UNIT 5 : EXISTENCE OF *YOGA* IN ANCIENT INDIAN LITERATURE

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Tradition of *Yoga* in Ancient Indian Literature

- 5.3.1 *Yoga* in Vedas
  - 5.3.1.1 *Yoga* in the *Ṛgveda*
  - 5.3.1.2 *Yoga* in the *Atharvaveda*
- 5.3.2 *Yoga* in Brāhmaṇa Literature
- 5.3.3 *Yoga* in Upaniṣads
- 5.3.4 *Yoga* in the *Mahābhārata*, and *Rāmāyaṇa*
- 5.3.5 *Yoga* in the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*
- 5.3.6 *Yoga* in Purāṇa

5.4 *Yoga* in Ayurveda

5.5 *Yoga* in Buddhism and Jainism as well as in Tantra

5.6 Let Us Sum Up

5.7 Further Reading

5.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.9 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- learn about the ancient Indian literatures as sources of *yoga*.
- know all about the existence of *yoga* in Vedas, especially in the *Ṛgveda* and in the *Atharvaveda*.
- learn about the existence of *yoga* in two noteworthy parts of Vedic literature- Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads.
- learn about the evidences of *yoga* in the *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Gītā*.
- learn about *yoga*' existence in Purāṇa, Āyurveda etc.

- learn about the existence of *yoga* in the literatures of Buddhism and Jainism.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a complete and elaborate introduction of *yoga* is being stated. For students' benefit, this chapter includes a variety of topics in whole such as- the meaning and definition of *yoga*, its origination and evolution, ancient Indian literatures as sources of *yoga* like Vedic literatures, Upanic ads, the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, *kāvya*s, Purāṇa, Yoga Upanic ad etc. After studying this chapter, students will get a comprehensive idea of *yoga* and about the ancient Indian literatures, in which the ideas of *yoga* are mentioned.

5.3 TRADITION OF *YOGA* IN ANCIENT INDIAN LITERATURE

In general, the term *yoga* depicts going through regular practice to gain control over the activities of the mind, life and senses. *Yoga* is a discipline for achieving union and harmony between mind, body and soul. *Yoga* touches the life of man at every level, physical, mental and spiritual. It is a practical method for making one's life purposeful, useful and noble. However, *yoga* philosophy includes various philosophical theories as well. The roots of systematic yogic ideas were found in Vedic scriptures and in other rules and regulations which are discussed in various sacred texts. The word *yoga* is mentioned in the oldest sacred texts, in *Ṛgveda*, *Atharvaveda*, Brāhmaṇa literature, Pāṇini's grammar etc. Gradually, the evidences of *yoga* are found in other Indian literatures as well, such as- *Gītā*, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, Purāṇa, Āyurveda etc. these evidences are discussed below-

5.3.1 *Yoga* in Vedas

The Vedas are considered as the most sacred and treasured texts of India. As the oldest texts in any Indo-European language, it's astounding that within these works the foundation of *yoga* are

established. The first reference to *yoga* in fact is made in the *Ṛgveda*. It is difficult to think of *yoga* without thinking about the Vedas, as the Vedas promote spiritual knowledge born of meditation which can be achieved through the practice of *yoga*. *Yoga* is a term that is first found in the *Ṛgveda*. In Vedic hymns, the word *yoga* is widely used to imply different meanings.

5.3.1.1 *Yoga* in the *Ṛgveda*

The first development of *yoga* traced back to the *Ṛgveda* in various senses such as yoking or harnessing, achieving the unachieved, connection and the like. At several places it signifies the horses etc. to be yoked to a chariot or the act of yoking itself. The word *yoga* also used in the *Ṛgveda* in the sense of the connection of the hymns with some sacrificial ritual. The term yoga is frequently used to mean uniting, connecting as well as dominating or yoking in the *Ṛgveda*. The *Ṛgveda* lays stress on the yoking of the mind and controlling of the stress (*yuñjate mana uta yunjate dhiyo viprā viprasya bṛhato vipaschitaḥ/vi hotrā dadhe vayunāvideka inmahī devasyan savituḥ pariṣṭutiḥ*). Controlling the mind and thereby restraining the senses is the best path to have spiritual ecstasy. It should be mentioned that *yoga* in some of the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* means the spiritual yoking, the synchronizing of the divine thoughts with the spiritual car of mind to start the spiritual journey. The word *yoga* is seemed to be used to imply relation also. The word is used to infer the relation of hymns with the rituals of *yajña*. In the *Ṛgveda, tapas* is also called *yuj* or an ally. Although the word *yoga* and the root *yuj* is generally used to denote any means to achieve any goal, three means viz. body, mind and speech are most important as far as the further development of *yoga* is concerned. It is these that

developed into the *kriyāyoga* of Patañjali. However, it must be noted that the end to be achieved by these means, viz. complete tranquility of mind is nowhere clearly mentioned in the *Ṛgveda*. Several seeds of yogic concepts can be found in the *Ṛgveda* itself. The first two accessories of Patañjali's *Aṣṭāṇgayoga, yama* and *niyama*, can be traced in the *Ṛgveda. Ahiṁsā* (non-violence) is mentioned as a virtue of God Mitra. The *steya* (theft) and the *stena* (thives) have been often condemned. *Dhāraṇā* (attention) consists in fixing the mind in a particular region and likewise the vedic poets were certainly trying to fix their minds on the deities while seeking their favours. Thus the idea of yogic concepts was also current in some way in the age of the *Ṛgveda.*

