all the creatures endowed with breath" (p.165), at the origin of all sounds or energy... (*Shabda, Dhvani, Vaïkharî, Mâstrikâ...*)



"Under the impulse of *Ichchhâ Shakti* acting through the *Prânavâyû* (vital force) of the *Atmâ*, is produced in the *Mûlâdhâra* the sound power called *Parâ*.
" It is the causal *Shabda*, motionless, in *Kundalinî*, in the bodycenter *Mûlâdhâra*." (idem p.92); in short: "*Kundalî* is the name of *Shabdabrahman* in human bodies" (165).

SOURCES: The many threads of weaving, the weft



Weaving in kogis (Sierra Nevada) Tchendukua doc.

<https://youtu.be/OQH8P6oFCOY>

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APPENDIX 1

List of illustrations

Coverage: postcard. Butantan series; No.1 *Corallus caninus*, - Emerald Tree Boa, found in the Amazon. Picture: G.Puerto. Post Do Brasil.
The carpet (P.Tomatis Room), photo E.L. *shavâsana* (drawing by Pascale Brun) photo E.L.
Patrick Tomatis's Business Card.

POSTURES of the *FRY 20* (drawings by Pascale Brun) :

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p. Copy of an audio graphic

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APPENDIX 2

Yoga and sublimation

The question arises... As we have seen in the reflection on processes, there are many terminologies to try to account for the expected transformations. Often, in Western texts, the term "sublimation" is used. It's a quick, simple way to "translate." However, it seems to me to be quite far removed from what we are talking about. Our reflection is not a tenth translation proposal, but rather seeks to understand what it is all about.

Sublime: the highest in the scale of aesthetic, moral, intellectual values.

Sublimation: direct transition from the physical state to the gaseous state.

In the case of yoga would it be a question of the transition from sexual (physical) to a "sublimated" psychic state, that is to say highly valued? (any way would then be good, yoga, but, much faster, drugs, hypnosis, or other ...) ?

Sublimation, this concept has become common since the popularization of psychoanalysis.

Its definition in this context (Laplanche J., Pontalis J.B., 1968, p.465-467): These authors first point out that the Freudian proposal has remained undeveloped in his work. In other words, its use would be inversely proportional to its development.

By definition: This is a form of desexualization: sexual drive is derived to a new non-sexual purpose. It keeps its intensity. This new goal is aimed at socially valued objects.

A complementary consideration, a temporal condition: "The transformation of sexual activity into a sublimated activity (these two activities being directed towards independent external objects), would require an intermediate time, the withdrawal of libido on the self, which makes desexualization possible." (id.p.466)

Hypothesis proposed, following this, by these authors: "One might find here indicated the idea that sublimation is closely dependent on the narcissistic dimension of the self, so that one would find, at the level of the object targeted by the sublimated activities, the same character of beautiful totality that Freud assigns here to the self. One could, it seems, situate in the same line of thought the views of Melanie Klein who sees in sublimation a tendency to repair and restore the "good" object torn to pieces by destructive impulses. (id.p.466) This would explain the high valuation.

What struck me first, in this sense of inadequacy of the concept of sublimation for yoga, is the change of object. For there is no question of object in traditional texts: more, we aim at the non-attachment, or even the detachment of objects, as also, more often than not, from the social. So the derivation to the social would also not make sense (except in special cases).

So how is the goal, common to these two approaches, desexualization, achieved in yoga?

The following consideration: withdrawal of libido on the self, could be common to both approaches. The imagery that accompanies the *kundalinî*, wrapped around itself, can evoke it. The importance given to the body, to its care, would also be of the same register.

Finally, the notion of "beautiful totality" which is also found in this literature, also joins narcissism.

One might therefore think here that this term, "sublimation", in the context of yoga, would correspond to the first phase of the process highlighted by psychoanalysis. The withdrawal of libido is not accompanied by investment in an object valued by society (intellectual, aesthetic, moral), the second phase of the process of sublimation. However, some seem to take "light" itself as an

object and/or purpose? (in contradiction?)

And again, the Ego so present in the texts and so often attacked, would it not be of the order of self-eroticism (which would explain the violence it arouses)?

