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Dr. Subal Chandra Sahoo
Lecturer in Vyakarana, Govt.
Degree Sanskrit College,
Baripada, Odisha, India

Spiritual intuition in rĀjayoga

Dr. Subal Chandra Sahoo

Introduction

RājaYoga-an infinite self-sustaining force, is always inherent in the divine conception of existence, consciousness & bliss which corresponds to the highest state of profound establishment of the Seer for the absolute liberation or emancipation on the patha of supreme spiritual experience. Thus Yoga, a Universal-Science of life is a means to attain the spiritual awareness and divine consciousness which is implicitly & explicitly conceivable for the ultimate enlightenment. It is a communion between cosmic awareness and supreme consciousness which recognises the pure self-existent and self-luminous Truth. Thus it is the harmonious transformation of life for the supracosmic union of the indivisual self (Jīvātmā) with the universal self (paramatma) for realization of supreme reality. It is also lucidly depicted in Vedānta Sāra ^[1]. “जीवब्रह्मैक्यं शुद्धचैतन्यं प्रमेयम्” The identity of Jiva and Brahman which is the pure consciōsneṣṣ or highest existence and thus it is to be realized. Similarly Yoga Darśan is also a non-dualistic system of self-realization where all philosophies merge into oneness and indivisible whole.

The word “Yoga” is derived from three Sanskrit roots having three different significances i.e., 1- युज् समाधौ meaning to enter into trance. 2- युज् संयमने to control the sense organs. 3- युजिर् योगे which means to unite. It also means the supra-cosmic union between indivisual self (जीवात्मा) and universal self (परमात्मा) According to the commentary of Vyāsa on ^[2] योगः समाधिः ^[3] Yoga is the absorption in Samādhi, which means the fine state of perception. Patañjali describes Yoga as- ^[4] “योगः चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः” Yoga is the conscious process of gaining control over mind. Katha Upaniṣad says- “तं योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम्” “the stillness of the senses and the concentration of the mind is called Yoga or yoga is the inhibition of mental modifications of consciousness.

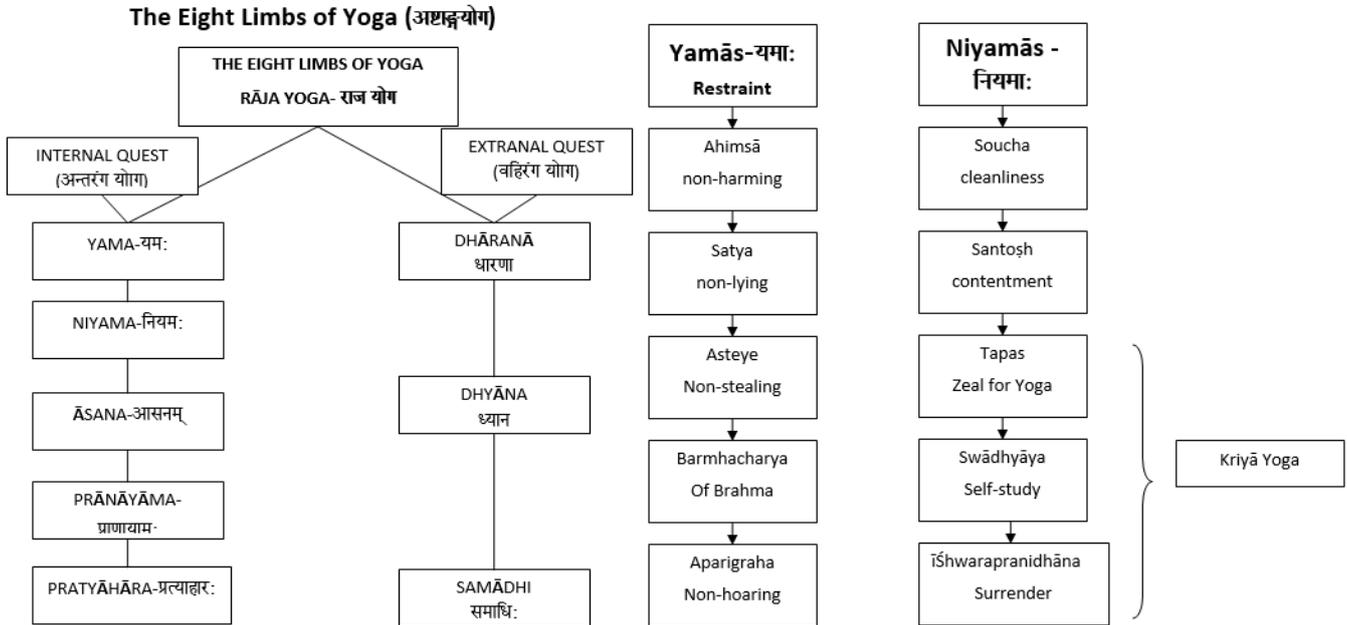
According to Śrī Aurobindo ^[5] – All life is yoga. The complete science and art of Yoga is presented by ancient saint Patañjali through the Yoga Sutras, a great document of life. It consists of 195 aphorisms classified into four chapters such as Samādhi Pāda, SādhanaPāda, Bibhūti Pāda and Kaivalya Pāda. Patañjali has codified the eight disciplines of Yoga which assert both an intellectual conception and dynamic discrimination of the truth. It is a realization of self-perfection or intervention of the omnipresent existence. According to Śrī Aurobindo ^[6] as the body and the prāna are the key of all the closed doors of the yoga for the Hathayogin, so is the mind the key in Rājayoga. Swāmī Vivekānanda says ^[7]. The end and aim of all science is to find the unity, the One out of which the manifold is being manufactured, that One existing as many. Rāja-Yoga proposes to start from the internal world, to study internal nature, and through that, control the whole-both internal and external. Swāmī Nigamānanda’s philosophy is described as the knowledge of the own nature of the soul (आत्मस्वरूपज्ञान) which means a state of being established in the self or understanding the reality in it’s fundamental oneness.

