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Sanskarika

Newsletter of the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre

JUNE 2024

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF



2024

Literary treasures of Indian yoga

While yoga traces its origins to the Vedas,
numerous books have made it popular globally

text | S Sridharan

Yoga,

with its roots in India, has been practiced from time immemorial. While it continues to be a part of daily life in most Indian homes, it started gaining popularity when foreigners, settled in India, started evincing interest. The credit for introducing and creating a special place for yoga in the hearts of global citizens goes to Swami Vivekananda who penned books on all four forms of yoga karma yoga (yoga of action), jnana yoga (yoga of knowledge), raja yoga (yoga of meditation) and bhakti yoga (yoga of devotion). Today, yoga is so popular worldwide that June 21 has been declared 'International Day of Yoga'. Yoga traces its origin to

the Vedas. Written in Sanskrit, the Vedas are among the oldest literature in the world. Though there are references to yoga in the Vedas, these are scattered, often not direct and exclusive.

Over the years, numerous texts have been written, born out of the experience of yogis, practitioners of yoga. The techniques involved were systematically documented and a number of texts are available in the market today. A few of these stand out as ancient, classical and authoritative texts...

Yoga Sutra

It is to the credit of great sage Patanjali that an exclusive text for yoga came into existence. It is in sutra form of literature and hence popularly known as Yoga Sutra. Even today, it is considered, respectfully, as the source text of yoga. Patanjali is believed to have walked the earth between 150 BCE and 450 CE. The

sutras, which are the teachings of Patanjali, need commentaries to understand and explore. Even today, new commentaries continue to appear on this valuable text. Patanjali is considered as the incarnation of the serpent lord Adishesha and held in high reverence.

There are 195 sutras which have been divided into four sections. Each section is called pada. In this text, yoga is defined as "the ability to direct the mind towards a chosen object and sustain the focus without any

distractions." The central message of Yoga Sutra: "Let us take steps to deal with the pain yet to come." It shows a way through yoga to live a healthy and happy life and to manage stress.

It lists a number of tools for practice, the famous being the 'light-limbed path of yoga'. The eight limbs are



Dandayamana-Janushirasana

Ekpada Kapotasana

Natarajasana variation

Natarajasana



Above: The various representations of Sage Patanjali; Below: Natarajana variation

yama (external disciplines), niyama (internal disciplines), asana (postures), pranayama (breathing exercises), pratyahara (control of senses), dharaea (concentration), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (total integration). This text is unique in bringing out the subtle dimensions of the way the mind functions. Through the practice of Antanga yoga, the mind is brought under control which reveals the true nature and

character of the self which is beyond pain. The final goal is to make the self release from its bondage to Nature and become independent.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika

This text gives the teachings of Lord Shiva to Parvati on yoga. This tradition is called Hatha Yoga. In text form, it comprises verses in Sanskrit authored by Yogi Svatomarama. There are in total 389 verses that have been divided into four chapters. Hatha yoga means 'joining of two forces called ha and tha. They are also known as prana and apana which flow in the two nadis called ida and pingala. It is through the practice of pranayama with the three bandhas that this union is achieved. The practitioner ultimately achieves the highest

Yoga Rahasya or The Secrets of Yoga was originally written in Sanskrit in the form of verses

state of mind called samadhi. The practice for achieving this state includes asana, pranayama, mudhra and nadanusandana.

Yoga Yajnavalkya Saahita

The teachings on yoga by great sage Yajnavalkya to his wife and disciple Gargi are recorded in this text. It has 462 verses divided into 12 chapters or adhyayas. According to this text, the union of jivatma (individual soul) with paramatma (universal consciousness) is yoga which is called samadhi. This is achieved through ashtanga yoga consisting of yama (external disciplines), niyama (internal disciplines), asana (postures), pranayama (breathing exercises), pratyahara (control of senses), dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (total integration). This text emphasises the importance of living a disciplined life according to the ancient scriptures apart from the practice of yoga to achieve desired results.

Yoga Rahasya

Yoga Rahasya, The Secrets of Yoga is in as Sanskrit verses. Its teachings are attributed to Sage Nathamuni, a south Indian. Vaishnavite saint. The text is believed to have been lost over time and revived by Yogi Tirumala Krishnamacharya (1888-1989), acclaimed as Father of Modern Day Yoga nationally and internationally. He was a great Sanskrit scholar who had formal education in Vedas and allied subjects. Born in Karnataka, he trekked the Himalayas to reach Kailash Manasarovar and learned under Yogi Ramamohana Brahmachari. His text has 267 verses called shlokas and is divided into four chapters - introduction, application, reflection and parts and the whole of man....

Prakaranaadhyaya

The proceeds to say Narayana is the lord present in the hearts of all beings. He is the material and instrumental cause of the world. He instigates all beings to do their duties. After mentioning the six limbs of surrender (prapatti), the author begins the work

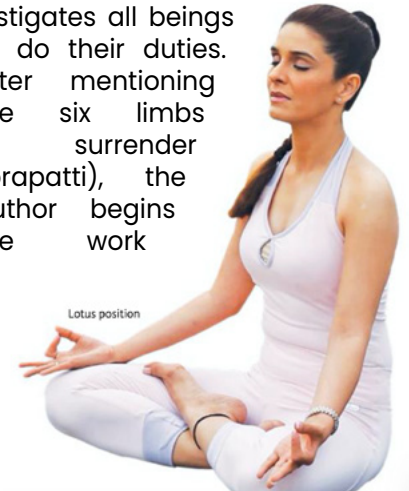


कालदेशवयोवृत्तिशक्तिवीक्ष्य विचारणात् ।
योगप्रयोगं कुर्यात् ज्ञानी मौनी जितात्मवान् ॥

Before yoga is taught the teacher should consider the, surroundings, age, nature of employment, energy and strength of the person and his power of comprehension.

