

HUMANS OF YOGA

Master Thesis Research on yoga in Amsterdam

written by Rebecca Alyssa Trouwee

Rebecca Alyssa Trouwee
Student number: 415980
Supervisor: Mart Willekens
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How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital? & How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?

A sociological research on the field of yoga lifestyle in the city of Amsterdam
by Rebecca Alyssa Trouwee

ABSTRACT & KEYWORDS

HUMANS OF YOGA - This Master Thesis research explores the modern postural yoga practice from the unique perspective of yoga practitioners in Amsterdam. Yoga evolved around 150 years ago during the interaction of Western individuals interested in Eastern, i.c. Indian religions. Western individuals (re)formed the spiritual almost God-like yoga practice into a reflexive practice to calm your so-called 'monkey mind' through a mind-body-spirit paradigm. 20th century sociologists such as Simmel, Weber, Bourdieu & Giddens analyzed increasing rationality within new modernity. This increase of rationalization caused a new mode of thinking, social constructions and individual choices versus chances. According to multiple scholars, in times of increasing rationalism and calculation, yoga became a great tool for reason, functioning as a mirror for the self, managing the body, where the individual becomes a reflexive project. Yoga revealed itself to be a powerful toolkit for a mindful and ascetic lifestyle, connecting the body to the mind through the dance of asanas and breathing techniques, promoting health and cope with disease which caused the immense popularity in scholarly study and the promotion of living a yogic healthy lifestyle. Due to its popularity in urban milieus world-wide, it became a multi-billion dollar industry where a self-identity could be consumed. About 1.6 million people are practicing yoga in The Netherlands today where yoga is being studied for physical exploration and relaxation. So why did we start practicing yoga in the first place? Why are we all hooked to this popular practice? And what does it offer us as Western individuals and us as a society today? In this Master Thesis research we will explore these questions through the sampling quota method searching for different types of yoga practitioners. During our quantitative phase we created ideal types. We explored our ideal types in order to collect a small group of representative profiles. We finally interviewed 9 out of the 21 yoga practitioners (sampling quota: yoga teachers) during our qualitative research phase. From the semi-structured interviews we could develop a framework in which different types of yoga practitioners are positioned within the theoretical concepts of spirituality, functionality, reflexive project and yogic capital. Through lifestyle research we tried to capture a sociological perspective on the yoga scene in Amsterdam, framing it in modernity theory where the individual is its own motive for practicing yoga, though influenced by social factors such as social positioning, education, financial circumstances and yogic interest.

Keywords: Spirituality - Monkey Mind - Mind-Body-Spirit Paradigm - Reflexive Project - Mirror for the Self - Body Management - Functionality - Yoga Toolkit - Yogic Capital - Lifestyle - Self Identity Consumerism - Quota Sampling - Semi-Structured Interviewing - Ideal Types - 20th century sociologists

FOREWORD

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Chapter 1

Humans of Yoga - An Introduction on a Thing Called Modern Yoga

For most of the yoga practitioners today yoga seems like a new practice but actually, it's been going on for hundreds of years. We call this 'modern yoga'. Modern yoga has been used as a technical term, referring to certain types of yoga that evolved around 150 years ago during the interaction of Western individuals interested in Eastern, i.e. Indian religions. Even though it exists within our Western scope for over one and a half century, 'modern' seems to describe its age well enough. It emerged in modern times and developed in urban milieus world-wide. But why did we start practicing yoga in the first place?

About 1.6 million people are practicing yoga in The Netherlands today (Yoga Magazine 2016) of which a great amount of people live in urban areas. Most of them come to yoga for flexibility, stress relief, health and physical fitness due to its overall bodily experience and health benefits. Yoga today is recognized as a form of mind-body medicine, integrating physical, mental and spiritual components. Research (Atkinson et al. 2009) shows that alternative methods such as yoga promote health and cope with disease. Since most diseases are closely linked to lifestyle behaviours, yoga is one of the great examples teaching us that we should take good care of our bodies. Within the scholarly study of the contemporary modern yogic practice (Horton 2012), yoga has also been undertaking a massive transnational interest. After remaining below the 'academic radar' due to mutual prejudice between those who study yoga and those who do it, the immense popularity increased scholarly study and promoted living this yogic healthy lifestyle.

What kept us wondering though was: What exactly is yoga? Where did the yoga tradition come from? Where can we position yoga within urban areas and the Western contemporary society? Does yoga mean the same thing to different types of practitioners? Are there different types? Why is yoga so popular? Why are we all hooked? And what does it offer us as individuals in modern society? All these questions will be answered through the exploration of the contemporary yogic practice and our two main research questions: **How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality & yogic capital? & How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?** This research will take the unique perspective of different types of yoga practitioners of all sorts, through the stories of yoga teachers in Amsterdam: whom we call the humans of yoga. Like most yoga practitioners, people started studying yoga for physical exploration and relaxation. Over time, however, yoga revealed itself to be a powerful toolkit for a mindful, aware almost ascetic lifestyle, connecting the body to the mind through the dance of

yoga asanas and intensive breathing. Within this research we have developed four theoretical concepts (spirituality, functionality, the reflexive project and yogic capital) which relate to modernity theory.

We will here present a brief indication of what is going on in the field of yoga. Yoga is inherently paradoxical. It is a modern invention with ancient roots (spirituality), designed to work with and through the body (functionality) in ways that responded to newly embodied (yogic capital) self-alienating conditions (the reflexive project) of modernity, such as individualization, rationalization and calculation. For yoga became a fitness fad with spiritual sustenance, but also a multi-billion dollar industry with non-material values. How can such apparent contradictions possibly combine to create this thing we call modern yoga (Horton 2012)? In the early 1900s yoga was described as mysterious, sex magic, uncivilized and threatening to modernity and rationality (Jain 2015), being part of a (negatively associated) counterculture due to its connotations towards culty like society formations. Today, “yoga is pragmatic, accessible, and an individually adaptable menu of options that offers people precisely what they need to empower themselves to live healthier, happier and hopefully more (small 'e') enlightened lives” (Horton 2012, p. 16).

So why study yoga? Current research mainly focusses on the historical part of yoga practice (De Michelis, 2005; Burger, 1995), the economical (Jain, 2015), the bodily and psychological (Varga, 2005), philosophical (Alter, 2006; Lea, 2009b) or the more medical benefits of the yogic practice (Ross & Thomas 2010; Atkinson et. al., 2009). Current research is lacking in engagement with the emotional impact of the practice, spirituality and sociological theory (Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg 2011). Therefore this Master Thesis will contribute to the field of yoga research. Currently it lacks critical thinking, which we can find in sociological research methodology and theory. This is why we chose to do sociological research, linking modernity theory to the yogic practice. Sociology is all about using concepts that allow you to look from an outsider’s perspective, allowing to analyze interaction processes. Within academia this study advances scientific theory and knowledge of yoga and modernity, as well as ideal types complimented by our methodological framework, combining qualitative (interview) and quantitative (survey) research, creating new visual models and analytical tools to help present data in order to communicate abstract information and turning it into tangible knowledge.

Chapter 2

The Practice of Postural Yoga - A Theoretical Framework

Today yoga is resonating throughout the western world. According to Yoga Magazine's (2016) research on the yogic practice in The Netherlands, 1.6 million people were practicing yoga in 2016. Even though this research took place within a wider range of respondents already interested in yoga, it is still relatively quite a large percentage of The Netherlands' total population (17 million). What is yoga and where is yoga being positioned within society today? There is clearly not enough room in this thesis to provide exhaustive coverage of what scholars have uncovered on yoga, especially since the yoga tradition is heterogeneous, contextual and taking a variety of forms, types and religions (Jain 2015). In order to understand modern day yoga and the role it plays for different types of practitioners in the contemporary scene of Amsterdam, we must first explain the broader historical and sociological context from which yoga developed in a wave of modernity. By the time we've reached this conception, we will understand that the level of traditional Indian yoga philosophy decreased on one hand and made room for modern spirituality on the other hand. At the end of this chapter we will explore a typology of different types of yoga practitioners by Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg (2011), which incorporates modern spirituality with bodily consciousness through the body-mind-spirit paradigm. We will do so by placing it in the larger theoretical framework of modernity theorized by sociologists Max Weber (1903), Georg Simmel (1908), Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Anthony Giddens (1991), which result in the four theoretical concepts of this research: spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital.

Weber (1903) articulated that following a lifestyle in new modernity is based on individual choices, but these choices are dependent on the potential or chances for realizing them, arguing that lifestyle is the element of choice. Within this yoga lifestyle research the theoretical concept of functionality compliments this element of choice, where yoga functions as a tool for living a physical yogic lifestyle. Simmel (1908) was concerned with the quantity, mass and size of groups in the metropolis, which lead to a growing dominance of rational modes of thought that promote impersonal forms of interpersonal relations, promoting individuality. This increase of rationality and functionality opposes our second theoretical concept of spirituality, which also came with the wave of new modernity. Spirituality thus promoted a body-mind paradigm instead of rationality, opposing new modernity. For Bourdieu (1984) lifestyles are socially stratified. For him this order is created by the intangibility of habitus and capitals. Capitals (economic, social and cultural) result in the embodied ways of living life, creating a basis for the existence of a group. In the following chapter we will discuss the exact definition of capitals, but to give you an idea to which theoretical concept Bourdieu is related, it is the yogic capital. Yogic capital is a field specific capital. It is embodied by

individuals practicing yoga and relates people to the group of socially constructed yoga lifestyle followers. Finally we have Giddens (1991) who, as opposed to Bourdieu, discussed that lifestyles are individual choices based and non-socially structured choices. According to Giddens individuals have the capacity to reflect on themselves in order to pick the most suitable lifestyle possible. This takes us to our final theoretical concept of the reflexive project, where the self has become an embodied project aiming for becoming the best version of the self, where yoga functions as a mirror to reflect on itself, opposing the yogic capital.

2.1. Definition of Modern Postural Yoga

But first, what is yoga in general? We will describe the word yoga itself, but also the practice of yoga, which is of great importance in this research. According to White (2012) the word yoga has a wider range of meanings than any other word in the *Sanskrit* lexicon (Sanskrit is the old Indian language in which yoga is collected). Yoga comes from the act of yoking animals and yoke itself. Yoga also comes from the conduction of planets or stars, mixing various substances, denoting a device, a recipe, a method, a charm, union or a total of sum (p. 2). Yoga included a number of characteristics in varying degrees such as yoga physiology (the yoga practice), realizing a hierarchy of mind-body constituents (White 2012), creating a first analyzation of a great comparison with contemporary yogic practice, where the body-mind-spirit is of great essence.

Originally the practice of yoga describes techniques and methods of meditation and asceticism, deriving from traditional Indian philosophy. Yoga refers to bodily consciousness, the practice of spiritual values, attitudes and techniques that have evolved over thousands of years, acquiring self-transcendence (Jain 2015). The yoga practice is derived from traditional Indian philosophy, such as the *Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali*, but in Western context yoga has been largely detached from its spiritual roots and mostly focuses on the physical postures and breathing techniques. This shift from spiritual to a more functional practice are two of the four theoretical concepts within this research. We can find the spiritual practice in the traditional Indian philosophy of yoga practice, but also in the new spiritual wave of New Age. According to De Michelis (2005) and Smith (2007) the classical Indian yoga tradition emphasizes the practice of physical postures gaining towards metaphysical inquiries. For the most modern and Western societies, the practice of yoga decontextualizes this focusing mostly on the bodily experience calling it *modern postural yoga*. In this thesis we will also refer to yoga as modern postural yoga, focussing on the positioning of the physical practice of yoga within a social context.

The dominant focus within current yoga research is mostly textual or on the ideas of modern science and medicine, trying to understand the embodied practice and its physical benefits, giving less attention to the analysis of the practice of yoga within a sociological and cultural context (Smith 2007). This research will therefore be constructed within a sociological framework, which will be discussed later in this chapter, being practice-based and focussing on the position of the embodied yogic practice within the social sphere. Thus this thesis will create new insights into the world of modern postural yoga research.

2.2 Yoga an Embodied Practice

Yoga is a technique to enable embodied transcendence. Practitioners describe the practice within Smith's (2007) research as "a mirror for the self" (p. 40). "Beyond the development of the physical ability to execute difficult poses, and the calmness of mind required to undertake the practice fully, this 'encounter' with the embodied self brings about moments within *āsana* [postural] practice which practitioners identify as 'spiritual'. The physical practice of *āsana* and *prānāyāma* [breathing technique] allow for forms of focus on one's embodiment and linked forms of bodily experience [...]. The conjunction of the practice of yoga and a culturally inflected phenomenology of the body can provide for another 'encounter' that results in the enrichment of both forms of inquiry into the character or nature of our embodied existence" (Smith 2007, p. 40). As mentioned before, this is of little concern within modern postural yoga. All forms of yoga taught and practiced within modern contexts seem to downplay the transcendental aim of classical yoga. Instead modern postural yoga emphasizes the physical benefits (*āsana* and *prānāyāma*) of yoga (Jain 2015).

2.3 A Field of Lifestyles

Within sociological theory, increased attention has been given to lifestyle theory. Lifestyles are social practices and ways of living, adopted by human individuals. Lifestyles reflect on persons, groups, as well as socioeconomic identities (Giddens 1991), thereby analyzing on three levels: micro, meso and macro. "Lifestyles consist of self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, bodily dress and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behaviour. Given the massive social, economic, technological, and political changes that have taken place in the late twentieth century, lifestyles have gained particular significance as individual and collective expressions of differences and similarities" (Abel & Cockerham 1993, p. 321). This chapter will discuss the influential sociologists in lifestyle theory naming: Simmel, Weber, Bourdieu and Giddens, relating them to significant points in the history of the social position of yoga in the Western world.

2.3.1 Modernity: Georg Simmel and Max Weber

Georg Simmel and Max Weber witnessed a new modernity; one that is moving beyond the classical industrial model. They analyzed society during a time of change. Industrial society was rising and the European feudalism was vanishing, changing into modernity at the time. Today the industrial society is changing again and becoming another modernity (Abel & Cockerham 1993). Later we will discuss the most recent changes to modernity through the eyes of Bourdieu and Giddens. For now we will focus on Simmel and Weber in the early 20th century modernity and their concepts that lead to the foundation for subsequent lifestyle research, relating this to the history of (classical) yoga.

Simmel (1903/1950) warned for the rise of modernity as “the deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his [or her] existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture, and of the technique of life” (p. 409). He was concerned with the quantity, mass and size of groups in the metropolis. This led to a growing dominance of abstract, analytical, calculative and rational modes of thought that promote impersonal forms of interpersonal relations. A sense of individuality was promoted. This created a barrier between individuals and mass society, which he called being blasé.

At the same time during the early 20th century yoga became popular in the West, due to an increase of interest in (alternative) spirituality. This created an increase of interaction between Eastern Asia and the Western society, exchanging religious orientations and social implications focussed on the body, mind and soul. ‘This yoga’ became something people in the West were interested in to engage with, creating a religio-cultural trend that became important to the cultural and economic exchange between the two worlds. The tangible form of yoga - the actual practice - took shape in 1896 when Swami Vivekananda travelled to Western countries. Swami Vivekananda was an influential person in the counter-missionary projects being part of the Indian reaction to Western missionary. During his travels he gave lectures on the postural practice of yoga and its benefits for body and mind. Making yoga functional for individuals in increasing rationality. This relates to our theoretical concept of functionality. His approach was quite different from the classical traditional Hindu approach and also created a counter-reaction towards individuality and rationality as Simmel (1903) warned us for. Swami Vivekananda incorporated physical and mental tools for the postural practice, which made yoga approachable to the Western society when they became interested in physical and mental improvements through spiritual movements during a time of increasing rationality (De Michelis 2005).

2.3.2 Early Theory of Lifestyles: Georg Simmel and Max Weber

When we analyze the beginning of modernity, on the one hand we see rationalism growing, creating an interpersonal distance between the individual and the mass, but on the other hand we see a movement of spiritual interest, increasing individual spirituality and improving cultural exchange. How did this influence the creation of social yogic groups? And how can we analyze the position of yoga in a field of so called lifestyles?

“Weber ([1922/]1978, p. 932) linked lifestyle to status by pointing out that a distinguishing characteristic of status is “status honor or prestige, which is normally expressed by the fact that above all else a specific *style of life* is expected from all those who wish to belong to the circle”” (Abel 1993, p. 324). Weber views status, not class, as a reflection of social groups sharing similar styles of living life where the consumption of goods and services distinct groups from one another. Consumption thus is a set of social and cultural practices which are established between different social groups.

"Weber used three distinct terms to express his concept of lifestyles. These terms are 'Lebensstil' or 'Stilisierung des Lebens' which mean lifestyles and 'Lebensführung' [the choices people have in their selection of lifestyles] (life conduct) and 'Lebenschancen' (life chances), which comprise the two basic components of lifestyles" (Abel & Cockerham 1993, p. 553). Here Weber made a distinction between life chances and life choices. Dahrendorf (1979) explained this as the fact that individuals have life chances in society, but their “living lives” are the response of their choices. This means that lifestyles are based on choices, but these choices are dependent on the potential for realizing them, arguing that lifestyle as Weber has articulated it is Lebensführung. Lebensführung is the element of choice (Abel & Cockerham 1993). Abel & Cockerham (1993) are very critical about the use of the definition of lifestyle grounded by Weber. Fair enough, because the use of the concept of lifestyle during the early 1900's can hardly be compared to the use of it in the 21st century, but also the fact that apparently the emphasis on life chances and choices are lacking in current research and in the use of lifestyle theory.

Now, how does Weber’s theory of lifestyles relate to the yoga lifestyle of the early 20th century? In the early 1900s yoga was described as mysterious, sex magic, uncivilized and threatening to modernity and rationality (Jain 2015), being part of a (negatively associated) counterculture. Here we can analyze that the status of yoga was negative, making it hard for individuals to choose for the yoga lifestyle, simply because the dominant group didn’t approve of it and excluded them. Even though this counterculture was excluded, the flourishing of physical yoga practice, as for the

‘mysterious’ spiritual practice of yoga became ‘appropriate’ in American and European culture. Indian elites reformed the practice into promoting ‘muscular Hinduism’, making it more attractive to the modern Western society. Yoga then was described in “a context in which physical fitness was perceived to enhance an ascetic and Protestant notion of self-control, moral development, and purity” (Jain 2015, p. 38). Yoga created a status of physical health and created popularity within health lifestyles.

Also, the new bodily perception was ‘scientifically’ proven to improve fitness and health. Yoga became modernized and medicalized, leading to a new system of physical culture (Alter 2004). Due to a new morality, nationalism, and economic vitality in the industrial world, physical strength became increasingly popular. This physical culture became later accessible to segments of society through fitness organizations such as the YMCA (Jain 2015). With the popularity of the physical culture, yoga became decontextualized from the traditional spiritual aspects of yoga by shedding positive light on the bodily experience. This created a new focus: functionality, which is one of the theoretical concepts in this research.

Here it seems that yoga responded to the increase of rationality that Simmel warned of. Due to its medicalization, the image of an ‘uncivilized and threatening to modernity and rationality’ decreased. Yoga gained a status that became more acceptable. Here we can find a separation of yoga as being physically beneficial, emphasizing the functionality of yoga versus a more spiritual focus. As mentioned earlier the classical Indian yoga tradition emphasizes the practice of physical postures gaining towards metaphysical inquiries. In Western societies the practice of yoga decontextualized this, focusing mostly on the bodily experience calling it *modern postural yoga*.

2.3.3 Theory of Lifestyles: Bourdieu

Bourdieu (1986) focused on a model of stratified lifestyles, analyzing a difference in cultural tastes between different social groups. Tastes describe the capacity of material or symbolic objects, appropriate to distinctive preferences, positioning people in different socially ranked geographical spaces. The point of view (*habitus*) within these spaces reflect the position in the class structure. For Bourdieu this idea exists within the larger focus: how the external structures individual’s routine practices in the social world and how these practices contribute to the maintenance of that structure. This focus forms a basis for the concepts of ‘*habitus*’ and ‘*capitals*’.

Before jumping into these concepts we must explain that they are central to the homology of lifestyle and social space. The homology represents an important methodological principle in

Bourdieu's analysis of the field and space. "The central axes making up the social space of France in the 1960s were capital volume (economic plus cultural capital), capital composition (economic versus cultural capital), and the change in these two properties over time (social trajectory)" (Roose et. al. 2012, p. 492). This principle leads to a form of symbolic violence, where the "superiority of legitimate culture is imposed on those who do not possess it and who are thereby excluded" (Roose et. al. 2012, p. 493) creating (symbolic) boundaries between members of different classes.

Capitals are objectified or embodied forms of potential capacity in the social space. They order someone's position within the system, space or field. Each individual positions a series of capitals that describes them as different from other individuals. The structure of the field is the (un)equal distribution of capital. The effects these capitals have between social groups and their positioning in the social space are "the appropriation of profits and power to impose the laws of functioning within the field most favourable to capital and its reproduction" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 84). Capitals thus produce profits for the positioning of the individual in that space. It has a force to describe the objectivity of things so that not everything is equally possible or impossible, creating a stratified order in life. The different types of capital (economic, social and cultural) structure the social world by determining the chances of success for practice (Bourdieu 1986). These capitals can be created within the social network of an individual or a group (social capital), through the sum of resources that help produce financial gains (economic capital) and socially valued information knowledge (cultural capital). Capitals might still remain vague. This is because they are very hard to research; mostly because they are intangible. The intangibility of capital might result in the embodied ways of living life, creating a basis for the existence of a group. In order to create such group, the embodied state of capitals or incorporation of it, demands time. The process of embodiment is an integral part of the person, becoming part of its 'habitus', which means that it becomes part of their way of living life.

Cultural capital is the embodied form of capital, meaning that the bodies of dominant groups have the ability to define their bodies and lifestyle, literally embodying their class internally and at the same time influenced externally as well (embodied capital). These practices are appreciated and produced within a specific social space, resulting in a lifestyle creating social differences (Schilling 1993). Embodied cultural capital displays social class advantages, such as social manners and accent. These embodied gestures denote status and social origins (Swartz 1997). Within this research we will try to understand how these capitals (social positioning) relate to different types of yoga practitioners and the positioning of yoga in Amsterdam in terms of spirituality, functionality, the reflexive project and yogic capital.

Next to the capitals principle, habitus is also important to understand within the homology. Habitus displays the similar dispositions across a broad range of domains between individuals. From Bourdieu's analysis the individual's positioning is defined by their position in society based on social class (economic capital) and profession (cultural capital). As the term homology suggests, there is a relation of elements amongst members of a group. This means that on top of the so called social space lies the approach of lifestyle, that are both the same for each member of the group. Within this structure people are allowed to protect their group and deposition from others. Thus, the homology is that social space is defined by your economic and cultural capital and allows the individual to disposition himself from others by the socially created structures. Because of these social structures, an individual's lifestyle is defined (Swartz 1997).

Now how does habitus work for an individual? To Bourdieu, habitus functions as a cognitive map for the individual's social world. He explains the human mind to be socially constructed within the limits of experience, upbringing and training where their perceptions and reflexive abilities are shaped by their social and economic conditions. This suggests that the participation in a lifestyle is affected by life chances, indicating that lifestyle choices are not only constrained but most of all shaped by life chances. With this idea, lifestyle can be operationalized as objective conditions of existence combined with its position in the social structure, producing habitus that consists of a system of schemes that generate classifiable practices and taste. All of this results in a lifestyle where the habitus predisposes them to choose. This takes Weber's idea of life chances and individual choices to a greater extent, arguing that the chance to choose is internalized by social structures and always will be produced by a socially qualified system (Abel 1993).

2.3.4 Yogic Capital

The differentiation of capitals explains how people with little or no financial assets (economic capital) can still be successful in modern societies. This is through the use of the other forms of capital, such as cultural and social capital. According to Hakim (2010) erotic capital, which is a form of embodied capital, is multi-faceted and has been overlooked. Erotic capital will help us understand the importance of social processes in the public and private spheres of modern societies and how we can understand our third theoretical concept of yogic capital.

Erotic capital is different per society, gender and per period of time. It also might be closely intertwined with cultural capital, but what it illustrates is "the combination of aesthetic, visual, physical, social and sexual attractiveness to other members of your society" (Hakim 2010, p. 501). It has a special hidden and enhancing success. According to Hakim (2010) erotic capital has greater

value when it is linked to high levels of economic, cultural and social capital. The value of being “attractive” and “charming” can be linked to social stratification, suggesting that beauty and sex appeal filter up the class system (p. 503). But how does erotic capital relate to yogic capital and embodied cultural capital?

Embodied cultural capital displays social class advantages for example status and social origins but also helps us understand the individuals’ point of view (habitus) within the space that reflects the position in the class structure. An example of habitus is the difference in taste of food because of the idea of the body: specific food might effect the body. Within the practices of Jivamukti Yoga yogi’s (yoga practitioners) are encouraged to eat a compassionate diet: a diet that is derived from organic sources, prepared in a sattvic (based on the Aryurvedic diet tradition) atmosphere, plant based as much as possible in order to harm less animals (Gannon & Life 2002). An example of embodied cultural/erotic capital is the marketization of the yoga lifestyle. “[W]e’re constantly inundated with carefully crafted commercial images of culturally iconic bodies. The seeming perfection of those air-brushed beauties suggest a state of self-knowledge and empowerment that we desperately want [...] Just wear this outfit, start that diet [...] Then, it’s seductively whispered to the subconscious mind, you’ll finally look like you should - and feel like you want” (Horton 2012, p. 142 - 143). This means that the value of being attractive and following certain a diet is a way of living the yoga lifestyle. This conceptualizes our field specific capital: yogic capital.

2.3.5 New Age

Before we step into further analysis of the theory of lifestyles theorized by Giddens, we will discuss the stream of interest in spirituality during the shift towards a modern society, explaining the choice of new yogi’s leaving an all materialistic world behind for Ashrams (Hindu monasteries). This shift existed within the New Age movement. The New Age movement can be argued as a group that is susceptible for yoga but shows the opposite of the commodification of the yoga lifestyle as argued above. With their interest in inner spirituality gained through bodily movements, the New Agers created a social space of people with similar interests in stress-relief (functional dispositions) and on the other hand ascetic dispositions (spirituality). The New Age movement implies a new era in which individuals search for inner spirituality through their inner realm. This inner realm, through the self and the natural order of life, serves humans to move from all that is wrong to what is right, finding salvation and liberation (Heelas 1996; Krystal 1994). The people moving into these Ashrams had similar cultural backgrounds, meaning their position within the social space had comparable cultural capitals.

As mentioned before, as a counter reaction, a small group of people became interested in religious orientations and social implications focussed on an alternative view on the body, mind and soul. The religious and spiritual landscape in the Western world changed dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. The movements of scientific modernity and conventional religions provided new systems of meanings about modernity. Due to the increase of individuality within modernity we can talk about a secularization paradigm: “individualism, diversity and egalitarianism in the context of liberal democracy undermine the authority of religious beliefs [...]. [R]eligion diminishes in social significance, becomes increasingly privatized, and loses personal salience except where it finds work to do other than relating individuals to the supernatural” (Bruce 2002, p. 30). This new focus is called the wave of the New Age, resulting in a new form of spirituality.

Due to the fact that the New Age is not an organization, it is hard to define its basis. As a result, New Age is a label that is attached to whatever seems to fit it. It means very different things to people (Hanegraaff 1998). As a starting point of this research we will label New Age as: the movement that adapted to elements from different world views, based on the needs and concerns of the individual (Urban 2005) incorporating practices of yoga for physical and mental health. In this light we can apply all our theoretical concepts. Yoga became the practice of ‘going inwards’, gaining inner spirituality through bodily movements, being a functional disposition as a form of stress relief (functionality), Enlightenment (spirituality) and self-awareness (the reflexive project). In addition, as a ‘social tool’ for group formations, yoga brings together people with the same interests and physical appearance (yogic capital).