The eight limbed Yoga being the blissful conscious process of practice (साधना) is treated as Rāja Yoga. The eight stages of Yoga are ^[8]: Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāranā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi. 1-Yama (यमः) - Universal moral disciplines which observe non-violence (अहिंसा), Truth(सत्य), non-stealing(अस्तेय), Continence(ब्रह्मचर्य), non-covetousness (अपरिग्रहः), Niyama (नियमः) - Conduct of self-purification.

Correspondence Author:
Dr. Subal Chandra Sahoo
Lecturer in Vyakarana, Govt.
Degree Sanskrit College,
Baripada, Odisha, India

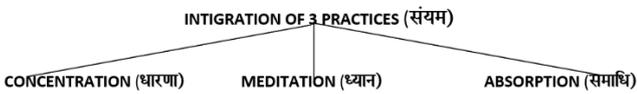
It is divided into five aspects like Purity (शौच), Contentment (सन्तोषः), Austerity (तपः), Study of the scriptures (mJeeO³ee³e:), Surrender to God (ईश्वरप्रणिधानः), Asana (Deemeveced) – Postures Āsanas bring health, beauty, strength, steadiness, happiness. Prānāyāma (प्राणायामः)- Prolongation of inhalation retention and exhalation.

Pratyāhāra (प्रत्याहारः)- With drawal of the mind from the senses and its objects. Dhāranā (धारणा)-Concentration of mind on a particular point. Dhyāna(ध्यान)- Meditation. Samadhi (समाधिः)- Yogic trance or the fine state of perception.



Patañjali says ^[9] – Trayam ekatra Samyamah (त्रयमेकत्र संयमः) which means Dhāranā, Dhyāna, Samādhi are together termed samyama, integrated whole.