The practice of yoga must be done by a learned person who has self control.

- Yoga Rahasya



Lotus position

stating: "Women are said to be specially qualified for the practice of yoga." Diseases and ailments of the mind and body are of three kinds adhyatmika, adhibautika and adhidaivika. The author gives an elaborate treatment of Pranayama and the use of breathing in asanas.

The first three verses are a prayer to the teachers of this lineage. The teachings start with the introduction of two types of yoga- bhakti yoga (path of devotion) and prapatti yoga (path of surrender). Bhakti yoga is the eight-limbed yoga while prapatti yoga is six-limbed. The eight limbs of bhakti yoga are yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharaea, dhyana and samadhi. This is the same as antanga yoga of Patanjali. Both paths of yoga are to be taken up only with a guru's grace. It proceeds to say Narayana is the lord present

in the hearts of all beings. He is the material and instrumental cause of the world. He instigates all beings to do their duties. After mentioning the six limbs of surrender (prapatti), the author begins the work stating: "Women are said to be specially qualified for the practice of yoga."

Diseases and ailments of the mind and body are of three kinds adhyatmika, adhibautika and adhidaivika. The author gives an elaborate treatment of Pranayama and the use of breathing in asanas.

Asanas are described with variations and shown to play a key role in pranayama. Specific purposes served by important asanas are discussed as is the importance of bandhas during pranayama.

Viniyogadhyaya:

The viniyogadhyaya deals with

yoga in the order of production maintenance and destruction. Some asanas are to be done before one completes the 25th year. Restrictions on the type of food are also indicated. Treatment of physical ailments is dealt with. Breathing pattern is indicated to overcome certain ailments. Duration and nature of pranayama are also to be studied by the preceptor and taught to the student.

Vimarshanaadhyaya:

Vimarcanadhyaya deals with the need to be disciplined while undertaking yogic practices. The unsteady nature of the mind and body is attributed to wrong food habits and have to be corrected by meditating upon god and worshipping Him. The author describes the asanas and

The author describes the asanas which a pregnant woman should undertake alongwith what to eat

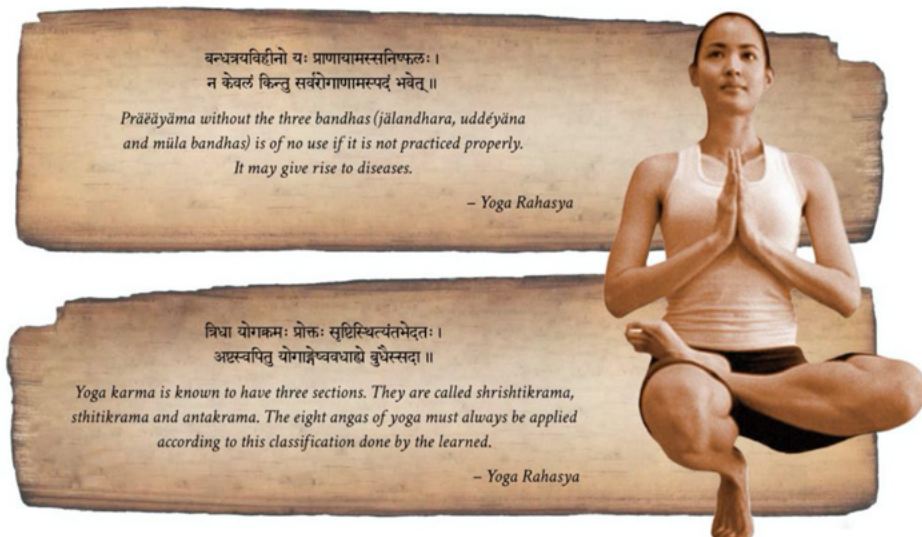
food which a pregnant woman should have according to her circumstances. Pranayama is the only remedy for them to get rid of ailments.

Kaladhyaya:

What makes a person treat certain matters as favourable or otherwise to him is discussed in Kaladhyaya. A detailed account is given about human behaviour which leads men astray. Man has to guard himself from pitfalls.

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SOURCE: INDIA PERSPECTIVES
VOL 29 | ISSUE 03 | MAY - JUNE 2015





**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CULTURAL CENTRE
HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA, COLOMBO**

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA – 2024

at Galle Face Green



22 JUNE 2024 @ 6.30 AM

EVENTS CALENDAR – JUNE 2024

THU	6 9.30 am	350TH CORONATION DAY OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ by Ajay Kumbhar, Yoga Expert from India
SUN	9 7.00 am	Online Yoga Session PRANAYAM IN YOGA SUTRAS by Ajay Kumbhar, Yoga Expert from India
TUE	11 7.00 am	Online Yoga Session “RELAXATION TECHNIQUES AND PRACTICES LEADING TO YOGA MEDITATION” by Ajay Kumbhar, Yoga Expert from India
WED	12 3.30 pm	Celebrating World Environmental Month in collaboration with SOUTH ASIAN REGIONAL CENTER on RAINWATER HARVESTING LANKA RAINWATER HARVESTING FORUM Venue: SVCC auditorium
SUN	16 7.00 am	Online Yoga Session “RELAXATION TECHNIQUES AND PRACTICES LEADING TO YOGA MEDITATION” by Ajay Kumbhar, Yoga Expert from India

THU	20 7.00 am	Online Yoga Session NADA YOGA by Ajay Kumbhar, Yoga Expert from India
THU - SAT	13 to 22	CURTAIN RAISER EVENTS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA
SAT	22 6.30 am	INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA – 2024 at Galle Face Green



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Carnatic Vocal, Hindustani Vocal,
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