



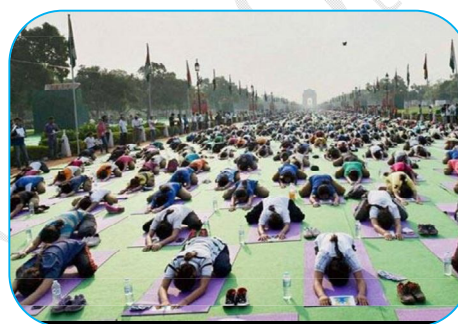
RESURGENCE OF YOGA IN MODERN TIMES

Dr. N. A. Perumal

**Director-General, WCSC-VISION for Wisdom, Temple of Consciousness, Aliyar,
Tamil Nadu.**

ABSTRACT:

We are totally mechanized, our thoughts are digitalized and we are enslaved to electronic mechanism and some corporate values. The mankind has totally forgotten the difference between day and night, the need of distance and the essentialness of reducing the speed. The lack of difference between day and night is leading to the total exhaustion of the vital forces in the body. The reduction of distance is totally destroying the natural order and also leading for the outflow of energy. The growth of speed is reducing the time of survival on the earth or longevity. Man is left out with no time to observe him, to understand him and to entre into him and realize him.



Unless the until he observes, understands, enters and realizes he cannot be freed from the suffering. It may be of any type, may be stress or disease, may be greed or desire and may be attraction or seduction. The man is slowly forgetting of the need of a vitality of the terrestrial and celestial forces.

At This Juncture We Want A Yoga

- 1. Which can give strength and peace to the physical unit.*
- 2. Which can promote moral base and cultural base for the human survival.*
- 3. Which can contribute personally for the promotion of self-control through meditation and introspection.*

Which can above all make the man to think of the greatness of the Divine, oneness in Creation and illusion in plurality. Such yoga can give man a natural, simple and blissful way of life.

KEYWORDS: *Transition, Yoga, Monastic order, Yoga in Modern Period, Different types of Yoga.*

TRANSITION IN YOGA TRADITION:

The evidences are very few to trace the transition in Yoga tradition in the post-Upanishadic period. Patanjali came out with his Yogasutra and it is a land mark. It has tried to reduce the multiplicity of traditions into a single fold and he has opted the concept of Ashtangayoga with Yama,

Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi as it is acceptable in three basic ways. The nature has been told to have been reflecting in the eight ways. Even though the nature has segregated itself into eight types as a matter of variant manifestation it is one and the same. In the same way Yoga even though is a single sastra or body

of knowledge can be one but with eight limbs. Secondary Kundalini is said to be having eight dimensions. The eight dimensions in Yoga suit well not only to ably activate dormant Kundalini but also help to manage the movement of kundalini as an ant, as a frog, as a serpent, as a monkey and as a bird. All these five stages or movements of Kundalini help to

understand from Muladhara to Visuddhi how the five elements are symbolizing. Beyond the facts can be found in mind, higher mind and trans-mental manifestation. Thus the number eight is very much acceptable. Buddha who has preached Saddharma (also called the dharma taught by for transcending suffering. As Yoga is basically meant to transcend suffering and attaining kaivalya, which is being and beyond nothingness, Patanjali has accepted the number eight for his yoga method.

The Number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati valley civilization with Yogic motives and figures performing Yoga Sadhana suggest the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The phallic symbols, seals of idols of mother Goddess are suggestive of Tantra Yoga. Presence of Yoga is available in folk traditions, Indus valley civilization, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, Darshanas, epics of Mahabharat and Ramayana, theistic traditions of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Tantric traditions. In addition, there was a primordial or pure Yoga which has been manifested in mystical traditions of South Asia. This was the time when Yoga was being practised under the direct guidance of Guru and its spiritual value was given special importance. It was a part of Upasana and yoga sadhana was inbuilt in their rituals. Sun was given highest importance during the vedic period. The practice of 'Surya namaskara' may have been invented later due to this influence. Pranayama was a part of daily ritual and to offer the oblation. Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-Vedic period, the great Sage Maharshi Patanjali systematized and codified the then existing practices of Yoga, its meaning and its related knowledge through his Yoga Sutras. After Patanjali, many Sages and Yoga Masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through their well-documented practices and literature.