- Men attain Gracious God by the selfless devotion.
- Kath Upanisad ^[17] - “यमेवैष वृणुत तेन लभ्यः तेन लभ्यः” (keÀ- p-1-2-23) Divine grace causes the attainment of beloved god.
 - Chhāndogya Upanisad ^[18] – “तत्त्वमसि” (ie-6-8-7) It means soul is substantially the same as God.
 - Taitiriopanisad ^[19] - “सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म”(lew. 2-1-1) Brahma is truth, knowledge and infinite.
 - “आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्” ^[20] (lew.3-6-1) He (Bhrugu) realized the innermost bliss that is Brahman.
 - Kathopanisad tells ^[21] –“नैषा तर्केण मति रापनेया” (keÀp.1-2-9) The existence of Brahman cannot be attained through arguments.



Eight-limbed yoga is divided into two forms as Antaraṅga ^[10] (Internal Quest). The practice of samyama means - Dhāranā, Dhyāna, Samādhi are treated as Antaraṅga Sādhana (practice of Internal Quest). The five divisions of yoga like Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyāhāra are considered as Bahiraṅga Yoga or Bahiraṅga Sādhana ^[11] (practice of external Quest).

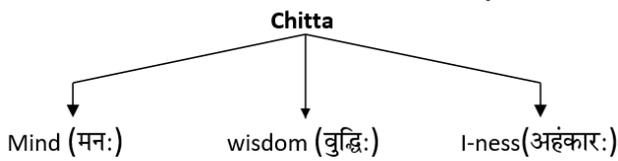
According to scriptural description of Upanisads the Ātmā or the absolute divinity is to be realized. The word Ātmā technically means the Divinity. Ātmā (souls) are initially divine by nature but being under the bondage of māyā it is termed as Jīva. Mundakopanisad says ^[12] to take refuge at Guru, God realized saint for the understanding divine truth “तद् विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् Patañjali says ^[13] -”स पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेन अनवच्छेदात्”, Almighty God is regarded as Guru, who is eternal and omnipresent. Following phrases and statement reveal the theme and divine status of Brahman and Ātmā in Upanisads.

- Bruhadāranyak Upanisad ^[14]: “आत्मा वाऽरे द्रष्टव्यः” (Je=2-45) The supreme divinity should be desired by a soul to be visualized.
- Aitereya Upanisad ^[15]: “आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र असीत्” (S-1-1-1) The soul (Almighty God) existed before the creation of the Universe.
- Mundakopanisad ^[16] - “परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्” (ceg-3-28)

The concept of Brahman is represented in Upanisads in multifarious mentions with annotations. Brahman for Advaita Vedānta, is a form of fullness of being which the essence of non-dualistic spiritual experience is. According to the doctrine of Advaita Vedānta there is no discrimination between two entities like Brahman and Ātmā, as both Brahman and Ātmā are invariably perceived in same cognition. So Ātmā (The Highest Self) in Vedānta is pure, undifferentiated, self-shining consciousness. So far philosophical expressions and explanations of bondage and salvation are concerned the term “Māyā” or Avidya is used interchangeably. Māyā is Non-real, (असत्) it is distinguished from true reality (सत्), Māyā is beginningless (अनादि). It is indescribable (अनिर्वचनीया). According to the theory of DeO³eeme (Superimposition) as long as ignorance exists the experience of Māyā is constituted. All illusory existence and appearances are grounded in Māyā. The phenomenal world is Māyā and it is produced by it. The mysterious and

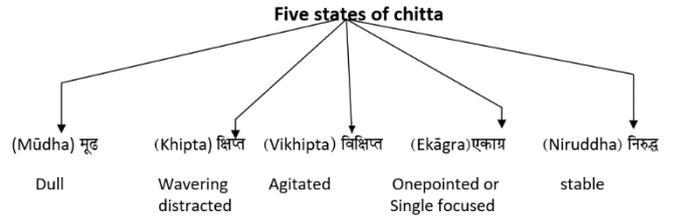
creative power of God is described as Māyā (illusion), avidyā (ignorance) and Adhyās (super imposition). In Yoga Darśhan- Avidyā is treated as Klesh (affliction). It creates instability and confusion in yogic practice. There are five kinds of Avidyā, such as ^[22] – “अविद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः (पञ्च) क्लेशाः.” These are Ignorance, egoism or pride attachment, aversion and desire for life, fear for death. According to Patañjali these five afflictions (क्लेशाः) are required to be eradicated as these are the root cause of imbalances at physical, psychological and intellectual levels. The essential nature of Avidyā is expounded in another aphorism that is ^[23] – “अविद्या क्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्ततनु विच्छिन्नोदाराणाम्” (³ees.met.2/5). This Avidyā is the breeding ground for other four afflictions. It has four state of perceptions. 1- Mistaking non-eternal for eternal, 2- Impure for pure, 3- misery for happiness, 4- non-self to be self.

