

Part 1: Ancient wisdom teachings, foreign Languages, unknown symbols and consciously veiled statements

Where is the cradle of meditation? If we disregard the hermeticism of ancient Egypt for the time being, and if we also consider that Gautama Buddha was a trained yogi, then our search for the cradle of meditation ends with the yoga of India, the highest level of which is called *Raja yoga*, the yoga of kings, meditation.

Unfortunately, there is no standardised or *certified* form of meditation here either, but there is a fundamental commonality: the meditator obviously wants to discover, explore and change something within themselves. This endeavour only seems to succeed with great commitment and enormous discipline and can take the course of an entire lifetime, if that is sufficient. On further investigation, however, we soon come across something highly disconcerting.

Patañjali (1999: 21) begins quite down-to-earth in chapter 1 of the Yoga Sūtren:

*... that inner state in which the mental and
spiritual processes come to rest. Then the
sighted person rests in his essential identity.*

*All other inner states are determined by the
identification with the soul-spiritual
processes ...*

However, in the third chapter, the Vibhūti Pāda, he switches to *siddhis*, supernatural powers.

Paramahansa Yogananda (1997: 314-315) also notes in his book *Autobiography of a Yogi*:

*Primitive people seldom or never realise that
their body is a kingdom ruled by the soul;
they do not know that the soul sits on the
throne of the cerebrum and commands
through six auxiliary rulers in the spinal cord
centres (spheres of consciousness) ...*

In his book *Kundalini Yoga*, Sri Swami Saraswati Sivananda (1994: XII) goes into more detail about such centres and recommends intensive concentration on these areas, starting with a point between the genitals and the anus

Resting in yourself sounds good, but supernatural abilities? Six auxiliary regents? Should there be other beings *living* in our bodies, do we even need an exorcist? Haven't we enlightened and scientifically orientated people of the modern age long since got over such hocus-pocus?

Concentrating on the pelvic floor, what spiritual insight am I supposed to gain if I devote myself intensively to my anus or my genitals? As the Indian-born Sri Chinmoy (1994: 145) says himself:

Since the message of the Gita was not really understood in India, this country abounds in dry ascetics and unenlightened people of action.

In view of such oddities, it seems advisable to stop our endeavours to gain a deeper understanding of meditation right here and now and to bury the subject, along with other disconcerting excesses of the human mind, on the spot.

If it weren't for Swami Sivananda, for example, a doctor trained in Western medicine who practised for many years, was even the director of a hospital in Malaysia for a time and later founded the Sivananda Charitable Hospital in Rishikesh. Would such a man give nonsensical advice?

Hardly, and again Sri Chinmoy (1994: 10, 12) offers an explanation:

... since the Veda was originally a secret book, accessible only to a few ... the encoding of the Vedic teachings in a highly symbolic language offered additional

protection against vulgarisation and the resulting misunderstanding of its true teachings. ...

over the centuries, however, the knowledge of the inner meaning of these verses and concepts would have almost completely disappeared and the outer aspect would have been regarded as their full meaning.

Excuse me, encryption? Symbolic language? Well, language consists of words, and words are nothing more than symbols for something from our respective inner or outer world of experience, depending on time and place.

Today, if we *have a connection* with a person or *are on the same wavelength* with them, we use technical terms from electronics or communication technology. A yogi who lived five thousand years ago and came across a text with such expressions would have searched in vain for the piece of copper wire or the common waves and their length; his translation of our modern idioms would inevitably be strange, misleading and completely wrong.

Or think of the signs on our motorways, for example: *Half the speedometer distance!* A speedometer has a diameter of around fifteen centimetres, so should we actually come within seven-point-five centimetres of the car in front at a speed of one hundred kilometres to avoid accidents?

At the beginning of Advent 2017, the Pope (Kaubé, FAZ) recommended changing the German text of the Lord's Prayer: ... *and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* His argument: a real Father or God does not first lead his creatures into temptation in order to then punish them, so he suspected a translation error here.

Words are therefore actually symbols for something from our respective inner or outer world of experience, from the past, present or future, depending on time and place. Firstly, there is always a corresponding perception, and only then is a word sought or newly created as a symbol for it. Conversely, if we later want to interpret and understand such words or symbols correctly, we can only succeed if we already know the relationship between the word or symbol and the perception, if we are initiated into *this secret*. It is like encountering a new and unfamiliar language;

without knowledge of the correlation described, the text remains *encrypted*.

We should actually be very familiar with such connections: Since around the middle of the last millennium, the West has developed its own scientific culture, whose technical and symbolic language also proves to be incomprehensible to laypeople - think of maths, chemistry or medicine, for example. However, this is a subject-specific necessity and not an intentional concealment, and anyone who is genuinely interested has the opportunity to unravel such supposed secrets, starting in maths and science lessons at general education schools through to attending university.

Besides this category of difficulties, there are also those of human nature (Sivananda Bhagavadgita, 2003: VII.3):

*Out of thousands of people, perhaps one
strives for perfection, even of those who
strive successfully, perhaps only one
recognises my nature.*

Obviously, meditation was not practised by everyone, nor did it prove to be suitable for everyone.

What does all this mean for our endeavour to understand meditation in depth? In order to decipher and understand the ancient texts, we must first have at least some idea of what was discovered thanks to meditation and what changes it brought about. How could we achieve such a certain premonition, such an *initiation* ...

et cetera ...