

Mr. U. Manikam completed a course at the Kamraj College, Tamil Nadu. A ten-day course was held for the members of Tuticorin Lions Club.

The first of the two 15-day summer camps at the Yoga Education Centre, Sevapoor will start on 29th April 1977. Mr. Manikam will conduct the camp.

Prof. Harendra Raval gave a talk to the members in the Ahmedabad Electric Company on Yoga and Personality. The Gujarat Vidhyapith started by Gandhiji at Ahmedabad made a resolution in favour of Yoga Education Centre, Ahmedabad to utilize the place of Kooherah Gandhi Ashram for yoga activities. Articles on Yoga have appeared in the magazine *Sandesh*, which have been contributed by Prof. Harendra Raval and Dr. Pratiksha Raval.

Mr. Shantikumar Bhatt and Miss Nirmala Kinare conducted classes at Prempuri Adhyatma Vidyabhavan, where 40 men and 25 women attended.

Among the new members of the NYC is Mr. M. N. Nair.

Shri Yogesh Sharma is actively engaged in promoting Yoga in Bikaner and Udaipur.

Shri Hansraj Yadav, conducted a second course at the Yoga Sadhana Kendra of the Benaras Hindu University. At the second Annual Day programme of the Yoga Sadhana Kendra, Dr. M. L. Dhar, Vice Chancellor of the B. H. U. presented the certificates and gave an address. Some of the participants of the course gave their impressions and Shri Hansraj Yadav conducted that part of the programme.

All the other yoga centres by the members of the National Yoga Council are functioning satisfactorily. There is a growing demand for more yoga teachers from various parts of India.

529
563
22
10

JOURNAL OF THE O G A INSTITUTE

VOLUME XXII

MAY 1977

NUMBER 10

CONTENTS

DESTINY WITH YOGA ..	Smt. Sitadevi Yogendra	145
RATIONALE OF THE EIGHTFOLD PATH OF YOGA ..	Dr. Ram Shankar Bhattacharya	148
YOGA AND PSYCHOSO- MATIC DISORDERS ..	Mr. John Shaw	154
REVIEWS ..		157
INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF YOGA ..	News	158



RECEIVED

DEC 19 1977

UNIV. WIS. LIBRARY

THE YOGA INSTITUTE

SANTA CRUZ, INDIA

Annual Subscription: Rs. 12; £1.50; \$ 3.00
Subscription to any Volume begins in August. Published on the 20th of each month

RATIONALE OF THE EIGHTFOLD PATH OF YOGA

by RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

Patañjali has employed both the words *aṅga* and *yogāṅga* in the *sūtras* 2.29 and 2.28 respectively to refer to the well-known yogic exercises, namely *yama*, *niyama*, etc. There seems to be a subtle reason for using the word *yogāṅga* instead of using the word *aṅga*¹, as no logical fault seems to arise if the word *aṅga* (aid, accessory) is used in the *sūtra* 2.28. It seems that by using the word *yogāṅga* (*i.e.* by adding the word *yoga* with *aṅga*) Patañjali intended to suggest that acts like non-injury (*ahimsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), non-stealing (*asteya*), cleanliness (*śauca*), austerity (*tapas*), devotion (*īśvara-praṇidhāna*), postures (*āsana*), control of breath (*prāṇāyāma*), etc. might be either yogic or non-yogic in character. To be explicit: if non-injury, truthfulness, etc. are practised with a view to acquiring some goals as prescribed in the *Yogaśāstra*, (such a practice depends upon the knowledge of the ontology of yoga) then, and then only, the acts like non-injury, etc., fall under the denomination of yoga-practice. *If these acts are practised without accepting yogic ontology or ideal, or without any touch with the goals as prescribed in the yogaśāstra, then they are no aṅga (auxiliary) to Yoga.* This distinction is important as it differentiates yoga lore from non-yogic sciences. The word *aṅga* in *yogāṅga* is significant. An *aṅga* is that which exists for other or serves the purpose of other (*parārtha*). We will show later that acts like non-injury, etc. lose their value or meaning if they are separated from yoga.