What is interesting here, is to find a link between spirituality and the more individualistic approach. “The interest in individual self-creation as a form of identity formation can also be seen in popular culture and is partially characterized by an emphasis on individual well-being and an increase of focus on the self in terms of happiness and a sense of spiritual fulfilment” (Henrichsen-Schrembs 2001, p. 2). New Agers value the self and believe in an inner realm, which is important to personal growth and self-discovery. They do so through listening to their own inner voices instead of outside ones, which argues against Bourdieu. According to sociological theory the reflexivity of modernity can be found in the core of the self. Giddens (1991) argues that the self has become a *reflexive project*. The reflexive project alters the self and is a form of individualization, our fourth theoretical concept in this research (the reflexive project). The self here has to be explored and constructed as part of a reflexive process through connecting personal and identity change (Giddens 1991). This opposite perspective to Bourdieu will be elaborated more in the following subchapter.

2.3.6 Theory of Lifestyles: Giddens

Where Bourdieu (1984) argued that individuals became part of a lifestyle due to social constructions, Giddens (1991) argued individuals create identity due to the reflexive awareness of the self within social structures making it an individual choice. According to Giddens the individual is conscious of the individual's action-system, where the self has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual. These activities can be related to the search for inner spirituality, which is characterized as being part of the yogic practice, but also to individualization. Individualization is one of the characteristics of modernization according to Giddens.

Individualization is the shift from social focus to being self-centred. Giddens (1991) views new modernity in which clear structures seem absent and people are more “on their own in making sense of an increasingly complex world”. He argues that due to the dynamism of new modernity and global impact, customs and habits have changed, influencing contemporary lifestyles. To him “a lifestyle involves a cluster of habits and orientations and hence has a certain unity [...] that connects options to a more or less ordered pattern” (p. 82).

According to an analysis of Giddens by Baber (1991), Giddens has contributed substantially to contemporary sociological theory. He ordered social elements systematically, which is helpful for the understanding of the nature of human social activity. In Giddens' concern mostly lies a theoretical balance between the role of structure and agency. In the concept of structure lies a duality. The duality of structure is referring to the recursive nature of social practices, rethinking the relationship between two opposites namely voluntarism and determinism. Here structure is the medium but also the outcome of practices constituting social systems. Structure both enables and constrains action by individual agency. Important to mention here is that structure in functionalist theory, of which it is the case, appears as being external to human action. Social systems here refer to the continually created and recreated action accomplished by individuals. The concept of agency is the continuous flow of conduct, which means that causal interventions of individuals acting to contribute to the creation and recreation of the structure, are part of the on-going process of events in the world. This sort of ‘flow’ can be defined as a stream of events governed by the individual. The individual could have acted otherwise because individuals are knowledgeable enough to act on the basis of their own consciousness.

Even when people are likely to be pushed by social situations, like Bourdieu argued, as Giddens (1991) puts it, “we have no choice but to choose” (p. 81) fitting a lifestyle that fits the character, one’s self-identity. He defines self-identity as “the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of his or her self-identity” (p. 53) emphasizing the increase of individuality and the power of the individual choice. This identity is not assigned to the individual by others; such as Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus & capitals. It is something that is created and maintained through the chosen activities of the individual being a result of the new condition in new modernity: the capacity of reflexivity.

For Giddens the trend of individualization and the creation of reflexivity over the self is one of his core discoveries, emphasizing the value of the self. New Ager found to believe this is the sense of the inner voice, which is important to personal growth and self-discovery. According to Rainwater (1989), yoga is a portrayal of therapy that leads to the more general terms of “individual”, “self”, and “self-identity” in modernity. This defines our final theoretical concept of the reflexive project. Here we can discover that the concept of the reflexive project opposes the concept of yogic capital where we would like to argue that: yoga being reflexive is on a micro level (reflexive project), yoga being socially structured is on a meso/macro level (yogic capital).

2.4 Ideal Types: Max Weber

Before we describe the different types of yoga practitioners, we must first understand the theory behind typology and types. In this case we describe ideal types. No human can be fully distracted from one model, since there will always be something that might be deviant from the overarching type. This makes us human. Max Weber is one of the founding fathers of ideal types, describing the naturality of creating typologies.

One of Weber’s best known contributions to contemporary sociology is the definition of *ideal types* (Ritzer 2012). He believed that the responsibility of sociologists is to develop conceptual tools, which could be used to capture the essential features of social phenomena. “An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct” (Weber 1903 - 1917/1949, p. 90). This means that an ideal type is a concept constructed by a social scientist that can grasp what the concept means through the essential formulated features

of social phenomena. The ideal type is therefore a heuristic device, that is useful and helpful for empirical research and in understanding the social world.

The function of ideal types is to establish divergences or similarities and not to mirror images of the world or to describe the best form of the world. They give one-sided exaggerations, aiding us in making sense of the real world. Since the world is constantly changing its reality, ideal types should also be flexible and adjustable (Ritzer 2012). As Kalberg (1994) argues, the heuristic use of ideal types in empirical research is important, but they also play a key role within Weber's theoretical work. Ideal types constitute the theoretical building blocks for the construction of theoretical models, allowing us to analyze developments within the social world. The typology of yoga practitioners, which will be discussed in the next chapter, is set within the theoretical framework of ideal types applied to yoga practice research in the larger framework of modernity.

2.5 A Typology of Yogi's

As mentioned before, the focus of the practice in modern postural yoga shifted into different spheres, the physical (functional) and mental (spirituality), the individual (reflexive project) and the creation of (counter-)cultures (yogic capital). Since yoga is heterogeneous, contextual and has a variety of forms and religion, Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008) structured a typology of yoga practitioners in order to understand the yogic landscape in Germany better. Together with Versteeg (2011) they did further research on how these types of yoga practitioners could be analyzed within different modern spiritual and religious forms. For this research we will explore the four types of yoga practitioners and apply it to the contemporary yogic landscape of The Netherlands, focussing on yoga teachers in Amsterdam. The four types of yoga practitioners are the following: The Pragmatist, The Explorer, The Self-helper and The Mystic. For the rest of this chapter we will discuss the typology more in-depth, trying to relate to the concepts of spirituality, individualization and modernization through the search for self-identity in modernization by Giddens (1991) and Bourdieu (1984) creating our own fifth type: The Capitalist.

As you will see in the following subchapters, we will work with the terms of 'functionality' (The Pragmatist, The Explorer & The Capitalist) 'spirituality' (The Mystic & The Self-Helper), 'the reflexive self' (The Self-Helper & The Pragmatist) and 'yogic capital' (The Explorer, The Mystic & The Capitalist). Here functionality refers to the focus on the bodily practice of yoga, functioning as the functional disposition as a form of (for example) stress relief. Yoga here is an embodied practice and a form of bodily experience, creating physical benefits. Spirituality refers to the mental practice, focussing on the spiritual process of yoga to the Divine and towards enlightenment. Here

spirituality is the reaction towards the increase of rationality. The transcendental aim in traditional yogic philosophy is embraced. Individualism is the form of the reflexive project by Giddens, referring to the power of the individual choice and the increase of becoming more self-aware and turning this into an individual project of reflexiveness. The final theoretical concept, which will be used in this research's framework is yogic capital, referring to a style of living where the practice and philosophy of yoga is the tool for the health and wellbeing of the individual gathered in a collective group of yogi's. Distinguishing this from the other theoretical concepts, yogic capital refers to yoga as an embodied practice being culturally and socially inflected.

Before we jump into the definitions of the four types of yoga practitioners, we wish to mention once again that the types are ideal types and function to establish divergences or similarities and not to mirror images of the world or to describe the best form of the world. They give one-sided exaggerations, aiding us in making sense of the real world.

2.5.1 The Self-Helper: Focus on the Reflexive Project & Spirituality

The first type is The Self-Helper. Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg (2011) characterize The Self-Helper as practicing yoga in a therapeutic way. This type wishes to better cope with one's personal problems and learn more about oneself through the kind of introspection yoga offers. Giddens (1991) self-actualisation is understood in terms of balance between opportunity and risk, letting go of the past and applying various techniques of becoming free from oppressive emotional habits. The Self-Helper is attracted by the aspect of the inner immersion (spirituality). The practice is not only for the physical and mental wellness but also to foster self-exploration and going inwards (reflexive project). Going inward makes them pay attention to what is going on inside the body and mind, wanting to learn more about ones inner self in order to make changes. This relates directly to Giddens' (1991) concept of the reflexive project. Here the practitioner literally makes him-/herself a project of which the individual is responsible, analyzing what is and what we make of ourselves, forming a trajectory of development. As a result, the self has become a project, altering the self, exploring and constructing the self through personal growth and self-discovery. A trend which we've seen as common to the New Agers. For this type, the process of individuality and therefore the reflexive project is their emphasis, but also spirituality since the process is identified by as 'spiritual' as you can see in Figure 1. on page 24.

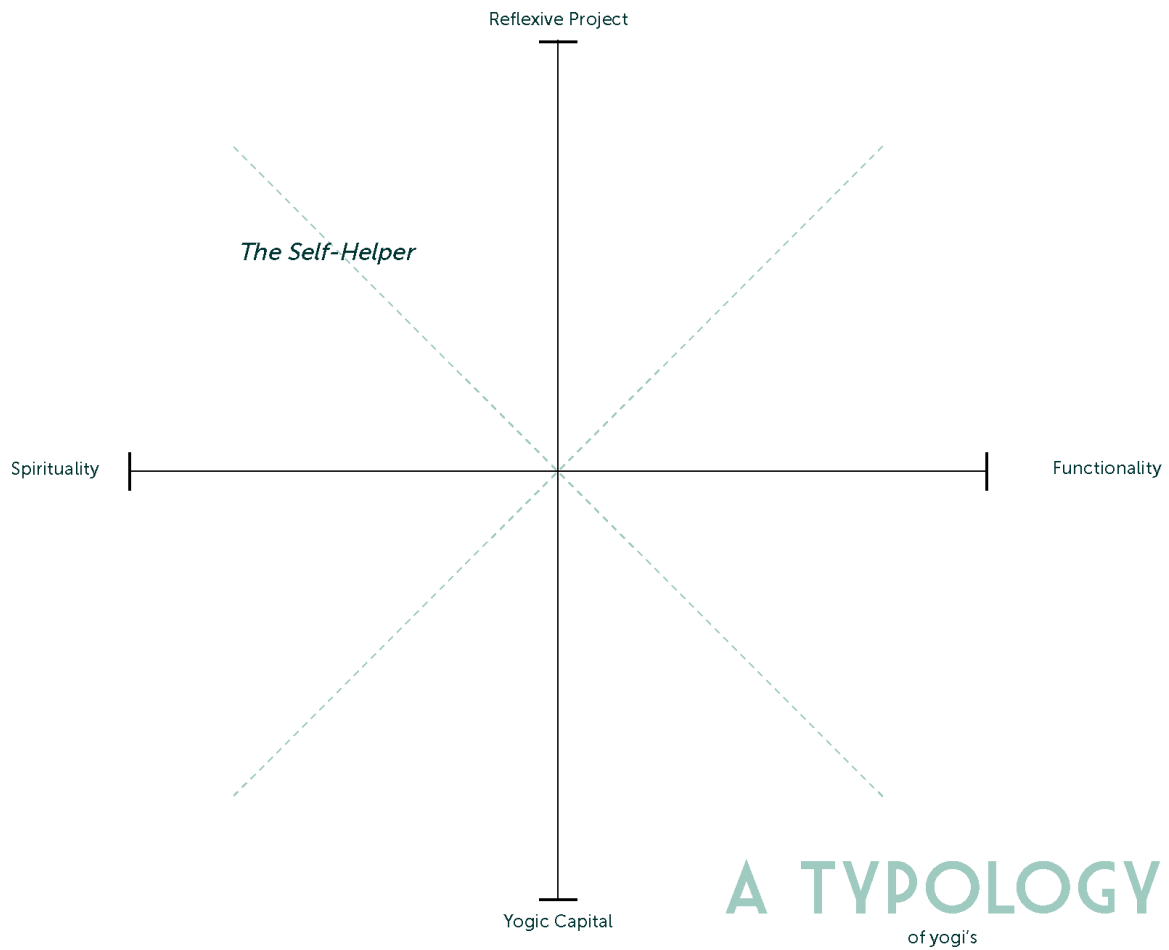


Figure 1. A Typology of Yogi's - The Self-Helper

2.5.2 The Mystic: Focus on Spirituality & Yogic Capital

The second type is The Mystic. The Mystic subscribes to yoga as a world-view. Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg (2011) researched that this type integrates yoga philosophy and its spiritual dimension into their daily lives via daily mental practice of meditation, but also via eating and drinking according to yogic beliefs, thereby more or less completely adopting yogic ethical standards to their lives (yogic capital). Spirituality has become part of their style of living, but the focus of spirituality is seeing the Divine as part of the self (spirituality). Earlier we emphasized a shift of spiritual practice in the traditional Indian philosophy of yoga practice to a more functional practice, but with the wave of the New Age this type is best defined by their focus on spirituality. The New Age movement implies a new era in which individuals search for inner spirituality through their inner realm. This inner realm, through the self and the natural order of life, serves humans to move from all that is wrong to what is right, finding salvation and liberation to the

Divine (Heelas 1996). Therefore The Mystic is best described within the theoretical concepts of spirituality and yogic capital as you can see in Figure 2. below.

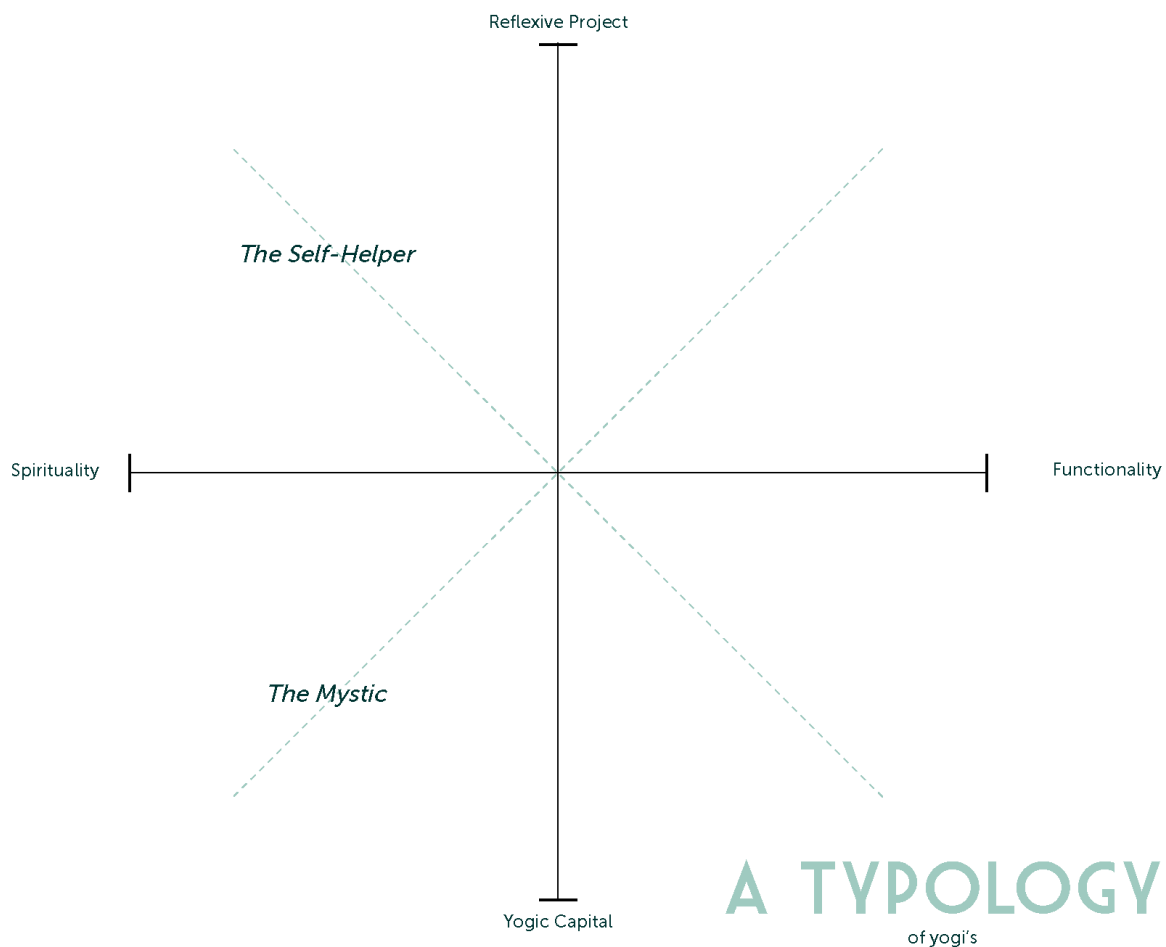


Figure 2. A Typology of Yogi's - The Mystic

2.5.3 The Pragmatist: Focus on Functionality & Reflexive Project

Our third ideal type is The Pragmatist. According to Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg (2011) The Pragmatist practices yoga in order to remain physically fit and for relaxation. Pragmatists also emphasize the process of going inward. Going inward refers to taking a time out from their busy and hectic daily life. This relates to the reflexivity of the self that extends to the body and its daily activity. Giddens (1991) argues that where the body is part of an action system rather than a passive object, the observation of bodily processes is intrinsic to the continuous reflexive attention. The individual is then becoming aware of the body, grasping the fullness of the moment and entails the conscious monitoring of sensory input from the environment as well as the major bodily organs and body dispositions as a whole. This type is therefore characterized by its emphasis on the bodily

experience and practice that influences its daily life, relating to the two theoretical concepts of the reflexive project and functionality. The body thus functions as a tool to remain fit (functionality), but also to create a better body-mind connection, embodying the yogic practice and mirroring the self (reflexive project). We found earlier the popularity of the physical culture, where yoga became decontextualized from the traditional spiritual aspects of yoga by shedding positive light on the bodily experience (Jain 2015). The Pragmatist thus leans mostly towards the functional aspect of yoga, though built on own individuality and his/her own identity as you can see in Figure 3. below.

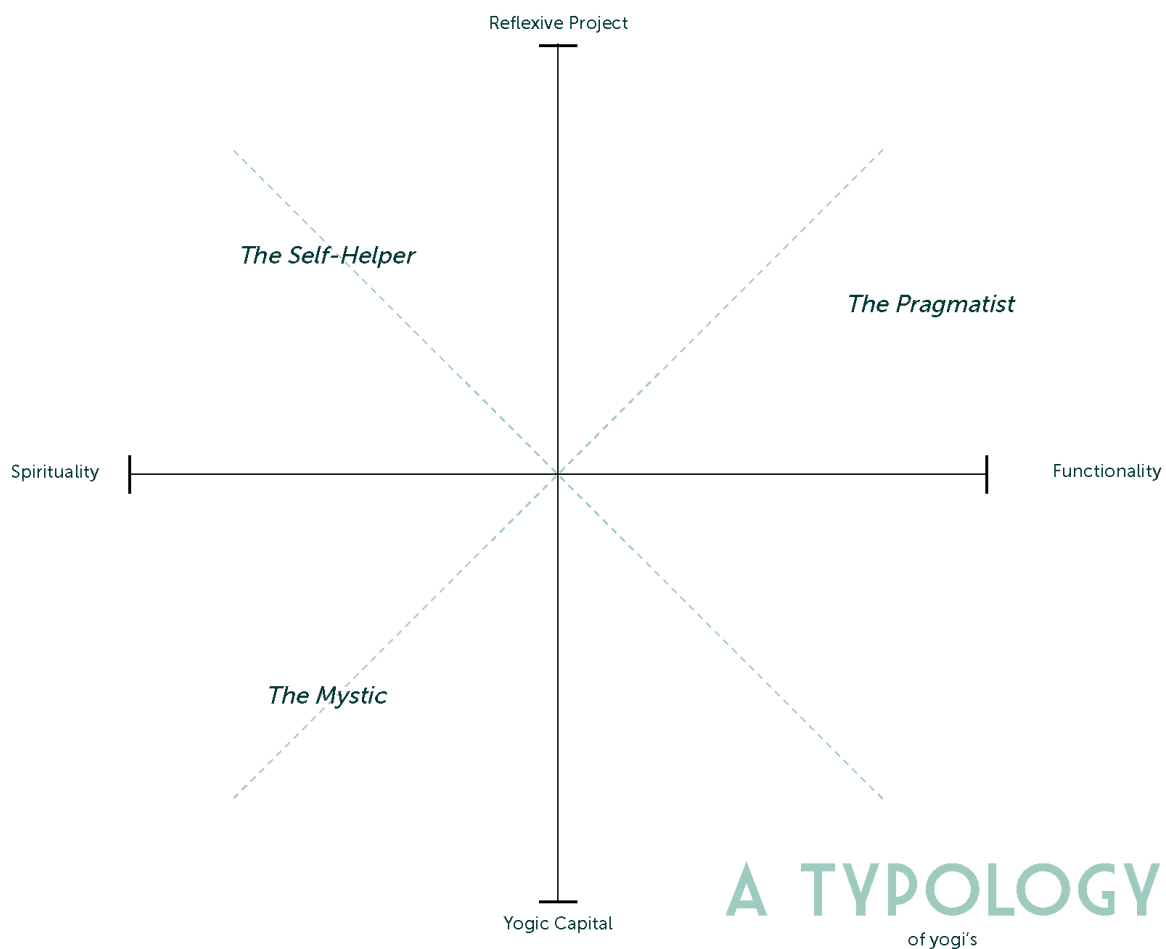


Figure 3. A Typology of Yogi's - The Pragmatist

2.5.4 The Explorer: Focus on Reflexive Project & Functionality

The fourth type is The Explorer. The Explorer as argued by Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg (2011), is attracted by the fact that yoga helps exploring the mental and bodily aspects of the yogic practice. Like the Pragmatist, the Explorer aims at finding and developing oneself as a human being through the philosophical and spiritual dimensions of the yoga practice in order to explore the self.

What distinguishes the Explorer from the Pragmatist is the more emphasis on yoga as a way to explore the self as for the aim to be bodily fit. Emphasizing the theoretical concept of the reflexive project over functionality and thus placing it closer to this theoretical concept in our framework.

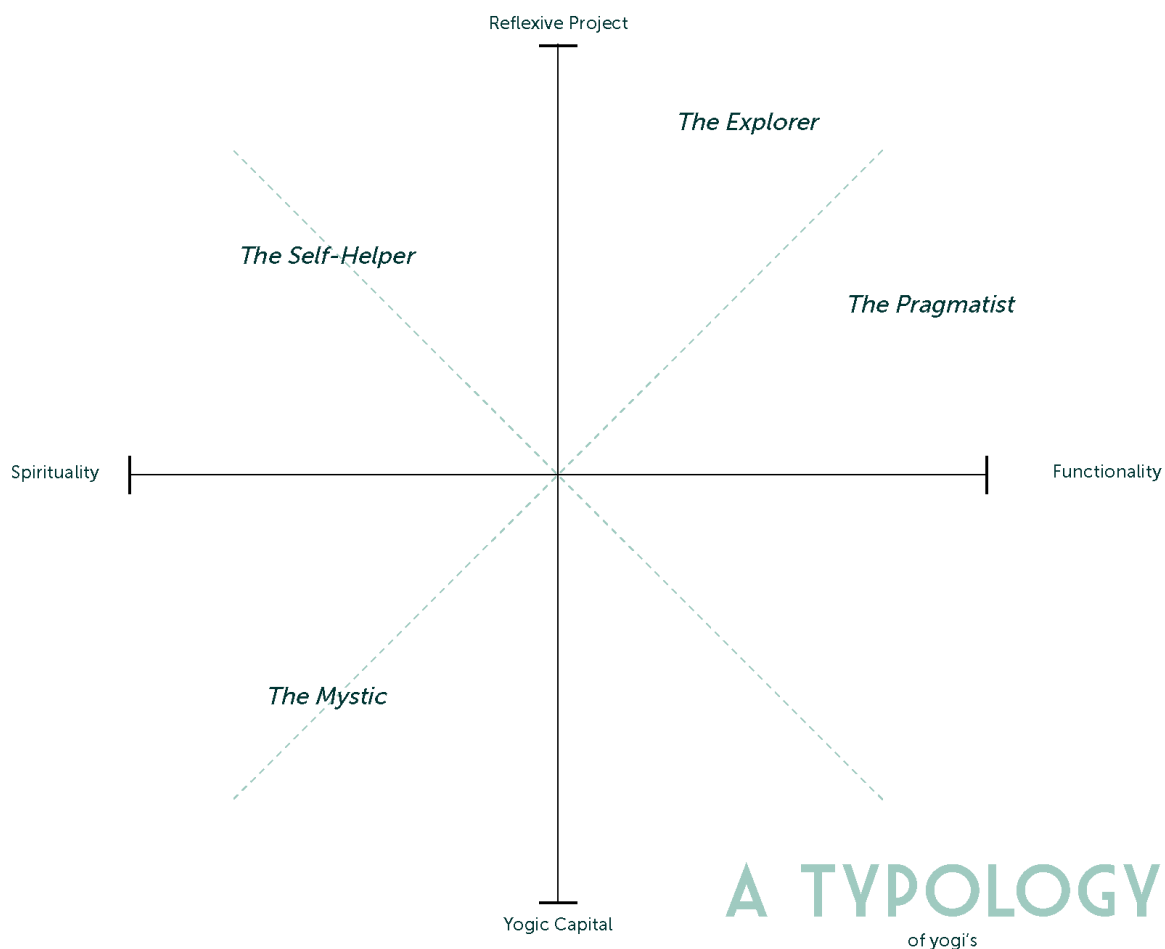


Figure 4. A Typology of Yogi's - The Explorer

2.5.5 The Capitalist: Focus on Yogic Capital & Functionality

The fifth type is The Capitalist. The Capitalist is characterized by yogic capital and functionality, where the field specific capital: yogic capital is being used functionally. According to Horton (2012), there is a booming popularity in a culture that worships the “body beautiful” (erotic capital). This resists critical self-reflection, where yoga can all-too-easily reinforce pre-existing tendencies toward commercialism and commodification, co-dependence and narcissism, irrationality and magical thinking. ‘The Capitalist’ will thus function as a critique on the current commodification and marketization of the yoga lifestyle, filling up the gap for our yoga typology framework.

