9. **Nirodha Parinama** is that transformation of the mind in which it becomes progressively permeated by that condition of Nirodha which intervenes momentarily between an impression which is disappearing and the impression which is taking its place.

After dealing with the three stages of meditation leading up to *Samadhi* Patanjali takes up the question of the three fundamental types of mental transformations which are involved in the practice of higher *Yoga*. These four *Sutras* (III-9-12) bearing on this question are very important because they throw light on the essential nature of the mental processes which are involved in the practice of *Yoga* and further elucidate the technique of *Samadhi*.

The important point to note with regard to these three *Parinamas* is that they are not states but modes of transformation, or to put it in other words, they do not represent static but dynamic conditions. In the progressive process of Self-realization through *Samadhi* the mind can pass from one stage to another through the use of three and only three kinds of transformations which are sequentially related to one another and really constitute three integral parts of a larger composite process which has to be repeated on each plane as consciousness withdraws, step by step, towards the Centre of Reality. The ordinary transformations of the mind take place according to the laws of association or reasoning or recording to the stimuli applied by the external world through the sense-organs. The three kinds of transformations we are now considering are of a special kind and are used only in the practice of higher *Yoga* after the *Yogi* has acquired the capacity of passing into the *Samadhi* state at will.
The *Sutra* under discussion defines *Nirodha Parinama* or transformation which results in suppression of *Citta-Vrttis*. In view of the fact that *Yoga* is described in I-2 as the suppression of *Citta-Vrttis* it is easy to see how important it is to understand this *Sutra* thoroughly. As soon as control of the mind is begun *Nirodha* comes into play. The word *Nirodha* in *Samskrta* means both restraint and suppression and the earlier efforts at control of the mind beginning with *Dharana* involve *Nirodha* not so much in the sense of suppression as that of restraint. But a little careful thought will show that even in the preliminary practice of *Dharana, Nirodha*, in the sense of suppression, is involved to a certain extent. In trying to practise *Dharana* the will is trying all the time to suppress distractions and substituting in their place the one object on which meditation is to be performed. It will be obvious to anyone that in each of these efforts to replace a distraction by the chosen object there must be a momentary state in which neither the distraction nor the chosen object is present and the mind is really without any *Pratyaya*, just as when the direction of a moving object is suddenly reversed there must be a moment when the object is not moving but is at rest. It is because *Nirodha* in this limited sense enters the problem of controlling the mind from the very beginning that Patanjali has taken up *Nirodha Parinama* first in his treatment of the subject but it should be noted that true *Nirodha* or complete suppression is the last in the cycle of transformations and comes after *Samadhi Parinama* and *Ekagrata-Parinama* in actual practice.

We have seen that *Nirodha* is that momentary unmodified state of the mind which intervenes when one impression which holds the field of consciousness is replaced by another impression. The impression which holds the field of consciousness is called *Vyutthana Samskara* and the impression which opposes or tries to replace the *Vyutthana Samskara* is called *Nirodha Samskara* in this *Sutra*. Between two successive impressions there must be a momentary state in which the mind has no impression at all or is present in an unmodified condition. The object of *Nirodha Parinama* is to produce at will this momentary state and gradually extend it, so that the mind can exist for a considerable duration in this unmodified state. This extension of the *Niruddha* state by repeated efforts has been expressed by the phrase *Nirodha-Ksana-Gittanvaya* which means ‘permeation of the mind by the momentary state of *Nirodha* or complete suppression of *Vrttis*. *Nirodha Parinama* comprises the whole process beginning with the first effort at suppression of the ‘seed’ and ending with the firm establishment of the *Niruddha* state. The *Yogi* should be able to maintain the *Niruddha* state for a suffi-
ciently long time to enable consciousness to pass through the ‘cloud’ or void and emerge into the next plane.

In passing from a condition in which the ‘seed’ of Samadhi holds the field of consciousness to a condition of complete Nirodha there is a struggle between two opposite tendencies, the tendency of the ‘seed’ to rise again in the field of consciousness and the tendency of the mind to remain in a condition of Nirodha. No other distraction can rise and occupy the field of consciousness because that tendency has already been eliminated in the previous two processes of Samadhi Parinama and Ekagrata Parinama. Samadhi Parinama has eliminated the tendency of distractions to appear in the field of consciousness and Ekagrata Parinama has established the tendency of the same impression—the ‘seed’—to persist without interruption. That is why, when the force of will is applied to suppress the ‘seed’, it is only that particular seed which can appear again. This will also show why the Samadhi and Ekagrata states must be attained before the will can be applied to produce the Niruddha state. If these techniques have not been mastered then after every effort of suppression a new Pratyaya or distraction may arise as happens in the case of the ordinary man who tries to practise Nirodha. The student will also be able to understand now the significance of the phrase Abhyasa Purvah in I-18, for Asamprajnata Samadhi is nothing but the state of the mind in which the Pratyaya or ‘seed’ has been made to disappear by the practice of Nirodha. This condition of Nirodha is not a state of ordinary mental vacuum, but a state of Samadhi in which the Yogi is in complete control of the mind.

