

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF YOGA

Miss Janet Waren and Mr. Bob Richard have started conducting Yoga classes including one at the University of Winnipeg, Canada. Mr. Jim Borthwick continues teaching Yoga in Vancouver.

A new regional centre in Italy, Centro Yoga Shadana has been inaugurated at Savona on 12th November 1974. The director of the centre is Mr. Paulo Valla.

Dr. Masosh Yamazaki of Fukui University, has translated the book *Yoga Hygiene Simplified* into Japanese, which is receiving wide attention in Japan.

Mr. Peter Klatt conducting *De Yoga Ashram* at Bern, Switzerland has been presented with a printing press by a grateful student. A translation of one of the texts of The Yoga Institute is expected to be published shortly.

The *Yoga Teachers Year Book* is ready for release on the 25th December 1974.

Prof. R. S. Misra informs us that the Rajasthan Yoga Pratishthan of Jaipur proposes to inaugurate a Yoga Education Centre in Calcutta, besides the one at Jaipur.

The Yoga Culture Institute, of Gwalior have approached the I.B.Y. for affiliation as a Regional member. Shri Hans Raj Yadav who is the director, is now busy organizing its Library and Extension Service activities in M.P.

A special issue of the *Yoga Pracharak* to commemorate the 78th birthday of Shri Yogendraji was published by Yoga Education Centre Melbourne and the Yoga Teachers Association of Australia.

The Yoga Shiksha Kendra of New Delhi arranged a programme to observe the 78th birthday of Shri Yogendraji.

Associaçao de Professores de Yoga do Rio Grande do Sul held the second week of Yoga Propagation from 18th to 24th October 1974. The activities consisted of talks, exhibition, interviews to promote Prof. Bastiou's visit to India in 1975, panel discussion and presenting of the *Better Living* slides with translation in Portuguese with a background of Indian classical music. Mrs. Dagmar Krebs and Prof. Bastiou gave several talks and coordinated the Yoga retreat in the countryside.

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THE YOGA INSTITUTE SANTA CRUZ, INDIA

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Two angels vowed to act the Truth;
 All they get they give.
 He is the mind; she is the heart,
 They are one soul aglow
 They live for the good of mankind
 In Yogic bliss they grow.

In unity and purity
 They find divinity
 For a better humanity
 They work in amity.
 Their Yoga is simplified;
 An art exemplified,
 All paths are unified
 In this path dignified.

Their Yoga is a Yoga for all,
 Their Institute is home for all,
 Their love is light for every soul.

By courtesy *Yogapracharak*, Australia

WRONG VIEWS ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF THE PADMĀSANA

by RAMSHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

WE find the following note by G. A. Jacob in his edition of the *Vedāntasāra* of Sadānanda :

Padmāsana is thus described by Moinier Williams in his Sanskrit Lexicon : 'A particular posture in religious meditation sitting with the thighs crossed with one hand resting on the left thigh, the other held up with the thumb upon the heart and the eyes directed to the tip of the nose*'. The *Rudrayāmala*, however, defines it as simply sitting with the left foot on the right thigh and the right foot on the left thigh. To this the *Tantrasāra* adds the following direction : (अङ्गुष्ठौ च निबध्नीयाद् हस्ताभ्यां व्युत्क्रमात् ततः) which may possibly mean, 'and he should retain the big toes (in their position) by means of the hands in the reverse order.' i.e. the left hand on the right foot and the right hand on the left foot (?) (p.81). The author, by putting a mark of interrogation here, wants to indicate that he is not sure about the correctness of his rendering of the verse quoted in the *Tantrasāra*.

The whole note needs to be corrected. It is evident that Jacob failed to understand the desired meaning of the expression *v्युत्क्रमा* used in the verse in the *Tantrasāra* (Chapter 4).