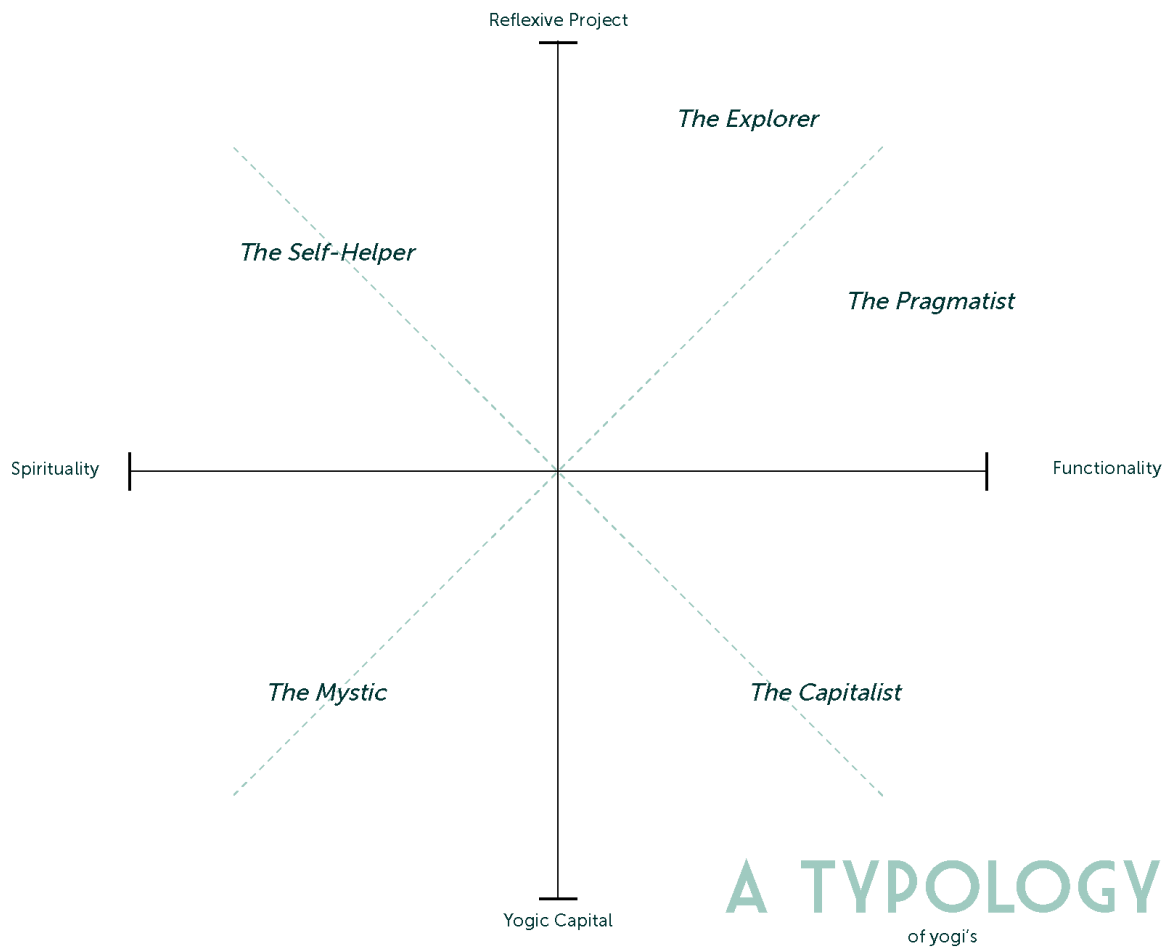


Figure 5. A Typology of Yogi's - The Capitalist

2.6 Summary

Yoga comes from a wide range of meanings, referring (for example) to yoke, a union and the hierarchy of mind-body constituents. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, we will work with the definition of modern postural yoga, since the contemporary Western yogic practice differs far from the traditional Indian practice. With a shift from spiritual to a more functional practice, we define yoga as the practice that focuses mostly on the bodily experience. This practice can be found within different forms of yoga. The contemporary yogic practice is the technique to enable embodied transcendence, creating a 'mirror for the self', which allows practitioners to encounter both forms of inquiry into the nature of our embodied existence and self. This personal focus is a result from new modernity. Simmel (1903) envisioned a deep problem of modern life. Due to an overwhelming social force of the mass in the metropolis and increasing rationality, interpersonal forms of relations would exist and the individual would preserve the autonomy and individuality of

his or her existence, creating a barrier between all individuals.

This increase of calculative and rational modes of thought encouraged a wave of functional spiritual interest (functionality) (De Michelis 2005), creating a culture of New Agers. With both the interest in Indian spirituality (spirituality), through increasing relations with Eastern countries, and the interest in healthy lifestyles, yoga became highly popular. A new bodily perception, which was 'scientifically' proven to increase fitness and health created even more popularity. This new bodily experience became, through ups and downs, mainstream today becoming a form of a particular lifestyle (yogic capital). According to Bourdieu (1986), individuals are influenced by their social class (habitus & capitals) and by individual success. Both determine in what social space you're positioned. This position is influenced by the series of capitals (cultural, economical, social and erotic), which leads to a form of symbolic violence, where the "superiority of legitimate culture is imposed on those who do not possess it and who are thereby excluded" (Roose et. al. 2012, p. 493) creating (symbolic) boundaries between members of different classes.

The symbolic boundaries are articulated by capitals: "the appropriation of profits and power to impose the laws of functioning within the field" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 84). Next to Bourdieu, Giddens (1991) was also concerned with the new modern movements and the formation of individuals in a social space. His ideas differ slightly from Bourdieu, due to the fact that Giddens thinks individuals create identity due to reflexive awareness and through the self consciousness within social structures. This results in the idea of a reflexive project, a movement of adjustable self-identity through self actualization and realization. He emphasizes the true value of the self, which relates to the wave of New Age and new spirituality in the contemporary (yoga) society.

To sum it all up we came up with four theoretical concepts: spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital. All four concepts are related to the typology borrowed from Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008) whom categorized four types of yoga practitioners and gave them their unique definition and title. With this information in mind we will try to answer the two research questions of this master thesis, namely: How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, functionality, yogic capital and the reflexive project? & How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice? by using sociological modernity theory.

Chapter 3

Yoga Research in Action - Research and Expectations

Following from the theoretical framework of modernization taking the four theoretical concepts of (spirituality, reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital) formulating a typology of different types of yoga practitioners, we will here address the research questions and expectations of this research. These expectations are a more in-depth analysis of the typology within the theoretical framework of modernity.

3.1 Research Questions

Bourdieu (1984) and Giddens (1991) both theorized the bigger framework of modernization where the process of individualization plays a big role. This shift of individualization is incorporated to the popularity of individual well-being and the increase of self focus. These two can be understood in terms of happiness and spirituality (Henrichsen-Schrembs 2001). Individualization seems to be a result of movements like the New Age and the reflexive project, created by individual choices. On the other side we can analyze, that practicing yoga isn't necessarily an individual driven choice, but rather a chance. It is Bourdieu's idea, that social circumstances 'force' the individual to take part in a group due to habitus and capitals. Giddens (1991) sees this 'force' in another light: "[I]n conditions of [new] modernity, we all not only follow lifestyles, but in an important sense are forced to do so - we have no choice but to choose. A lifestyle can be defined as a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity" (p. 81). To sum it up: "for all individuals and groups, life chances condition lifestyle choices" (p. 86).

In order to understand this idea in the current situation of yoga we also had to theorize the increase of marketization of the yoga lifestyle. Carrette and King (2005), are concerned with the marketization of postural yoga. They argue it is construed as nothing more than a capitalist enterprise in a contemporary popular yogic scene. So what does all of this mean to the contemporary practitioners? How do the theoretical concepts influence the practice of yoga by different types of practitioners? And (how) can we relate the yogic chances to be chosen by the differences between yoga practitioners? Can we distinguish different types of yoga practitioners? In order to answer all questions, this master thesis is focused on the positioning of yoga by different types of yoga practitioners in the current health scene of Amsterdam. Following in two research questions: **How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital? & How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?**

The first research question: **How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital?** will be researched through the four theoretical focusses as discussed in our theoretical framework. Spirituality relates to the deepened interest in the yoga philosophy searching for inner spirituality through their inner voice. The reflexive project relates to Giddens' idea of the process of self helping through inner emersion during the yoga practice due to (negatively) associated life course events. Here the self has become a project of reflection. Functionality relates to the physical and psychological benefits of the yoga practice, shedding light on the positive effect of the bodily experience, opposing spirituality. The final focus is yogic capital, which opposes the reflexive project. The focus relates to the exploration of social positioning of yoga in the field of lifestyles, relating to social structures in stead of the individual exploration. In order to find social positioning we will have to research the social background of the respondents and ask questions relating to different types of capitals.

This builds a bridge towards the second research question: **How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?** Through asking about the social networks and backgrounds of the respondents we will try to analyze differences in social positioning between the types of yoga practitioners. Respondents with an upbringing within the spiritual world might have a bigger chance of having interests in yoga than practitioners who don't have this experience.

3.2 Topics

The two research questions can be researched through three themes, namely: 1) Modern postural yoga in general according to Amsterdam's yoga teachers 2) the field of yoga lifestyle and 3) the social space in Amsterdam connected to the yoga typology in relation to our four theoretical concepts. All three themes will be discussed during the interviews, but in this chapter some thoughts and expectations will already be discussed. Firstly we think that the yoga practice incorporates both techniques for physical and mental health. The practice allows practitioners to 'go inwards', gaining inner spirituality through bodily movements (Urban 2005), which will allow us to research the embodiment of the yoga lifestyle and ask for the positioning of yoga through the respondents. The types of techniques are mostly dependent on the style of yoga practice, the location it's been taught and the type of education (e.g. Yoga Teacher Training). Each style/location/teacher focusses differently on either the physical aspect and/or the philosophical/spiritual dimension of the practice. Therefore we've chosen to take the more energetic, yang focused styles of yoga (i.e. Vinyasa, Flow, Hatha, Ashtanga, and Iyengar). Yin is the opposite, focussing on relaxation and restoring the body.

The field of yoga lifestyles and social space will be researched through questions that regard respondents' choices and chances in practicing yoga. Here we will ask what their social network looks like, what customs they have considering consumerism, food, appearance, housing, work habits, leisure and global impact (yogic capital).

3.3 Typology Characteristics

In order to critically define what type our yoga teachers are, we will present here a better defined definition of our typology which we explored. We also used these definitions for the creation of our survey. Once again, all types are exaggerations and are merely explorations in order to unfold the yogic world. We will find overlap between different types, but our main goal is to capture the story not to tell the truth and categorize. Important in this chapter is that we conceptualized the theoretical focuses and linked them to the characteristics of the typology in order to have a theoretical foundation for our research. In appendix 1. on page 72 - 75 you can find these characteristics in the statements from the survey.

The Pragmatist (functionality & the reflexive project) practices yoga in order to remain physically fit and to relax. Pragmatists are characterized by taking a time out from their busy and hectic daily life. Reflexivity of the self is also part of The Pragmatist, that extends to the body. Yoga here is part of an action system rather than a passive object.

The Explorer (functionality & the reflexive project) is attracted by the aspect of the inner immersion and self-exploration. Self-development and self-exploration are often applied as a tool for better managing ones daily life.

The Self-Helper (spirituality & the reflexive project) practices yoga in a therapeutic way, relating to the experience of negative life events. Going inwards he/she hopes to foster self-awareness. Another characteristic of this type is symphasizing the spiritual dimension of yoga, where we can find the characteristic of the reflexive project, defining the reflexive project and individualization through their inner voice.

The Mystic (spirituality & yogic capital) subscribes to yoga as a world-view. This type also integrates yoga philosophy and its spiritual dimension into their daily lives via daily physical practice and meditation, as well as eating and drinking according to yogic beliefs. The divine is seen as part of the self. Going inwards for the Mystic means establishing a connection to the divine, which characterizes the focus on spirituality and transferring this through a world-view mindset.

What distinguishes the Mystic from the Explorer is the focus of the individual. With the Mystic we can find a more collective search for spirituality and the Explorer searches more through the inner voice, focussing on a more explorative mode of living, which results in a collective lifestyle of yoga.

The Capitalist is characterized by a culture that worships the “body beautiful” resisting critical self-reflection tending toward commercialism, narcissism, irrationality and magical thinking.

3.4 Expectations

In order to get a better overview of the positioning of the different types of yoga practitioners within the theorized field of lifestyles, we have created four expectations which visualize their position. Here all criteria of the typology and the theory come together. As discussed earlier in the theoretical framework of the ‘ideal type’, we mentioned that we are merely describing an ideal world. This also applies to the expectations. We are not here to set out to test ‘hypotheses’. We rather emphasize on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena through structuring expectations.

As you can see Figure 6. on page 34 represents the complete scheme of ideal yoga types in the four theoretical concepts of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital. This basic figure hypothesizes all types connected to their characteristics as discussed in Chapter 2. The Pragmatist and the Explorer position yoga as being functional and a reflexive project, the Mystic emphasizes spirituality and yogic capital and the Self-Helper emphasizes the concepts of spirituality and the reflexive project. This idea creates the following expectations, which we will elaborate more on.

Expectation 1: The Pragmatist & The Explorer emphasize the theoretical concepts of functionality and the reflexive project

Meaning those individuals experience conscious monitoring of sensory input from the environment as well as the major bodily organs and body dispositions as a whole. Applying this reflexive process of the self from their yogic practice as a toolbox for daily living.

Expectation 2: The Self-helper emphasizes the theoretical concept of the reflexive project and spirituality

Meaning these individuals are searching for a balance between opportunity and risk, letting go of the (negative) past, through various techniques of becoming free from oppressive emotional habits. They are attracted by the aspect of the inner immersion and foster self-exploration.

Expectation 3: The Mystic emphasizes the theoretical concept of spirituality and yogic capital

Meaning these individuals integrate the yoga philosophy and its spiritual dimension into their daily lives via daily mental practice of meditation but also eating and drinking according to yogic beliefs. More or less completely adopting yogic ethical standards and spirituality to their lives.

Expectation 4: The Capitalist emphasizes the theoretical concept of yogic capital and functionality

Meaning these individuals worship yoga, resisting critical self-reflection, tending toward commercialism, narcissism, irrationality and magical thinking.

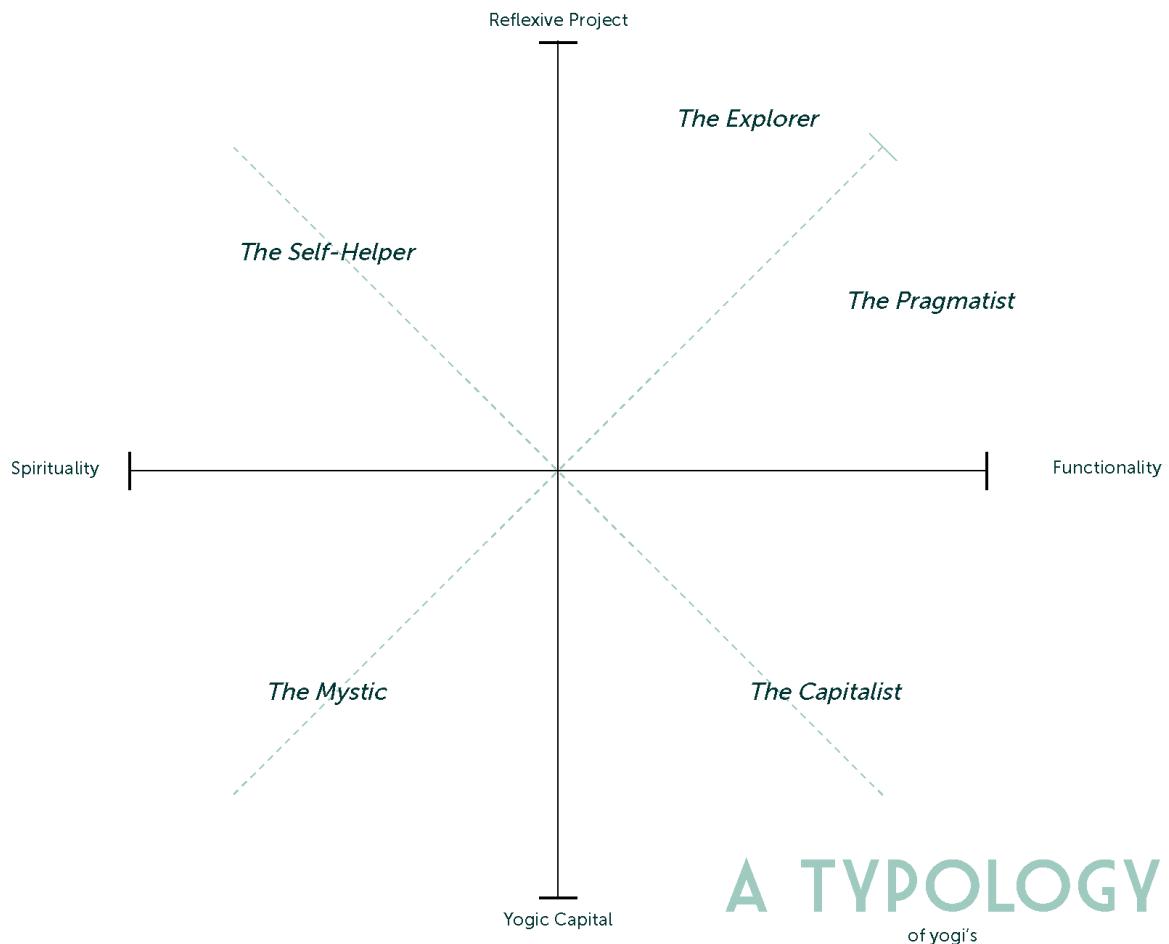


Figure 6. Ideal Yoga Type

Within this research we do not expect The Capitalist to arise, due to the nature of yoga teachers that practice yoga for its spiritual, reflexive and functional practice. Yoga teachers are consisted of

generally healthy individuals interested in furthering their training in yoga through the body-mind paradigm (Conboy et. al. 2010). We also do not expect them to focus on solely the lifestyle of yoga, since the yoga lifestyle is the effect of the interest in spirituality, functionality and the reflexive project meaning all types will in their way relate to the yoga lifestyle.

According to Lewis' (2008) research on life chances, wellness, the meaning and motivation in the 'yoga market', capitals play a significant role. The connection between the initiation of doing yoga practice and the yoga types are capitals. "[T]he desire to improve health and wellness, specific kinds of educational and economic capital play an equally significant role [...]. [N]arratives reveal the confluence of disparate resources and privileges that recommend yoga to an individual and demonstrate the bridges and bonds necessary for successful integration into a new community and a new bodily discipline [...]. [A] pattern of motivation [...] was nourished by pre-existing, mutually reinforcing capitals" (p. 539 - 543). The degree of social impact in the social space by Bourdieu (chance) is confirmed here.

Expectation 5: Economic privilege, sport experience and cultural values instigate & sustain yoga exercise and a healthy lifestyle

Meaning individuals that practice yoga are nested within a broader social, cultural, structural and economic context, which is essential for understanding the individual exercise habits of yoga, creating what we will call yogic capital (field specific capital).

What is further left in this research is the idea of Giddens: the influence of individuality (choice). As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, Giddens defines lifestyles as "individual choices that consist of self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, bodily dress and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behaviour [...]. [L]ifestyles have gained particular significance as individual and collective expressions of differences and similarities" (Abel & Cockerham 1993, p. 321). This relates greatly to Bourdieu's capitals.

Lewis (2008) explored the interconnectivity of individual life chances and choices, collective efficacy, media representations, emergent capitalist endeavours and habits of the body (erotic capital). This reminds us of the successful application of yoga in the contemporary modern capitalist yoga market, capitalizing the potential of the yoga market. Due to this commodification of the yogic practice, individuals can buy an yogic identity and choose to become a certain yoga

lifestyle by solely confirming with the yoga community and culture. This creates our final expectation:

Expectation 6: The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice

Meaning individuals that practice yoga in the contemporary scene of Amsterdam gain significance as individuals by finding particular meaning and collective expressions through the capitalist endeavours and habits of the 'commodified yogic body'.

3.6 Summary

In summary, this chapter addressed the research questions and expectations of this research. Following from sociological modernity theory inspired by Bourdieu and Giddens we formulated the four theoretical concepts of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital. These concepts formulated the following two research questions:

How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital?

&

How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?

In this research we will flow through three themes, namely:

- 1) Modern postural yoga in general according to Amsterdam's yoga teachers
- 2) The field of yoga lifestyle
- 3) The social space of yoga in Amsterdam connected to the yoga typology in relation to our four theoretical concepts (expectations 1 - 4).

In order to select our respondents, we've characterized the yoga typology. We've invited yoga teachers for an interview based on their availability. In order to relate the typologies to lifestyle research, we will ask questions that regard respondents' choices and chances in practicing yoga. Here we will ask what their social network looks like and what customs they have. We expect that in the end all types of yoga teachers will mention all aspects (spirituality, functionality, the reflexive project and lifestyle) though specifically highlighting a certain characteristic. There exist all sorts of forms of yoga. We haven't necessarily narrowed it down to one specific style (i.e. Vinyasa, Flow, Hatha, Ashtanga, and Iyengar), but rather focussed on the energy movement of 'yang' as opposed to the relaxation movement of 'yin'.

Finally we expect to find a relation between the sociological theories on modernity and the practice of yoga. Formulating our final hypotheses, where capitals play a significant role in the chance to practice yoga (expectation 5). On the other hand, the individual has the choice to participate in this style of living due to the increase of marketization of the yoga lifestyle. Offering the consumption of yoga, commodifying the yogic practice (expectation 6).

Overview of expectations:

Expectation 1: The Pragmatist and The Explorer emphasize the theoretical concepts of functionality and the reflexive project

Expectation 2: The Self-helper emphasizes the theoretical concept of the reflexive project and spirituality

Expectation 3: The Mystic emphasizes the theoretical concept of spirituality and yogic capital

Expectation 4: The Capitalist emphasizes the theoretical concept of yogic capital and functionality

Expectation 5: Economic privilege, sport experience and cultural values instigate & sustain yoga exercise and a healthy lifestyle

Expectation 6: The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice

Chapter 4

Honouring All Yogas - A Methodological Approach

In this chapter we will discuss the research practically, starting with the question ‘Why study yoga?’. We then explain our methodological considerations in order to understand the motivations for using social science, more in particular, sociological research on the topic of yoga. This is followed by the conceptualization of these theoretical concepts, the used data collection methods, labelling and coding techniques. This chapter is finalized with methodological limitations and a summary.

4.1 Why Yoga Research?

Current research mainly focusses on the historical part of yoga practice (De Michelis, 2005; Burger, 1995), the economical (Jain, 2015), the bodily and psychological (Varga, 2005), philosophical (Alter, 2006; Lea, 2009b) or the more medical benefits of the yogic practice (Ross & Thomas 2010). Current research is lacking in engagement with the emotional impact of the practice, spirituality and sociological theory (Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg 2011). Therefore this Master Thesis will be a contribution to the field of yoga research. Within academia this study advances scientific theory and knowledge of yoga, individualization and modernity, as well as ideal types.

4.2 Methodological Considerations

4.2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

This master thesis is a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Our aim was to understand why the degree of physical interest (functionality) in yoga is more important to a certain type of yoga practitioner than to another, as another yoga practitioner focusses on spirituality, yogic capital and/or the reflexive project. Another question is: how does this relate to larger concepts such as individualization and modernization (Giddens) and social structures and lifestyles (Bourdieu). This was also the aim of Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008) analyzing different types of yoga practitioners in Germany. In this research our scope is the yoga landscape in Amsterdam. Through a quantitative exploration we will understand what type the practitioner is and through a qualitative approach we will better understand the respondents stories in a more exploratory and descriptive way.

For this research we tried to apply the mixed-method research design, but since we had a total N of 21 (respondents), we can solely speak of the quantitative part as exploratory. In order to understand

the methodological approach we will here define this method and explain later how we applied it. The definition of a mixed method design is, that it consists of two phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. The procedure of collecting, analyzing and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data within a single study, has the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the research problem. The rationale behind this method is that both kinds of data collecting are sufficient by themselves. When used in combination, both methods compliment each other by taking strengths of each method (Ivankova et. al. 2006). Its opportunities lie in the exploration of the quantitative results, resulting in more detail in the qualitative results. By visually representing the quantitative research data in figures, we help conceptualize our own thoughts and guide the reader to better comprehend the results.

In the mixed-method design, data is collected over a period of time in two consecutive phases. Firstly analyzing quantitative data. Secondly relating the outcomes of the quantitative to the qualitative collected data in the second phase (Ivankova et. al. 2006). This means the integration of both methods took place in connection to each other. The application of the quantitative research method in this research was a survey. This survey explored what yoga type the respondent is. Through using a visual method of quantitative data application, we were able to see the different scales of interests of the types. Since the types are ideal versions of the reality, we were able to visualize the tendency of interest of the respondent. Based on interesting outcomes (either strong profiles, which are profiles that have a great tendency towards a certain type, or a fairly general profile, which don't necessarily focus on one particular aspect) we chose 9 from the 21 respondents to interview (quantitative N=21; qualitative N=9). This selection process took place through the analization of the quantitative data. We tried to invite an equal amount of male and female yoga types, but unfortunately we were dependent on their availability and time, so had to select those that were available.

During the interview phase we were able to understand the quantitatively provided answers, by asking our respondents their personal stories that arises during the interview. This is one of the strengths of qualitative research, its ability to access directly. It examines what people actually do in real life instead of asking them to comment upon life (Silverman 2011). Interview is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research. It is the flexibility of the interview that makes it attractive. Qualitative interviewing has two approaches. One is the unstructured interview, where the interviewer asks one question and the interviewee gets the opportunity to respond freely.

The interviewer will continue the interview based on the points in the conversation that seem relevant. The other form is (semi-)structured interviewing. Here the researcher has a set of questions or topics, which must be covered. It becomes semi-structured when follow-up questions are asked, which weren't in the interview guide. Most important here is that all questions must be asked in the same form to all interviewees in order to make comparisons later (Bryman 2012). Here the quantified results blend with the qualified results. Resulting in the understanding of the stories (qualitative) behind the types (quantitative). In this research we will apply semi-structured interview.

4.2.3 Motives for Sociological Research

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, current research mainly focusses on the historical, economical, philosophical, psychological and medical aspects of yoga. It lacks critical thinking, which we can find in sociological research methodology and theory (De Michelis, 2005; Burger, 1995; Jain, 2015; Varga, 2005; Alter, 2006; Lea, 2009b; Ross & Thomas 2010; Atkinson et. al., 2009; Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg 2011). This is why we chose to do sociological research. Sociology in this research helps us to link modernity theory to the yogic practice. Sociology is all about using concepts that allow you to look from an outsider's perspective, allowing to analyze interaction processes.

Within this research we chose to use the concept method of typology, which we explored quantitatively (phase 1: surveys) and qualified (phase 2: interviews). Typologizing in social inquiry remains relatively 'underdeveloped' within social science research. A primary function of types and typologies, are to identify, simplify and order data, conceptualizing roles and features for institutionalization and social structure. This will allow the types to be described in such terms that make them comparable (McKinney 1969). Max Weber (1904/1949) introduced this social scientific research method as the attempt to capture complex social realities and contexts of meaning. The basic principle here, is that a typology is the result of the process of grouping aspects of the object of social inquiry into different groups or types, creating ideal types. In reality elements might overlap with other types' elements. In order to label a certain type, typologies are overarching, symbolizing a type of practitioner and their meaning towards a certain subject, which in this research is: the modern postural yoga practice and its sociological meaning.

4.2.4 The Yogic Researcher

In this research the main focus is on how different types of practitioners practice yoga, what their

perception is of yoga in Amsterdam and where they can be positioned in the field of lifestyles, within the larger theoretical frame of modernity. In order to research the position of yoga we will make use of sociological research, researching through a theoretical lens. This theoretical lens can be found within the fact that we constantly relate back to the four theoretical concepts of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital. These four concepts are a summary of the larger theoretical framework of modernity, which was presented in chapter 2.

The purpose of this research is not to establish what is true, but to give a multifaceted perspective of the meaning of yoga, yogic lifestyle and a typography of yogi's as being part of a popular culture in the contemporary urban sphere of Amsterdam, where yoga seems to be idiosyncratic and a complex creation of which all practitioners call it yoga. What is true to the practitioner, is true to them. What is true yoga to the researcher, might not be true yoga to them. Therefore, as the scholar, yoga will not be criticized as 'illegitimate', 'untrue', 'unauthentic' or 'unoriginal' yoga. Honouring all forms of yoga.

Ideally the researcher works from an objective point of view in order to leave out any preconceived ideas and or theories. Of course in reality this is a great challenge. Especially since the researcher is highly involved in the yoga scene. We realise there is a challenge to refrain from preconceived ideas and we did our very best to be as objective as possible, using the yoga practice experience as a strength to help find sufficient respondents within the large network and transforming previous knowledge of yoga into critical sociological thinking.

4.2.5 Quantitative: Quota Sampling Through Surveys

For this research it was impossible to get a large population of N=100 (for example) due to time and money constraints. In order to get a specific group that would come closest to representing the population of yoga practitioners we sent out a postal survey, sampling the different types of yoga practitioners. This survey was sent out to four different types of yoga studio's which we selected on the basis of criteria from our typology, through analyzing the website of the studio or institution. We will elaborately explain the criteria of all yoga practitioners and note the coded words to link the studio or institution to the type. For the Pragmatist, which is mainly focused on the physicality of yoga, Yagoy (2017) was chosen due to their emphasis on the 'fit body' and 'cosiness' of the studios. For the Explorer Svaha (2017) was chosen, due to their emphasis on 'self-exploration' and the teachings of a flow that helps to make everyday life more comfortable living a 'yogic lifestyle'. For the Self-Helper De Bewustzijn School (2017) was chosen, because next to yoga classes they offer a lot of workshops and lectures focused on 'self-awareness'. For the Mystic The Conscious Club

(2017) was chosen due to its focus on living a spiritual lifestyle integrating the yoga philosophy and its spiritual dimension into their daily lives via daily mental practice of meditation. As mentioned in chapter 3.4 on page 33 we chose not to analyze the Capitalist since our quota exists of yoga teachers who are expected to be spiritual and reflective in their practice, meaning the Capitalist opposes a yoga teacher, which made us decide to leave this type out of the analysis.