GUPTA PERIOD

The intervention of the Indo-Greeks, Kushanas, Pahlavas has left much change in the Indian cultural scenario. Till the outbreak of neo-Hinduism in the Gupta period (319-400 A.D.) more changes have come in the civil way of life under the Buddhist and Jains influences. The monastic order has gained a great place and the monasteries and guilds have worked in communion for the betterment of society.

During this period yoga has relegated from the popular place of philosophy and it has become a part of the religion and ritual of highest order orienting towards the attainment of many siddhis like inner travel and also impress the laymen through yoga activity. The pacification, purification and realization provided Yoga a place of honour in the religious wings, whatever may be the religion. For these two examples can be seen one in Buddhism and the other in Islam.

BUDDHIST EXAMPLE OF YOGA:

Buddhism developed in three basic stages called Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. Vajrayana is also called Tantric Buddhism. More changes have taken place in Philosophy, ritual and perspective of religion. One such example can be found in Yogacara school of the Buddhist sects. These are also called Vij~jAnavadins. In this school the basic concept is that what all the knowledge that is grasped with the senses and mind is only transitory. It is a variant of Alayavij~jana, which in turn derived from a non-manifest, formless entity called vij-japtimatrata. This is pure consciousness beyond unreal knowledge. What we encounter in this world are all compositions. All compositions and relations based on subject-object ground remain unreal. All this unreality cannot exist over a long time and ultimately it merges with the grand vacuum. The Buddhist philosophers like Vasubandhu, Dharmakirti and Asanga had provided more theoretical and practical orientation to this philosophical argument. As the yoga is said to be a union of terrestrial force from unreal association to the celestial and Divine realistic association, the Vij~jAnavadins also opt the same path. The impact of meditation and other austerities can very much be seen. The meditations like Vipasana found in the Buddhist tradition are an outgrowth of the impact of Yoga on the then religious sects and segments.

ISLAM EXAMPLE OF YOGA:

The Islam example of Yoga can be found in the Sufi cult. The Sufis first centered at Basra. They consider Allah as the real being and they want mystical experience than the result of philosophic reflections. Sufism is a transformation from mere quietism (called Rida) to pan-theism and even beyond. They consider the ultimate one real being as a Haqq. They want a divine unity (tauhid). They want to see the God with their hearts to get the unity of Being (Ittihad). A famous Sufi philosopher of 15th century Abd al Karima al Jili has told that this entire world is opted and puzzled between I ness (aniyat), He ness (Huwiyat) and Oneness (ahadiyat). Sufism remarks a travel from I ness to Oneness. This is similar from the travel from Self to Brahman (I to One). They have practiced Pranayama which is called as Pas-in-anfas. They have also followed many austerities for pacification and purification. They are not different from the Yoga practices but mingled with religious culture and kept secret under the brands mystic and occult.

In the context of India the Sufis developed into two basic important schools the Chishtis and Suharvardis. The Chishtis have patronage under the rule of Akbar the Great (1556-1605). Hajrat Nizamud din, Hajrat Muinud din and others were famous Chisthi teachers. At Jaipur one can see Quaza Garibul Nawaz and all the Chisthi teachers of Yogis opted poverty. During 1861-1925 lived Tajud din Aulia a famous Chisthi saint at Nagpur. It is a living tradition within in the Islamic fold and many members are still practicing yoga in that fold. In the same way famous Suharvardi teachers are also there practicing Yoga technique and realizing the ultimate. They always opt for divine bliss than the family pleasures. Tajud din himself has proclaimed. "I have seen Allah". Such can be the density of Yogic experience.

YOGA IN INDIA DURING MODERN PERIOD:

The modern period in Indian historical terminology can be taken to have commenced from 1858 when the country has passed on directly into the British rule after the declaration of the closure of the rule of English East India Company. During this period one can see the impact of theosophical society founded by the directions of Col Alcot, Ledbeter and Blavatsky. It has left a great sign in the development of Indian yoga methods during the modern period. As Calcutta was the capital from 1756 to 1911, major changes have taken place in and around Bengal. They have not only tried to understand the Indian yoga tradition with the Indian perspective but also tried to visualize with a western perspective. The remarkable spiritual achievements of Blavatsky and others are throwing light to uplift the place of yoga from religion to the hold of and fold of philosophy and theosophy.