It cannot be denied that acts like non-injury, truthfulness, etc. can be practised by one who has no touch with yogic ideals or yogic ontology, or who does not aspire for such goals as are prescribed in the *yogaśāstra*. We are fully aware of the fact that not only the *yamas* and the *niyamas* but also *prāṇāyāma* and *pratyāhāra* can be practised by a person who has practically no touch with yogic viewpoint or yogic

ideals. *That such a practitioner acquires some benefit by practising these yogic acts cannot be denied. But the results he derives by practising prāṇāyāma, etc. in the said way are of least importance.* In most cases such practices cause greater downfall and create various troubles in the mental life of the practitioner. *Without yogic ideal, the practice of yogic acts becomes more or less artificial. Ancient sages laid much stress on the fact that acceptance of yogic ontology and yogic ideals is absolutely essential for a person who wishes to practise yogic acts (ahimsā, etc.) successfully.* If non-injury (*ahimsā*) is practised for non-injury's sake, the practice, *aver yogins*, will be of a very little value. Its effect will be of the least degree. Our age-long experience shows that a person cannot continue the practice of *ahimsā*, etc. for a long time unless he accepts yogic view-point and ideals wholeheartedly. Persons possessing no direct knowledge of yogic ontology and having no regard for yogic goals are often found to misuse these practices. Practice of yogic exercises without *tattvajñāna* is a danger².

The next important point regarding the *aṅgas* is their capability of dwindling the impurities (*asuddhis*). Since the root cause of these impurities is *avidyā*, they will not cease to exist naturally. Since these impurities affect the mental field of an aspirant, the removal of these impurities is of paramount importance. These *asuddhis* have been given an important place in the yogic literature. The *Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* informs us that the *Hiranyagarbha yogasamhitā* had one chapter on these *doṣas* or *asuddhis*. The *Sānti-parvan* treats of these *doṣas* in more than one place. We find some aphoristic sayings of ancient yogins on the *doṣas* or *asuddhis*, quoted in the works on philosophy and religion.

It should be noted in this connection that *impurities are of various kinds and each yogāṅga is capable of dwindling a particular kind of impurity; e.g. the impurities capable of being eradicated by dhyāna cannot be eradicated by tapas or by truthfulness or by non-injury.* Similarly the impurities

1. The *Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* (12.34) informs us that the *Hiranyagarbhayoga* treatise dealt with these *aṅgas* in its first chapter (अङ्गतन्त्रमथाद्यं तु).

2. Cf. the aphoristic saying योगस्तत्त्वज्ञानार्थः quoted in the Vivaraṇa commentary on the *Yogasūtra* 2.28. Vide *Sārīrakabhāṣya* अन्य तत्त्वदर्शनोपयो योगः (II.1.3)

capable of being eradicated by the yamas or the niyamas cannot be eradicated by the practice of the yogic postures (āsanas) even if they are practised to the highest degree of their development³.

Now we are to say something about the validity of the eightfold path of yoga. Truly speaking, it is not a 'logical division', for there is no breaking up of the class yogāṅga into its eight constituent sub-classes according to a certain 'principle of division'. There seems to be no fundamentum divisionis in the eightfold division of yogāṅga. Some āṅgas are evidently more subtle than the others.

The eightfold āṅgas seem to have their concern with the external and the internal life of an embodied sentient being who possesses an organic as well as an animal life. Each aspect or phase of this life has its specific character with specific functions. Each of these aspects or phases does not possess the same potentiality, importance and value. Each aspect has its own impurities which can be chiefly eradicated by one particular āṅga. (All the āṅgas help one another; this is why the field of operation of one āṅga cannot be strictly detached from that of the other āṅgas).

The aspects stated above and the corresponding āṅgas are as follows :—

(i) The field of yama is behaviour towards others ;
 (ii) the field of niyama is one's own behaviour towards one's personality ; (iii) the field of āsana is one's own physical body (material causes of the body and its function as well) ;
 (iv) the field of prāṇāyāma is the vital forces as well as the most subtle parts of the living organism ; (v) the field of pratyāhāra is the organs with their functions ; (vi) the field of dhāraṇā is the fluctuations of the mind ; (vii) the field of dhyāna is ahaṁkāra, the dynamic ego and to some extent the latent impressions ; (viii) the field of samādhi is the pure empirical ego which is not disturbed by fluctuations but is liable to be disturbed by latent impressions (saṁskāras).

3. It is samādhi that can bring about the results of the other seven āṅgas. But it should be borne in mind that samādhi cannot be acquired unless the other āṅgas are practised properly.

The impurities of each field and their eradication by the corresponding āṅga (as has been shown above) deserve all attention of the aspirants of yoga. Some important points in this respect will be discussed later. Only one or two points are going to be discussed here in a very general way. Let us consider the field of yama which consists of ahimsā, satya etc. (vide *Yogasūtra* 2.30). At the time of behaving with others or creating association with others (the association may be chiefly mental in some cases) who seem to be our friends or foes, we cannot disregard our previous saṁskāras.

A person, possessing vāsanā of rajasa or tamasa nature would easily run on the path of violence, untruthfulness, etc. (i. e. the anti-yama acts). So long as we have association with others and so long as we are under the dominating influence of avidyā, etc., most of our actions will invariably generate aśuddhi, which cannot be eradicated unless a rigorous practice of the five yamas is taken up. If, however, we leave association with others and cease to behave with others (even mentally) there will arise no occasion for violence, etc. and consequently the practice of yamas will cease. In this way all the āṅgas are said to cease when *vivekakhyaṭi* is acquired.