5.3.1.2 *Yoga* in the *Atharvaveda*

Like *Ṛgveda*, various *kāṇa*s of the *Atharvaveda* also show the application of the word *yoga*. Actually these are just reproductions from the *Ṛgveda*. At some places , the word *yoga* occurs in compound such as *Brahmayoga*, *Kṣtrayoga* etc. At one place of the *Atharvaveda* the word *yoga* is used as *aṣṭayoga* and *ṣaḍayoga* (*imaṁ yavamaṣṭā yogaiḥ ṣaḍayogebhircarakaṣuḥ*. In this Veda, *yoga* is used to imply the attainment of unattainable relation as well. The concepts of *prāṇa* as the dynamic life principle can also be traced to a hymn in the *Atharvaveda.* In a verse of this Veda, human body is described as an invincible fortress of gods having eight *cakras* and nine gates.

As for the equipments of *yoga*, in the *Atharvaveda* also, we find only the stray ideas. Amongst the *yamas*, the concepts of *ahiṁsā* (non-violence)*, satya (*truth*)* and *asteya (*abstention from stealing) can be found in the *Atharvaveda* though, of course, not as the *mahābratas* unlimited by the

consideration of class, time, place and condition. Thus, *ahiṁsā* has been recommended in connection with the various legends. The importance of *satya* has been stressed at several places. God Varuṇa has been described as the protector of truth and punisher of falsehood. Other gods like Agni, Indra and others also are supposed to act in the same manner. Amongst the *niyama*s, *tapas, svādhyāya* and *iśvarapraṇidhāna* can be traced to the *Atharvaveda*. In this Veda, much importance is given on *brahmacharya* (celibacy). In this respect also, the position of the *Atharvaveda* is not much different from that of the *Ṛgveda*. As already noted, the concept of *prāṇa* and *aprāṇa* were evolving in the days of *Atharvaveda,* but *prāṇāyāma* has not been clearly mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* and the *yogāṇgas* were also still in the state of growth. Thus, although it is not proper to read full-fledged system of *yoga*s, in the age of the *Atharvaveda*, yet, the different means employed for self – advancement in those days have certainly contributed to the development of *yoga*.

5.3.2 *Yoga* in Brāhmaṇa Literature

The word *yoga* is used in Brāhmaṇa literature to imply mostly in the sense of dominating, ruling, yoking etc. In the Brāhmaṇa literature the yogic tradition is seen in their ritualism. The sacrifices require initiation and yoking of body, speech and mind. With initiation, *Yogī* controls his speech, body and mind. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that control on speech is a duty of a *Yogī*. Importance of yoking mind has been greatly stressed in this Brāhmaṇa. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that nothing can be done properly without yoking the mind. It has been also stated in this Brāhmaṇa that success of every action depends on application of mind which is said to be the *vibhūti* of the mind.

In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, the importance of mental *japa*

and observing silence is also explained. Meditation on the concerned deity is also recommended while offering oblations. The *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* also explains the significance of observing fast and sitting on black antelope's skin in connection with the sacrifice. In the later era, fasting is considered as an important matter of yogic practices. Thus we find the growth of certain yogic tenets in the Brāhmaṇas as well. The *Jaminīya* Brāhmaṇa states that by yoking mind and speech at the time of offering oblations, one can transcend both bad and good actions. Another important topic from the view point of yoga discussed in this Brāhmaṇa is the *praṇavavidyā* or importance of *Om*. It seems that in the age of this Brāhmaṇa, syllable *Om* was already recognized as an important object of meditation. The concept of *Puruṣa* of Yoga philosophy is also discussed in this Brāhmaṇa. The power of reading the thoughts in other mind is clearly mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa.

5.3.3 *Yoga* in Upaniṣads

In the age of Upaniṣad, concepts of *yoga* were seen to be fully developed. According to Upaniṣads, *yoga* signifies the union of the *jīvātman* with *paramātman*. It is an alternate method of realizing Brahman. The method of *yoga* can be said as synthetic in nature which proceeds harmonizing inner and outer world to a meeting point. The meaning and method of *yoga* are studied in the various Upaniṣads. It includes description of virtues and practice of meditation. The reference of *yoga* can be found in the principal Upaniṣads also. In *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, *Kaṭhopaniṣad* and *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, the yogic methods, for the first time, receive a systematic development. It means that a simple beginning of yogic philosophy, as an orderly system, was initiated in these very Upaniṣads. In the later period, *Patanjali* furnished it in a well integrated form. In *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad* the mention of *yoga* can be found in a terminological form. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* says that when