Although minority groups in India are uncomfortable with the association of yoga and Hindutva ideology, it is clear that many groups that do not self-identify as Hindu also have practices they understand as yoga. Yoga is a multivalent term covering a diverse collection of ideas and practices. In contemporary India, yoga has strong associations as a religious ideal, as well as an activity that can promote health and wellness. Yoga is also associated with nationalistic ideology, international gurus, evidence-based biomedical health benefits, secular physical culture, and purely individual aspirations for mokṣa.

SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY

The impact of the western method of scientific enquiry started from Issac Newton onwards had made everybody to go for an empirical and pragmatic enquiry into the objective truth. This has left some influence on yoga in understanding its perspective and molding out the practices. Irrespective of the greatness of the Yoga and its cultural heritage it has to prove for its own survival its efficacy, efficiency and validity in the regular way of life in the most acceptable terms and in most advisable scientific jargon in the more known language.

AUROBINDO

As has been opined by Aurobindo (1872-1950), the founder of Integral Yoga, "the traditions of the past are very great in their own place, in the past, but I do not see why we should merely repeat

them and not go farther. In the spiritual development of the consciousness upon earth the great past ought to be followed by a greater future. Aurobindo continues with a comment on the methodology of the Indian philosophes as, "In the East especially in India, the metaphysical thinkers have tried, as in the West, to determine the nature of the highest Truth by the intellect. But, in the first place, they have not given mental thinking the supreme rank as an instrument in the discovery of Truth, but only a secondary status. The first rank has always been given to spiritual intuition and illumination and spiritual experiences; an intellectual conclusion that contradicts this supreme authority is invalid. Secondly, each philosophy has armed itself with a practical way of reaching to the supreme state of Consciousness, so that even one begins with thought, the aim is to arrive at a consciousness beyond mental thinking.

VIVEKANANDA

The impact of Vivekananda is also acceptable and agreeable on a particular change. The accommodative perspective developed in Indian thinking wants to unfold the secret knowledge of the monastic order for a common man, who is also interested to know about spiritualism and realize after a proper practice. That is why the social non-acceptance of so many cultural and intellectual heritage and allied practices have led for either retelling the past in the modern jargon and remolding the system or redesigning the system as suitable to the needs of the hour and the demand of the people.

Three systems of yoga are discussed here to provide about the change in the thinking and the developments in the arena of yoga as a philosophy and a way of life. They are the Kriya yoga system sponsored by ParamahansaYogananda; Integral yoga system developed by Aurobindo and the Simplified Kundalini Yoga system developed by Vethathiri Maharishi. All these personalities lived in the 20th century and have faced the problems both secular, civil and spiritual and tried to organize their vitalities for the betterment of mankind through the founding of different schools of yoga.

KRIYA YOGA:

This is very classical and ancient yoga system allied with amanaska yoga. It has been acquired from MahavatarBabaji and descended through Syama Charana Lahiri, Yuktesvaragiri and Paramahamsayoganamda. Paramahamsayoganamda (1863-1952) promoted this system very efficiently and widely and it was received well in the United States of America. According to Paramahamsayoganamda Kriya yoga is an advanced form of Rajayoga and it works like Mathematics. It is having a method of four stages of Samkhya, taraka, amanaska and paripurna. The Samkhya involves quest into the self. Taraka is purification of the action and illustrative imprints and Amanaska is beyond the sound and entering into the five vyomamanadals which are mentioned in the Upanishads resulting in the experience of the Omnipresent. It is the ultimate divine experience.

INTEGRAL YOGA:

This is founded by Aurobindo (1872-1950). The object of integral yoga is "to enter into and be possessed by the Divine presence and consciousness, to love the Divine for the Divine's sake alone, to be turned into our nature into the nature of the Divine and in our will and works and life to be the instrument of the Divine. Its object is not to be a great Yogi or Superman or to grab at the Divine for the sake of the ego's power, pride or pleasure. It is not for Moksha though liberation comes by it and all else may come, but these must not be our objects. The Divine alone is our object. This yoga demands a total dedication of the life to the aspiration for the discovery and embodiment of the Divine Truth and to nothing else whatever. In this yoga one must go inside into his own self and enter into a complete dedication to the spiritual life. All clinging mental frequencies must fall away. All insistence on vital aims and interests and attachments must be put away. All egoistic clinging to family, friends, country must disappear for a success in yoga.