Chitta is constituted of three aspects.



The word chitta is derived from Sanskrit root चिती संज्ञाने which means to awake, or to become aware, the word chitta is elaborated in Yoga sutra as ^[24] – “पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रति प्रसवः कैवल्यं स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चित्तशक्तेरिति” Self realization is attained when the power of pure consciousness become established in its true nature. It is described in the Vyāsa bhāṣya that- chitta has five divisions such as ^[25] – क्षिप्तं मूढं विक्षिप्तं एकाग्रं निरोध इति.

Patañjali has explained the characteristics of chitta in 4th chapter of Yoga sūtra ^[26] – ‘प्रवृत्तिभेदे प्रयोजकं, चित्तमेकमनेकेषाम्’ That means chitta or consciousness is one but according to variations of thought and power of understanding, it appears to be many. Patañjali proclaims the essence of consciousness (Chitta) from a state of dullness (Mūḍha) to stable state (Niruddha). Sage Vyāsa has described these five state of chitta to cross the bridges of Mūḍha, Khipṭa, Vikhipṭa and to reach the state of Ekāgra, Niruddha to illuminate the mind.



Hatha Yoga, literally means the yoga of force or determined process. Hatha Yoga Pradīpika of Swātmārāma deals with physical discipline in rigorous practice. It is described in yoga pradīpika that ^[27] – “भ्रान्त्या बहुमतध्वान्ते राजयोगमजानताम्, हठप्रदीपिकां धत्ते स्वात्मारामः कृपाकरः”॥ (हठयोगप्रदीपिका-1-3) compassionate saint swātmārāma composed Hatha yoga pradīpika for those ignorant of Rājayoga wandering in the darkness of different doctrines. Rāja Yoga the royal union with the self was composed by Patañjali in the name of Astāṅga Yoga or eight stages of yoga, which deal with spiritual discipline on the pāth of self-realization. It is conspicuous that Hatha yoga and Rāja yoga complement each other and create one pointedness from external world to internal world. Grosser to finer state, material observation to spiritual perception.

Hatha Yoga	Rāja Yoga
1- Āsanās (Posture)	1- Yama – Yoga Sūtra 2/29
2- Prānāyām (BreathControl)	2- Niyama- Yoga Sūtra-2/32
3- Food (Balanced diet)	3- Āsana - Yoga Sūtra-2/46
4- śhatkarma as (Internal cleansing practices)	4- Prānāyām - Yoga Sūtra-2/49
5- Mudrā(Seals)	5- Pratyāhār- Yoga Sūtra-2/54
6- Bandh(Locks)	6- Dhāraṇā - Yoga Sūtra-3/1
7- Nādis (The channels of energy)	7- Dhyāna - Yoga Sūtra-3/2 through which prāna flows.)
8- Kundalinī	8- Samādhi - Yoga Sūtra-3/3

Practice of Rāja Yoga (राजयोगसाधना): So far RājaYoga is concerned practice (Avyās) is very essential to control the various mental activities or mind-modification (चित्तवृत्ति), YogaSūtra says – ‘अभ्यासवैराग्यं तन्निरोधः’ the thought patterns (Vritti) are mastered by the practice and dispassion. The real nature of practice is also formulated by Patañjali that- ‘तत्र स्थितो यत्नोऽभ्यासः’ Practice means the real effort to establish man in his true self (आत्मा). Practice can be successful through the stable and tranquil state of mind.