The first effort to suppress the ‘seed’ of Samprajnata Samadhi produces a void only momentarily. The tendency of the ‘seed’ to emerge again into consciousness is so strong owing to the previous practice of Ekagrata that it again takes possession of the mind and transforms it into its own image. The repetition of the effort at suppression, however, makes it slightly easier every time to bring about the Niruddha state and maintain the mind in that state a little longer. Continued practice of this kind gradually increases the tendency of the mind to remain in the Niruddha state and weakens the tendency of the ‘seed’ to reappear in the field of consciousness as pointed out in the next Sutra.

A simple physical experiment will serve, perhaps, to illustrate the opposition of the two tendencies referred to above. OB is a rod attached to a stand OA and kept in the position OB by a spring at C.
If a child is asked to press the rod OB to the position OA he may be able to bring it to that position with difficulty and may be able to touch the stand OA only momentarily in the first attempt. Each successive attempt will, however, make it easier for him to bring the rod in the position OA and keep it in that position longer. And with sufficient practice the child may learn to keep the rod in the position OA as long as he likes. The tendency of the rod to spring upwards has been completely mastered by practice. In the same way the tendency of the ‘seed’ to spring back into the field of consciousness can be mastered by sufficient practice and the Niruddha state maintained for a sufficient length of time for the consciousness to pass through the Laya centre and emerge into the next higher plane.

10. तस्य प्रशान्तवाहिता संस्कारात्।

Tasya prasānta-vāhitā saṃskārāt.

तस्य its (of Nirodha Purīśama) प्रशान्त peaceful; tranquil; undisturbed वाहिता flow संस्कारात् by (repeated) impression.

The meaning of this Sutra will be clear from what has been said in connection with the previous Sutra. The tendency of the mind to remain in the Niruddha state also grows with practice and ultimately becomes so strong by the force of Samskaras that it can remain in that condition easily for any length of time. The significance of the phrase Prasanta Vahita should be noted. The flow of this Niruddha state becomes, after sufficient practice, easy and peaceful. There is no struggle which may be present in some degree in the earlier stages when the tendency has not been established firmly.
Such a struggle would produce an unstable condition of the mind which is utterly unsuited for the purpose which has to be accomplished.

It may be pointed out here that the resistance encountered from the mind in bringing about the different transformations is due not so much to the mind itself as to the Samskaras of Vasanas still hidden within it. If these have been removed to a sufficient degree the passage from one condition to another can take place without much resistance. In fact, if Vairagya has been developed to a high degree the necessary changes may be brought about with comparative ease as shown by the life of great spiritual teachers of the world. That is why the Yogi has to rise on the two wings of Vairagya and Abhyasa as pointed out in I-12. Even in the last stage when Dharma-Megha-Samadhi is practised (IV-29) for the attainment of Kaivalya it is the practice of extreme Vairagya which destroys the remaining Samskaras of the subtlest Vasanas and liberates the consciousness of the Yogi.

11. Samadhi transformation is the (gradual) setting of the distractions and simultaneous rising of one-pointedness.

The second kind of mental transformation which is involved in the different stages of Samadhi is Samadhi Parinama. This transformation really begins with the practice of Dharana and continues until the Ekagrata state is reached. As the definition of Samadhi Parinama given by the author shows, its essential nature is the gradual reduction of the all-pointed condition of the mind to the one-pointed condition. First, the series of objects which in the case of the ordinary man occupy the mind, one after another, are replaced by one chosen object, the ‘seed’ of Samadhi. All the other objects except the object chosen for Samyama which are technically called ‘distractions’ are eliminated completely when Dhyana is perfected. Then begins a new kind of
movement or transformation of the mind in which consciousness begins to move in
depth, as it were, and the object is denuded of its coverings or non-essential elements
like name or form. The ‘seed’ is split open and its different layers exposed in order to
get at the core which is its Svarupa. When this process which is dealt with in I-43, has
been completed and the object ‘shines’ in the mind in its real Svarupa there is nothing
further which can be done on that plane. The attainment of the Nirvitarka stage marks
the completion of the Samadhi Parinama as far as the Vitarka stage of Samprajnata
Samadhi is concerned. If the mind is kept concentrated on the object it can merely re-
produce the irreducible Svarupa of the object. Here the Ekagrata Parinama which is
dealt with in the next Sutra begins.

\[ 92. \text{तत: पुनः शान्तोदितो तुल्यप्रत्ययः विचित्रमैथे कार्यात्-}
\text{परिणाम:।}
\]
\[ तत: पुनः सांतोदितां तुल्य-प्रत्ययांति चित्तस्याकारतां-}
\text{परिणाम:》}

12. Then, again, the condition of the mind in which the ‘object’ (in the mind)
which subsides is always exactly similar to the ‘object’ which rises (in the next mo-
ment) is called Ekagrata Parinama.