This sampling method can be described as quota sampling. Quota sampling is rarely employed in academic social research, but is used intensively in market research aiming to produce a sample that reflects a population that proportions a category (Bryman 2008), in this case yoga teachers from four specific studio's. The sampling phase is not carried out randomly, since the selection of people was left to the interviewer. In this research the selection of our respondents (also known as 'quotas') have been decided upon them fitting certain categories (The Pragmatist, The Explorer, The Self-Helper or The Mystic) based on the theoretical concepts (spirituality, functionality, the reflexive project & yogic capital).

The survey is built up by five topics, which all cover the theoretical concepts. All concepts are covered through four statements. Each statement represents a yoga type. The selection criteria for these statements can be found in subchapter 3.3 on page 32. Based on the characteristics of the typology we created a statement that linked a type to a theoretical concept. The respondent was asked to divide 100 points per topic, which allowed us to divide all points given to all statements and summarize with a final set of points per type. In appendix 3 on pages 78 - 88, you can find all the profiles of our quantitatively researched (N=21) respondents. These profiles visually display what type our respondent represents and shows if they deviate from our original framework, meaning if their interest in the theoretical concepts match the type which we conceptualized with two of the four theoretical concepts.

Based on this quantitative research method of surveys we selected our respondents. A number of criticisms are levelled at quota samples. For example the choice of respondent is left to the interviewer, which means the sample cannot be representative. It may reflect a population in terms of superficial characteristics (ideal types) where the interviewer may be influenced by their perceptions or judgements about certain characteristics in deciding to choose the respondent (Bryman 2008). However in its favour it is a quick way to collect people and it is useful for conducting development work on new measures or research instruments. In this case it was related to exploratory work from which new theoretical ideas generated (framework: typology and theoretical concepts). This allowed us to explore the field before inviting our respondents for the

interview phase and critically collect interviewees in order to try to find a representative sample as much as possible.

4.2.6 Qualitative: The Semi-Structured Interviews

All interviews are semi-structured interviews and took place during the period of April and May 2017. The interview method of semi-structured interviewing allowed us to cover a wide range of instances, still being able to vary the sequence of the questions and ask further questions for what is seen as significant replies (Bryman 2008). In order to compare all interviews, we have structured the interview with at least six set questions which must be answered. As mentioned earlier the selection of the interviewees took place within the interviewers network through the snowball effect. The snowball effect took place through approaching yoga studios personally after following a class. Either the teacher was interested in participating or one of their colleagues.

First we made a selection of four different types of yoga institutions in Amsterdam, comparing them with the typology characteristics. In practice, we were restrained to the availability and time of the teachers. Since a lot of yoga teachers travel, we weren't able to equally choose the same amount of yogi types. This means we ended up with a unit of analysis of minimal 9 practitioners of which two were male and seven female (based on N=21 from the survey) of which one is a Self-Helper, five an Explorer, two a Pragmatist and one a Mystic.

4.3 Conceptualization of the Theory

Important themes in this research are the practice, positioning and perceptions of yoga. In order to analyze what these mean to the yoga practitioners we used a coding scheme, which relates back to all four theoretical concepts. The main characteristics were inspired by Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008) original 'yoga path model' and more in-depth theoretical concepts of modernity by Bourdieu and Giddens.

4.3.1 Labelling: The Yoga Path Model

The yoga path model is based on a coding scheme, which was centred in Henrichsen-Schrembs' (2008) interview guideline. The categories that came out of her analysis was a mixture of top-down and bottom-up coding strategies, creating two analytical dimensions: 1) the structural and 2) the individual. Four aspects of the structural are health, relationship, finances and social networks, trying to understand the interviewees social circumstances. Within our research, the interview started with a few 'start up' questions, which relate back to the interviewee's personal backgrounds. Closed questions such as years of practice ($x > 10$ yrs or $x < 10$ yrs), previous and

current jobs (self and parents), education (self and parents) gave us the fundamentals to understand the social circumstances and therefore their social positioning. Within the open questions we tried to relate the theoretical concepts back to these social circumstances, trying to figure out if these are of any affect for the choice or chance of individuals practicing yoga.

The individual label consists of the interviewee's life course, motivations to practice yoga and the application of yoga practice, defining the interviewees yoga path (coded by: bodhi). Within our interview guide, you can find that all the questions relate back to the individual perspective on yoga, which we will try to relate to the theory in our analysis. What does yoga mean to them (yoga in general)? Is yoga beneficial to them (functionality)? Do they practice the yoga philosophy (spirituality)? Does yoga improve them as a person (the reflexive project)? What does their yogic lifestyle look like (yogic capital)? If these questions still remain vague, we would like to refer you to the interview guide on pages 72 - 75 for a detailed overview.

4.3.2 Coding: Modernity Theory

Based on our theoretical framework of modernity theory by Bourdieu and Giddens and the results, the following codes raised: Enlightenment Project, Mind-Body-Spirit Paradigm, Embodied Habitus, Internal Referentiality, Self-Commodification, Yogic Capital, Self Identity, Commodified Capitalism. What must be mentioned is, that the four main theoretical concepts overlap with each other constantly, for we will try not to determine one answer as solely 'spiritual'. What we do say, is that it might emphasize 'spiritual' more than others.

The enlightenment project refers to the individual becoming spiritual, relating to something Divine and god-like. Finding that yoga is about Life with a capital L, where oneness, realness and a (w)holistic approach occurs. The mind-body-spirit paradigm can be found within the philosophical and spiritual readings, which most yoga teachers are required to read and reread. The embodied capital (yogic capital) and habitus take us to the more physical aspect of yoga, where movement and bodily experience plays a large role in the practice of most yogi's. The internal referentiality code also relates to more functional and physical practices of yoga, where yoga functions as a guide, a mirror, regulating and managing for example stress. Self-commodification relates to yoga's function within daily practice and becoming a lifestyle. The self becomes a laboratory, where yogi's want to become the best version of the self and yoga functions as a toolbox. The yogic capital relates to what we've defined earlier, the field specific capital. Self identity is a concept in which the community, with the same lifestyle, create a self identity within this structure. Finally, the

commodified capitalism refers to the marketization of the yoga lifestyle as a spiritual trend, influenced by (mass) media.

In Figure 7 below, you can find the positioning of all labels and (mother) codes within the theoretical framework and yoga typology, which we've been using throughout this research.

Mother Codes: Spirituality, Functionality, The Reflexive Project & Yogic Capital

Codes: Enlightenment Project, Mind-Body-Spirit Paradigm, Embodied Habitus, Internal Referentiality, Self-Commodification, Yogic Capital, Self Identity, Commodified Capitalism

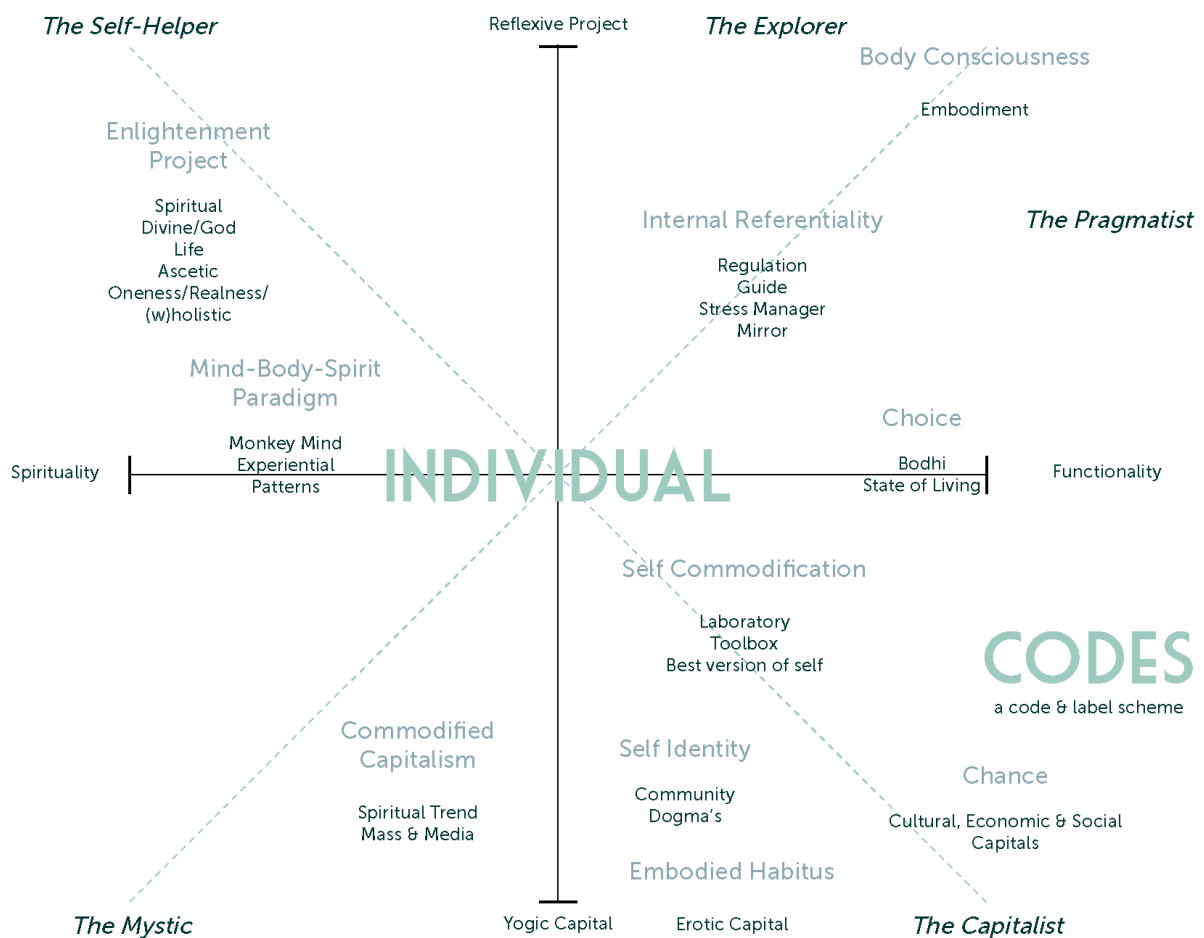


Figure 7. Code Scheme

4.4 Limitations

“Theory critics have continued to argue that the concept of lifestyle has often been operationalized without adequate attention to its meaning” (Backett & Davison 1995, p. 631). Although the concept has been dominant in social marketing, consumption and behaviour patterns of different social groups are identified by lifestyle. Here lifestyle relates to the differences in beliefs and practices

between groups of the population, providing social and cultural contexts which are embedded and given meaning. For this research we will take yoga practice and lifestyle as the whole concept into account, for there are too many types and styles practiced in the city of Amsterdam and there is no specific tradition besides e.g. Jivamukhti, Hatha and Ashtanga.

The practice of yoga can be found in different types of forms such as: Bikram, Hatha, Iyengar, Jivamukti, Kundalini, Sivananda and Yin Yoga. But the yoga world is also innovating itself by creating styles like Karaoke Yoga or “breaking the yoga mold” as the Yoga Journal (2017) calls it, finding new forms such as Rage Yoga and Metal Yoga, featuring heavy metal, cursing and beer. Within this research we will mainly focus on the traditional ‘powerful types’ of the ‘yoga flow practice’, such as Hatha, Iyengar, Jivamukti and Ashtanga.

The multiple meanings of yoga are also important for helping us understand contemporary urban yogic practice. In reality, there is no single yoga, only yogas. In this research we will refer to the singular term postural yoga, to honour those who practice any form of physical yoga that is true to them and to foresee in confusion of different styles. For further research it would be interesting to make a distinction between the different types of yoga styles and their values, symbols and lifestyles to look for differences. Another limitation is the result of respondents. As mentioned before, not all types of yoga practitioners are represented in this research equally as for the distribution of male/female, all respondents are yoga teachers and yoga can be part of a larger framework of lifestyle, for example health lifestyle.

4.5 Summary

In the beginning of this chapter we explained why we study yoga. According to the literature (De Michelis, 2005; Burger, 1995; Varga, 2005; Alter, 2006; Lea, 2009b; Ross & Thomas 2010 & Henrichsen-Schrembs & Versteeg 2011) there is a lack of sociological research within yoga studies. We argue that within academia this study will advance scientific theory and knowledge of yoga, individualization and modernity, as well as ideal types.

We then explained our methodological considerations in order to understand the motivations for using social science and sociological research on the topic of yoga. Within this research framework we explored quantitatively in order to select and collect respondents. This idea is inspired by the mixed-method design, but due to a small population (N=21) we can't strictly call it this design. We merely used our quantitative phase, sampling quota (yoga teachers), to explore profiles for the further selection of our respondents. In general the mixed-method design consists of two phases:

quantitative (phase 1: surveys) followed by qualitative (phase 2: interviews). The procedure of collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data within a single study, has the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the research problem but also collecting the right respondents in order to get a broad amount of information on all types of yoga practitioners.

Our aim with this research design was to understand why the degree of physical interest (functionality) in yoga is more important to a certain type of yoga practitioner as for the other practitioners focus on spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital and how this relates to larger concepts such as individualization and modernization (Giddens) and social structures and lifestyles (Bourdieu). During phase 1 we took the main criteria labelling them as one of the four theoretical concepts. Allowing us to quantify our exploration on Henrichsen-Schrems' (2008) typology. These typologies are to identify, simplify and order data, conceptualizing roles and features for institutionalization and social structure. This allowed us to describe the types, create a new one (The Capitalist) and make them comparable (McKinney 1969).

Finally we held semi-structural interviews with a unit of analysis of minimal 9 practitioners of which two were male and seven female (based on N=21 of the survey). Based on these interviews we labeled and coded all the qualitatively gathered data in order to structure our analysis, which will be presented in the next chapter. We found that there are already several limitations to this research, namely that our unit of analysis consists of a limited amount of people and an unequal distribution of types and gender, based on solely yoga teachers. This means we won't be able to generalize to any kind of group or type. However our main purpose was not to establish what is the yoga world's truth, but to give a multifaceted perspective of the meaning of yoga, yogic lifestyle and a typology of yogi's as being part of a popular culture in the contemporary urban sphere of Amsterdam.

Chapter 5

Humans of Yoga - The Results

The types of yoga practitioners The Mystic, The Self-Helper, The Pragmatist, The Explorer and The Capitalist illustrate different applications of the yogic practice, creating ideal types of yoga practitioners. As mentioned multiple times, these types do not determine the reality of the yoga world and the truth of yogic practice. They simply categorize different types of practitioners in order to create an overview of what the significance and focus of yoga can be for yoga practitioners within the theoretical framework of modernity. They show how the same kind of yoga practice can carry diverse meanings and significance for persons in the contemporary yoga society of Amsterdam. At the same time, the different types also share certain values. The Explorer (for example) shares the value of functionality with The Pragmatist. How is this possible? What does this mean? Where do the types position these values? How are these related to the four theoretical concepts functionality, spirituality, the reflexive project and yogic capital? And how are these theoretical concepts related to social positioning? The following chapter addresses the original research questions in light of the typology and matching theoretical concepts, explaining how different types of yoga practitioners experience yoga in Amsterdam differently, though sharing some of the same meanings and significance in the light of modernity and a wave of popular spirituality.

5.1 General Remarks

Before jumping into the results, we must address some issues regarding the representation and generalization of the typology. Firstly, as mentioned, the sample is not big enough to cover all types of yoga practitioners. From the explorative quantitative phase (N=21: surveys) we analyzed the yoga cases and resulted in seven cases fitting the Mystic, eight the Explorer, three the Pragmatist and three fitting the Self-Helper. This evolves through the nature of yoga teachers that responded in this research and that practice yoga for its spiritual, reflexive and functional practice. The example of yoga teachers consisted of generally healthy individuals interested in furthering their training in yoga through the body-mind paradigm (Conboy et. al. 2010). We left out The Capitalist as a type within our survey, which makes our framework discussable, though it would be interesting to use the framework for further research placing it within a larger frame of for example health lifestyles with the focus on yoga where respondents don't have to be a practitioner.

Our current limitations relate to the research results of Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008). She mentioned in her remarks that “[c]learly, the [Pragmatists] [in my case The Pragmatist and The Self-Helper] comprise the smallest, and the [Mystic] [in my case The Mystic and The Explorer] comprise the

largest group within this typology. This yoga type distribution could cause the reader to assume that most yoga practitioners are interested in the philosophical dimensions of yoga, and that the majority of these individuals are, to a certain extent, spiritual” (p. 158), which also defends our choice to leave out *The Capitalist* (emphasizing yogic capital and functionality).

From the qualitative data there was no direct link between *The Mystic* and being spiritual. All types considered their practice being spiritual, which can be argued as logical since the sample exists of yoga teachers. Yoga teachers are expected to learn, relearn and unlearn through specific yoga literature, which promotes the philosophical focus of yoga and spirituality in their own practice and teachings. Common literature are for example *The Bhagavad Gita* and *The Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali*. Both describe the origins of the yogic practice. In Western context yoga has been largely detached from its spiritual roots and mostly focuses on the physical postures and breathing techniques. *The Mystic* was described as adopting yogic ethical standards for their lives. Spirituality has become part of their style of living, but the focus of spirituality is seeing the divine as part of the self, searching for inner spirituality through their inner realm. This inner realm, through the self and the natural order of life, serves humans to move from all that is wrong to what is right, finding salvation and liberation to the Divine day in, day out (Heelas 1996).

The reason why we mention this ahead is because for the majority of yoga teachers the spiritual and philosophical aspects seem to play a major role, no matter what type they are. Spirituality is of utmost importance and the focus on spirituality is becoming increasingly popular. This tells us something about the state of the contemporary society i.e. the increasing interest in body-mind-spirit. Though the way this is presented during the interviews can't be found in “finding salvation and liberation to the Divine”, as Heelas (1996) described this. It is rather described through a ‘mind-body-spirit paradigm’ and ‘the monkey mind’, which greatly relates to the reflexive project by Giddens (1991), modernity theory on lifestyle ‘embodied habitus’, ‘self-commodification’ and the set of a functional ‘yogic toolbox’. Again, how is this possible? What does this mean? Where do the types position these values? How are these values related to the theoretical concepts? And how are these theoretical concepts related to social positioning? All these questions will be answered in the following chapter.

5.2 Spirituality

“"[T]he truth is that yoga overlaps a lot with the larger culture of 'lite' spirituality, with its endless parade of promises for quick-fix panaceas" (Horton 2012, p. 116).

The contemporary society became interested in religious orientations and social implications focussed on an alternative view on the body, mind and soul, creating new systems of modernity in a light of spirituality. The members of this group we call New Agers. Their interest in inner spirituality was gained through bodily movements, creating a social space with people with similar interests. On the one hand they are interested in functional dispositions (stress-relief) and on the other hand on aesthetic dispositions (spirituality). Through the search for inner spirituality, their inner voice, the self and the natural order of life (Heelas 1996), promising a culture of 'lite' spirituality and 'quick-fix panaceas' (Horton 2012). "I truly believe that a lot of things are there to fix it because they just can't be fixed. So the only thing you can do is to face them and except them and move forward and just have fun because everything is beautiful any way so yoga is really something that works in this direction" (Beatrice 36 yrs, The Explorer).

What we find interesting here, is the link between alternative spirituality and the more individualistic approach. "The interest in individual self-creation as a form of identity formation can also be seen in popular culture and is partially characterized by an emphasis on individual well-being and an increase of focus on the self in terms of happiness and a sense of spiritual fulfilment" (Henrichsen-Schrembs 2001, p. 2). The self and a believe in an inner voice is highly valued, which is important for personal growth and self-discovery, people also believe in the idea of yoga being multiple purposed. In this subchapter we will discover the relation between different types of practitioners and how they value the theoretical concept of spirituality through the idea of the monkey mind and the mind-body-spirit paradigm, of which both are part of the idea of a 'lite' spirituality.

5.2.1 The Monkey Mind

"Beyond the development of the physical ability to execute difficult poses, and the calmness of mind required to undertake the practice fully, this 'encounter' with the embodied self brings about moments within *āsana* [postural] [and *pranayama* breathing] practice which practitioners identify as 'spiritual'" (Smith 2007, p. 40).

For this research spirituality was defined to be the reaction towards the increase of rationality and calculation in a wave of modernity. Individuals experienced new impulses creating a decrease of bodily consciousness, mindfulness and awareness. From our results we can relate this increase of rationality and impulses to the monkey mind. "They call it like the monkey mind. Because you're thoughts are just everywhere. So [...] when you are focussing on your breath you have a point of focus. Otherwise you're just bouncing around either how much you like this or hate it or why you're here what you're doing what you're gonna do next" (Shannon, 26 yrs, The Explorer). The

idea of the monkey mind is that your brains are constantly chit chatting. They call those the monkeys that are jumping around in your head. Through asana practices and meditation you can create a better state of mind (Deborah, 38 yrs, The Mystic).

The idea of the monkey mind comes from Hanuman the monkey god. He won freedom by serving only Rama, the god who represents the true Self. The essential cause of the monkey mind is desire, due to its representation of our animal nature and instinct. If we can give up all desires we will attain enlightenment or identification with our true Self, you must be aware of your mind and its monkey tricks, its prejudices and preferences. The mind then functions as an instrument that can either harm you if used unwisely or help if used wisely (Krystal 1994). This idea of the mind that functions as an instrument, we find literally find back in our results. “Your mind it is a tool” (Beatrice, 36 yrs, The Explorer). What we would like to mention here is the importance of the regulation of the mind for a better state of spiritual living.

“That is what the philosophy tells us. It is sometimes the mind. So than you can either put it aside. But it will than maybe come back up again and again and again. And then you have to start thinking maybe I have to learn something about that or start to stay with that. And recall it. And then, just by being with it meditating on it [...] [y]ou will realise stuff and certain situations. Maybe you can also let go. And stay there. And not push it away” (Tobias, 29 yrs, The Pragmatist). This idea of regulating the monkey mind functions as unfolding emotions which we aren’t directly aware of. “You’re really pushing against things [that] are unfolding or reacting very quickly from fear. Then the sensitivity that yoga practice gives you, reminds you, come back and just feel everything just feel everything via the breath (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). What we can find here is that for the Mystic, the Explorer and the Pragmatist, spirituality can be linked to a state of mind, which can be regulated through yoga practice. This state of mind is framed within the philosophical story of Hanuman, the monkey god, positioning spirituality in the embodied practice of yoga.

For the Self-Helper spirituality “is more like the tangible things that make me more mindful and present and aware. And the consciousness that comes when you just focus on the little things that I think that is for me the philosophical part of building that consciousness, that awareness. It’s like taking a sip and tasting what am I tasting. Not just gulping it down” (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper). Here we can distinguish between what for the Mystic, the Explorer and the Pragmatist, spirituality means compared to the Self-Helper. For the Self-Helper the practice is not only for the physical and mental wellness but also to foster self-exploration and going inwards. Going inwards makes the practitioners pay attention to what is going on inside the body and mind, wanting to learn more

about ones inner self in order to make changes. This idea of ‘tangible things’, ‘tasting’ and not just ‘gulping it down’, reminds us of the process of detecting personal issues. We might be able to say here that for the Self-Helper the question arises before the problem exists. Tackling the monkey mind before it has become the monkey mind, due to constant self-explorations. For the Mystic, the Explorer and the Pragmatist we can conclude that the monkey mind is the cause for unfolding emotions. Reacting rather afterwards and becoming aware. With the mind as their tool, they “still the fluctuations of the mind” (Afke, 48 yrs, The Pragmatist).

5.2.2 A Mind-Body-Spirit Paradigm

"If you're open to it, yoga allows your mind to shift into a different gear, one that may allow subconscious memories and emotions to break through to the surface of conscious experience" (Horton 2012, p. 71).

Moving from the spiritual and philosophical aspect of the monkey mind to the mind-body-spirit paradigm seems a logical step. "Modern yoga [...] was the uniquely Indian expression of an international movement that, while taking different forms in different cultures, consistently placed new significance on the body as a potential site of integrated physical, psychological, and spiritual development" (Horton 2012, p. 123-124). The idea of the mind-body-spirit paradigm became integrated in somatic psychology. Somatic psychology is an alternative form of medicine that focuses on so called somatic experience, an embodied self, approaching the body holistically and therapeutic. Where “yoga can be used as therapy” (Romon 30 yrs, The Explorer). “It is more of a holistic practice like it certainly has this physical part of it stepping on the mat and doing asana practice our bodies are getting more flexible and you feel that I mean I certainly felt more and better after each practice every time. More healthier and so on. But the philosophy part is also into that. It also attaches to the physical, it also attaches to the mind and to your life. It is the (w)holistic approach” (Tobias 29 yrs, The Pragmatist) “integrating the conscious and unconscious minds as central to the ongoing work of what [is] called 'individuation': that is, 'the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'individual'... a separate, indivisible unity or 'whole" (Horton 2012, p. 78).

The “mind is not like a white paper that does not have any impressions written on it. The tendencies and experiences derived in a number of births that have been imprinted on it. The fruits of many actions performed by the body are also imprinted on the mind. Therefore, mind may be described as an entity that is full of thoughts and desires. So the mind is not the real Self anymore than is the body. They are both instruments designed for the use of the High Self” (Krystal 1994, p. 15).

Creating the mind-body-spirit connection. For most respondents this paradigm was hard to describe or explain how to get to the state of a mind-body-spirit connection. “I think it is constant asking why? I mean in the yoga practice you’re constantly having the question of like where is something

going. The meditation aspect, of like keeping your breath, moving, nursing, are you feeling in some certain ways. Just these questions that you don't ask yourself outside of it. I think that's the awareness" (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper).

Deborah (38 yrs, The Mystic) describes it as the constant search within the core of the self. What you feel, what you do. This core of the self is more than we are. It feels so spacious. There is more than this spirit. We're connected to it All. This approach is clearly different from The Self-Helper, who sees the mind-body-spirit paradigm more in light of awareness. "I think to me it means like finding connection to yourself and as well as to other people around you being more in harmony and with yourself and others. It is a physical practice. But it is also a spiritual practice a mental practice. So I feel it is encompassing. Ehm very broad so that is why it is hard to describe sometimes" (Shannon, 26 yrs, The Explorer). This interest in your self is a form of identity formation that is commonly seen in popular culture. It is partially characterized by the emphasis on individual well-being and fulfilment (Henrichsen-Schrembs 2001). Also for The Explorer the paradigm is more an individual experience, relating it to the self and awareness.

It is interesting that we can find that the Pragmatists can identify with the Mystic's observation on the connection with something 'higher'. Afke (48 yrs, The Pragmatist) describes it as the connection with the 'dance with the Divine'. It's all about the connection with the whole. "We're not here alone and together we create consciousness". We here see that the Pragmatist and the Mystic both position spirituality in a more communal and within a Divine space, which opposes the Self-Helper and the Explorer. We can try to relate this idea of well-being and fulfilment to the concept of individuation, "the true self"- way of being that is authentic, integrated, unique, and connected to a compelling but ineffable sense or the universal and spiritual. Though, how do yogi's get there? How do they in-dividualize? And how does this relate to our theoretical framework of the reflexive project? The following chapter will research this concept more in-depth.

5.3 The Reflexive Project

A trend of adjustable self-identity through self actualisation and realisation (Giddens 1991).