Maharṣi Patañjali has described the unique technique of Rājayogasādhana (Practice of Rāja yoga) in yoga sūtra with empiric annotation and connotation. In four chapters of yoga sūtra, he has explained Samādhi in first chapter (pāda), Sādhana in the 2nd, Vibhūti (divine power) in 3rd and kaivalya (Self realization) in the fourth chapter Systematically and Scientifically. Rāja Yoga Sādhana is a Spiritual endeavour of Constant practice and Concentrated effort which produce

the everlasting spirit to fulfil the pursuit of soul on the path of divine success. Swātmārāma explains that ^[28] Success is not attained by the mere wearing Yoga garments or the dress of sanyāsi nor by conversation about Yoga so anyone, who practises Yoga he be young, old, extremely aged, even the sick can obtain success in Yoga ^[29]. śankarāchārya has described the highest truth of life in Aparokshānubhūti ^[30] – “नित्याभ्यासादृते प्राप्तिर्न भवेत् सच्चिदात्मनः, तस्माद् ब्रह्म निदिध्यासेज्जिज्ञासुः श्रेयसे चिरम्” ॥ which means the realization of Brahma or Ātmā is not produced without constant spiritual practice, so one seeking after knowledge should long meditate upon brahma for the attainment of desired goal. It is also elaborated in Vivekacūdāmani that- ^[31] “न गच्छति विनापानं व्याधि औषधसेवनात्...” that means – self realization is attained by direct experience of the absolute. As diseases are not cured by pronouncing the word medicine but by taking it, like wise one can under go the true reality of the self (Deelcee)

on the way of direct spiritual realization not by merely uttering the word Brahma or Ātmā.

Systematic practices of Rāja Yoga

1. The five principles of Yama (Ethical disciplines) like – Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha are to be conceived for individual divinity and selfless moral service for society.
2. The five Niyama (Rules of conduct) like Saucha, Santosha, Tapa, Swādhyāya, Īśhwarapranidhāna are to be observed for the purification of mind to control passion and emotion.
3. Āsana or Postures bring steadiness and lightness of body and creates mental tranquility. Siddhāsana, Padmāsana, Sukhāsana are the best meditative postures during the practice of RājaYoga.
4. Prānāyāma is a divine discipline for the control of mind and senses. The practice of prānāyāma is expounded in three categories in Hatha yoga such as Puraka (Prolongation of inhalation), Kumvaka (Retention), Rechaka (Exhalation) but in Rājayoga these three processes are avoidable as these happen automatically during the course of observation of Prāna (Vital force). Real Prānāyāma is considered as ajapā-japa (Unconscious) chanting of real self. It is described in treatise as- सोऽहम् (I am that Brahma)/शिवोऽहम् (I am Siva). Here inward breath is called Brahma or Siva and out going breath is treated as individual spirit.
5. Pratyāhāra means withdrawal of senses from sensual objects. The yogī prefers pratyāhāra for the restraint of senses while running before external pleasant objects. By virtue of this practice man becomes able to renounce the attachment towards cosmic phenomenon and emerge with the self-luminous divinity.
6. Dhāranā- After practicing five limbs of yoga i.e Bahiraṅga sādhanā yogī enters to the practice of Saṁyama sādhanā i.e Antaraṅga yoga to attain the state of complete absorption. Dhāranā means fixing or concentrating the mind on a single point. The practice of Yoga Dhāranā is beautifully represented in Gīta that [32]. “सर्वं द्वाराणि संयम्य मनोहृदिनिर्धाय च, मूर्धन्याधायाम्नः प्राणमस्थितः योग धारणाम्” Which means Restraining all the passages or gates of the body and fixing the mind in the heart and drawing the life force to the head men become established in yoga or yogic concentration.
7. Dhyāna- Mahārṣi Patañjali says [33] - “तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम्” that means the uninterrupted flow of mind towards single point of object is called meditation or contemplation. Yoga is nothing it is full of meditation. Meditation does not mean nearly sitting in a āsana closing eyes and making spine erect. It is a single-focused attention to innermost true self (Ātmā) or god and goddesses or any object of the cosmos. Dhyāna is the easiest, harmonious and effortless practice where man forgets personal identity and get absorbed in the concentrated thing. It is the wakeful state of yogī for true transformation.
8. Samādhi is a sādhanā for minimizing fluctuations of consciousness and mental afflictions on the path of emancipation (kaivalya). Patañjali defines Samādhi in 3rd chapter of yoga sutra as [34] - “तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः” In the state of Samādhi only the

essence of object shines in the mind and own form of existence, disappear. Samādhi is the final destination and innermost transformation of Rājayoga sādhanā.

