

by scientific experiment how persistently the mental state affects the process of cell activity in the body. Mind is the creative force at the back of physical well-being.

The body has within itself sufficient power to heal and restore it, provided we do not obstruct the way of Mother Nature by deadly or life-pulling negative drugs. They not only cause prolonged chronic diseases by suppressing the acute ones, but also poisons the nervous system and bodily tissues resulting in great increase in encumbrances and equally great reduction of vitality. It is simply surprising to know that the recent World Health Organization report has revealed that the overall mortality rates in 16 industrialised countries, which had gone down considerably during the past two decades specially on account of the elimination of dangerously infectious diseases and the significant fall in the infant mortality rate, hitherto considered a major achievement of science and civilization, is now again rising and may rise in some others soon. More and more men are said to be falling victims to old and new diseases, the notorious killers being those affecting the heart, the lung and the respiratory organs. The sharp turn in the mortality graphs considered to be the lost battle of scientific research in the medical sphere in the very countries in which they were made. So long as man's vitality is not sufficiently increased through some of the methods suggested, and through his return to the natural way of living, we can't expect any miracle from these drugs hopefully any more. They virtually do not go deep into the cause of all ailments, but are in several cases very harmful, being spurious or otherwise. This is now quite evident from the findings of the Federal Food and Drug Administration of United States. They have declared 370 drugs and other pharmaceutical products as harmful and hazardous. This doubtless jeopardises not only the reputation of doctors and hospitals, but also greatly affects the national health and morale.

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The most formidable argument, however, against Yoga is that, while the yoga ideals are above question, one cannot put them into practice in every day life, if he is to live *within the society* for what it is—mundane and corrupt. According to many Indian and foreign students and teachers of yoga, so long as this basic problem of social antagonism against the ideals and practice of yoga are not resolved by some method, it is no use spreading yoga which is not put into practice in all its aspects except the mechanical. When at his study, the student is enthused with the high principles involved in Yoga, he is able to follow the same so long he is under the observation of his teacher, but no sooner he leaves the place and mixes with the society outside, than he is subjected to so many problems that he succumbs to the usual practice prevalent in the society in which he lives. Thus the society always remains an obstacle in the path of the student who would like to put yoga into practice. This confrontation or conflict poses two alternatives: (i) either one should change the society to suit his ideals, or (ii) one should change his ideals to suit the society. If the society is wrong, his effort should be to change the same but, as in the latter case, if his ideals are amiss, he should modify them.

Since the ideals of Yoga are not wrong and the student who imbibes them is not at fault, the only alternative is to change the society to the needs of the yoga ideals. Besides his own study, this should be the main mission of both the students and teachers of Yoga. If one is convinced about the yoga way of life, he should not only put it into practice but carry his activities forward into the society by criticising what is wrong and confronting amorality wherever found. He should be an active participant in minimizing immorality and not be a pacific spectator of the tragic drama of amorality. He should use his right to criticize and expose such tendencies to public gaze by using his resources and moral influence. This can be done only by a man who is beyond reproach. Are you one?

## SANDILI: ONE OF THE YOGINIS IN ANCIENT INDIA

by SMT. JYOTIRMOYEE BHATTACHARYA

SOME of the authoritative yogic texts sanction the practice of yoga by women.<sup>1</sup> The *Viṣṇudharma* (an unpublished *Upapurāna*) says that it was Kapila who prescribed the practice of yoga not only for all human beings including women but also for birds and insects (*kitta-paṅga*) (vide the *Jyotsnā* commentary on the *Hathayoga Pradīpikā*, 4.15 for the verses of the *Viṣṇudharma*). That such an injunction was not an imaginary one may be decidedly proved from a good number of celebrated women who practised fortitude or yoga and thereby achieved perfection. The right to practice yoga by women is clearly stated in the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>2</sup>

Brahmānanda in his commentary on the H.Y.P. (4.15) quotes a verse from some Purānic work which speaks of Maitreyī, Sulabhā, Śārṅgī, Śāṅḍilī and others who attained the highest stage of jñānaniṣṭhā through yoga practice.<sup>3</sup>

Among these yoginis, Gārgī and Sulabhā are well-known in the traditional history of India. Here we are dealing with the life and achievements of Śāṅḍilī who is less known. In a separate paper life of Śārṅgī will be described.

Śāṅḍilī is not the proper name of the ascetic but the patronymic name which indicates that the father of this ascetic was Śāṅḍilya, who, himself was a great yogin. His view on yoga is quoted in *Sānti Parvan* 253.14. Fortunately, the Purānic literature speaks of a daughter of the sage Śāṅḍilya.