"The binding power of tradition and social structure has ebbed away – 'it is rather a *lack* of social structures which establishes its self as the basic feature of the social structure'" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, p. 51) This results in a post-traditional and individualizing society where people have to turn to their own resources. Turning to their own resources requires individuals to decide what they value, how they organize their priorities and how to make sense of their lives (Heelas,

1996). For we argued that “the self today is for everyone a reflexive project” (Giddens, 1992: 30). In this chapter we will focus on how different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of the reflexive project.

5.3.1 A Mirror for the Self

The contemporary yogic practice is the technique to enable embodied transcendence, creating a 'mirror for the self', which allows practitioners to encounter both forms of inquiry into the nature of our embodied existence and self. (Smiths 2007).

The previous chapter discussed in what way different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality. We analyzed that the Mystic and the Pragmatist are more focused on the connection with something ‘higher’ and the Self-Helper and the Explorer think more individually and ‘grounded’, integrating the concept of individuation, ‘the true self’. This true self is what all yogi’s call your ‘centre’. “[T]he force and also the surrender the perceiving, to bring you into this kind of, centre. The centre is the whole process of yoga of the force” (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). Now, how do they get there? What is this force? Are the practitioners aware of this force? How does it relate to the reflexive project? And is this creation of the centre an individual process or can we find social influences?

According to Bourdieu, individuals are influenced by their network of people and by individual success. Both determine in what social space you're positioned and both relate to lifestyle and symbolic boundaries. The position is also influenced by a series of capitals. These capitals are "the appropriation of profits and power to impose the laws of functioning within the field" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 84). Giddens (1991) was concerned with the new modern movements and the formation of individuals in a social space. Giddens thinks individuals create identity due to reflexive awareness and through the self within social structures, not solely due to social constructions. This results in the reflexive project, a trend of adjustable self-identity through self actualization and realization. He emphasizes the value of the self.

According to Adams (2006), Bourdieu does allow for the possibility of reflexivity. He did not separate the science of social circumstances and individualization. He understood it as “the systematic exploration of the unthought categories of thought that delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:40). For Bourdieu the reflexive process, is in itself a form of habitus. Habitus here unfolds as a required constituent of a particular field. Reflexivity then can potentially emerge anywhere in ‘crisis’ situations. “It is not a transcendent

reflexivity however; it is simply a procedural requirement within that field; a necessary form of collective cultural capital, which becomes engrained in individual agency. Thus reflexivity is as much the habitual out-come of field requirements as any other disposition. Reflexivity becomes, in a sense, the very ‘feel for the game’” (Adams 2006, p. 517).

Do the different types of yoga practitioners sense reflexivity as a sense of ‘feel for the game’ or can we relate this to the yogic capital? “It is a marriage of spirituality and awareness and movement and body. [...] It is that constant practice of how you can combine the two. How can you intertwine a lifestyle that you’re spiritual with and also awareness in how you’re moving and how you’re doing” (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper). It seems like the whole practice of yoga is a reflexive project because you’re constantly facing yourself. “The mat is the mirror. It is your life. You can really face yourself than [...] yoga really brings awareness. If you want to” (Beatrice, 36 yrs, The Explorer). In this case it is hard to research if the respondents have formed a certain habitus of yoga, because what is that, the habitus/the why? “It is constantly the challenge of why do you do what you do” (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper). So what we can say here is that the ‘feel for the game’ is this constant search for the why through ‘the mirror of the mat’. Unfortunately, this doesn’t tell us anything about social formations though, meaning yogic capital. The yogic capital will be discussed during Chapter 5.5.1.

There is the idea that reflexivity emerges during a crisis. This can be witnessed during radical changes in the field or unexpected movement between fields. For example suddenly losing your job, breaking up or losing a loved one. This results in increased individuality. In such a context, the establishment and maintenance of habitus is problematized, allowing reflexivity ‘in’. Interestingly enough, five out of the nine respondents experienced negative previous life-events, causing either them to start practicing yoga or proceeding doing yoga. “When I heard the call before that I had to get back on my mat and go more regular and I started to perfect and it really became beneficial to me. Health wise and but also to deal with all that stuff” (Tobias, 29 yrs, The Pragmatist). “I had a big traumatic life experience and yoga practices kind of gave me another way of centring, so things were extremely emotionally stressful in my life. And yoga gave me this kind of life raft I think. Something to come back to you know, a steady friend. Yoga is being held by a very reliable and loving friend to be able to explore, experience and have a safe place to go to” (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). Here we can say that social circumstances can cause individuals to increase in awareness and reflexivity through yogic practice. How does this work?

5.3.2 Body Management

"The reflexivity of the self *extends to the body*, where the body [...] is part of an action system rather than merely a passive object. Observation of bodily processes - 'How am I breathing?' - is intrinsic to the continuous reflexive attention which the agent is called on to pay to her behaviour" (Giddens 1991, p. 77).

Yoga according to Josie (43 yrs, The Explorer) is all about Life with a capital L. Yoga allows her to rest in her centre. This is hard to engage in. It is a constant play of strength and receptivity and finding yourself and being comfortable in both of those places, your centre and Life. Eventually she defines it as "being held by a very reliable and loving friend to be able to explore, experience and have a safe place to go to". This idea of exploration and the comfortability of the yoga practice reminds us of in-dividualization. Is this going 'in', the bodily experience of yoga? How does this relate to the reflexive project?

"It has been massively powerful for me. I really enjoy the self regulation. Understanding that it's not wrong or right to feel happy or sad or fearful. They're feelings. Now can you sit with your feelings? What does it mean to have those feelings? How do you manage it? Self analysis is involved in the stuff that comes up during meditation, because they're not separated. There are lots of tools within the yoga kit that can help you manage those things. I think it is quite precious for that" (Rachel, 32 yrs, The Explorer). For all types of yoga practitioners, the body is an important aspect of the practice. As we analyzed earlier, there is a connection between mind-body-spirit in which the body is the main system and yoga functions as a tool. Yoga helps to "manage stress because I had so many classes in college at that time and I was also working with juvenile delinquencies" (Shannon, 26 yrs, The Explorer).

For most yoga practitioners the practice of yoga is a help for body management and at the same time very confronting. "'Taking charge of one's life' involves risk, because it means confronting a diversity of open possibilities. The individual must be prepared to make a more or less complete break with the past, if necessary, and to contemplate novel courses of action that cannot simply be guided by established habits" (Giddens 1991, p. 73). Tobias (29 yrs, The Pragmatist) explains it as that "you deal with yourself and that is a confrontation in itself. Because when you deal with yourself you don't only see the nice side, you see also the other parts of yourself. And there's a hell lot to deal with for all of us I think". Here we can distinguish all types of yoga practitioners. The emphasis of the pragmatist is clearly on the reflexive project being very functional "you just deal with it" (Tobias (29 yrs, The Pragmatist). For The Explorer it is also functional, though the reflexivity isn't solely part of an individual project, it intertwines within their whole style of living.

For Ramon (30 yrs, The Explorer) yoga functions as a tool for awareness. Through breathing, thoughts calm down (monkey mind) and you can take this awareness with you in the rest of your day. As for Deborah (38 yrs, The Mystic) the reflexivity is related more to negative life-course events. She experienced a lot of insecurities. Because of yoga she became aware of these flaws and confronted herself by doing her practice and working with it. For The Self-Helper (Italy, 24 yrs) it is more about the “practice of constant talk and constant conversation of yourself of self love, of acceptance”. Also relating mostly back to the reflexive project.

What we learn here is that all types of yoga practitioners practice the reflexive project as defined by Giddens, though some social factors play a role for for example those that experienced negative life-course events. Here a shift between social fields took place that made them realize yoga could be a solution. Not a ‘quick-fix panacea’ as we mentioned in the previous subchapter. It is rather an individualized project of body management and a mirror to the self in which the practitioner uses yoga as a tool. In the next subchapter will be discussed how this idea of the tool works and its functionalities.

5.4 Functionality

“We know more about outer space than we know about our bodies” (Rachel, 32 yrs, The Explorer).

In the previous subchapters the functionality of yoga as been mentioned several times. The way it was defined was more in the light of spirituality and the reflexive project. Even though different types of yoga function as support for the enrichment and enlightenment of the self and as the mirror of the self, in this subchapter we will try to explain how different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of functionality and how this ‘technically’ works. It is interesting that yoga functions as a toolkit for all our respondents. According to Rachel (32 yrs, The Explorer) we are lacking knowledge of ourselves. We know less about our bodies than we know of outer space. “I think we’re a quite disembodied culture [...] knowing that art and movement aren’t necessarily things we value in our education system”.

5.4.1 The Yoga Toolkit

“Like asana practice, chanting I see that as a toolbox. So then over time you know you start to know what works for you” (Tobias, 30 yrs, The Pragmatist).

“Its really been through my life a tool of self acceptance. That is why I continue to teach this. It has been massively powerful for me. I really enjoy the self regulation. [...] There are lots of tools

within the yoga kit that can help you manage those things. I think it is quite precious for that” (Rachel, 32 yrs, The Explorer). Yoga here reveals itself to be a powerful toolkit for a mindful and aware lifestyle, connecting the body to the mind, coping with everyday stress as well as an intuitive opening to the hidden magic of everyday life.

“If yoga is the practice that gives us the toolbox, to like help yourself kit, this is like a DIY, is the help yourself kit! It’s great. I feel it also makes yourself a bit more settle and more secure” (Tobias, 30 yrs, The Pragmatist). The bodily experience and practice influence daily life, which relates to the two theoretical concepts of the reflexive project and functionality. The body thus functions as a tool to remain fit (functionality), but also to create a better body-mind connection, embodying the yogic practice and mirroring the self (reflexive project). Earlier, we found the popularity of the physical culture, where yoga became decontextualized from the traditional spiritual aspects of yoga by shedding positive light on the bodily experience (Jain 2015). “Yoga is really an experiential thing. So I can tell you how my experience is what the breath is and how it does that, but it’s not that THE thing about yoga. That is the whole point about yoga, it’s that it’s an experiential thing” (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer).

All types of yoga practitioners experience yoga as a wonderful tool for either remaining fit or becoming more aware of the self, emphasizing once again the reflexive project and functionality. What is interesting here is that there are no forces from social circumstances that influence the yogic practice to this extent, at least, not mentioned by the practitioners. “The reflexivity of the self is continuous, as well as all-pervasive. At each moment, or at least at regular intervals, the individual is asked to conduct a self-interrogation in terms of ‘what is happening’. Beginning as a series of consciously asked questions, the individual becomes accustomed to asking, ‘how can I use this moment to change?’ Reflexivity in this sense belongs to the reflexive historicity of modernity, as distinct from the more generic reflexive monitoring of action” (Giddens 1991, p. 76). The individual seems to be set by itself without the influence of external social structures. “[W]e all know we come alone into this world. Of course we have friends and family and lovers but in the end we all encounter this that we have to leave alone” (Tobias, 30 yrs, The Pragmatist). Here yoga functions as a tool for self direction for all of us lost in ‘space’. “[I]t is teachings that give you like, almost an instruction pamphlet that is very broad and its nice to have a sense of direction. I think everyone looks for something to follow, like everyone wants some kind of direction, like we are just lost little beings” (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper).

5.5 Lifestyle

"A lifestyle involves a cluster of habits and orientations, and hence has a certain unity [...] that connects options in a more or less ordered pattern" (Giddens 1991, p. 82).

This final subchapter is on the process of individualization to a communal lifestyle. Where is the line between the individual process or rather the reflexive project which is practiced through the flow of yoga? Where do people come together and experience this so called cluster of habits and orientations which become ordered patterns? In this research we so far investigated spirituality, functionality and reflexive project of yoga where the different types of yoga practitioners more or less experienced the same, due to what called their yogic capital, a habituated or rather embodied experience of yoga, acting out a yogic style of living. The practice thus has become a lifestyle, one that our respondents value due to its spiritual, functional, reflexive and structural benefits. "When you work as a freelancer for example, it is kind of a good structure to your life. Like if you say you go to yoga class at this time of the day on this time of the week and I do my practice. So generally speaking I, back then in the day when I first started doing yoga. It gave structure within that structure" (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer).

5.5.1 Yogic Capital

Expectation 5: Economic privilege, sport experience and cultural values instigate & sustain yoga exercise and a healthy lifestyle

In our analysis we argue that different types of yoga practitioners position the theoretical concepts of spirituality, functionality and the reflexive project quite the same. Nevertheless, they value different aspects of the yoga practice within these concepts. Since these values are hard to 'test' and difficult to research we tried to discover what this means so far. It almost seems that the yogic practice comes naturally. If you look at the ways the respondents first started doing yoga, most of them got introduced either by a friend or got medical advice to start doing yoga. "I think people are drawn to it out of similar reasons they had contact with it somewhere in their lives, maybe through their family or friends or read/heard about it and developed an interest in it [...] Speaking from my personal experience and also from some colleagues, it is also from life" (Tobias, 30 yrs, The Pragmatist), this argues that it all came very naturally. We can say here that individuals already are positioned in a certain field where healthy living is valued, either spiritually or culturally through 'life'. The practitioners know a lot about the history of yoga, the yoga practice itself and herewith they are encroaching in the field of yoga lifestyles.

Within our results we can find that more than half of the sample has been in touch with the yogic field before practicing yoga. "My mum practiced yoga in the 70ies. [R: Is she a teacher also?] No

she wasn't. She would, we lived in a tiny village back then and once a week she would put on this fabulous sparkly silver leotard and leggings. It was the 70ies after all. And she would go to yoga in the village hall. But my mum, she was a physio" (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). It also happens to work the other way around, where our respondents encouraged friends and family to start practicing yoga.

To take these insights back to our theoretical lens: Giddens' account sails close to Bourdieu's position on the functional habitus. 'Habitus' is the collective term for this array of dispositions. Thus, the field instantiates us as subjects and reproduces social distinctions via the enactment of habitus. According to Lewis' (2008) research on life chances, wellness, the meaning and motivation in the 'yoga market', capitals play a significant role. The connection between the initiation of doing yoga practice and the yoga types are capitals. "[T]he desire to improve health and wellness, specific kinds of educational and economic capital play an equally significant role [...] narratives reveal the confluence of disparate resources and privileges that recommend yoga to an individual and demonstrate the bridges and bonds necessary for successful integration into a new community and a new bodily discipline [...] a pattern of motivation [...] was nourished by pre-existing, mutually reinforcing capitals" (p. 539 & 543) reproducing yogic capital.

We can find that from a theoretical point of view that practicing yoga is based on for example economic privilege, in our respondents cases due to successful previous jobs. Also our respondents seemed all to have been interested in movement and cultural values, valuing the aesthetics of yoga and culture an sich, instigating and sustaining yoga exercise and a healthy lifestyle. This proves our fifth expectation where we argue that *individuals that practice yoga are nested within a broader social, cultural, structural and economic context, which is essential for understanding the individual exercise habits of yoga, creating what we will call yogic capital (field specific capital)*. Here the form of collective cultural capital, in this case yogic capital, becomes engrained in individual agency. Becoming the habitual outcome of field dispositions, but due to reflexivity the sense and 'feel for the game' has been encountered individually. Approving both Bourdieu's as for Giddens' ideas.

5.5.2 Self Identity Consumerism

Giddens defined lifestyles as individual choices that consist of self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, bodily dress and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behavior [...] lifestyles have gained particular significance as individual and collective expressions of differences and similarities" (Abel

& Cockerham 1993, p. 321). “It is kind of confusing, cause it’s not a religion, it’s like a certain lifestyle which is essentially also the way of a religion but yoga doesn’t have a church, a steeple, a place, it is a very individual finding” (Italy, 24 yrs, The Self-Helper). It is clear that our respondents individually chose to practice yoga in the first place. Interesting here is that yoga became a logical response to a wave of modernity, creating more self awareness and spirituality. Yoga improves autonomy, creating more individualistic individuals, of which Simmel (1922) was afraid of, creating more distance between individuals. Does this count for everyone?

Lewis (2008) explored the interconnectivity of individual life chances and choices, collective efficacy, media representations, emergent capitalist endeavours and habits of the body. This reminds us of the successful application of yoga in the contemporary modern capitalist yoga market. Capitalizing the potential of the yoga market but also the idea of erotic capital. Erotic capital illustrates “the combination of aesthetic, visual, physical, social and sexual attractiveness to other members of your society” (Hakim 2010, p. 501) Due to this commodification of the yogic practice, individuals can buy a yogic identity and choose to become part of a certain yoga lifestyle by solely confirming with the yoga community and culture, but also by communicating in a certain yogic way, physically embodying habits of the commodified yogic self, which created our sixth expectation:

Expectation 6: The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice

Meaning individuals that practice yoga in the contemporary scene of Amsterdam gain significance as individuals by finding particular meaning and collective expressions through the capitalist endeavours and habits of the ‘commodified yogic body’.

The body becomes commodified due to idealized images that promise you that yoga creates a beautiful body, calm mind and happy heart (Horton 2012). “When I first started practicing yoga, I was like ‘oh’, I came to yoga to feel better and then I saw this kind of in kind of Western, media terms, improvement happening with my body, you know I lost some weight and things just gotten a little, I got some kind of different shape in my body and I was like ‘oh how fabulous’. But that is really according to a cultural structure, and that cultural structure is extremely painful. It leads to this idea of improvement to fit a power structure, which is incredibly painful. You know, it leads to all kinds of mental health issues, in my opinion. And this is my experience. I feel that it leads to a lot of self hatred, this goal and that goal and it’s not that I’m not as attractive I don’t fit it into the kind of images I portrayed around me and that’s very damaging for very people. I think the majority

of people aren't even realising it. Rather than really enjoying the right now. And for me it is heartbreaking this structure" (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). This structure produces erotic capital. Commodified yogic bodies relates to our fourth expectation:

Expectation 4: The Capitalist emphasizes the theoretical concept of yogic capital and functionality

It becomes quite difficult when we analyze media and advertisements in the yogic scene. "It is a very middle class, white thing. It must be very intimidating to walk into a space that you are not on any advertising, you are not represented in the staff that is working there. That's an interested trend" (Rachel, 32 yrs, The Explorer). "I think it's very exclusive and very white. That's not ok. That's why it's really important to offer yoga [...] to all kinds of people [...] yoga is portrayed in the media and when I say the media I also mean social media. Because of the way it's portrayed, it's for skinny white girls in tiny bikini's doing calendar poses. People are really put off by that. [...] Either [people think] 'wow I want to be that person' rather than being happy with yourself you're projecting towards what seems to be the promise of yoga. And that is about that physical perfection or that enlightenment perfection (Josie, 43 yrs, The Explorer). This structural differentiation between 'skinny white girls' and 'non-skinny white girls' helps create symbolic boundaries. These symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors, separating people into groups and generating feelings of similarity and group membership. These "boundaries function as a means to draw strong boundaries between the members of different classes by stressing that they come from very different (mental) worlds" (Roose et. al. 2012, p. 493).

Living in a rapidly changing society that places unprecedented pressure on individuals to develop robust sense of self as Josie (43 yrs, The Explorer) mentioned, yoga allows either a relatively easy access to psychology and spiritual resources that are enormously valuable for us today such as the reflexive project of which yoga functions as a tool. At the same time, however, as it's grown more and more popular, yoga has become increasingly bound up with mainstream commercial culture and, more perniciously, related processes of self-commodification (Horton 2012). This creates the threat Josie mentions, which we define as the threat of self-commodification. The self is than understood and mediated by the consumption of goods and images. Our personal identities are profoundly structured by our relationship to consumer goods and a trend of physical health lifestyles (The Capitalist) (Horton 2012).

This idea proves our fourth expectation right. Individuals that practice yoga in the contemporary scene of Amsterdam gain significance as individuals by finding particular meaning and collective

expressions through the capitalist endeavours and habits of the ‘commodified yogic body’, creating a self identity through consumerism that is based on a trend of ‘skinny white girls in tiny bikini’s doing calendar poses’.

5.6 Summary

In this final chapter of the theoretical concept of lifestyle we tried to determine a difference between different types of yoga practitioners and their perspective on the yogic lifestyle. We came to the conclusion that all other theoretical concepts of spirituality, functionality and the reflexive project are all intertwined in the concept of lifestyle. All types can be argued to have a field specific capital, calling it yogic capital. A habituated or rather embodied experience of yoga, acting out a yogic style of living. The practice thus has become a lifestyle, one that our respondents value due to its spiritual, functional, reflexive but also structural benefits. Choices consist of self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, bodily dress and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behavior [...] lifestyles have gained particular significance as individual and collective expressions of differences and similarities” (Abel & Cockerham 1993, p. 321). These similarities are found back in the style of living of yoga practitioners and is very common, natural for them. This means they embody their yogic practice, their yogic capital.

Our final conclusion is that the efficacy, media representations, emergent capitalist endeavours and habits of the body are of great influence on the practice of yoga. Due to the successful application of yoga in the contemporary modern capitalist yoga market, the yoga market became marketized and anticipated on the yogic capital. Due to this commodification of the yogic practice, individuals buy a yogic identity and choose to become of a certain yoga lifestyle by solely confirming our sixth expectation: The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice. We related this to the idea of self identity consumerism because the media promises yogi’s to improve their physical well-being and becoming part of a ‘skinny white girls’ society, emphasizing structural differentiation between ‘skinny white girls’ and ‘non-skinny white girls’ and creating symbolic boundaries. These symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors, separating people into groups and generating feelings of similarity and group membership.

“It is at least as important to direct critical attention towards the individualized opportunities available to transform embodied, partial, reflexive awareness into an opening out of choices for a relational and autonomous self- identity, by focusing on the ways in which opportunity, or the lack

of opportunity, gravitates towards particular social groups” (Adams 2006, p 525). By studying this subject from a sociological perspective we don’t overlook any valuable contribution of understanding the globally differential transformations of stratified and hierarchized identities that are formed in social change and due to the impact of the media, answering our second main research question how social positioning is related to differences in the modern postural yogic practice. We will always be positioned by our social circumstances, having the chance to participate in yoga, but we might be limited by it due to capitalized and mediatized perspectives that are mostly white privileged.

Chapter 6

Positioning Modern Postural Yoga - Conclusion

The aim of this research was to answer the two main research questions: **How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital? & How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?** Here we defined yoga as ‘modern postural yoga’, since the contemporary yogic practice differs far from the traditional Indian practice. With a shift from spiritual to a more functional (postural) practice, we define yoga as the practice that focuses mostly on the embodied experience, where the contemporary yogic practice is the technique to enable embodied transcendence, creating a 'mirror for the self', which allows practitioners to encounter both forms of inquiry into the nature of our embodied existence and self. This personal focus is a result from new modernity.

6.1 The Conclusion

From our theoretical framework we created four theoretical concepts of spirituality, the reflexive project, functionality and yogic capital. All four concepts are related to the typology borrowed from Henrichsen-Schrembs (2008) who categorized four types of yoga practitioners and gave them their unique definition and title: The Pragmatist and The Explorer (functionality & the reflexive project), The Self-Helper (the reflexive project & spirituality) and The Mystic (lifestyle & spirituality). We created our own fifth character The Capitalist (yogic capital & functionality). From the idea that different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga differently, we created the following expectations.

Expectation 1: The Pragmatist and The Explorer emphasize the theoretical concepts of functionality and the reflexive project

Expectation 2: The Self-helper emphasizes the theoretical concept of the reflexive project and spirituality

Expectation 3: The Mystic emphasizes the theoretical concept of spirituality and yogic capital

Expectation 4: The Capitalist emphasizes the theoretical concept of yogic capital and functionality

Within our results we could not find a direct link between solely the Mystic or the Self-Helper being spiritual. All types considered their practice as being spiritual, which opposes the speculation that yoga shifted from a spiritual to more functional practice. Spirituality has become part of the style of living, but the focus of spirituality is seeing the Divine as part of the self, searching for inner spirituality through their inner realm. This inner realm, through the self and the natural order of life, serves humans to move from all that is wrong to what is right, finding salvation and liberation to the

Divine day in, day out (Heelas 1996). Here we see that the body functions as the gate for spirituality in order to find inner reflexivity, which yogis are highly interested in. The focus on spirituality is also becoming increasingly popular. This tells us something about the state of society, namely the increasing interest in body-mind-spirit and 'the monkey mind', which greatly relates to the reflexive project by Giddens (1991), modernity theory on lifestyle 'embodied habitus', 'self-commodification' and the set of a functional 'yogic toolbox'. The question remains though how they relate to social positioning. Asking our second research question (How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?) result in the following expectations:

Expectation 5: Economic privilege, sport experience and cultural values instigate & sustain yoga exercise and a healthy lifestyle

Expectation 6: The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice

From our results we found that all the theoretical concepts are intertwined in the concept of lifestyle. All types can be argued to have a field specific capital, calling it yogic capital a habituated or rather embodied experience of yoga, acting out a yogic style of living. The practice thus has become a lifestyle, one that our respondents value due to its spiritual, functional, reflexive but also structural benefits. Choices consist of self-selected forms of consumerism, involving particular choices in food, bodily dress and appearance, housing, automobiles, work habits, forms of leisure, and other types of status-oriented behaviour [...] lifestyles have gained particular significance as individual and collective expressions of differences and similarities" (Abel & Cockerham 1993, p. 321). These similarities are found back in the style of living of yoga practitioners and is very common, natural for them. This means they embody their yogic practice, their yogic capital.

In total we conclude that the efficacy, media representations, emergent capitalist endeavours and habits of the body are of great influence on the yoga scene according to the respondents. Due to the successful application of yoga in the contemporary modern capitalist yoga market, the yoga market became marketized and anticipated on the yogic capital. This commodification of the yogic practice leads to individuals buying a yogic identity and choosing to participate in the yoga lifestyle. The yoga lifestyle is an individual choice, formed by consumerism and the commodification of the yogic practice. Interestingly enough, is that the warning from Simmel was the increase of rationality, which would compliment autonomy and individualization became reality.

"It is at least as important to direct critical attention towards the individualized opportunities available to transform embodied, partial, reflexive awareness into an opening out of choices for a

relational and autonomous self-identity, by focusing on the ways in which opportunity, or the lack of opportunity, gravitates towards particular social groups” (Adams 2006, p 525). Yoga thus is the individual choice, existing within social structures. Economic capital here plays an important aspect for practicing yoga, because yoga is a multi-billion capitalist market. For we would like to finalize this research with a new type of capital: Yogic capital, which is capital of individuals that are set within social privileged spaces that allow them to individually choose this yoga lifestyle. The important thing is that these humans of yoga in Amsterdam are self intellectuals.

6.2 Our Recommendations

This master thesis research was focused on the four theoretical concepts of spirituality, functionality, the reflexive project and yogic capital, placing them in a framework of different types of yoga practitioners. Through modernity theory, critical (sociological) thinking, quota sampling and qualitative research, we aimed to understand a great part of the positioning of the yoga lifestyle in Amsterdam, through the eyes and ears of yoga teachers. Since there is so much more to unfold from the contemporary yogic scene, we would here like to give some further research recommendations.

Within our research we came across a few limitations, namely: our unit of analysis consisted of a limited amount of people and an unequal distribution of types and gender, based on solely yoga teachers. This means we weren't able to generalize to any kind of group or type. We also didn't go into further depth of different styles of yoga. For further research we would like to recommend a more specific unit of analysis and research a specific yoga style, for example the style Ashtanga and respondents: practitioners versus teachers. It would be interesting to make a distinction between the different types of yoga styles and their values, symbols and lifestyles to look for differences. In this research we interviewed teachers only. Insights from 'regular' practitioners might differ from a teacher, for it would be interesting to compare the results. We also left The Capitalist out of this research. For further research it might also be interesting to look at the yoga lifestyle trend as a whole. A lot of people participate in the stream of healthy living in urban areas. We would suggest to take the more general health lifestyle perspective in order to understand the yogic scene from a more generic scope, which might give more insights from a social aspect as for an individual one.

Even though our main purpose was not to establish what is the yoga world's truth, but to give a multifaceted perspective we believe this master thesis research will contribute to the contemporary research on yoga, hopefully inspiring other sociologists to continue with the subject.