the five sense-organs are silenced along with the mind and when the intellect ceases to function, that state is called as the highest, the supreme, transcendental state. The firm control of the senses is regarded as *yoga*. After this control, the Yogin becomes free from all the vagaries of the mind, for the *yoga* is subject to growth and decay (*tāṁ yogamiti manyate sthiramindriyadhāraṇam, Kaṭhopaniṣad*). Again it is said that, he, who has understanding, who has control over his mind and is ever pure, reaches the goal or end of the journey of yoga, i.e. *paramapādam* and never born again. *Yoga* is described in the same meaning in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. In the *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, the word *yoga* is used to imply the unification of *prāṇa* and *Om*. In another section of this Upaniṣad, the word *yoga* is used to imply harnessing and arranging. In reality, several Upaniṣads use the word *yoga* to imply dominating, ruling and control over the senses. In fact, in several hymns of the *Ṛgveda,* the words 'yoking of horses' actually implies controlling over senses or soul. In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* and in the *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, senses are compared to horses. In Upaniṣads, *yoga* is entitled as *adhyātmayoga*, whose primary purpose is introspection or self-realization. But, this conception of *yoga* is different from the conception of *yoga* described in pre-Upaniṣadic period, because in the pre-Upaniṣadic period, the primary purpose of *yoga* was spiritual attainment (*siddhi*) or realizing super natural powers.

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* states that to see the soul, one should practice meditation on *Om* regularly. By *tapa* and truthfulness, one can see it. This Upaniṣad describes the process of meditation. With mind and senses joined with *paramātman*, one should pray to *Savitā*, to help one for attainment of *dhyāna*. Then it gives steps of meditation. Learned one should seat steady by keeping his head, neck and chest erect and concentrating sense and mind into the heart. The object of meditation is *Om*. With right movements and right diet, he should control his breathing and mind carefully. Regarding the place of meditation, detailed description is found in

this Upaniṣad. This Upaniṣad also says that by practice of *yoga*, one is free from disease, old age and untimely death. One is unattached to the worldly objects. Thus, one becomes free of sorrow.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes duties of students such as truthfulness, follow *dharma*, study of the scriptures. This Upaniṣad also states virtues such as *ṛta* (right dealing), *tapa* (asceticism), *śama* (tranquility), *dama* (self-restraint) and *dāna* (giving) with respect and faith. In this Upaniṣad, there is only one reference to *yoga* in the discussion of *Vijñānamayakoṣa*- [(*yoga ātmā saha puccham pratisthā*].

Patañjali, in his *Yogasūtra* mentions that *yoga* consists of eight limbs, known as – *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyama, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi*. The *Kam hopaniṣad* gives a full-fledged idea of the first *yogāṅga – yama*. The *Taittirîya Upaniṣad* has given a long list of instructions of positive virtues like – speak the truth, practice virtue, etc. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, *Chndogya Upaniṣad* and *Muṇakopaniṣad* describe in details about the second *yogāṅga niyama*. The *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* says that the *Brāhmaṇas* seek to know Brahman by the study of Veda, by sacrifices, gifts, penance and by fasting. The third *yogāṅga* is *āsana*. It means the right posture of sitting. The *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* mentions the process of the practice of *yogāṅga*. It also prescribes a triple holding erect (of breast, neck and head) and symmetry of sitting posture. *Prāṇāyāma* means regulation of breath. The *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* says about *prāṇāyāma* as the 'sole vow' to inhale and exhale. The *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* says about it as – through the meditation one can identify himself with the Brahman. Thus one can be free from *māyā* after realization of Brahman, as the ultimate reality. The fifth *yogāṅga* is *pratyāhāra*. It means withdrawal of the senses. In the Brhadaranyakopanisad it is said that *pratyāhāra* is a practice in which *yogin* retains the senses from the objects so that the senses follow the nature of the mind. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* and *Chāndyogopaniṣad* also

contain much more reference on it. Confinement of the mind in a place is called *dhāraṇā*. Its place might be the naval, the heart. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* accepts its place as the deep cavity of the heart. In most of the Upaniṣads, the way of realizing Brahman is said as *dhyāna* (meditation) on *Om*. The *Maṇḍalabrāhmanopaniṣad* says that meditation is an unavoidable step on the way of self realization. The most important and final phase of the *yogāṅga* is *samādhi*. The references of *samādhi* are found in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, *Maṇḍalabrāhmanopaniṣad*, *Chāndyogopaniṣad* etc. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* describes that when the five sense-organs, which are the means of cognition and perception, along with the mind stay at rest and when the intellect ceases to function, that state is called the highest goal.

5.3.4 *Yoga* in *Mahābhārata* and *RāmāyaG a*

The *Mahābhārata* is the treasure house of mythology, religion, philosophy, ethics, customs, and information about kings and sages throughout the ages. The term *yoga* is mentioned in several *parvans* of the infamous epic the *Mahābhārata*. The word *yoga* is used as a source of great psychic power in the *Mahābhārata.* In this epic, the Sāṁkhya and Yoga are described as complimentary aspects of one whole, signifying theory and practice, philosophy and religion. Here, the word *yoga* is used to imply as a medium or remedy (*eko hi yoga asat bhaved badhāya, Mahābhārata*). It is repeatedly mentioned in this epic that sages practiced *yoga* for the purpose of achieving miraculous powers. The epic consists of many wonderful stories who are enjoined with the practice of different forms of austerities. Numerous hermits of this epic, practice of *yoga*, as they consider, is the medium for having supernatural powers (*Śāntiparvan, Anuśāsanparvan, Āśramavāsikparvan, Ādiparvan, Śalyaparvan* etc.). The *Mahābhārata* mentions the Sāṁkhya and Yoga as two eternal system of thought (*sāṁkhyañca yogañca sanātane dve*). The *Mokṣadharmaparvan* prescribes subtle spirit *(sukṣma Ātman)* to

be concentrated at different regions viz. naval, neck, head, heart, stomach, lips, eye, ear and nose. The elocution of *yogāṅga* such as *dhāraṇā* and *prāṇāyama* are clearly mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. *Yoga* in the *Mahābhārata*, is frequently used as the means of realizing the super natural powers. In this epic, word *yoga* is also used to imply arrangement by (*ātmānam yuñjita*). In this way, the word *yoga* occurs in various *parvans* of the *Mahābhārata*.