The transformation process would involve a desexualization of libido by narcissistic withdrawal. **What's next?**

The texts describe a transformative journey of libidinal energy, from chakra to chakra, a "mutative" journey for some. The images given are of "drilling" of successive chakras. The result is not, as we have just seen, the attachment to a new object, even artistic, no, a new state of consciousness that would make access to Love, a feeling of pure love, without object, without desire.

Some more details: The libido, in Freudian conception, is totally oriented towards impulse satisfaction, resolution of tension (the means is, on the other hand, contingent). Freud speaks of sexual object and object of love, object of impulse (person or partial object).

The object of the impulse: "what and by which it seeks to achieve its goal, namely a certain type of satisfaction" (J.Laplanche and J.-B.Pontalis, 1968, 290-295) ; (a person, a real or fantasy object, a partial object).

Object relationship "A term used by S.Freud's successors to describe the fantasy modalities of the subject's relationship to the outside world as they arise in the object choices that this subject performs." (E.Roudinesco, M.Plon, 1997, p.736-742)

In trantrism we notice that the "partner" - which has no materiality in the texts - is a (feminine) "passer", a function, a contingent means. We can also consider that since we are talking, in these texts, about *the yoni*, we are talking here about a partial object (it is not the person).

Sublimation in the physical sense: sexual energy would be freed from its biological source (physical state) and would move directly to the abstract "abstract love feeling", which, in this case, would be equivalent to "pure" (avoiding being the object of impulse, desire, avoiding attachment) ???

Sublimation makes admirable, grandiose, all superlatives...: the highest state in the scale of moral, aesthetic, intellectual values...

Psychoanalytic reflection has again focused on these activities and, above all, on the value that human beings, and society, attribute to them. The concept of "transitional object" was proposed by D.W.Winnicott (1971), an object between subjectivity and objectivity. It would have its origin in the development of the young child. This author places it "between the breast and the teddy bear." It is above all that the attachment to this object is recognized by the family environment, and also by society, as indisputable, unjustifiable, just to accept, respect, as essential for the child. This particular object is witness to the part of illusion in the relationship to the other essential, parental figure. This object exists, outside the child, shareable, but its value is purely subjective and it is this subjectivity, its price, that is recognized, undisputed. It carries the illusion (that of the presence of the mother, in her absence, in particular). However, it receives

the ardour of the impulse.

This would be the process at the root of cultural, artistic, scientific activities...

Here we find this "sublime", the object of great socio-cultural value.

Philosophies and religions are also part of it.

At the same time of the child's relational development, we find the notion of a "transformational object" proposed by C.Bollas (1989), as we have seen in this brief. In the latter case, it is a person who, through his care, physically transforms the positioning of the child in front of his environment, his vision of the world.

These two "objects," transitional, transformational, are external to the individual. These are supports (material, human) for these functions essential for human development, which are transition, illusion, and transformation.

We see these functions that lean on the initial need (instinct) of the baby are the foundations of this process of sublimation. Pathological conditions, more frequent than we think, can hinder or pervert this functioning (they have made it possible to study it better).

So, the expected transformation of the rise of the *kundalinî*... would take as its foundation the first part of sublimation, withdrawal of libido on the self, the representation of the *kundalinî* could have a transitional function, nourish the illusion, and the guru rely on the virtues of the initial transformational object to offer us a new vision!? ... The *kâma*? (A.Padoux, 2010, p.146-147)

This is where my reflection ends today...

ANNEXE 3

The tempo in the course N.Hahoutoff/P.Tomatis

We saw that tempo may itself be considered part of the framework of the yoga class. Tempo, that is, a temporal regularity whose presence is often not conscious, such as the regularity of heartbeats, e.g. It is on the tempo that a rhythm is set up, which in turn structures time in a particular way, such as heart rate (with strong/weak, long/short times...). On the same tempo one can imagine a wide variety of rhythms. This is what happens in the yoga class, since each posture prints its own rhythm. The tempo is therefore the time frame, it may be more or less slow or fast. The yoga class preparing for the seat, its horizon is therefore a certain quality of slowness.