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Appendix 1 - Interview Guide

Personal Background

1. Name:
2. Male/Female:
3. Age:
4. Years of practice:
5. Type of practice (survey):
6. Teaches at (survey):
7. Years of teaching (survey):
8. Previous other jobs:
9. Highest education:
10. Current other jobs:
11. Parents education:
12. Parents jobs:
13. Yoga type (survey):
14. Yoga emphasis (survey):
15. Consent form signed (yes/no):
16. Construction of this interview (yes/no):

Conversation starter:

1. When did you start practicing yoga? And why?
2. Why did you decide to proceed doing yoga?

Yoga in general:

1. What does yoga mean to you?
 1. Concepts:
 1. To find Enlightenment (spirituality),
 2. fond by the physical benefits (functionality),
 3. due to (negative) life-course events (reflexive project) &
 4. influenced by the global trend or it became part of their way of living: habitus (lifestyle)

Probes:

- Where did the interest in yoga come from and can this be related to a spiritual interest, the physical benefits, life course events or the rise of yoga in the world?

- How do different types of yoga practitioners position modern postural yoga in terms of spirituality, functionality, lifestyle and the reflexive project?

Theoretical concept 1: Functionality

1. Is yoga beneficial to you? Yes/no, why and how (not)?

1. Concepts:

1. Practice of yoga functions as: yoga as being an embodied practice bringing about moments identified as spiritual / transcendental aim of yoga philosophy (spirituality),
2. as a form of e.g. stress relief (functionality),
3. 'a mirror of the self' (reflexive project) &
4. a social tool for group formations (lifestyle).

Probe:

- Is yoga rather a beneficial tool to gain spirituality, a self reflexive mindset, a bodily experience or a guide for lifestyle, ordering a style of living?

Theoretical concept 2: Spirituality

1. Do you practice the philosophy of yoga? Yes/no, why and how (not)?

2. What do you know about the philosophy of yoga?

1. Concepts:

1. The spiritual focus is on: the reaction towards increased rationality (spirituality),
2. the embodied practice as a form of bodily experience (functionality),
3. the interest in self-creation/identity formation (reflexive self) &
4. the style of life that is expected (lifestyle)

Probes:

- What does the yoga philosophy mean to the practitioners?

- To what extent does the practitioner involve the philosophy and spiritual aspects of yoga in their practice and how?

Theoretical concept 3: Reflexive Project

1. Does yoga improve you as a person? Yes/no, why and how (not)?

1. Concepts:

1. Creating Enlightenment (spirituality),
2. functions as e.g. stress relief (functionality),
3. creates a sense of inner domain, important for inner growth (reflexive self) &
4. identity formation (reflexive self) >> tool for group formation & habitus (lifestyle)

Probe:

- Does yoga influence the practitioners on a spiritual level, as a functional form, in a reflexive way and/or as a tool for group formation?

Theoretical concept 4: Yogic Capital/Lifestyle

1. What does your (daily) yoga practice look like? How do you apply yoga in your life?
2. Do others within your social network practice yoga? Yes/no, why (not)? Who are they?
 1. Concepts:
 1. Connects to the Divine, gaining Enlightenment (spiritual),
 2. motivates physical health and bodily experience, status of health (functionality),
 3. increases individual spirituality, self-awareness, day-to-day valuing the self and the sense of inner domain, self-practice (reflexive project) &
 4. due to increased popularity within health lifestyles, influencing consumerism, cultural exchange, creating group formations (lifestyle)
 1. Individual choice (individuality)
 2. Individual chance (social positioning)
 5. Social network: friends/family? Was yoga part of the upbringing?

Probes:

- How are the theoretical concepts of spirituality, functionality, reflexive project and lifestyle connected to the practice of yoga on a daily basis?
- Is yoga an individual choice or a social chance?

Theoretical concept 5: Social positioning vs. Individuality

1. Do you consider all forms of yoga as legitimate?
2. What do you think of the global trend of yoga?
3. Is yoga accessible for everyone?
 1. Concepts:
 1. It encourages individuals to practice yoga, important for self-discovery (individualization)
 2. It creates a trend of commodification, influencing people to practice yoga (social positioning)

Probes:

- How is social positioning related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?
- How is individuality related to differences in the modern postural yoga practice?

End conversation:

1. What do you wish for the evolution of yoga in Amsterdam?
2. Is there something I can help you with? What can I do in return!
3. Thank you so much for this interview.

Appendix 2 - Survey Questions

Hey you! Thank you so much for clicking on this mini survey!

So, welcome! This survey is a pre-research for my master thesis on the positioning of yoga in Amsterdam. I will first ask you some simple personal background information (6 questions), followed by some statements (4x4 statements). Don't think too long, just follow your instinct.

Though why a survey first before the interview? I'll tell you why! This survey will give me some basic information on your perspective on yoga. Based on this survey I will be able to pick a diverse group of yoga teachers in order to create a broader story for my research.

If you have any questions in advance, or later, please don't hesitate and ask.

The survey will only take 10 minutes! That's about 4 sun salutations, right?

Thanks for helping me out!

Personal background:

- Hi I am: (NAME)
- I did my yoga education at: (NAME YOGA SCHOOL)
- I currently teach yoga at: (NAME YOGA SCHOOL)
- I've practiced yoga for: (approximately X YEARS)
- I've taught yoga for: (approximately X YEARS)
- I teach this/these yoga style(s): (YOGA STYLE(S))

Divide 100 points, how much do you value the following aspects:

Yoga in general

- Yoga is taking a time out from my busy and hectic daily life (pragmatist)
- Yoga is self-development and self-exploration, which is applied as a tool for better managing ones daily life (explorer)
- Yoga is a therapeutic way, emphasized by self-awareness (self-helper)
- Yoga is going inwards for the Mystic, establishing a connection to the divine (the mystic)

Yoga Practice

- I practice yoga in order to remain physically fit and for relaxation. (pragmatist)
- I practice yoga in a therapeutic way, relating to the experience of life events (self-helper)
- I practice yoga because I am attracted by the aspect of the inner immersion and self-exploration. (explorer)
- I practice yoga integrating yoga philosophy and its spiritual dimension into my daily live via daily physical practice and meditation, eating and drinking according to yogic beliefs (the mystic)

Yoga living (for analysis of yoga type, divide points by 3)

- Yoga rises in global consciousness that is calling out for a more spiritual and sustainable lifestyle (the mystic)
- Yoga teaches flow that helps you with you and makes everyday life more comfortable (explorer)
- Yoga offers several options to optimize life and learn to live consciously (self-helper)
- Yoga is part of an action system rather than a passive object, where change can only come trough action. (pragmatist)

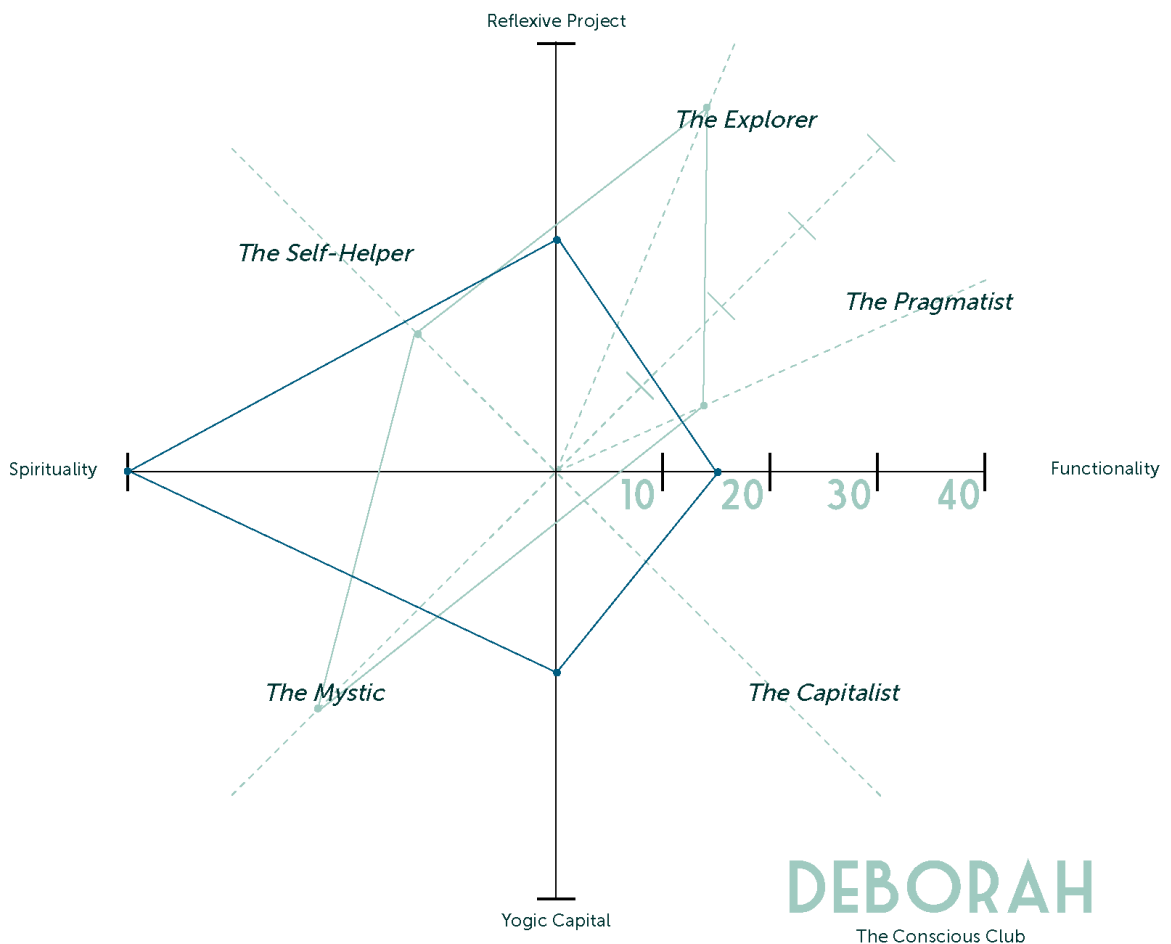
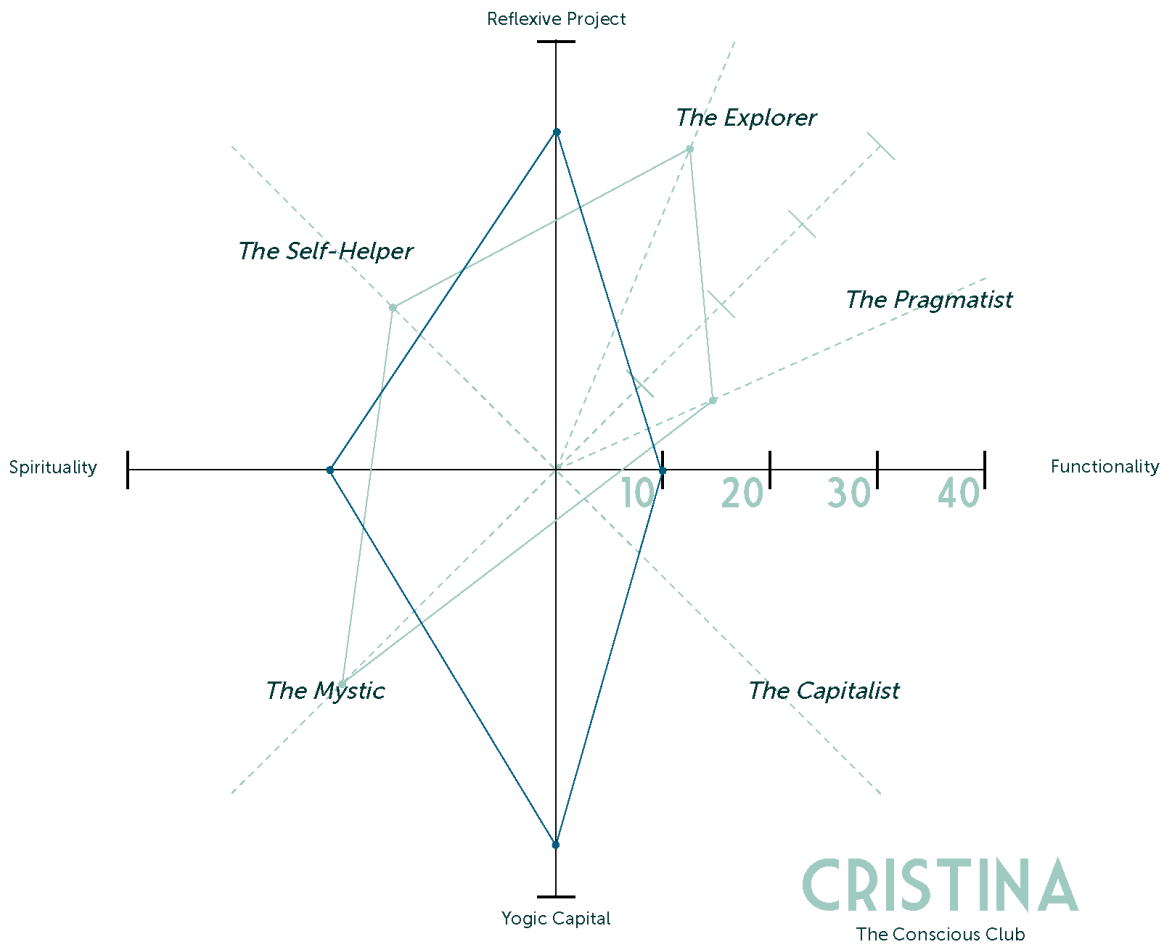
Yoga View

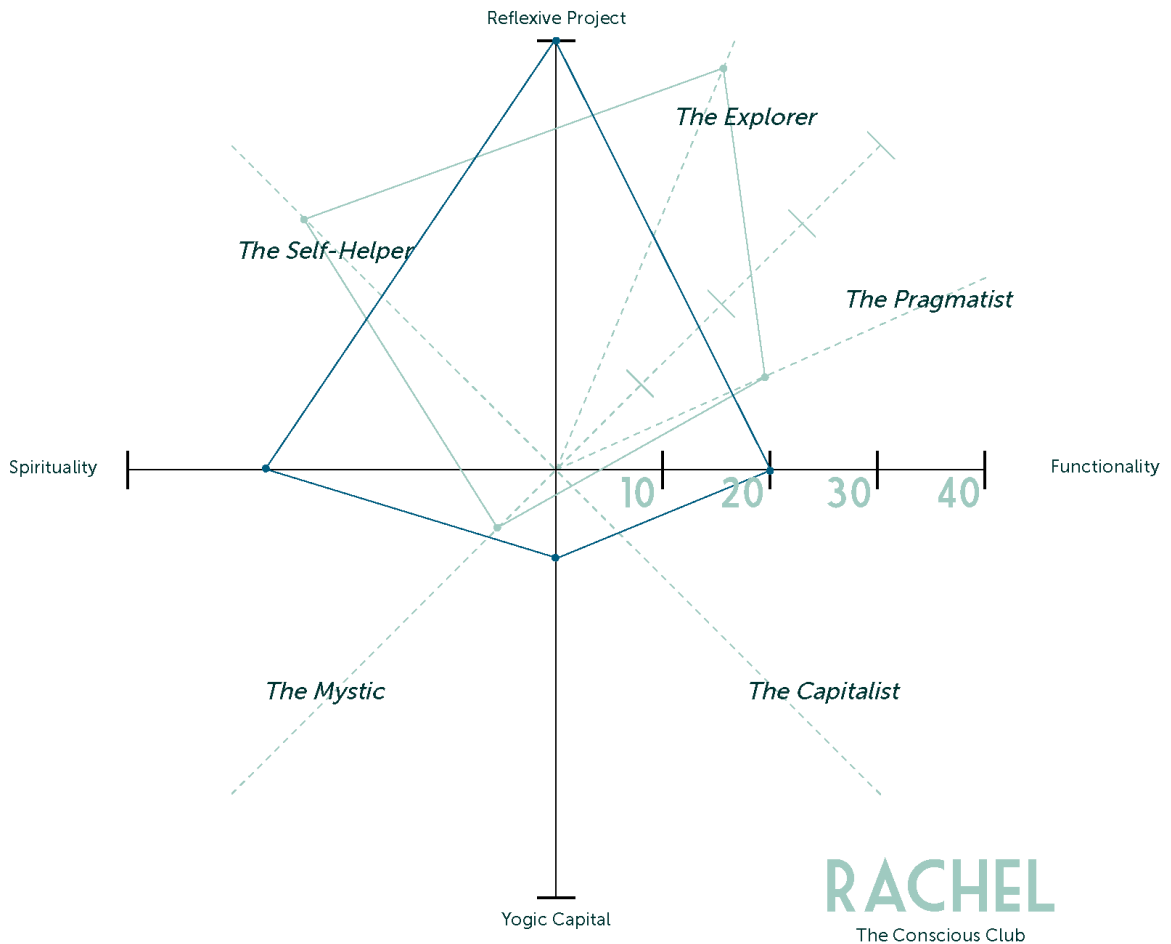
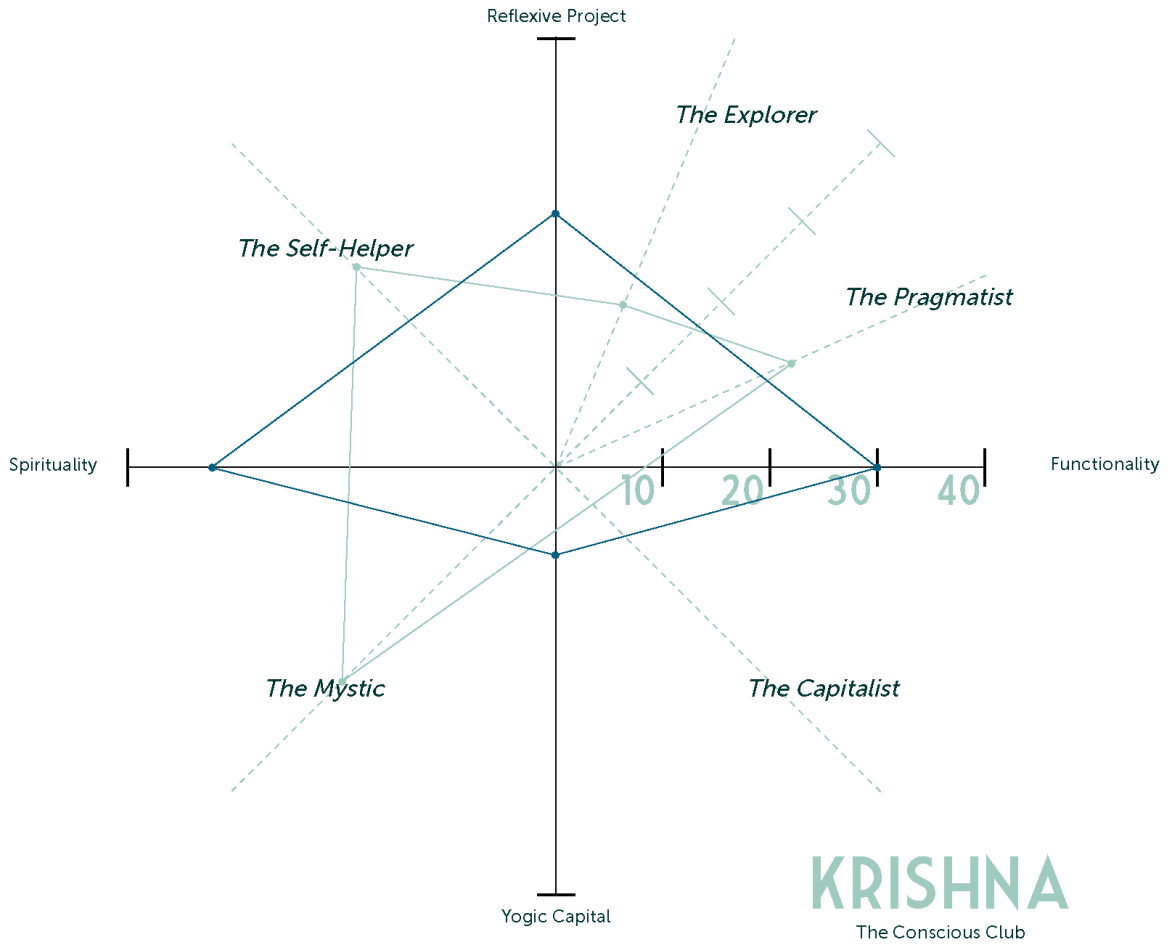
- I view yoga as a physical practice, being functional for my body-mind connection. (functionality)
- I view yoga as a project of the self, being an individual process establishing self-exploration. (reflexive project)
- I view yoga as a spiritual practice, bringing an extra dimension to the experience of the self. (spirituality)
- I view yoga as a world view, being a collective process towards a conscious lifestyle. (yogic capital/lifestyle)

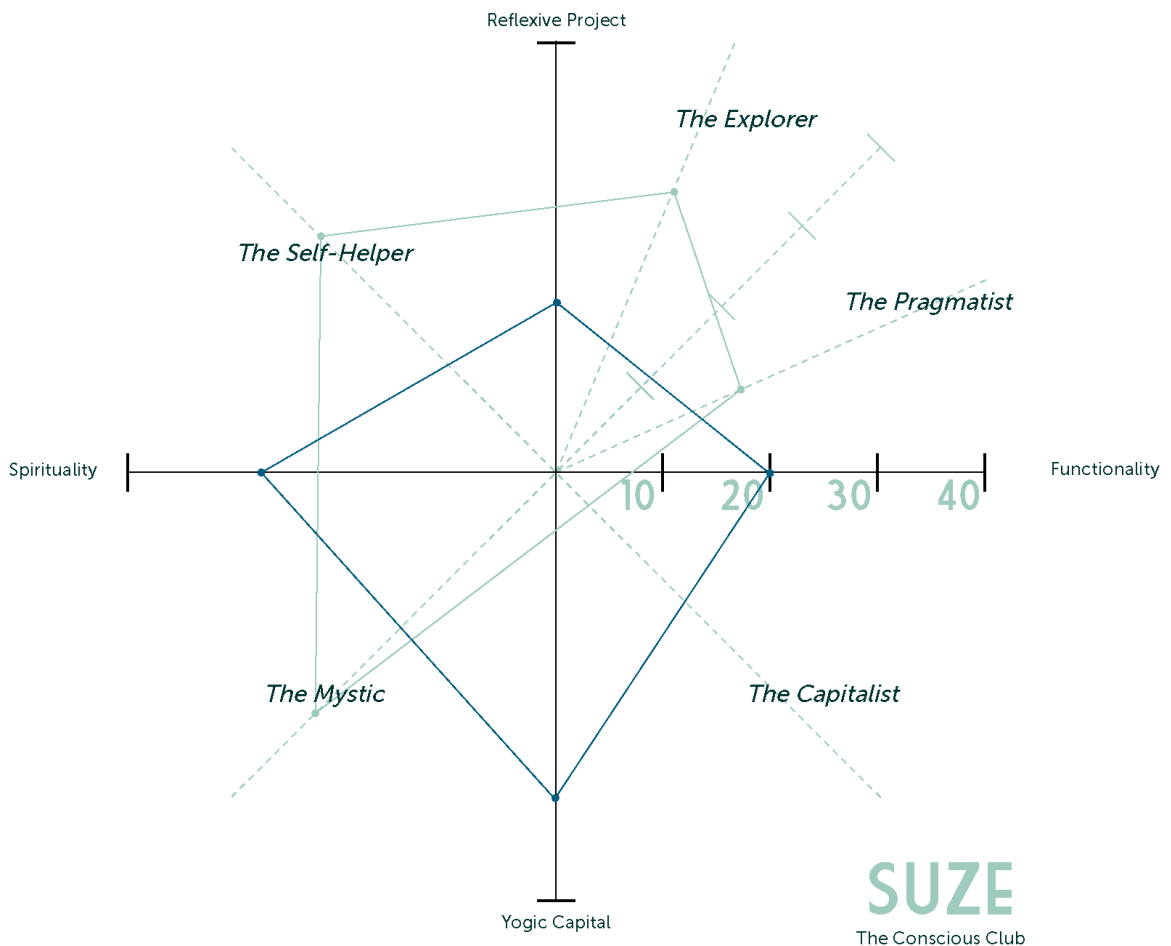
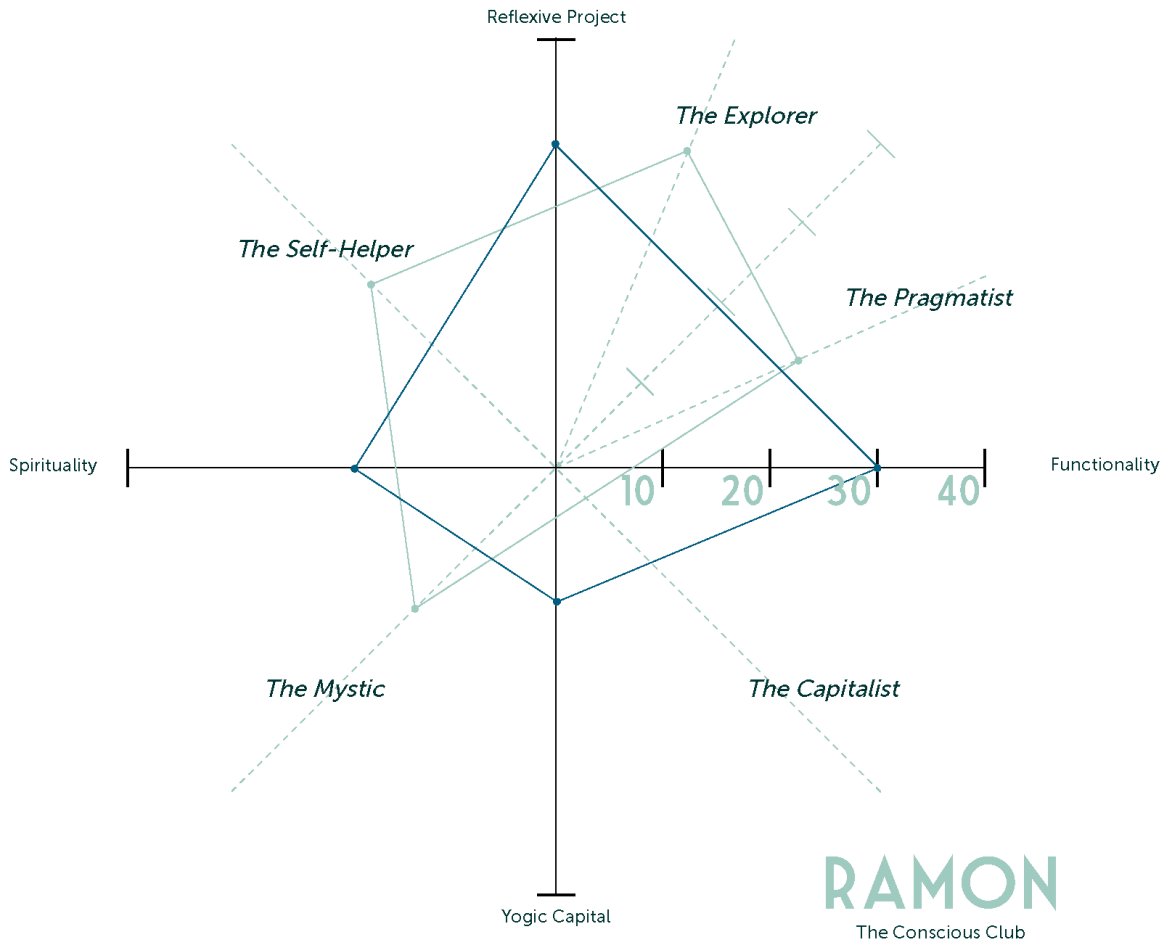
Final questions:

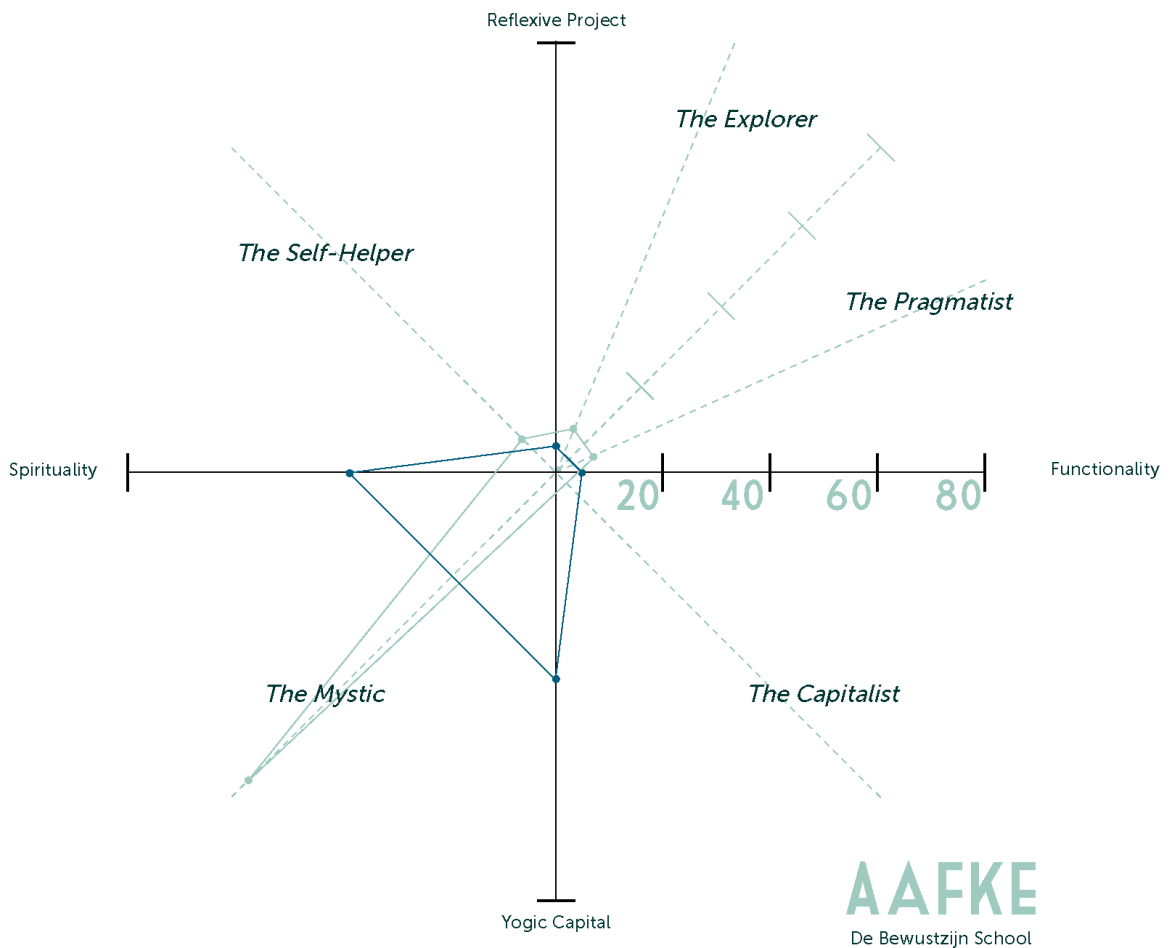
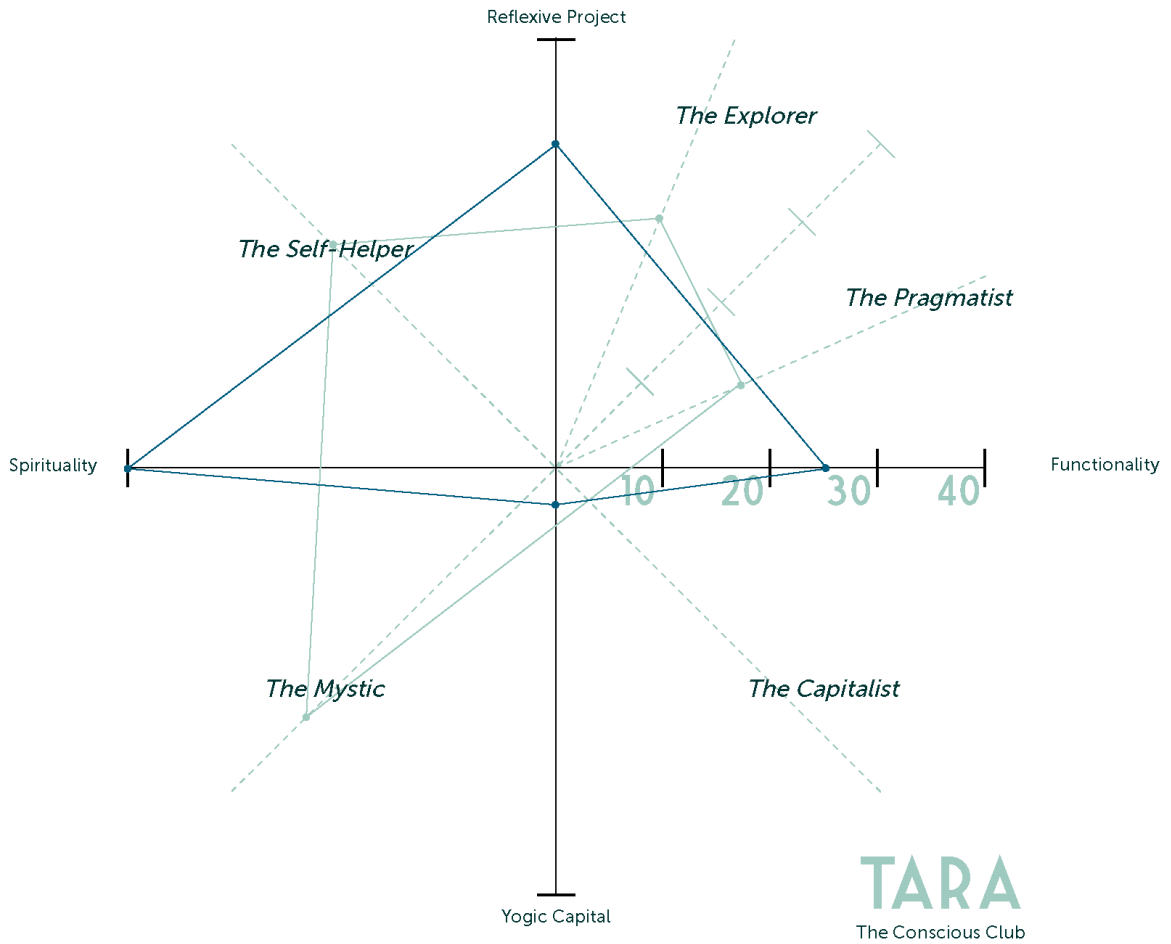
- I'm available for the full interview in the week of: (APRIL INTERVIEW DATES, FIRST 3 WEEKS)
- Call me on this number so we can figure it out: (YOUR NR.)

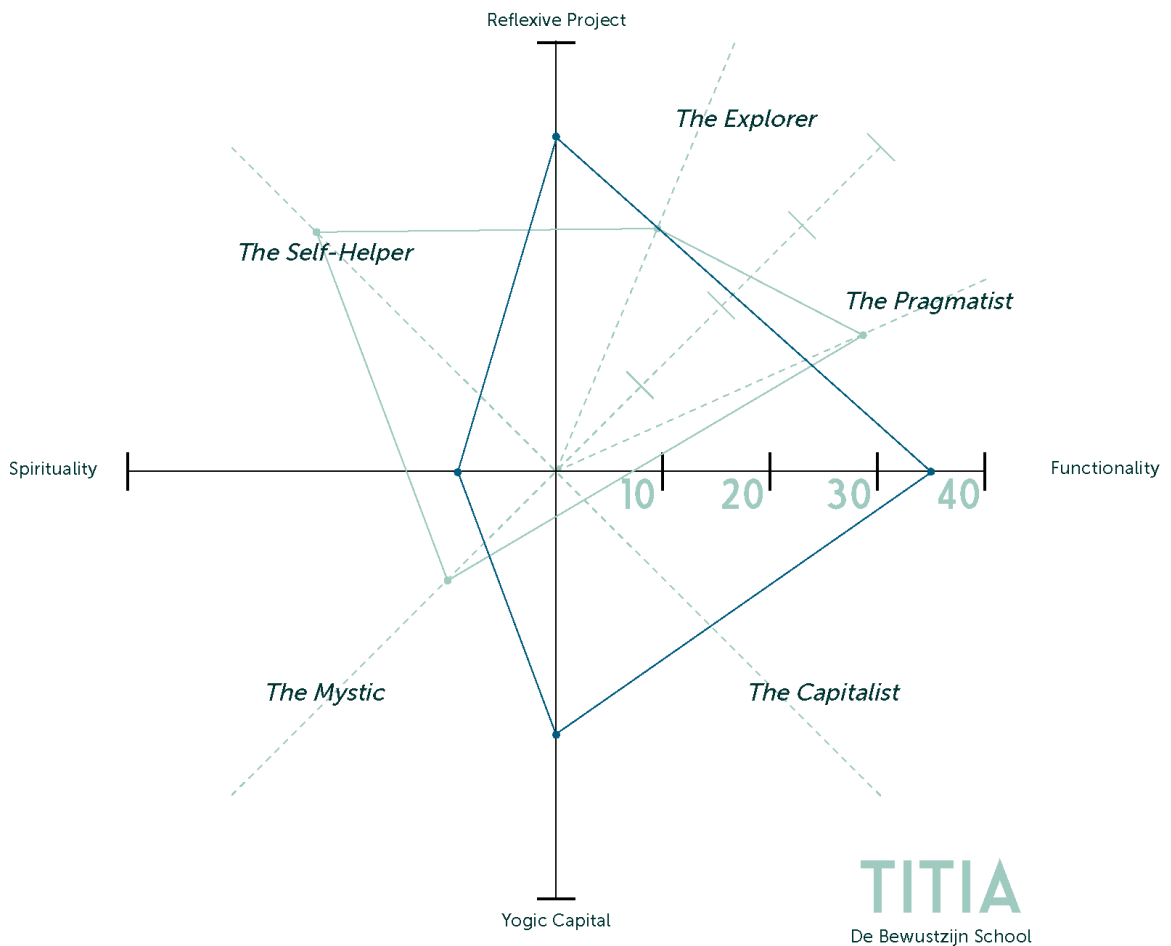
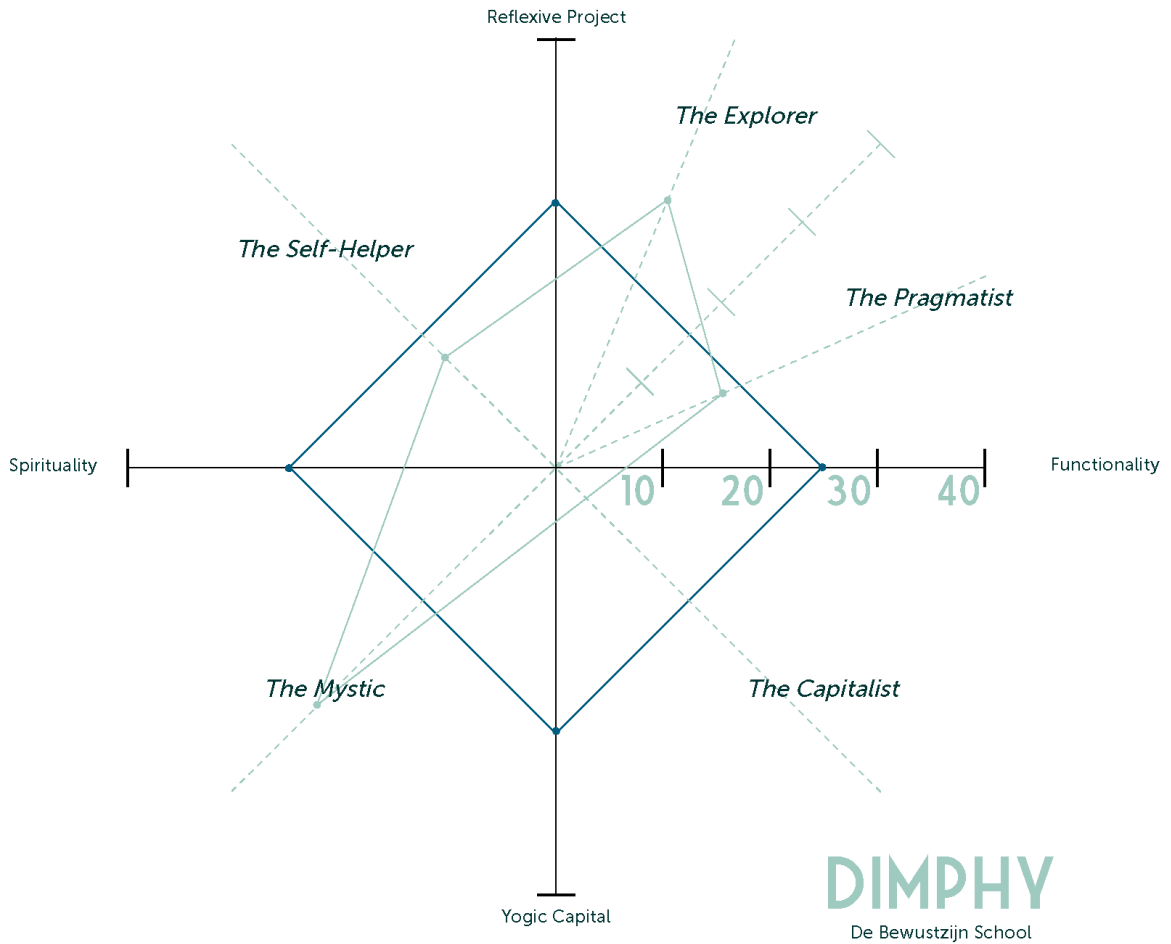
Appendix 3 - Survey Results Figures

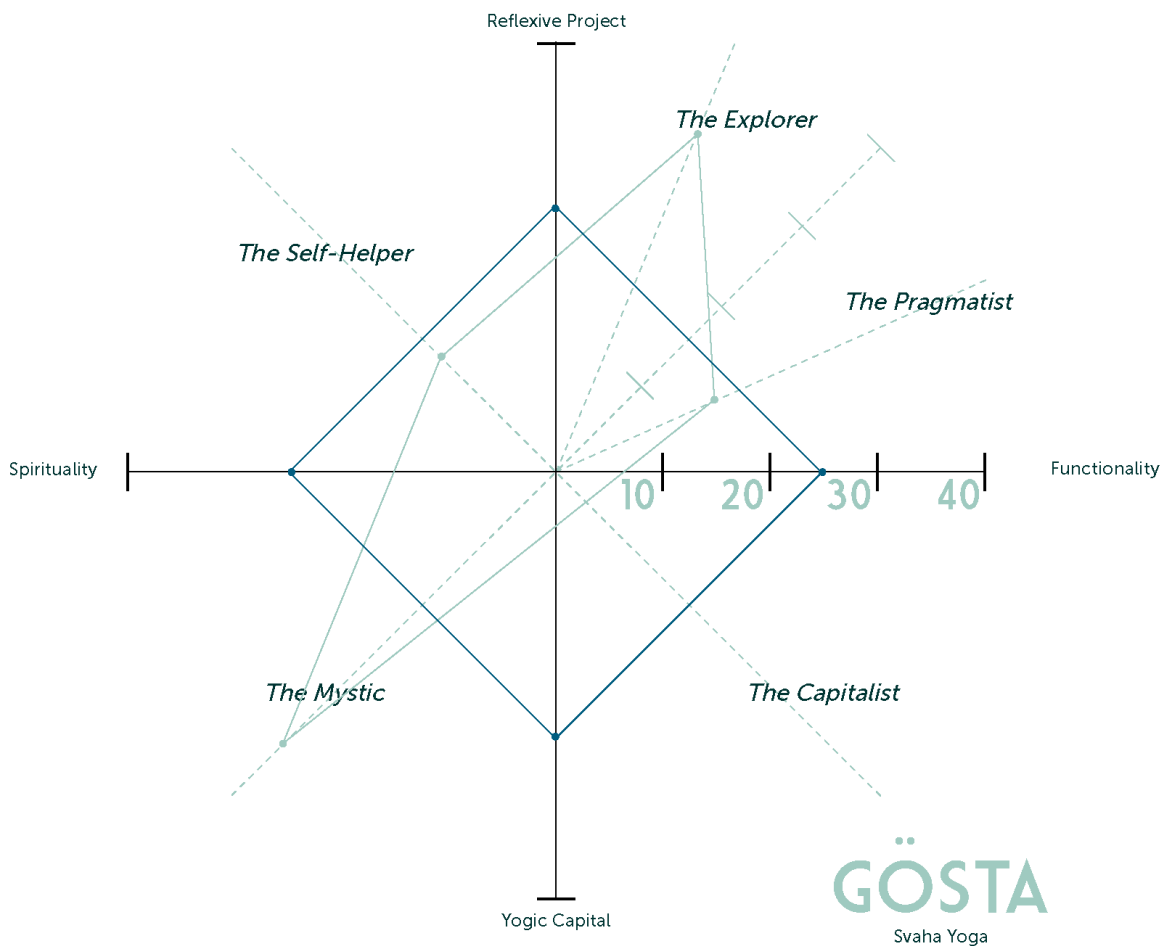
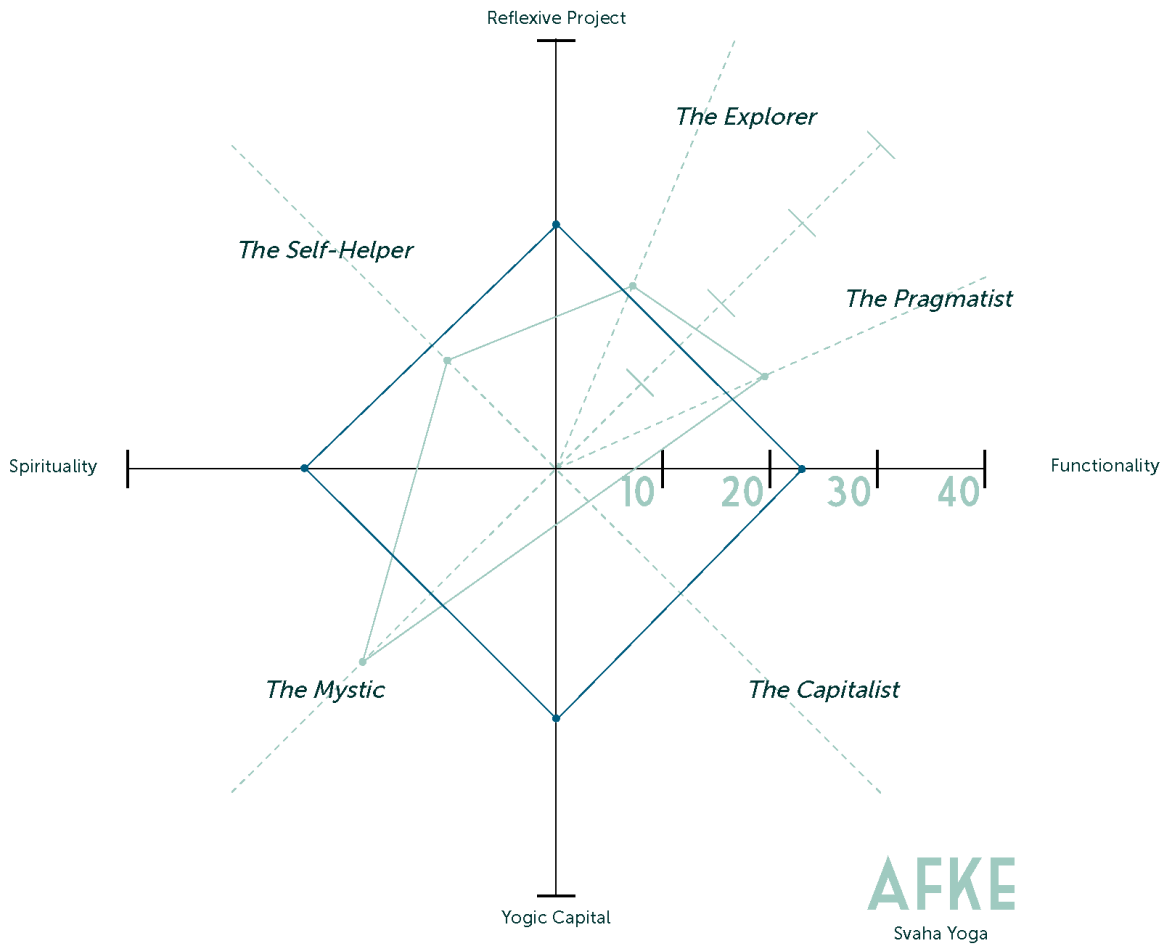


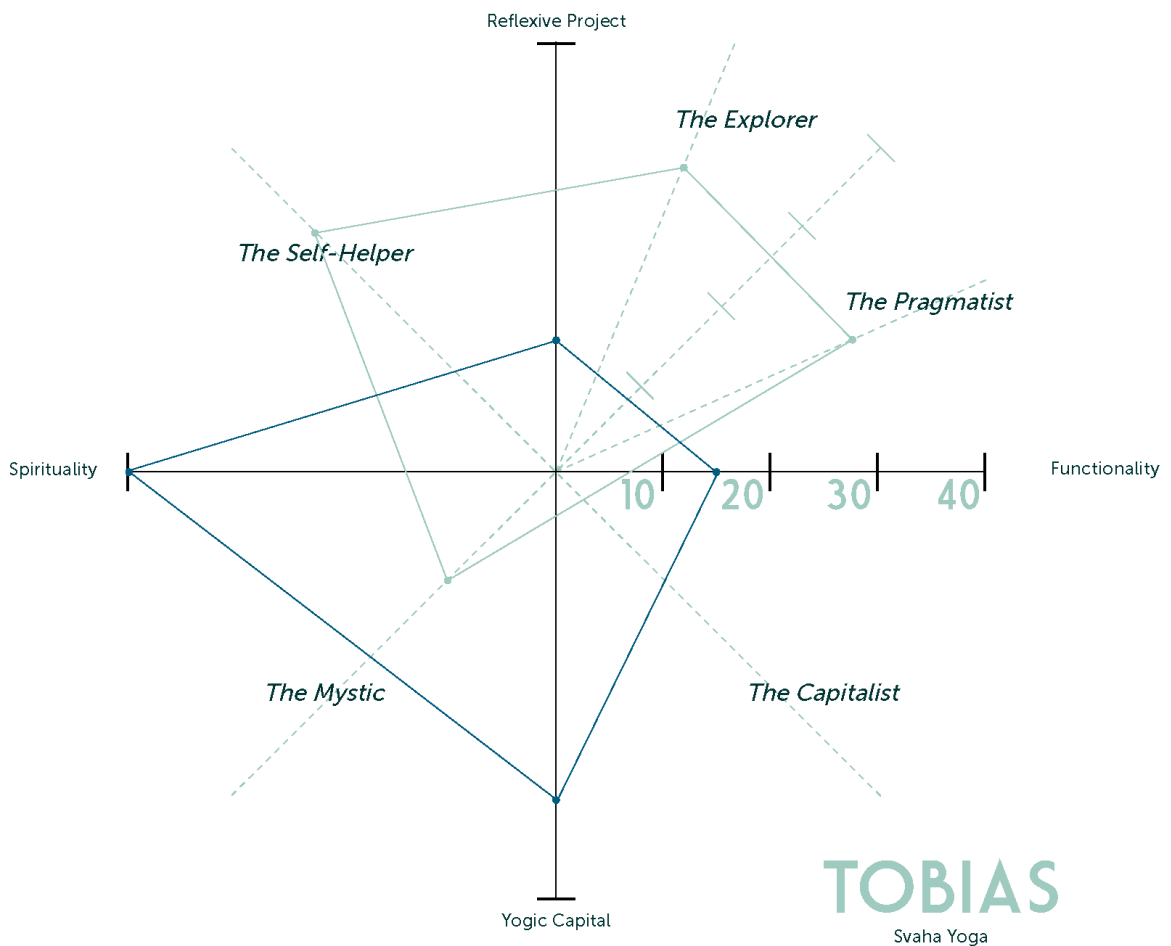
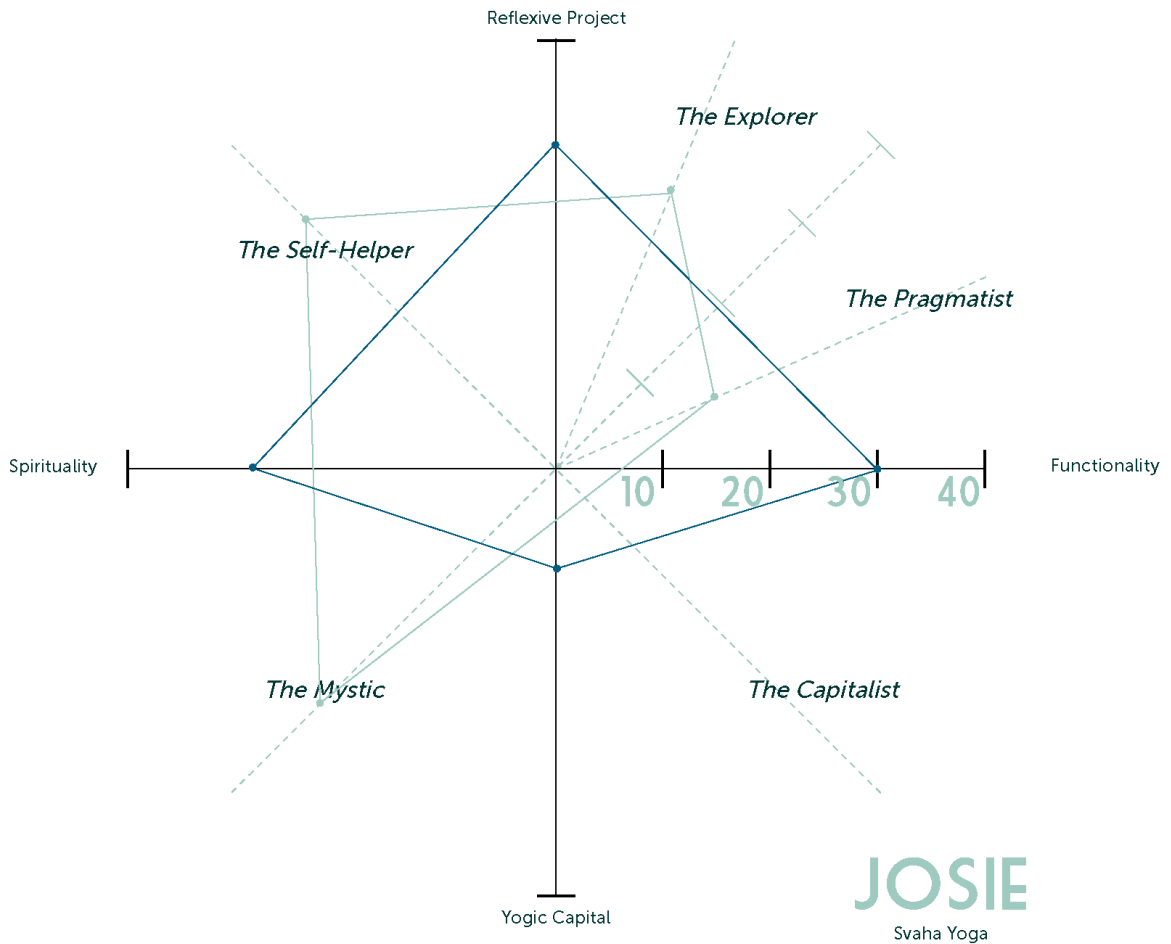