The *Rāmāyaṇa,* one of the most admirable epics of India, which is older than even *Mahābhārata* and it mentions *yoga* as well. But in comparison with *Mahâbhârata*, the citation of *yoga* in *Rāmāyaṇa* is less in number. However, in *Rāmāyaṇa*, *yoga* is mentioned in two ways- as a system of philosophy and as procedures of yogic practices. Several concepts of *yoga* can be seen in *Rāmāyaṇa*. Description of several types of yogic practices have been referred to in the sixth chapter of the *Araṇya Kāṇa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In this *kāṇa*, several types of ascetics have been mentioned and all of them are said to be firmly resorting to *yoga*.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: In the Ṛgveda, the word *yoga* is mentioned mostly to imply which meaning?

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Q 2: Where do you find the *omkāra* prayers for the first time as a object of meditation in yogic practices?

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Q 3: Among Vedic literature, where can you find the citation of *yogāṅgas* for the first time?

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Q 4: Which literature mentions *yoga* as a medium or remedy?

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5.3.5 *Yoga* in the *Śrīmadbhagavadgîtâ*

The *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, also known as *Gītā* is the world famous scripture of India. The *Gītā*, which forms part of the *Bhīc maparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, can be termed as the bearer of Indian culture and literature. It consists of 18 chapters and 700 verses. Every one of the eighteen chapters of the *Gītā* is entitled as *yoga*. In all the eighteen chapters of the discourse between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the proper yogic attitude towards every human crisis is given. *Yoga* was codified and elaborated in a systematic way for the first time in the *Gītā.*

We find that the word *yoga* has been used not so much in conformity with *yujsamādhau*, but rather with *yujir yoga*. The *Gītā* is a description of the three paths of *yoga* i.e. *bhaktiyoga* (*yoga* of devotion), *karmayoga* (the *yoga* of the selfless action) and *jñānayoga* (*yoga* of knowledge). Through these three paths of *yoga*, the individual comes to self realisation. In the *Gītā* the word *yoga* is more and more reserved for the regular discipline of *dhyānayoga*. At a few places, it is also connected with action, knowledge and devotion.

There are many references to *yoga* in the *Gītā*. *Yoga* sometimes means method, sometimes activity, force, meditation etc. Some verses of the *Gītā* contain only the practical physical techniques of *yoga*. *Yoga* is not just a withdrawal from the world and practice of extreme asceticism, but rather a *yogin* is he, who moderate in eating and fasting, sleeping and walking. In the *Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa defines *yoga* as nothing but excellence in work (*yoga karmasu kauśalaṁ*). Excellence in work means doing any work efficiently. For performing any work well, we need to have a peaceful mind. *Yoga* is the way of living, which calms the mind and improves our ability too. In another place, we find another definition of *yoga* such as- equilibrium of mind is *yoga* (*samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*). It is said that *yoga* makes for the happiest behavioural adjustment. *Yoga*

signifies a picture of behaviour that is free from self-imposed limitations and hence makes for the happiest adjustment. The *yogin* is one who controls his senses. In another passage it is said that a *yogin* is a man who rises above the duality of action and non-action. The *yogin* is not attached to the fruits of action.

Hence, *Gītā* gives clear and precise knowledge about *yoga*. It also describes the nature of self and realisation of self, the spiritual returns to the highest or, in the personal senses the realisations of the personal self, has always been the goal of its fundamental philosophy and spiritual approach to life.

5.3.6 *Yoga* in the Purāṇa:

The Purāṇas are the most important religious literature of India after the Vedas and the Mahākāvyas. The Purāṇas constitute a branch of Indian literature which comes to be a storehouse of Indian culture and civilisation. It also consists of varied topics like philosophy, history, geography and poetics and so on and so forth. The different morals and values propounded in the Vedas, the Upaniṣads and the epics are dealt in detail. The word Purāṇa means *purāṇamakhyānaṁ* i.e. old narrative. The Purāṇas themselves also try to ascertain the meaning of the term 'Purāṇa' in the Purāṇas. In Purāṇa, *yoga* is found on 18 *mahāpurāṇas* (major Purāṇas) and some available minor Purāṇas.