Our discussion on the yamas and the impurities has its concern with the yogic field (*i.e.* the mental field) only. These yogic acts have their corresponding social forms also which form the subject of Ethics. In Ethics much stress is laid on the external aspect of these yogic or moral acts. It is the mental state that is chiefly discussed by the yogins. Even in the mental state much attention is paid to the stage of saṁskāra-vāsanā in comparison to the stage of vṛtti. There is fundamental difference between the social and the yogic point of view. As for example in a society, no person can be punished on the grounds that he has the desire or inclination to steal or kill, unless he is found to have actually committed an injury, etc., or he is found to have expressed his illegal or immoral intention to others in a clear manner, or he is found to extend his helping hand to those who are actually engaged in illegal or immoral acts. *In the field of yoga, a mere uprisal of the desire to steal or kill is considered as an actual act and the person is required to undergo penance, etc.*

According to yogins, *aśuddhi* lies in such acts as are done chiefly under the guidance of *avidyā*, etc. That anti-yama acts, namely *ahiṃsā*, *asatya* etc., possess impurity can be demonstrated by the disturbances, disorders and troubles caused by them. Any act guided by *avidyā*, etc. invariably creates certain *rajasa* and *tamasa* effects which augment distractions (*vikṣepas*) and weakens the *sāttvika* powers inhering in the sentient beings.

We shall show later that each of the *aṅgas* has original and gross forms. The gross form has gradations and they change according to the change of time, place, etc.

It is to be noted that *the aṅgas can be practised in an artificial way also*. Being incited by greed etc., one can perform *ahiṃsā* etc. with a view to acquiring name and fame. *Ahiṃsā* practised in this way produces a little effect in the mental field of the practitioner. Though such an artificial practice does not deserve praise yet it has its own utility and we welcome a person even if he practises yoga with a view to acquiring worldly ends. As there is *sāttvika* temperament or nature, so there also is *tāmasa* temperament or nature. A person possessing *tamas guṇa* in abundance cannot perform an act leaving all his worldly interests wholeheartedly. This is the reason for prescribing *tāmasa* means in the *śāstras*.

There is a tradition which speaks of six *aṅgas*⁴ and does not regard the *yamas* and the *niyamas* as the *aṅgas*. Since without the following up of these two, nobody can acquire *vivekakhyāti*, it is quite reasonable to accept them as *aṅgas*. The reason that bestows the position of *aṅga* to the *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, etc., bestows the same position to the *yama* and the *niyama* also. It should also be noted that the practice of *yama-niyama* is not altogether rejected by those who do not regard them as the *aṅgas* of yoga.

4. The six *aṅgas* are not enumerated in the same way in all schools. Some accept the last six *aṅgas* of the eight *aṅgas* as mentioned in the *Yogasūtra*, others enumerate the *aṅgas* as प्रत्याहार, ध्यान, प्राणायाम, धारणा, तर्क and समाधि. We have a different kind of enumeration of the eight *aṅgas*, Vide the *Yogapāda* of the *Mrgendra Tantra*.

The relation between the following up of the *aṅgas* and the dwindling of the impurities is that of cause and effect. The dwindling of the impurities does not, as a matter of fact, produce the enlightenment of knowledge (*jñānadīpti*). According to the view-point of the *Sāṃkhya* school, *jñāna* is always existent in the *citta* in a latent state, being overcome or covered by the impurities. The existent *jñāna* is gradually manifested according as the impurities are removed. Because of its negative character, the dwindling of impurities cannot be regarded as the efficient cause of the rise of *jñāna*. This dwindling may however be regarded as inseparably connected (*avinābhāvin*) with the rise of *jñāna*. Every student of yoga should carefully note the fact that *divinity inherently lies in him in a potential or latent state and the yogic practices cause it to come into a gross or active state*.

It is remarkable to note that the development of the enlightenment of *jñāna* has a definite end. It is held that as soon as it reaches the stage of *vivekakhyāti* (discriminative discernment) it ceases to develop. As to why development ceases at this stage, yogins offer the following reason. The knowledge of an object goes on developing if the object is mutable or changeful. Since *vivekakhyāti* is associated with *puruṣa*, the immutable principle, the process of the development of knowledge ceases. The knowledge called *vivekakhyāti* has neither variation nor gradation.

The question as to why these eight *aṅgas* have been mentioned separately from the twofold means of *abhyāsa-vairāgya* or why these two means (*upāyas*) have not been included in the eight *aṅgas* will be discussed in a future article. In this regard, our views are different from those of the commentators.