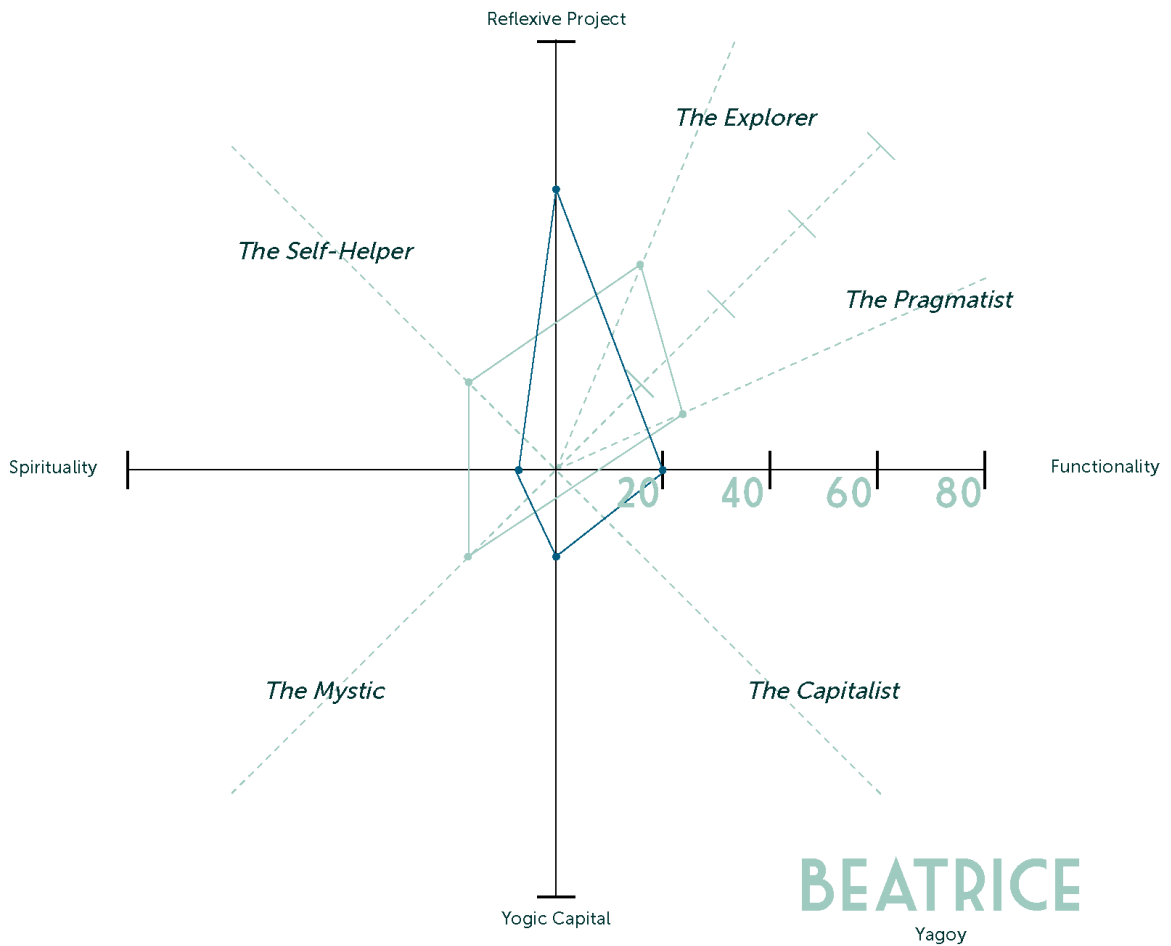
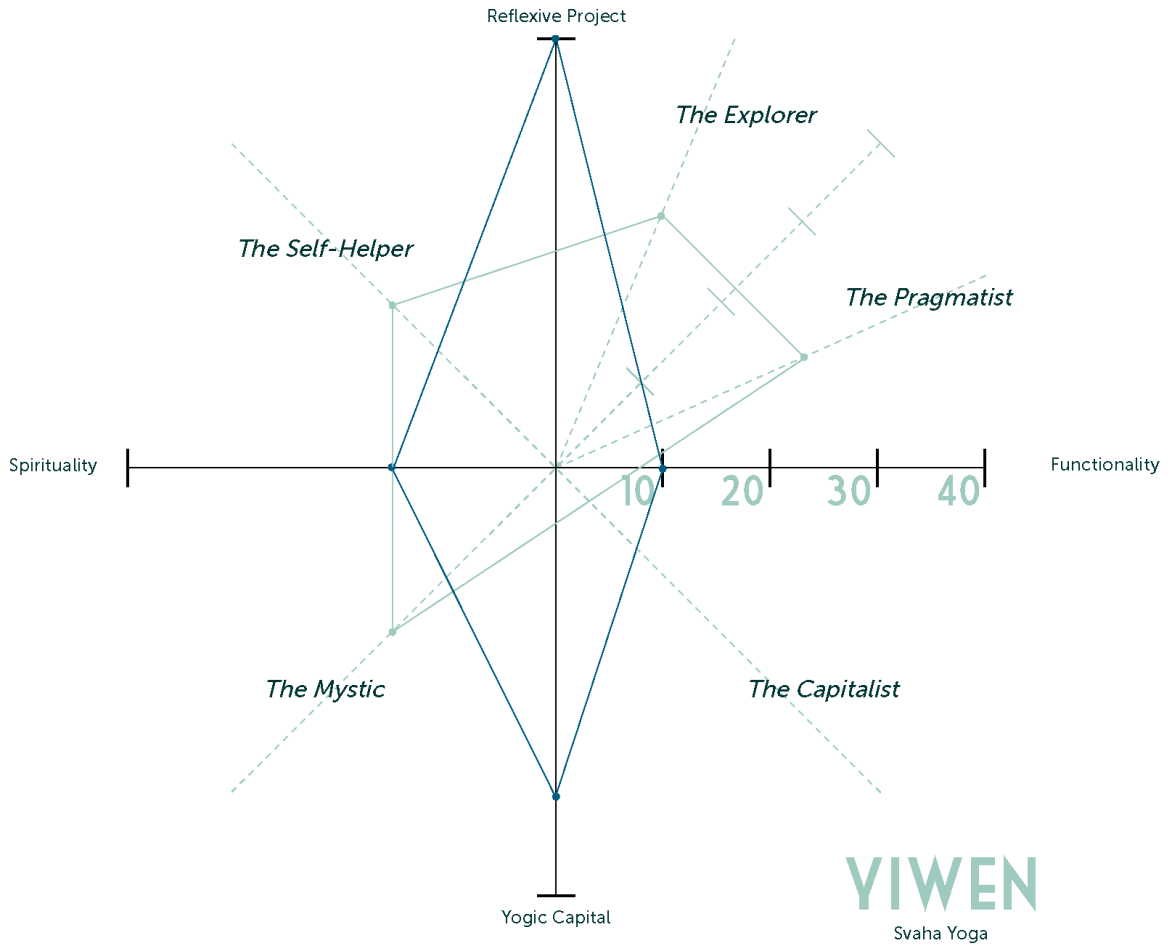


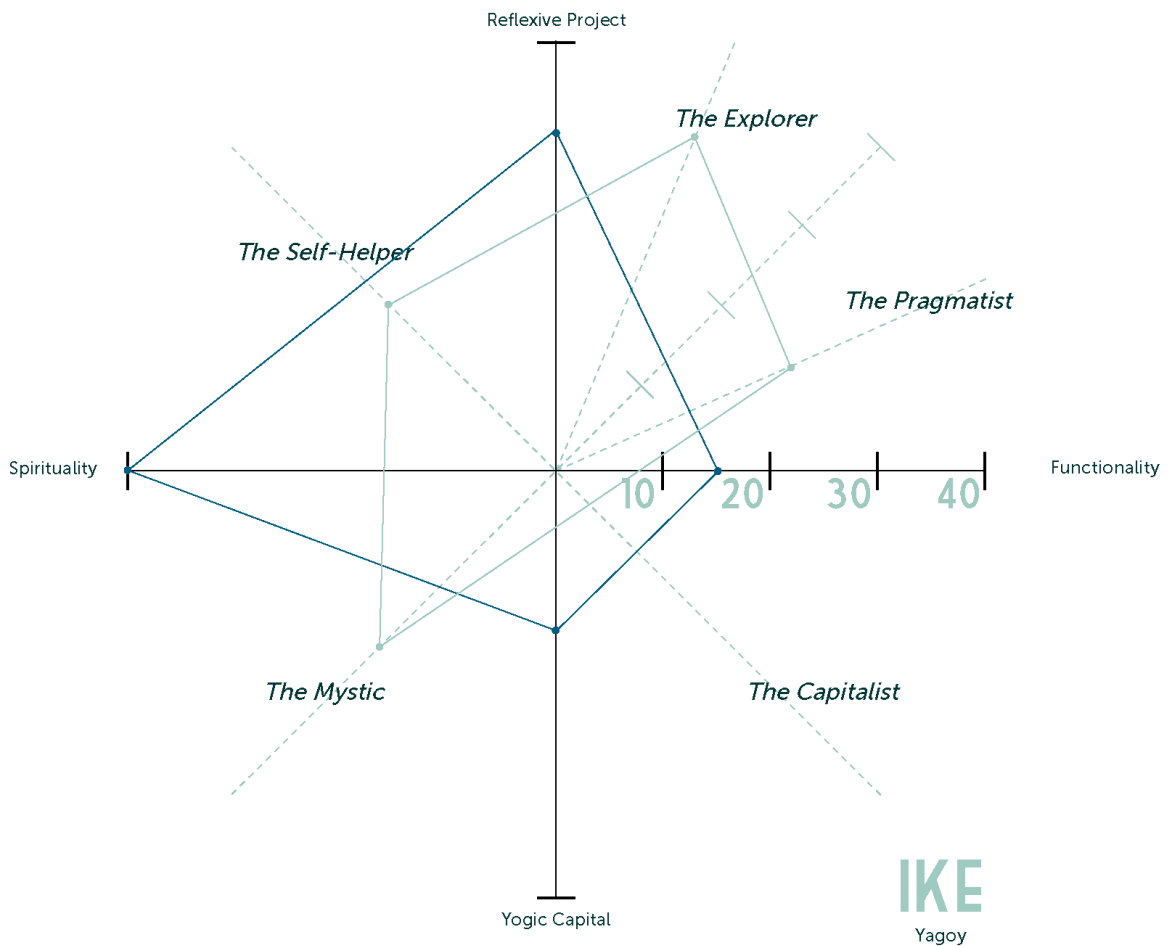
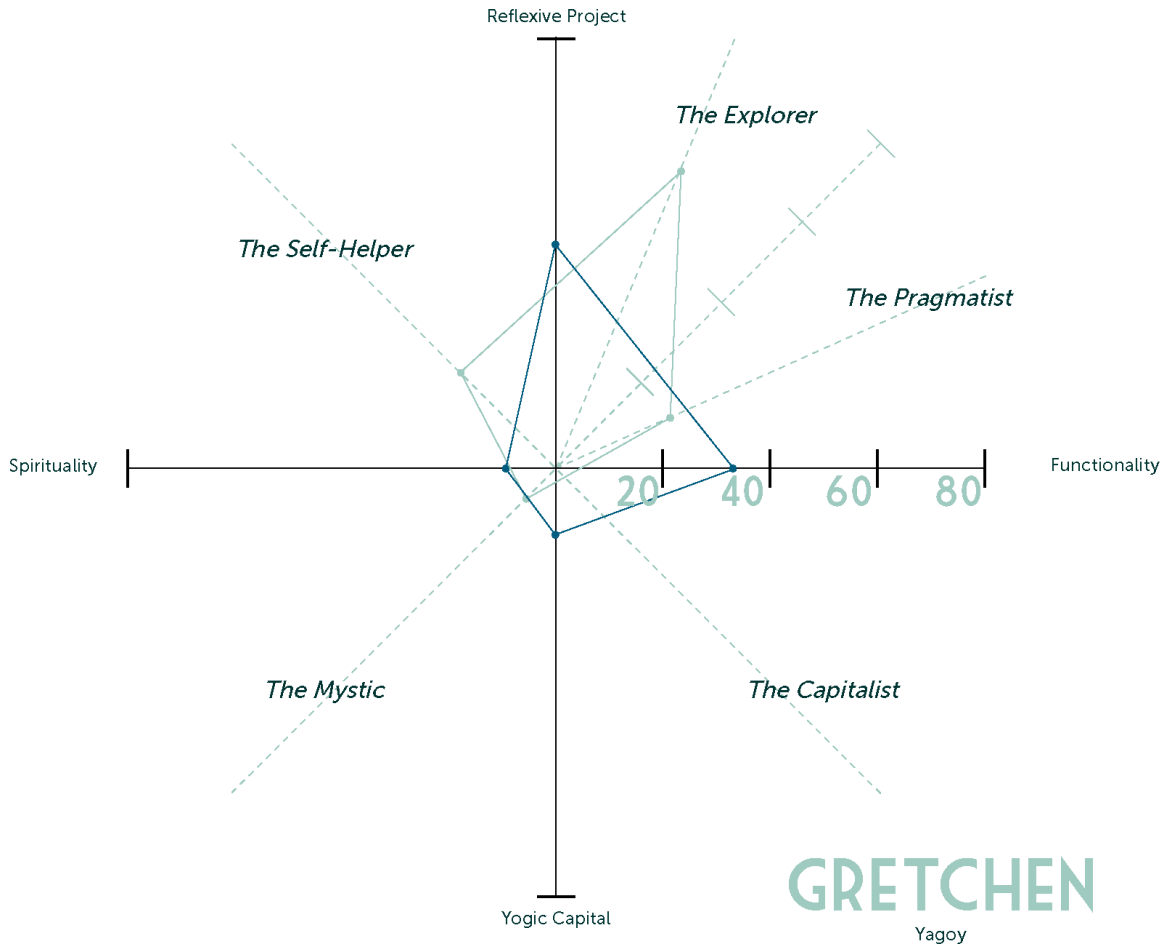


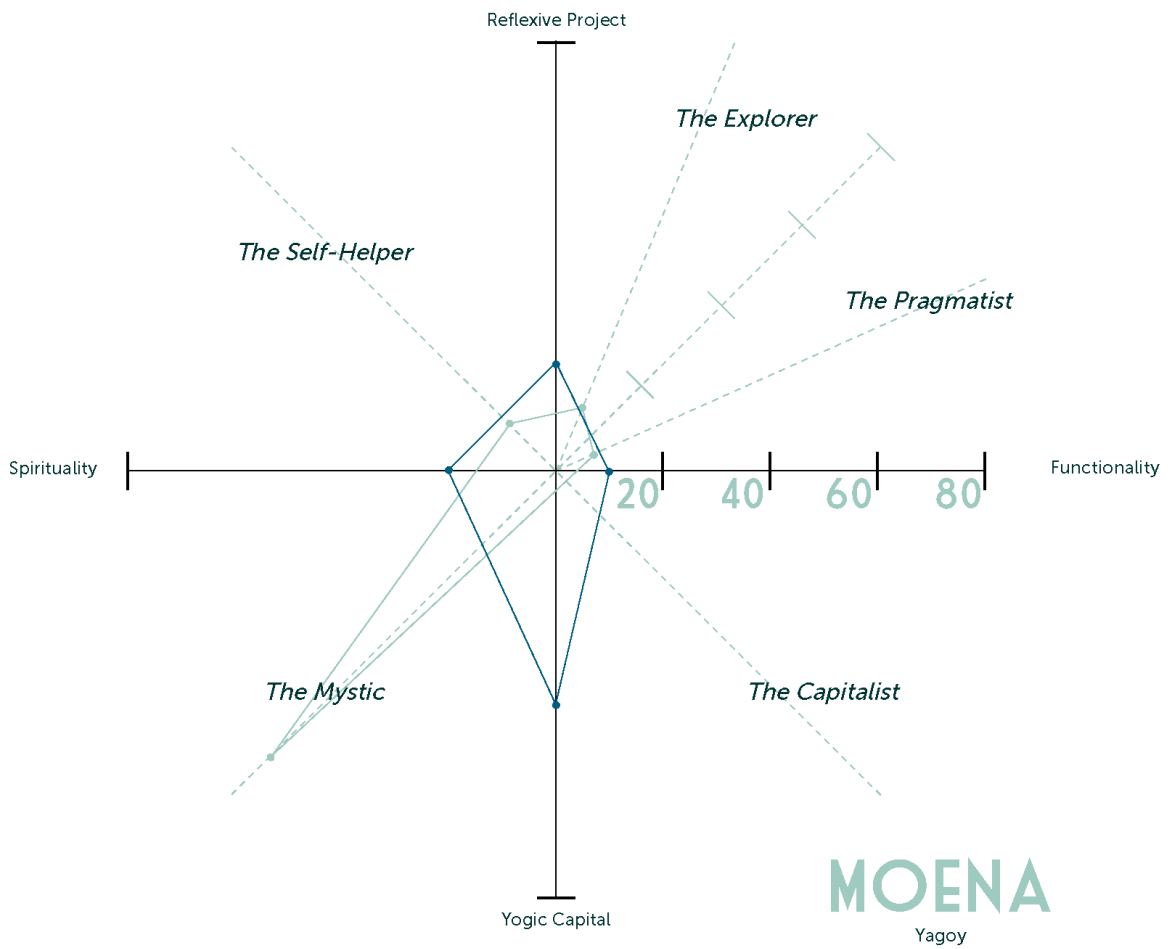
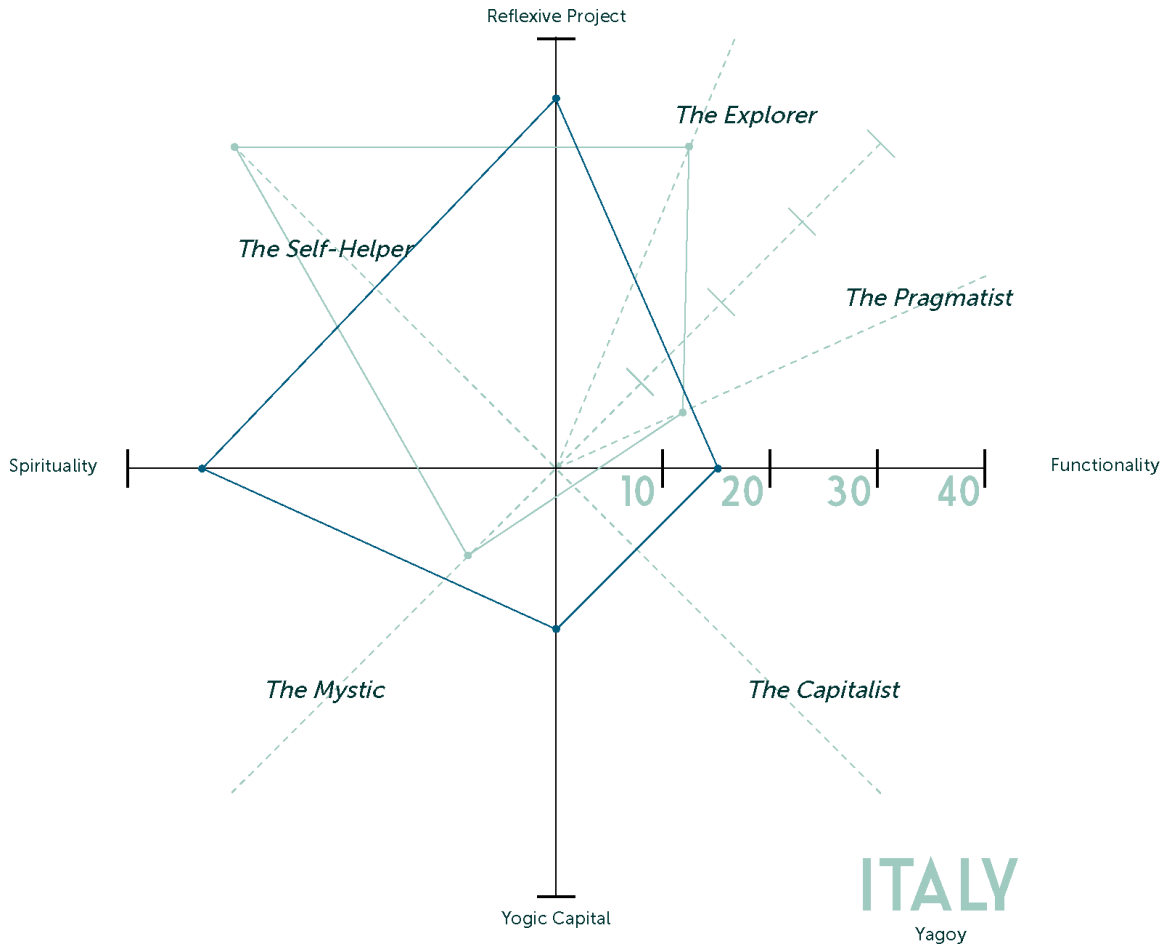


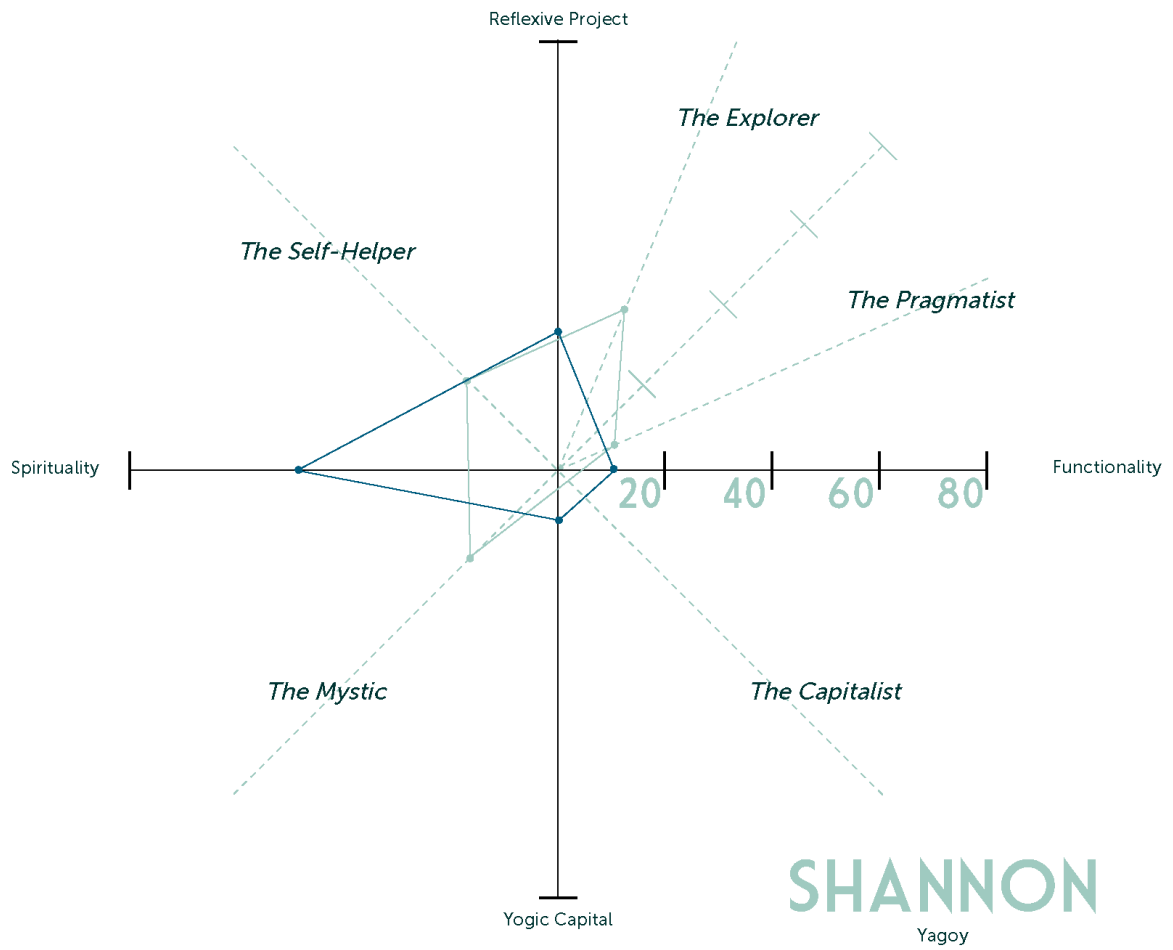












Appendix 4 - Survey Results Schematic

Table 1

HUMANS OF YOGA	Respondents	The Pragmatist	The Explorer	The Self-Helper	The Mystic	Functionality	Reflexive Project	Spirituality	Yogic Capital	Teachers Type	Deviation				
De Bewustzijn School (3)	Aakie	19,0	6,3	21,0	7,0	24,0	8,0	235,0	78,3	5	5	45	The Mystic		
	Dimpy	70,0	23,3	80,0	28,7	70,0	23,3	80,0	26,7	25	25	25	The Mystic		
	Titia	80,0	26,7	75,0	25,0	80,0	26,7	65,0	21,7	35	30	10	The Pragmatist		
	Total:	Av.	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	31,7	
MYSTIC 42.2		56,3	18,8	58,7	19,6	58,0	19,3	126,7	42,2	65	21,7	80	26,7	95	31,7
Yogic Capital															
Yagy	Shannon	35,0	11,7	105,0	35,0	80,0	26,7	80,0	26,7	10	30	50	The Explorer	Spirituality	
	Beatrice	70,0	23,3	110,0	36,7	60,0	20,0	60,0	20,0	20	50	10	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
	Italy	40,0	13,3	90,0	30,0	120,0	40,0	40,0	13,3	15	35	35	The Self-Helper	Reflexive Project	
	Gretchen	65,0	21,7	160,0	53,3	65,0	21,7	30,0	10,0	35	40	10	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
Meena	15,0	7,5	20,0	10,0	25,0	12,5	140,0	70,0	10	20	20	The Mystic	Spirituality		
Ike	70,0	23,3	60,0	30,0	70,0	23,3	70,0	23,3	15	30	40	The Explorer	Spirituality		
EXPLORER 32.5		Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.
Reflexive Project		49,2	16,8	90,8	32,5	70,0	24,0	70,0	27,2	105	17,5	165	27,5	125	20,8
The Conscious Club (7)	Deborah	45,0	15,0	100,0	33,3	60,0	20,0	95,0	31,7	15	25	40	The Mystic	Spirituality	
	Cristina	50,0	16,7	100,0	33,3	70,0	23,3	80,0	26,7	10	30	25	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
	Krishna	75,0	25,0	50,0	16,7	85,0	28,3	90,0	30,0	30	25	35	The Mystic	Spirituality	
	Rachel	70,0	23,3	120,0	40,0	80,0	26,7	30,0	10,0	20	40	30	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
	Suze	50,0	16,7	80,0	26,7	80,0	26,7	90,0	30,0	20	20	30	The Self-Helper	Reflexive Project	
	Tara	55,0	18,3	75,0	25,0	75,0	25,0	95,0	31,7	25	30	40	The Mystic	Spirituality	
	Ramon	80,0	26,7	90,0	30,0	75,0	25,0	55,0	18,3	30	30	25	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
EXPLORER 29.3		Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.
Spirituality		60,7	20,2	87,9	29,3	75,0	25,0	76,4	25,5	150	21,4	225	32,1	125	17,9
Svaha Yoga (5)	Josie	45,0	15,0	85,0	28,3	85,0	28,3	85,0	28,3	30	30	30	The Explorer	Reflexive Project	
	Gosta	45,0	15,0	95,0	31,7	55,0	18,3	105,0	35,0	25	25	25	The Mystic	Spirituality	
	Tobias	90,0	30,0	90,0	30,0	80,0	26,7	60,0	20,0	15	15	40	The Pragmatist	Spirituality	
	Akhe	78,0	26,0	75,0	25,0	62,0	20,7	85,0	28,3	23	27	26	The Pragmatist	Spirituality	
	Yvwen	75,0	25,0	75,0	25,0	72,0	25,0	75,0	25,0	10	40	20	The Self-Helper	Spirituality	
EXPLORER 28.0		Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.	Total:	Av.
Spirituality		66,6	22,2	84,0	28,0	70,8	23,8	82,0	27,3	103	20,6	141	28,2	119	23,8
TOTAL: 21										22,8		30,6		22,7	