



SIDDHAR YOGA MARUTHUVAM - AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is one of the most important philosophies in India. It is the practice of physical, mental and spiritual activities which originated in ancient india. According to siddha philosophy the practice of yoga may be united with the universal soul and acquire similar super nature powers. Controlling the five senses and practicing the yoga make the soul and mind get united with the universal soul. One who goes on the path of yoga is called a yogi. The ultimate goal of yoga is MOTCHAM (liberation), although the exact form this takes depends on the philosophical or theological system with which it is conjugated. The history of indian culture is the revelation of the mystery of human consciousness. The key to the mystery of consciousness is provided by yoga. Yoga is a process of relaxation ending and calminating in samathi which is a state of supreme peace and bliss passing all understanding. It is the power of all true art and science. Concepts and principles of Siddhar yoga maruthuvam. This includes Thirumoolar's Thirumandiram Attanga yogam and other yogam of various Siddhars, role of yogam in current scenario, yogam in different school of thoughts and role of Yogam intreating various life style disorders and also to promote physical and mental fitness.

KEYWORDS: Types of Yogam, History, Thirumandhiram, Attanga Yogam.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Tamil word 'Yokka' meaning 'to join' or 'to Yoke' or 'to unite'. Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living. As per Yogic scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body, Man and Nature. Thus the aim of Yoga is Self-realization, to overcome all kinds of sufferings leading to the state of liberation (Moksha) or 'freedom' Living with freedom in all walks of life, health and harmony shall be the main objectives of Yoga practice. Yoga" also refers to an inner science comprising of a variety of methods through which human beings can realize this union and achieve mastery over their destiny.

Yoga, being widely considered as an 'immortal cultural outcome' of Indus Valley civilization – dating back to 2700 B.C., has proved itself catering to both material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Basic humane values are the very identity of Yoga Sadhana. Yoga was known and practiced by the people of the Indus Valley

civilization. In this paper I shall identify the posture depicted on the so-called Proto-Siva seals.^[1]

Yoga History: Proto-Siva Seals from Mohenjo-daro

It regarded as depicting a three-headed god, seated in a yogic posture, and saw as a prototype of Rudra or 'Siva as Lord of the Beasts (Pasu pati). This story has been widely accepted and the presence of a 'proto-Siva' figure in the Indus Valley is perhaps the most frequent assertion made about religion in that period. However, on closer examination, the case for a 'proto-Siva' interpretation of this image is far from conclusive. It is clearly the yogic posture moolabandhasana, and has to be understood in terms of proto-Tantric techniques aimed at driving 'the sperm- marrow-soul fluid up the spinal channel'.^[2]

It is the method of actualizing what is always potential in one's nature. It helps one to understand the untapped silent areas of one's consciousness. The nucleus of Yoga is practice. He who tastes knows it, not by philosophic argument. As dhyana-sukham-joy of contemplation-Yoga provides man with the joy of self-discovery. The Tamil Yoga Siddhas have indicated the connotation of the term Yoga. According to Siva-vakkiyar, a Tamil

Siddha, the aim of Yoga is to attain seedless consciousness, or pure or integral consciousness, which is an emergence from time and abolition of history. It is a “perception beyond perception.” The Tamil Yoga Siddhas call Yoga figuratively as an esoteric path of taking honey without flowers as base. Yoga, in short, may be interpreted as a method by means of which the basic aspects of the individual, namely, the vital current, mind, consciousness and energy are mobilized and harmonized. It is an esoteric technique, a method of inner development of a human being. In short, Yoga is ecstasy that is samadhi. It provides practical method for self-realisation.^[3]

Yoga, as mentioned above, means “to connect”

To connect

- ❖ The individual soul with eternal soul.
- ❖ The human body and mind with the Supreme (God).
- ❖ The Microcosm (Human body) with the Macrocosm (Universe).
- ❖ Human Vital Energy with the Cosmic Mother Energy.
- ❖ Your lower self (representing senses and illusion) with your higher self (representing the Cosmos or Universe). (The higher self has no ego, has no discrimination, it is always one and connected with the Universe).^[4]

Types of yoga

Yoga has many forms and of these the main four are:

- ❖ Mantra-Yoga
- ❖ Hatha-Yoga
- ❖ Laya-Yoga
- ❖ Raja-Yoga

Mantra yoga

The simplest form of Yoga is Mantra-Yoga in which the aspirant is selective about the object of his

contemplation, such as gods in images, emblems, pictures, markings, mandalas, yantras, mudras, etc.

Hatha yoga

The practices, which comprise Hatha-Yoga, are concerned primarily with the control of the physical body for conditioning the subtle body. A basic knowledge of Hatha-Yoga is necessary for anyone who wants to understand the Siddhas.

Raja yoga

Raja-Yoga stands for the concentration of the mind through the control of the vital airs.

Laya yoga

Laya-Yoga is the highest form of Hatha-Yoga and is connected with the functioning of the kundalini. The Tantrics and the Siddhas lay great emphasis on this form of Yoga. The method of arousing the kundalini and uniting her with the Supreme Spirit is the essential part of Laya-Yoga.