The characteristic of the Ekagrata-Parinama, which as we have seen is the con-
summation of the Samadhi Parinama, is that exactly the same Pratyaya rises in the
field of consciousness again and again and produces the impression as if a single fixed
unchanging Pratyaya is occupying the field. The succession of exactly similar images
in an apparently stationary Pratyaya is due to the intermittent nature of the manifested
Universe which has been briefly explained in connection with IV-33. The whole Uni-
verse appears and disappears alternately but the interval called a Ksana is so small that
it appears to be a continuous phenomenon. We see a continuous glow in an electric
bulb with an alternating current but we know that the glow is discontinuous and peri-
ods of illumination follow periods of darkness alternately at very short intervals. It is
not only in Samadhi that this discontinuity enters in the perception of the Pratyaya. It
is present in all perceptions and thinking right from the plane of the lower mind up to the *Atmic* plane. Wherever there is manifestation there must be discontinuity or succession which is called *Kramah* in III-15 and IV-33.

The projection of a cinematographic picture on a screen may serve to illustrate, to some extent, the difference between the three *Parinamas*. The moving picture on the screen is produced, as is explained in connection with IV-33, by a succession of dissimilar images falling on the screen at intervals of less than 1/10th second. This produces an illusion of continuity while there is actual discontinuity in the projection. If all the pictures on the film roll are made exactly similar there will be one stationary and unchanging image produced on the screen. But we know that the appearance of such a stationary and unchanging image is an illusion. What we see as an unchanging image is composed of a number of similar (*Tulya*) images following each other so rapidly as to be indistinguishable. If we slow down the speed of projection sufficiently the illusion will disappear and we shall be able to see similar images following each other at regular intervals. In the same way the *Pratyaya of Ekagrata Parinama* remains apparently the same but in reality it is composed of a series of similar (*Tulya*) *Pratyayas* following each other at inconceivably high speed. It is because the phenomenon is dynamic and not static that it is called a *Parinama* (transformation) and not *Avastha* (state).

Now, if we suppose that even this picture which produces an unchanging image on the screen is removed and each portion of the film corresponding to a single picture is quite transparent it is obvious that a uniform illumination will be seen on the screen. Here the analogy breaks down. The dropping or suppression of the *Pratyaya of Ekagrata Parinama* by means of *Nirodha* does not produce the illumination of Reality but the consciousness of the next subtler plane and the whole cycle of the three *Parinamas* has to be repeated again on this plane to enable the consciousness to pass again into the next subtler plane. It is only when the *Pratyaya* of the last plane (*Atmic*) is dropped or suppressed that the illumination of Reality or consciousness of the *Purusa* dawns.

The reason for the emergence of a *Pratyaya* of the next subtler plane when the ‘seed’ present in *Ekagrata Parinama* is suppressed is to be sought in the nature of the complex mechanism through which consciousness functions on the different planes and the nature of the *Samskaras* which bind consciousness to its vehicles. Theoretically, the *Nirodha* which follows the *Ekagrata* state should lead to direct contact with
Reality but this does not happen. As this question has been dealt with at another place (I-18) it is not necessary to enter into it here.

13. By this (by what has been said in the last four Sutras) the property, character, and condition-transformations in the elements and the sense-organs are also explained.

Since the mind gets its raw material for thinking from the Bhutas through the instrumentality of the Indriyas it follows that, corresponding to the three Parinamas dealt with previously in relation to Citta, there must be analogous Parinamas in the field of Bhutas and Indriyas also. These Parinamas are referred to in this Sutra, firstly, to emphasize their all-pervading character in every field of Prakriti and, secondly, to facilitate the understanding of the modus operandi of many Siddhis which are dealt with in the remaining portion of this Section. Transformations of every kind in Nature are based according to Yogic philosophy on the changes in Gunas and must therefore be governed by laws which are fundamentally the same. It is easy to understand, therefore, that the laws governing the three types of transformations which are utilized in the control and manipulation of Citta in Yogic practice must also hold true in the field of Bhutas and Indriyas. But, owing to the difference in the medium, their mode of working, though analogous, will not be the same. Just as mastery over the technique of the three kinds of transformations in the field of Citta enables the Yogi to control and manipulate the working of Citta, in the same way, mastery over this technique in the field of Bhutas and Indriyas enables him to control and manipulate natural phenomena. He can then exercise extraordinary powers which are called Siddhis.

Patanjali has merely referred to the applicability of the three laws of transformation to the field of Bhutas and Indriyas without elucidating the idea further. The student is expected to work out the analogous relationships himself. Let us see how