In the *nāgakhanda* of the *Skandapurāṇa*, there is a story of propagating of *yogaśāstra* on the earth. According to the *Brahmapurāṇa yoga* is not simply possible by *padmâsana* or by connecting on the tip of the nose but in fact it is defined as the contact or proper coordination between mind and the senses. In the *Kūrmapurāṇa* it is said that Lord Śiva always blesses the person who is accustomed with the knowledge of *yoga*. This Purāṇa also states that the fire of *yoga* (*yogāṅgni*) burns the cage of sin that surrounds a man. Knowledge becomes purified and *nirvāṇa* is directly obtained. Again, in this Purāṇa it is said that by *yoga*,

knowledge is obtained and through knowledge *yoga* is practiced. *Yoga* is also classified into two kinds- *abhāvayoga* and *mahāyoga*, the later being the most eminent of all *yogas*. When the mind is concentrated upon God, thought as void and formless, it is called *abhāvayoga*. When one sees everywhere one's own soul identified with him, the ever blissful and pure, that is called *mahāyoga*, which is the highest. The *Kūrmapurāṇa* also mentions another division of *yoga*- *savīja* and *nirvīja*. The *yoga* which has *vīja* is called *savīja yoga*. This *savīja yoga* is also called *saguṇayoga* or *bhaktiyoga*. It is because in this *yoga*, the prayers of Vicṇu, Rudra, Biriñci (Brahma) etc. are mentioned.

The *Agnipurāṇa*, embodies topics bearing on philosophy and cosmology. It has given the definition of *yoga* as- *yoga* is a kind of special mental activity, which is characterised by its dependence upon one's own effort and its union with Brahman. This Purāṇa enumerates the eight *aṅgas* of *yoga*, which are- *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇā and samādhi*. The *Vicṇupurāṇa* is of the opinion that the *yama* and *niyama* are ten in number and they can be practiced in two ways- *sakāma* and *nic kāma*. If practiced with some purpose, they fulfil that desire, but when practiced without any desire for fruit, they become conducive to liberation. According to the *Vicṇupurāṇa*, the mental activity characterised by one's own effort, by which one becomes united with Brahman, is called *yoga*. The *Liṅgapurāṇa* has first defined *yoga* as a status in which one gets knowledge of everything in the world.

5.4 YOGA IN ĀYURVEDA

Many scholars are on the opinion that Ayurveda is the fifth Veda. Again, Āyurveda is also termed as a part of the *Atharvaveda*. Āyurveda considers the procedures of *yoga* as the ways of curing the diseases of the body and the mind. In Āyurvedic medical procedure, the eight limbs of *yoga* (*aṣṭāṅga yoga*) has immense significance. Mainly the *āsana* and *prāṇāyama*

are considered as the medium of curing physical and mental diseases. In order to lead a healthy life, Āyurveda recommends daily meditation. The importance of *aṣṭāṅgayoga* is depicted wonderfully in the *Suśruta Saṁhitā*. Again, the references of eight powers (*aṣṭa-aiśvarya*), which are described in the Patanjali's *Yogasūtra* is also depicted in the *Caraka-Saṁhitā*. According to Āyurveda, one can control his senses by practising *pratyāhāra*, then he can control his mind and body. In Āyurveda, *āsana* is termed as external medicine and *prāṇāyāma* is termed as internal medicine.

Vāta, pitta, and *kapha*- collectively known as the *doṣa*s (disorder), are one of the most foundational concepts in the tradition of Āyurveda. According to Āyurveda, whenever there is an imbalance in someone's body, it is known as *doṣa*. It is mentioned in the Āyurveda that this *doṣa* can be annihilated with the help of *yoga*. The concept of *triguṇa* i.e. *sattva, rajas*, and *tamas* which are described in Yogaśāstra, also be found in Ayurvedaśāstra as well. In the *Caraka Saṁhitā* and *Suśruta Saṁhitā*, *rajas* and *tamas* are mentioned regarding the case of physical or mental illness, which occurs on the basis of quantitative imbalance amongst the internal elements of the body.

The references of five basic elements [*pañcamahābhūta- kṣiti (*earth*), apas (*water*), tejas (*fire*), marut (*air*)* and *vyoma (*ether)] as mentioned in Yogaśāstra is also found in Ayurveda. According to both of these texts, the human body is considered to be made of these five basic elements (*pañcamahābhātas)*. Any disorder in human body indicates imbalance of one or more of these elements. The three doṣas, which, according to Ayurveda, are intrinsic in every human being, are representation of combination of these five elements in human body. According to Ayurveda, each *doṣa* is predominantly composed of two elements of *pañcamahābhûta*. For example, *vāta* is produced whenever there is an excess of air and ether. *Pitta* is created on the basis of the excess of fire and water and *kapha* is produced on the basis of the excess of water and earth. A balance in the combination of these elements leads to a healthy life whereas any imbalance causes illness. The main objectives of Āyurvedic medical tracts are to keep balance amongst the five principal elements which produce the three *doṣa*