(Laya-Yoga is a yogic method practiced by all Siddhas. It is deep absorptive concentration, which takes one to the final goal of oneness with the infinite or what Siddhas call Siva Vakiyar. Since arousing the kundalini is the fundamental aspect of Laya-Yoga, this Yoga has been called Kundalini-Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is also called Chakra-Yoga because in it we come across the six subtle centers called chakras. The Siddha-Yoga practice is primarily based on the chakra organization and the Naadi system.^[5]

Yoga energy system

Human energy is spread over four phases:

- (1) Spiritual
- (2) Mental
- (3) Emotional
- (4) Physical



The bio-plasmic body or etheric body gets energy from cosmos, sun and various other sources such as sound and vibrations etc. This energy is received by manholes called Chakras, which are circular whirlpools of energy distributed all over the body. There are Mini Chakras and Minor Chakras on the hands and the feet.

The physical body also derives energy from food, which is a comparatively crude form of energy. This combined with the energy derived from the bio-plasmic body helps in the performance of various functions of different parts /organs /systems of the physical body.

The energy system of the bio-plasmic body is very well developed along the spinal column (backbone), where the energy runs from bottom to top and vice versa

passing through the energy wells, which act as relay stations of the energy. These relay stations are called “Major Chakras”.^[4]

These Chakras are situated in the energy body along the spinal column and are called:

- ❖ Mooladhara Chakra - The root centre
- ❖ Svadishthana Chakra - The support of the life – breath centre
- ❖ Manipura Chakra - The centre embedded with gems
- ❖ Anahata Chakra - The unstruck sound centre
- ❖ Vissudha Chakra - The great purity centre
- ❖ Ajna Chakra - The command centre
- ❖ Sahasraara - The thousand petaled lotus centre

The awakening of the kundalini is the sole aim of Yoga. When kundalini reaches a chakra, the head or face of the chakra (or lotus) turns upward and the chakra 'blooms'. The dynamization of kundalini when it passes from one chakra to another is an unfolding of spiritual consciousness stage by stage and also the acquirement of certain yogic powers called siddhis. Yoga-sadhana consists in raising the kundalini- Sakthi, the coiled force from one pole, the mildir, to the other, the sahasrana, the abode of Siva. When kundalini reaches and merges into the sahasrara, the yogin becomes conscious of consciousness. Here he is said to "drink" the "ambrosial Juice" (RASAM OR AMIRTAM) oozing from the "moon" of the sahasrara.

Laya-Yoga follows the various stages of control that are referred to as Astanga-

Yoga or the eight-limbs of Yoga. They are yama (abstention), niyama (observance), asana or sthūla-kriya (posture or muscular control process). Pranayama (breath-control process), pratyahara (sensory control), dharana (holding concentration), dhyana (deep concentration), and samadhi (cognitive absorption). Along with asanas, we have bandhas and mudras, which play an important part in Yoga. Bandhas are locks or concentrations pertaining to isolated muscles or groups of muscles. The Siddhas speak of mila-bandha, uddiyana-bandha, and jalandara-bandha. Mudra involves the positioning of hand and fingers while performing Tantric practices. It is a non-verbal mode of communication and self-expression; it is a stylized form of gestural communication utilizing psycho-energetic gestures. Of these, the yoni-mudra and the khechari-mudra are very important for rousing the kundalini.

Yoga and The siddha tradition

Any tradition is attributed to certain philosophies. Siddha perhaps the earliest science that laid stress on positive health a harmonious blending of physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual welfare of an individual. The siddha system is well known for its complication free simplicity, credibility, accessibility, curability and good quality. The siddha system has its own doctrine theory of fundamental principles based on hypothetical logic of nature's law. This consists of Pancha bootha thathuvam, Thiridhosa thathuvam, Andapinda thathuvam.

So all the Siddhas profess 96 philosophies. The philosophy of the Siddhas is that man is nothing but a miniature of the universe. The human body is eight span long, four span thick, and has 96 inches fingers.

According to the Siddhas, Pancha Buddhas are the source of all things in the world.

It is said that the human body is made up of five elements. Man has a close relationship with the outer world.

The universe is called macrocosm (Andam) and the human body is considered as the microcosm (pindam). If

there is any change in the macrocosm, it will have its impact on the microcosm (human body). Both macrocosm and microcosm are formed by the basic five elements (pancha poothangal) namely earth, water, fire, air and sky. There are 96 kinds of Thathuvams and they constitute the essential functions of the human organism and are at once the cause and effect of our physical and mental well-being.

Only if you know the explanation of these 96 principles, you can follow the yogic practice of the Siddhas. 96 Thattvas are physically standing and working both overtly and covertly. The Siddhas have clearly explained in their hymns about the 96 Tattvas and how to deal with them.