The aim of this yoga is to rise to a higher consciousness and to live out of the higher consciousness alone. According to this yoga there are two states of consciousness in either of which one can live. One is a Higher Consciousness which stays above the play of life and governs it; this is

variously called the Self, the Spirit and the Divine. The other is the normal consciousness in which men live; it is something quite superficial, an instrument of the spirit for the play of life. Those who live and act in the normal consciousness are governed entirely by the common movements of the mind and are naturally subject to grief and joy and anxiety and desire or to everything else that makes up the ordinary stuff of life.

SIMPLIFIED KUNDALINI YOGA:

Simplified Kundalini Yoga (SKY) which is also said to be the yoga for modern age was founded by Vethathiri maharishi (1911-2006) lived in Tamilnadu. According to him Simplified Kundalini Yoga can be explained as: "A master who is well versed in Kundalini Yoga can arouse an aspirant's Kundalini power in minutes. The aspirant can feel the vibration of the Kundalini energy at once. For few people, however, it takes two or three days to feel vibration clearly. From the date of initiation, the aspirant is enabled to practice Meditation by merging his mind within his Soul. This process of Yoga is called Simplified Kundalini Yoga (SKY)".

Vethathiri invokes the present world community speaking about the need of yoga as: "When man realizes the greatness of his own Self, he reaches the highest peak of humanity and he is then able to respect the needs and ambitions of others. Such perfection alone will secure and maintain Peace within Self, between individuals and between Nations. All the problems in the life of mankind will be solved only then. Therefore, all deserving men should realize Self in time. This is the absolute need for the World in these days of scientific advancement. The question "Who am I?" arising one's own mind indicates that he is deserving of Self-realization. This can be attained only by proper guidance.

He further advises, "it is not an easy task to find out an able real and sincere teacher to guide the aspirants of spiritual approach in the safe and right way. If any one of you is not able to get such a Guide within easy reach, do not be disheartened. I am ready to help you. With my open heart, spiritual love and sufficient experience in inner travel, I shall guide and lead you to attain Spiritual perfection and reach the goal of Self Realization". He further advises to avoid such practices brought to us as heritage but cannot be followed in the present condition of living.

This entire system and process of SKY yoga can be defined in short as: a yoga through mental enlightenment based on the transcending of Kundalini force, to the centre of the eye brows, with a sheer aim of merging with the unified force. It is having the basic and major concepts like Limit and method, Initiation, purification, introspection, Genetic centre, mind, peace, magnetism and Brahman. It has the organs namely:

1. Simplified physical exercises to promote physical ability to sustain the spiritual force and its vagaries.
2. Meditation, to penetrate into the womb of the cosmos through the bio-magnetism medium.
3. Introspection, the method of have self-control by controlling the thoughts and having a command over the six temperaments and
4. Kayakalpa yoga, a symmetric, continuous and artificial pressure created at Muladhara, expanded uptoBrahmarandhra or Pineal gland, to improve the Ojas power in the air through the methods like Asvini mudra, Mulabandha and Khecari mudra.

This entire system is based on the philosophy and tradition related with the Siddhas, the Sivadvaita and Advaita philosophies.

For this Kundalini yoga system Introspection is like head; tradition and knowledge are like eyes, silence is the voice, initiation is the neck, practice and patience are the shoulders, duty and charity are the hands, chastity is its heart, Kayakalpa is the genitals and it stands on two legs the meditation and exercises.

CONCLUSION

All the methods of yoga cannot be equally applied to these (sattva quality-more tranquil, rajas more active and tamas more dormant)three varieties of people and even though applied they cannot give the same result. For example if one persons places the metal, glass and cloth exposed to the sun

light, the receptivity will be different. In the same way there will be a variation in receptivity among the people with tranquillity, activity and laziness. These methods help at the instruction level to distinguish the groups according to their quality and offer them that course in yoga which is more suitable and for which one can be receptive. This is the major reason for the emergence of different types of yoga practices too.

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