(disorder), to keep the body healthy, to keep the healthy people away from catching diseases, and to cure diseases of the ill people. In the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṁhitā* and *Suśrutasaṁhitā*, descriptions of the *pañcamahābhūta* and the actions and the reactions of *sattva, rajas*, and *tamas* regarding the production of five kinds of *vāta*, five kinds of *pitta*, and five kinds of *kapha* are presented beautifully. In Ayurveda, the practice of *kapālabhāti* and *vrastikā* is recommended in order to cure *vāta doṣa*. In Ayurveda, it is also mentioned that the *āsanas*, which are performed by bending towards the front, help in reducing *pitta doṣa*. The practice of *yoga* helps to purify the arteries and this purification leads to the purification of the body and the mind as well. That is why, the practice of *yoga* is enormously significant in Ayurveda. it is mentioned that good health is reliant on the balance amongst the *doṣas, dhātus,* and *malas.* Similar ideas are also found in the *Hathayoga Pradīpikā*. The rules of *hathayoga* are especially followed in Ayurveda. In Ayurveda, some specific importance are given on the division of the consumption list of medicinal and non-medicinal substances in accordance to the disease, exercise of particular *āsanas* in accordance to the disease, being in control of the senses towards any external subjects, meditation etc. In the **Ā**yurveda as well *sāttvika āhāra* is recommended. The purification ceremony is performed through *pañcakarma* in **Ā**yurveda and through *ṣaṭkarma* in *yoga*. According the *Caraka Saṁhitā*, by exercising *yoga*, the realization of *satya-buddhi* (the realization that the entire universe and the individual are the one and same) can be achieved. Patañjali's idea of *ṛtambharā prañjyā* is similar to the idea of *satya-buddhi* which is mentioned in the *Caraka Saṁhitā*. *Satya-buddhi* is the realization or assumption of the real truth. This helps to eliminates all miseries in order to pave the way towards *mokṣa*. This is the actual self-realization. For attainment of *satya-buddhi* regular yogic practices are necessary. In Ayurveda maximum priority is given in the yogic practice.

5.5 *YOGA* IN BUDDHISM, JAINISM, AND TANTRA

Gautam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism and Mahāvīra Jain, the founder of Jainism are predecessors of Patañjali. The influence of *yoga* is

seen in their philosophies. *Dhyāna* and *samādhi* are mentioned in the Sutta literature of Buddhism. These Suttas have described the ways to attain the objectives of *yoga*. According to Buddhism, the five qualities – faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom – are required in order to attain the objectives of *yoga* (Majibhamanikaya 1/164). This idea is also accepted in the *Yogasūtra* (1/33).

In reality, Buddhism and Yoga Philosophy born out from the Indian spiritual civilisation. Both their aim is to eliminate all miseries. In Yoga Philosophy, three kinds of miseries are described and how their ultimate elimination of miseries can lead to the attainment of *mokṣa* is also described. According to Yoga philosophy the hindrance of the flesh and restless mind can be overcome and the complete suppression of the mental states and processes is achieved by the eight-fold method of *yoga*, known as *yogāṅga* (*yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi*). The practice of *acm āṅgayoga* can help in eliminating miseries and also pave the way towards attaining *Kaivalya*.

In Buddhism too, it is mentioned that by following the Noble Eight-fold Path (*aṣṭāṅgika mārga*) miseries may be removed and one can attains liberation. In Yoga Philosophy, non-violence is the most prominent one amongst the five kinds of *yama*, the first *yogāṅga* of *acm āṅgayoga*. In Buddhist Philosophy too, non-violence has acquired an important position as a medium of conducting good behaviour. The doctrines of Buddhism and Yoga Philosophy are quite similar in nature. The differences are only seen in their respective names. As in Yoga Philosophy, *dhyāna* (meditation) is perceived as the medium to attain *kaivalya*, likewise, in Buddhism, importance is given upon *dhyāna*. The idol of Buddha is always seen in a meditating (*samādhiyukta*) position. Like Buddhist Philosophy, Yoga Philosophy also possess the view that the *nirvāṇa* or *kaivalya* can be attained by meditation while stabilizing the mind, being free from the compulsion of work, and realizing the ultimate truth. Both of these schools have advised to practice good behaviours like *ahiṁsā* (non-violence), *satya* (truth), *brahmacarya* (celibacy), *asteya* (abstention from stealing) etc. in order to be in control of the physical and mental characteristics. The *āsana*s as

mentioned in the Yoga Philosophy is termed as *vahiraṅga* in Buddhism.

In the doctrines of Jaina Philosophy, various references of Yoga Philosophy are also found. In Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*, the descriptions of five *yamas* (*ahiṁsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, aparigraha*) are found. In Jaina Philosophy, these five *yamas* are described as *pañchamahāvrata* (*ahiṁsāsunṛtāsteyabrahmacaryāparigrahaḥ/na yat pramādayogena jīvitavyaparopaṇaṁ*// Ārhatdarúanam, *Sarvadarśana Saṁgraha*). In Yoga Philosophy, *śauca, santoṣa, tapa, svādhyāya,* and *iśvarapraG idhāna* fall under the *niyama*. In Jaina Philosophy, *śauca* is one of ten elements of *dharma*. Again, *santoṣa* and *iśvarapraṇidhāna* of Yoga Philosophy are similar to *saṁyama* (self-control) in Jaina Philosophy. Like Yoga Philosphy, Jaina Philosophy has described *dhyāna* as a means to attain spiritual progress and *kaivalya*. The idea of control of senses (*indriya saṁyama*) of Jaina Philosophy is similar to *pratyāhāra* of Yoga Philosophy. If we analyse the doctrines of both Jaina and Yoga Philosophy, it can be assumed that there are many similarity in their ideas. Although the meaning and the subject matters are the same, there are differences in the names used in both the philosophical systems.