And the Siddhas practice various doctrines such as Vaazhai Annai Pooja, Iyama, Niyama, Adhanas, Pranayama, Pratyakara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi, Vasiyogam, Nadisuddhi, Yogic Diets, Life Norms of Living in Yoga, Meignana, Meiguru, Poi gurumars, Varasaram, Astrology, Vanasastra. There are several methods of yoga to advance in penance, dissolve obstacles in penance, and attain excellence in penance.

It is here that the siddhas attain the bliss of Shivalokam in the state of Samadhi Achievers. Those who see the end and end of themselves. The Siddhas are imperishable, guiltless and abiding in pure bliss, the Siddhas have entered into the unspeakable light of Sivananda.

They lived till the time of attaining godhood by doing divine works, creating spiritual inclinations for good people and making disciples to uphold the truth, giving sermons, and doing Siddhavaidiyam, life service etc. to the people of the society.

Siddhas salvation was possible through two methods; namely, Yogam (the strenuous meditative practice) and Karpam (ambrosia of gods). Siddhas refer to these two resultant statuses as Aathma Siddhi and Kaya Siddhi; it may be religiously interpreted as Spiritual salvation and Physical salvation. The physical transformation attained through these two methods is termed Deva (divine angel) and Deivaththodoppar (equal to god) by Thirumoolar in his Thirumandhiram. Siddhas, with their basic knowledge of improving longevity through herbs, added an age-old practice of meditation known as Yogam, refined by them as Ashtaanga Yogam (The Spiritual practice of eight steps) and preached the same for Spiritual salvation.

Many types of yoga has described by siddhas. The one of the most important yoga is AshtangaYoga. The other special type of yoga as Kechari yoga and Pariyanga Yoga.^[5]

The attangangal as said by Thirumoolar, Patanjali and other Siddhargal.

These 8 limbs are

- ❖ Yama: How we relate to others and all moral lodes
- ❖ Niyama: How we relate to ourselves, and our self-purification
- ❖ Asana: How we relate to our body through yoga postures
- ❖ Pranayama: How we relate to our breath and control the breath
- ❖ Pratyahara: How we relate to our sense organs, and how we withdraw the mind from the senses
- ❖ Dharana :How we relate to our mind through concentration
- ❖ Dhyana: How can we move beyond the mind through meditation of deep meditation
- ❖ Samadhi: Our deep realization via meditation absorption and union with the object of meditation and the essence of god.

Kechari-Yogam

Kechari-mudra is called Kechari-Yoga by thirumoolar. It is also called Niraadhaara-Yoga. Kesari means to transverse in space. In kechari-mudra when tongue has been lengthened one has to practice turning it upward and backward so to touch the palate until at length it reaches the holes of the nostrils opening into the mouth. Close the holes with the tongue and fix the gaze at the space between the eyebrows. This position of the tongue in the mouth is said to permit or facilitate the flow of current along the ida, the pingala, and the susuna naadis to sahasrara. This mudra is said to be the king among mudras. The Yoga of the inner tongue is called Kechari-Yoga. When kesari- mudra is performed, the mystic nectar will begin to ooze from the sahasrara. One who drinks the nectar contains bodily immortality.

Chandra yoga

Chandra yoga is not a separate kind of yoga as is Pariyanga-Yoga. Kundalini acquires different tantric names in its passage from Muladhara to Sahasrara. Kundalini extending from muladhara to anahata is called agni or fire kundalini. This is technically called as agni-mandalam. Kundalini extending from anahata to akkinai is called surya or sun-kundalini. This is called surya-mandalam. Kundalini extending from akkinai to the end of the susumna, at the top of the head is called chandra or moon- kundalini. This is called chandra-mandalam. Kundalini, which is beyond susumna and residing at sahasrara, has been termed as thuriya-kundalini. This, in short, is Chandra yoga finally merge the kundalini in the cranium top. There in the sahasrara, the yogi pays homage at the feet of the lord. One who has learned to merge the phases of the fire and sun in the phases of the moon, verily become masters of themselves.

Pariyanga yoga

Maithuna-Yoga as Pariyanga-Yogam, which unfortunately has been translated as bedstead Yoga. Maithuna is a conceptual framework of the oneness between Siva-Sakthi. Pariyanga-yoga is a type of yoga in

which the heroic yogin and his consort participate in the great banquet, a secret sex ritual which culminates in their act of intercourse under tantric laboratory conditions. It is the means to the attainment of spiritual greatness through the identity of siva and energy. The aspirants become identified with the absolute or the tremendous god-the highest state realized by ayogi-and remain therein in the most adverse conditions. It is a test to see if the votary can have such control over bodily senses as to remain impassible to emotion and pleasure and to concentrate on the pure self.

CONCLUSION

Siddhars are not saints; they are in a way, scientists of nature. Not all can, and will, become a Siddhar. For, one becomes a Siddhar by birth and grows up as Siddhar by his faith, effort and opportunity. One opts to become a Siddhar to gain wisdom himself and impart the same to his society and thus help his fellow men to use their birth for a noble meaning and purpose.

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