In the yoga Nil Hahoutoff/Patrick Tomatis, one can use the preparation phase to initiate this process through the tempo of breathing: the minutes of relaxation that open the course (free tempo), the great exhalation that follows it, and the next five breaths are at the tempo with which individuals arrive at the session and fit into the group (the grouping establishes its own tempo). For the rest, we have an alternation of very slow tempo and dynamic phases (salutation, grouping). At this point it is the voice of the teacher, by its own quality (more or

less internal tension, for example) and by the tempo of the prosody, that of the indications given, that dictates the progression of the slowdown. The alternation can have a deepening effect here (as in some hypnosis techniques), provided you are aware and listen to this phenomenon (for the teacher). Thus, as a result of each acceleration the slowdown can take depth, lengthen. The duration of the final passive twist can be lengthened, benefiting from this progression. The postures sequence that follows, again introduces the slow/rapid alternation through its dynamic impulse. Then the taking of the postures depends on the conductive voice that prints the rhythm. However, its realization, at the student level, can be destabilizing, even arrhythmic. When the posture is properly in place, it may be supported by the previous slow tempo, materialized by the breaths. And this until the final seat.

In addition to the vocal tempo of the teacher's instructions, there is the delicate management of the durations of the intermediate silences, which must be able to be heard as an extension and part of the same movement (too long they can make live a form of "letting go", "abandonment", or even producing anxiety, too short to shake up the current process, P.Fraisse (1974, on perceptual limits).

Throughout the course, the "refrain" of the two depth breaths (accompanied by sighs and yawns) ensures both the rhythm, through its repetition, and the safety of the group, by its regular appointments accessible to all. He's doing chorus. It also has a "brake" function compared to the accelerations that may have taken place along the way. The tempo is a very sensitive parameter as to psychic states, it should be handled with science... It is also mentioned in *Yoga sutra* (II.50), in the form of duration and number.

We talked about a slow/rapid alternation, it can also evoke the alternation tension /relaxation inscribed in the body, physiological functioning. The latter is often quoted in texts. One of the advantages of the group is the natural convergence of tempos - provided there are not too many obstacles (tensions, irritations, absence...) -, convergence that gives the feeling of being "carried" by the group. Then the student can live postures that have not been performed until then.

Music or not...

One can have the idea of using music to facilitate, accelerate, accompany this group tuning. Thus a well-chosen musical atmosphere can introduce to the yoga class, especially for beginners. This choice is, however, not easy if it wants to respect, welcome individualities, tastes, cultures, being very variable and reactions often unpredictable. My very first "experiment" was on this subject in music therapy, in the 1970s. I observed that depending on personality traits (measured on Cattell's 16PF test), the results could go to extremes. Some, for example, relaxed on well-paced (or even military) music, others, on the contrary, on "planktony" music... So for a band how to do it?

Music, such as those marketed for meditation, can also lead to opposite

reactions: immediate fusion or just as strong rejection. For this requires not only the music and its tempo, but the whole ideology, sometimes not far from the sect. There is no neutral music, passes everywhere, and the proposed choice will be directly heard, interpreted in the relationship with the teacher. In addition, musical induction reinforces dependence. The downside here is, in fact, that it is an external tempo that comes to cover the internal listening. It can therefore be a facilitator for the beginner, but quickly also an obstacle.

I had the chance to participate in a seminar with Cristina Sosa, in which she has several times associated music and postures, sympathetic experiences, especially for a musician. But, beyond that, my impression was that we were getting closer to a group animation medium, like a nice side step. The result, however, was neither concentration nor meditation. It recalled me experiences of free body expression supported by music.

In writing these lines, I now remember the strong experiences I had about 40 years ago, training music therapists. The idea was to listen to the other from his gesture, to accompany him, to support him, with percussion (I was then learning to play conga, great drum for Afro-Cuban music). Inside a small group, a person stepped forward and, from his first steps, was invited to pursue a few very simple gestures, which came to mind. I was trying to focus on the movement produced to accompany it, discreetly, to the percussion. After a few minutes I felt a very strong physical commitment on my part, a real training as inside the gesture, which several times led us to a form of trance (small!)

This might as well be done from the posture take... to experiment?! In any case it seems to me that the main thing is why music is introduced, and in what form. What is the goal?

- - Create a supportive atmosphere to prepare for the course,
- - Bringing relaxation, a change of activity, even soliciting creativity (cf. Cristina): music as a detour,
- - Animating a group,
- - To bring concentration to the music and then to the sound (a progression, a deepening),
- Support a gesture, a posture: enter into a relationship (until the trance?), or deepen a posture ?...Personally, attached to concentration, I prefer little stimuli.

Translated from French by the Author