Tantras are an integral part of Indian literature and culture. Influences of Yoga on the Tantras are very significant. Mainly, the references of *kuṇḍalinīyoga*, *hathayoga*, and *layayoga* are found in the Tantra literature. In Tantra literature, the utmost importance is given upon awakening the *kuṇḍalīni* energy in order to connect it with the *sahasracakra* of Lord Śiva. Tantra literatures are based upon Āgama literature. In these Tantra literatures, there are descriptions of *siddhi,* which can be attained by controlling the mind and the body through practising *yoga*. Tantric practice is mainly the harmonization of *yoga*, *bhakti* (devotion), *mantra* (hymns), *homa* (oblation of fire), *jñāna* (knowledge) and *karma* (action). That is why, it is said that liberation can be attained easily through Tantric practice. According to *Kulārṇḍavatantra* (9:16), *kuṇḍalīni* energy unites *Jīvātmā* with *Paramātmā* through self-realization. However, the knowledge and the characteristics of this *kuṇḍalīni* energy can only be realized through *yoga*. In Tantric practice, there is a vast contribution of *yoga*. Tantric practice is

based on four process – *jñānapāda, yogapāda, kriyāpāda*, and *caryāpāda*. In *yogapāda*, various Yogic actions and exercises are described in order to know the ultimate truth and to attain *Paramapada*. The proper application of *yama* and *niyama* of Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* is done under Tantric practice. Apart from them, *prāṇāyāma* is very important in Tantric practice. In the Tantric literatures, it is said that the *prāṇāyāma* is practised with *recaka, pūraka* and *kumbhaka* (*Mahānirvāṇatantra*, 3.41-48). This type of practising of *prāṇāyāma* is an important part of *hathayoga*. Another important part of Yoga scriptures is *praṇava* or *Oṁkāra* prayer. It is also mentioned in the Tantra scriptures that one can obtain will power and knowledge through *praG ava* prayer.

Famous Nyāya philosopher Vātsāyana mentions about *yoga* in his work *Nyāyabhaṣya*. In *Arthshashtra*, Kauṭilya has also mentioned Yoga along with Sāṁkhya and Lokāyata (*sāṁkhyaṁ yogo lokāyataṁ cetyānvīkṣikī – Arthaśāstra*).

The root *yujir* in the sense of connection as given in Pāṇini's list of roots is a root form derived later from the noun form *yoga* (yoking), or that *yoga* also was originally formed from *yujir yoge*, but as *yoga* had taken a technical meaning in Paṇini's time he invented a new fanciful root *yuja* in the sense of concentration. In Pāṇini we find that the word *yoga* had already attained its technical meaning, for he distinguishes between the root *yuj* in the sense of concentration (*samādhi*) and *yujir* in the sense of joining or connecting. In the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* Pāṇini has used the word 95' suggest a person who follows or practices religious austerity. In the *Amarakoṣa*, the word *yoga* is used in sense of means, meditation, unity etc. In the *Yājñyavalkyasmṛti* also, there are detailed descriptions regarding *prāṇāyāma* and the practice of *yoga*. In the book *Śrītattvanidhi*, there are descriptions of 122 poses of *yoga*.

Thus, in reality, the origin of the *yoga* tradition as mentioned in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* is very ancient. It is because, in India, the practice of *yoga* was being held traditionally since the ancient times, as the ancient Indian scriptures serve as testimonies to that.

Apart from this, *yoga* is mentioned mainly in Yoga Upaniṣads. *Yoga*

is mentioned in the major Upaniṣads such as – *Yogatattvopaniṣad, Maṇḍala Brāhmaṇopaniṣad, Nādavindu, Am[tānada, Varāha, Dhyānavindu, Haṁsa, Yogakuṇḍalinī, Yogaśikha, Yogatattva, Brahmavidyā, Yogacūḍāmaṇi, Advayatāraka, Yogarāja, Tejovindu* etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: In which context the word 'yoga' is mentioned in the *Gītā* ?

.....

Q 6: How many major Purāṇas are there?

.....

Q 7: What do *Savīja* and *Nirvīja yoga* mean as mentioned in *Kūrmapurāṇa*?

.....

Q 8: How many *yama* and *niyamas* are mentioned in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* ?

.....

Q 9: How many *yogas* are mentioned in *Liṅgapurāṇa* ? What are those?

.....

Q 10: What are the four levels of Tantric practice?

.....

Q 11: What does *tridoṣa* mean?

.....

Q 12: What are the *panñcamahābhūta* ? How are *vāta, pitta*, and *kapha* created?

.....

Q 13: How according to Ayurveda, health is dependent on balance?

.....

Q 14: What does *satyabuddhi* mean?

.....

Q 15: Which *āsana* should be practiced in order to annihilate *vātadoṣa* ?

.....

Q 16: According to Buddhism, which qualities should be possessed in order to attain the aims of *yoga* ?

.....

Q 17: In what context the word 'Yoga' is used in the *Amarakoṣa* ?

.....