Rājayoga is an important way of awakening Kundalinī. It is the creative cosmic power (शक्तिः) of pranic energy. This Kundalinī śhakti is conceived to be lying dormant in the form of a serpent with 3 and half coils. The three coils indicate the three state of chitta (consciousness), namely waking (Jāgrat), dreaming (Swapna), sleeping (Suṣupti). The last half coil is the fourth state (Turīya) which represents the state of transcendence. Kundalinī śhakti moves upward through suṣumnā nādi in the spinal cord to reach sahasrāra as a result yogī attains the highest realization. There are different opinions about the seat of Kundalinī. Some of yogī speak Mūlādhāra other speak Sahasrāra. In reality Kūndalinī dwells at Mūlādhāra in dormant condition. It moves towards Sahasrāra when it is awakened. The path of Rāja yoga is neither meant for monks (मेव³ेमेर) nor for house holder (गृहस्थ), it is a universal approach for all human beings. The greatest effect of this yoga is the conquest of Prakruti Puruṣha, mastery over the elements [35] (पञ्चमहाभूत), mastery over the sense objects (पञ्चतन्मात्रा) and organs of senses (इन्द्रिय) as well as the mastery over mind. According to Patañjali we find the classification of Samādhi in two ways i.e. Sabīja Samādhi (स्वरूपशून्य-अवस्था)-the state of loosing awareness of oneself and Nirbīja Samādhi (स्वरूप-प्रतिष्ठा) means the fine state of establishment of the seer in own glory of the self.

Important seven chakras	
Name	Location
Mūlādhāra Chakra	Mūlādhāra is located inside the perineum (Middle of Pelvic and Anus. It is the root of chakra system and seat of Kundalinī śhakti.
Swādhīsthān Chakra	The genital Organ (The organ of generation)
Manipura Chakra	It is situated in the naval.
Anāhata Chakra	At the heart (In the Cardiac region)
Viśuddha Chakra	Thyroid gland (In the pharyngeal area)
Ājñā Chakra	The mid-eyebrow centre
Sahasrāra Chakra	In the Brain

The word chakra means wheel or circle which cannot be visualized in physical body. According to Anatomical science it can be experienced in the subtle body through the circular movements of energy. Through the chakravedan kriyā (Passing the chakras by mind concentrating on each of them starting from Mūlādhāra to Sahasrāra) by uplifting the mind through suṣumnā yogī becomes able to come into the union with the supreme. The three Nādis like Idā, Pingalā, and Suṣumnā are most important among 72000 or more such nādis (channels) in human body. Here idā is known as the moon (mental power), pingalā is the sun (pranic energy) and suṣumnā is the channel (spiritual power). Kundalinī śhakti after being awakened passes through suṣumnā nādi (Spinal cord) up to Ājñā chakra. The left hemisphere of the brain is activated when idā flows in the left nostril, the right hemisphere is activated when pingalā flows in the right nostril. Both idā and pingalā cross over each other from swādhīsthāna chakra to ājñā chakra. At the end idā, pingalā

and suṣumnā mixed one another in the ājnā chakra (pineal gland). The chakravedan kriyā (The ascending and descending process of mind in between Mūlādhāra chakra and Sahasrāra chakra) is described as kundalinī yoga for merging of individual consciousness with super consciousness.

In reality there is no discrimination among eight stages of yoga, as all these eight parts put together form one integrated yoga i.e. Rājayoga. Each one entity of eight limbs appears with separate identity as Yama, Niyama etc. in the initial stage of practice as all thoughts imply duality where as the Ātmā is non-dual. But when yogī is established in his own self, no multitude of components can hinder the seer from the reality of his pure existence in Raja Yoga.

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