M. Williams means to say that 'in practising padmāsana a person is required to hold up one hand upon the heart'. As a matter of fact this holding is neither necessary nor is stated in the works on yoga. Some often practise this holding of one hand at the time of some particular *japa*, which, though not wrong, is altogether unnecessary in practising the padmāsana. It should be noted that if a person wants to remain in the padmāsana for an hour or more, he will not be able to keep one of his hands upon the heart for the same period. It should be borne in mind that the padmāsana is a dhyānāsana (meditative posture) and as such this āsana is to be practised in such a way that one can remain in this posture for some hours. Persons who hold one hand upon the heart, keep the hand for a few minutes only at the time of performing *japa*.

* Quotations and references *in extenso* supplied by the author have been omitted.—Ed.

Regarding the rendering of the Tantrasāra-verse (quoted above), we are of opinion that Jacob failed to understand the method of placing hands (the two palms) in the *vyutkrama* way. Though the word *vyutkrama* often means 'out of the right course' or 'a reverse order' (वि+उत्+क्रम) yet in the verse in question the word has a special meaning. With reference to the practice of padmāsana, the procedure of placing the hands in the *vyutkrama* way means: 'the hands are to be crossed behind the back in a way that the right hand fingers should catch the right toe and the left hand fingers the left toe'. This is the traditional way of practising padmāsana. This practice is very difficult for a man having too much fat. This posture destroys excessive sleep and enables a man to achieve firmness in the body. This posture is good for those who inherit weak backs and crippled pelvis.

A study of the relevant passages on the padmāsana in the yogic works reveals that some use the word *baddha-padmāsana*² when the padmāsana³ is practised with the hands turned towards the back as shown above. Since the toes are to be tied by the palms, the posture is called baddha padmāsana, and not padmāsana. Some, however, take this baddha-padmāsana posture as the proper padmāsana⁴; i.e. according to these teachers the crossing of the hands behind the back must invariably be practised with the padmāsana.

It seems to us that when the word baddha-padmāsana came to be used for padmāsana, a word was needed for the simple padmāsana. The new word *muktapadmāsana* for padmāsana came to be used to fulfil this want in later times.

The *Gheraṇḍasamhitā*, while dealing with the padmāsana speaks of this *vyutkrama* form by using the expression *paścima vidhi* (2.8), which also occurs in the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* (1.44) and other works.⁵ Brahmānanda has rightly explained the word *paścima* as *prṣṭhabhāga*. The *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* (41.63) advises an aspirant to cross the hands behind the back after having folded the two legs at the knee and having placed them on the opposite thighs as is stated in the yogic works. In practising padmāsana, it is not correct to say that the hands are to be placed in the reverse order.



INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF YOGA

Miss Renuka Mandan was invited to Kimberly to hold yoga classes. 60 students attended and the response was excellent. She was awarded a trophy for the best work shown by a part time teacher at the M.L. Sultan Technical College where she teaches Yoga.

Mr. Gerhard Unger has started a Teacher Training programme for the Instructors in Europe.

Mr. Jayant Panchal, has left for Canada. Mr. and Mrs. Farrookh Dudhmal returned to Germany, where they intend to teach Yoga. Mr. K. B. Dangayach has left for U.S.A.

Miss Pearl Drego has written a book on *Yoga Pathways to Liberation*. The *Yoga Teachers Year Book 1975* is now available and those who would like to have a copy should address the Executive Secretary of the I.B.Y. along with the necessary remittance of postage, Rs. 5.00 India; \$1.00; and 0.50 pence.

AT THE INSTITUTE

25th December 1974 was observed by the Institute as the 56th year Foundation Day. It was more of a family gathering of the students, teachers, trainees, patients, sympathisers and friends, of the Institute. The Teacher Trainees offered a small satire exposing the modern trends in Yoga enlivened with sarcasm and humour. Shri Kishen Mehta directed the skit. Songs were sung by Miss Devi Lakhiani, Sarah Pillay, Miss Bina Trindade, Mrs. Golwalker. Smt. Hansa Jayadeva compered the programme and Mother Sita Devi gave the vote of thanks.

Shri Hans Raj Yadav called a press conference at Gwalior. He has started teaching 12 professors at the Yoga Culture Institute. He also spoke at the Satellite Symposium organized by the International Physiological Conference at Jhansi. His paper was very well received.