5.6 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the following topics in this unit –

- The word 'yoga' is somewhat relational.
- In terms of the practice of spirituality, the significance of *yoga* is the way to attain God, self-knowledge or *Brahmajñāna*.
- The tradition of *yoga* is very ancient.
- Amongst the Vedic literatures, *yoga* is mentioned mostly in *Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda*, Brāhmaṇa literature, Upaniṣads etc.
- The existence of *yoga* is found in *Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa* , and *Gītā*. Mainly, the mention of *yoga* in *Mahābhārata* and *Gītā* is significant.
- The existence of *yoga* is found in Purāṇa. Apart from Purāṇa, *yoga* is also mentioned in other texts. *Yoga* also exists in Ayurveda. *Yoga* is also mentioned in the works of the precursors of Patañjali like Buddha, Jaina, and Pāṇini. In this matter, Yoga Upaniṣad is also significant.



5.7 FURTHER READING

1) Dasgupta, S. N. (1974) : *Yoga Philosophy*, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas

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5) Kamesvara, Raj V. C. : *Yoga and Tantra*, Hyderabad.

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7) Belvalikar, S. K. & Ranada, R. D. (1927) : *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, Poona: Bilvakunja Publishing House

8) Radhakrishnan, S. (1971) : *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, New York: George Allen & Unwin LTD.

9) Shankar, Ganesh. (2002) : *Classical and Modern Approaches to Yoga*, Delhi: Pratibha Prakasan.

5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: In the *Ṛgveda*, *yoga* is mentioned mostly in the context of connecting or constituting or yoking.

Ans to Q No 2: In Brāhmaṇa literature, *Oṁkāra* prayer of Yogic practice as a subject is mentioned for the first time.

Ans to Q No 3: The divisions of *yama* and *niyama* are found mostly in the *Atharvaveda* which is under Vedic literature. *Ahiṁsā*, *satya, asteya* etc. under *yama* and *tapasyā, svādhyāya*, *īśvarapraṇidhāna* under *niyama* are mentioned in this Veda.

Ans to Q No 4: *Yoga* as a means or medium is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata.* In the *Amarakoṣa* also, *yoga* is mentioned as a means.

Ans to Q No 5: *Yoga* is mentioned in *Gītā* mostly in the context of 'yujir yoge' (union). In the sixth chapter, Śrīkṛṣṇa has said that the union of the *Ātman* with *Paramātman* is the actual *yoga*.

Ans to Q No 6: There are eighteen major Purāṇas.

Ans to Q No 7: In the *Kūrmapurāṇa*, *savīja yoga* and *nirvīja yoga* are mentioned as the branches of yoga. The yoga which has *vīja* is called *savīja yoga*. This *savīja yoga* is also called *saguṇayoga* or *bhaktiyoga*. It is because in this *yoga*, the prayers of Viṣṇu, Rudra, Biriñci (Brahma) etc. are mentioned.

Ans to Q No 8: Ten kinds of *yama* and *niyama* are mentioned in *Viṣṇupurāṇa*.

Ans to Q No 9: Five kinds of *yoga* are mentioned in *Liṇgapurāṇa*. Those are - *mantrayoga, sparśayoga, bhāvayoga, abhāvayoga*, and *mahāyoga*.

Ans to Q No 10: The four levels of Tantric practice are – *jñānapāda, yogapāda, kriyāpāda*, and *caryāpāda*.

Ans to Q No 11: *Tridoṣas* are *vāta, pitta*, and *kapha*. According to medical science, when there is an imbalance in the body, it is known as *doṣa* (disorder).

Ans to Q No 12: *Pañcamahābhūtas* are *kṣiti* (earth), *apas* (water), *tejas* (fire), *marut* (air), and *vyoma* (ether). Our body is constituted of these five (*Pañcamahābhūta)* elements. Whenever one of elements of *Pañcamahābhūta* overpowers on the other, *tridoṣa* occurs on the body. For example, vāta doṣa is created whenever there is a predominance of *marut* and *vyoma*, *pitta doṣa* is created whenever there is a predominance of *tejas* and *apas*, and *kapha doṣa* is created whenever there is a predominance of *apas* and *kṣiti*.

Ans to Q No 13: According to Ayurveda, good health depends on the balance amongst *doṣa, dhātu*, and *mala*.

Ans to Q No 14: *Satyabuddhi* is the realization of the actual truth. This can annihilate all the miseries which paves the way for the attainment of liberation. The actual self realization is *satyabuddhi*.

Ans to Q No 15: *Vāta doṣa* can be annihilated by the practice of *kapālabhāti* and *bhastrikā*.

Ans to Q No 16: According to Buddhism, the possession of the five qualities which are - faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom –

can lead to the attainment of the aims of *yoga*.

Ans to Q No 17: In the *Amarakoṣa*, *yoga* is used in the contexts of protection, means, meditation, unity etc. (*Amarakoṣa*, 3.4.24)



5.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Question:

Q 1: Write a short note on *yoga* as mentioned in *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda*?

Q 2: Write a short note on the influence of *yoga* on Brāhmaṇa literature?

Q 3: Discuss how the existence of *yoga* is reflected in Upaniṣad.

B) Long Question:

Q 1: Write a note on the use of *yoga* in different contexts in the *Mahâbhârata* and *Gītā*.

Q 2: Discuss how *yoga* is mentioned in Purāṇa.

Q 3: Discuss how the influence of *yoga* is reflected in Ayurveda.

Q 4: How does *yoga* exist in Buddhist and Jaina literatures?

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