

YOGA EDUCATION

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THE YOGA INSTITUTE

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The practitioners of Yoga (*yogasādhakas*) are of various categories and a further differentiation becomes necessary in this respect. (i) They are either mild both in their application or in their quality of non-attachment; (ii) they are mediocre both in practice and non-attachment; and (iii) they are intense both in their practice and non-attachment. It may also happen that some belong to certain irregular combinations of these three qualities, e. g., (i) mild in practice but intense in non-attachment, (ii) intense in practice but mild in non-attachment and so on. There are thus twenty-seven such combinations for qualifying the practitioner.

RATIONALE OF ISVARA IN YOGA

ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा ॥२३॥

Īśvara-praṇīdhānād-vā

23. Or (supernormal consciousness is attained even) by feeling the presence of *Īśvara*.

Fundamentally committed to the theory of evolution, it is paradoxical why and how Patañjali happened to introduce in his *sūtras*, the theocratic concept of *Īśvara* — popularly conceived as God. Unless treated as interpolations, there are four plausible reasons for this departure, to include *Īśvara* in the system of classic Yoga.

First, obviously, not by conviction but by compulsion, the spiritual and religious ecology of his time affected Patañjali to submit to the acceptance of some compromise in regard to the belief in the existence of a special absolute entity, *Īśvara*. This conclusion is based on the strength of succeeding *sūtras* qualifying such an entity.

(Continued)

LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE YOGIN JAIGISAVYA

The story of a Great Yogi of the past, is reconstructed from available clues, contained in ancient literature.

Jaigīṣavya has been recognised as one of the best authorities on Yoga. Epithets like, the best of all *yogis*, are usually found to have been used of him in *Ithihāsa-purāna* literature. In the group of six great *yogis*, he is mentioned as one. The glorious position of Jaigīṣavya, may be known from a statement of the *Mahābhārata* that there is none, who can excel him in lustre, fortitude and Yoga. He is found to have been praised by a sage like Devala, as a person not giving way to wrath, when blamed, and to gladness, when praised. Jaigīṣavya's renown or celebrity, may be inferred from the fact that the Buddhist poet *Aśvaghōṣa* thought it reasonable, to mention his name, while enumerating the persons who attained emancipation through the age-old path of Yoga. Lovers of Yoga should take to heart the message of this *yogi*, that there is nothing which is more beneficial than Yoga.

It is to be noted that Jaigīṣavya is not the proper name. Unless critical editions of the *Purānas* are available, it is impossible to determine the original form of the name. The *Purānas* inform us that *Ekapāṭalā*, one of the three daughters of *Himālaya*, king of mountains, was married to Jaigīṣavya. We may not take this information as totally historical, though this indicates that Jaigīṣavya was a householder-yogin. He is said to be a *bhikṣuka* (*Mahābhārata*, *Salya Parva*). This shows that Jaigīṣavya entered into the path of *sannyasa*, in the later part of his life. From *Ekapāṭalā* Jaigīṣavya got two sons named *Śaṅkha* and *Likhita*. It may be surmised that the *Dharmasūtra* of *Śaṅkha-Likhita* was composed by these two sons of Jaigīṣavya.

The *Viṣṇu-dharma* (an unpublished text) supplies us the interesting information that Jaigīṣavya, *Asita* and a few other Brahmins achieved the highest perfection, on account of practising Yoga in their former birth. Several *Purānas* contain vivid descriptions of his Yoga practices, and his

attaining supernormal powers; they describe the various forms of penances practised by Jaigīṣavya.

Most of the Purāṇic passages mention Kāśī as the place where Jaigīṣavya practised Yoga. In these passages we find the mention of the *Jaigīṣavya-guhā* (a cave named after this sage at Kāśī). Jaigīṣavya practised Yoga in the region called Prabhāsa, in a cave called *Jaigīṣavya-guhā*. Prabhāsa is in Saurashtra near the sea; Kṛṣṇa is said to have left his mortal coil here.

It appears that Jaigīṣavya in his life of *parivrājaka* (wandering mendicant) roamed here and there—a fact which is borne out by the mention of Jaigīṣavya-āśrama, at the mountain in Kailāsa in the Kūrma Purāṇa. Jaigīṣavya seems to be a follower of the *īśvara-praṇidhāna* way (devotion) of Yoga. This is why, he is often described as a devotee of Śiva, in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. Jaigīṣavya came to be regarded as an incarnation of Śiva, in later period.

No yoga-text contain any information about the teacher of Jaigīṣavya. It is the Kūrma Purāṇa, that says that he and Pāñcaśikha were taught by Kapila, a fact which is difficult to believe for various reasons.

The Purāṇas inform us that the well-known yogin-king Brahmādatta was taught by Jaigīṣavya in Yoga. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa further informs us that Brahmādatta, being instructed by the sage Jaigīṣavya, composed a work on Yoga. It appears that Jaigīṣavya taught Devala the science of Yoga with all details, and that Devala took *sannyāsa* from him. It appears that Jaigīṣavya composed some treatises on Yoga. His authorship was known to the Purāṇic authors etc. It is remarkable to note, that the philosopher Vācaspati referred to the Dhāraṇā-śāstra of Jaigīṣavya, in his Tātpariyātika. Most probably, Vācaspati came to know of this work through tradition. A work named Jaigīṣavya-yoga-śāstra is frequently quoted, in connection with prāṇāyāma etc, in the works on Haṭhyoga, etc. (vide Yogecintāmaṇi p. 176, 186 etc.). This seems to be a work of later age based on the teachings of Jaigīṣavya. The Vyāsabhāṣya has quoted a sentence from a work of this sage which reads “चित्तैकाग्र्याद् अप्रतिपत्तिरेव (प्रत्याहारः)

(on Yoga Sūtra II, 55). Commentators are of the opinion that Patañjali also subscribed to this view.

There are some quotations of his, which may not be the actual sayings of Jaigīṣavya but are based on his sayings or views. Jaigīṣavya is found to propound the views that (1) everything yields pain, (2) the pleasure of contentment, is also pain, if it is compared to the bliss of liberation; (3) everything which is a modification of guṇas is to be avoided, and (4) all desire is pain-producing. The Agni-purāṇa also contains a view that lays stress on performing actions, without attachment. The Śānti-parva contains the *upadeśas* (precepts) of Jaigīṣavya on *samatvabuddhi* (evenness of mind). Some of the *upadeśas* are : “They who behave uniformly towards those who praise them, and those that blame them, they who conceal their own vows and good acts, they who never indulge in recriminations, they who never say even what is good, when it is calculated to injure (instead of producing any benefit), they who do not desire to return injury for injury received, are said to be men possessed of wisdom. Destitute of envy, they never injure others, and possessed of self-control, they are never pained at the sight of other people’s prosperity. Those that have understood the things, become gratified with even disregard, as if it were ambrosia. The man who has vanquished all his senses, is regarded to have performed all the sacrifices. Such a person attains to the highest rung, viz. that of brahman, which is eternal”.

R. S. BHATTACHARYA