1. In this connection the paper entitled "Texts sanctioning the study of yoga by women and their chronology" by Dr. P. K. Gode is worth noting (*Yoga, the Journal of The Yoga Institute*) III pp. 17-20.

२. अपि वर्णाविकृष्टस्तु नारी वा धर्मकाङ्क्षिणी । तावप्येतेन मार्गेण गच्छेतां परमां गतिम् ॥ *Mahābhārata* verse quoted in the *Jyotsnā* on H.Y.P. 4. 15.

३. मैत्रेयी सुलभा शार्ङ्गी शाण्डिली च तपस्विनी<sup>१</sup> एते चान्ये च बहवो नीच-योनिगता अपि । ज्ञाननिष्ठो परां प्राप्ताः पूर्वाम्यासयोगतः ॥

The *Salyaparvan* 54. 5-8<sup>4</sup> speaks of Śāṇḍīli as yogayuktā (endowed with yoga) and tapaḥsiddhā (perfected in fortitude). There is no room for doubt that this Śāṇḍīli is the same as is recalled in the Jyotsnā commentary.

The *Anuśāsanaparvan* also mentions Śāṇḍīli in 123. 8-20. It is stated there that Śāṇḍīli realized the essence of all things (*Sarvatattvajñā* 123.2) and she was bestowed with great psychic power. It is further stated that she instructed Sumanā, the Kekaya princess in the conduct of a chaste woman (*pativrātya*). Śāṇḍīli herself served her husband faithfully according to the principles stated there (123.9).

The Nāgara Khaṇḍa of the *Skanda Purāṇa* speaks of Śāṇḍīli in a good number of passages (81.28-29 ; 82 ; 130.131). Chs. 81-82 narrate her curse on garuḍa, and she is praised as *sarvajñā* and *brahmacaryaparāyanā* (devoted whole heartedly to the vow of celibacy). She is also designated as *Vṛddhakanyakā* i.e., she remained unmarried for a long period after taking the vow of celibacy ; cf. the epithet *Kumarabrahmacārīṇī* as shown above. She is said as possessing *bala* (mental strength), and as having no parallel in practising austerities, and also as extolled by the *devas*. She was practising the vow of *mauna* while she cursed Garuḍa (81.38). It is clearly stated that Garuḍa turned into a wingless bird owing to her wrath though she did not utter a single sentence of curse to Garuḍa.

A *tirtha* named after Śāṇḍīli is mentioned in the *Nāgarakhanda* (Chs. 130-131). In this shrine, Śāṇḍīli instructed Kātyāyanī, the wife of the sage Yājñavalkya. Consequently worldly-minded Kātyāyanī became a follower of the path of *Vairāgya* (130.6).

४. अत्रैव ब्राह्मणी सिद्धा कौमारब्रह्मचारिणी ।  
योगयुक्ता दिवं याता तपःसिद्धा तपस्विनी ॥६॥  
बभूव श्रीमती राजन् शाण्डिल्यस्य महात्मनः ।  
सुता घृतव्रता साध्वी नियता ब्रह्मचारिणी ॥७॥  
सानु तपत्वा तपो धीरं दुश्चरं स्त्रीजनेन ह ।  
गताः स्वर्गं महाभागा देवब्राह्मण-पूजिता ॥

Kumarabrahmacārīṇī means that she took the vow of celibacy from her childhood. She, however became married afterwards.

In the Ch. 130, it is said that Śāṇḍīli was dear to her husband and she used to learn the rules of conduct from her husband (130.13-15). Kātyāyanī requested her to expound the ways through which a wife becomes dear to her husband and also becomes able to get rid of all anxieties (130.19-22).

In reply Śāṇḍīli, the daughter of Śāṇḍīlya narrated her own life saying how she came to marry the sage Jaimini (131.37) after having worshipped the goddess Gaurī for one year (131.35), commencing from the month of Agrahāyana (131.36).

Śāṇḍīli was one of the ideal women, of ancient India. She was a '*grhastha*' *par excellence* ; and yet she practised severe discipline and cultivated yoga practices along with her household duties. Her life is an example of the vedic idea of *grhastha-dharma*.

#### 75TH BIRTHDAY OF SHRI YOGENDRAJI

Special activities have been organized at the campus of the Institute on the 18th November onwards as follows:

#### POSTER EXHIBITION ON BETTER LIVING

standardised by the All-India Board of Yoga on the 18th, 19th, and 20th November from 2 p. m. to 8 p. m. A special inauguration function will be held on the 18th November at 8.30 a. m.