
UNIT 4 YOGA PHILOSOPHY

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Organization of the Yoga-Sutras
- 4.3 Psychology of Yoga
- 4.4 The Eight-Fold Yoga (Astanga Yoga)
- 4.5 God and Liberation
- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Further Readings and References
- 4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, you will have an exposition to Yoga Philosophy. You will learn different stages, various forms, and modifications of Citta. You will also find the explanation on the eight-fold path of yoga. Further, you will be familiar with the Yogikas' views on God and liberation.

After working through this unit, you should be able to:

- explain various forms of Citta;
- elucidate different kinds of Klesas;
- discuss the eight-fold path of yoga; and
- analyze the Yoga views on liberation.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you must have studied Samkhya philosophy in an elaborate manner. Their views on purusa, prakariti, pramanas (sources of valid knowledge), bondage, and liberation.

In this unit you will be explained what are the eight fold path of yoga, how liberation can be attained, how mind gets purified, how to control bodily act, and some more issues allied to Yoga School of thought.

The Yoga philosophy speaks about the theory and practice for the realization of the ultimate truth concerning human being and the world. In Vedanta, yoga is understood as 'union', i.e. spiritual union of the individual soul with the supreme soul. This view is not explained clearly. Patanjali, who is the founder of the Yoga System says, yoga is a spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of sense organs, gross body, subtle mind, intellect and ego. It guides to achieve the highest wisdom through spiritual realization.

Patanjali's 'Yoga-sutras' are the first and foremost systematic and authoritative presentations of yoga in both its theoretical and practical aspects. Followed by

Patanjali, Vasys’s “Yoga–bhasya” and Vacavpati Mishra’s ‘Tattva-vaissaradi’ are the good additions to Yoga philosophy. These two works are treated as commentaries on Yoga-sutras.

The Yoga Philosophy is closely associated with Samkhya philosophy. The Yoga presents a practical path for the realization of the self whereas the Samkhya emphasizes the attainment of knowledge of self by means of concentration and meditation. Thus, it won’t be incorrect to state that yoga is the practice and Samkhya is its theory. The Gita says that Yoga and Samkhya are the practical and theoretical sides of the same system.

Although there are many similarities found between Samkhya and Yoga system yet a few dissimilarities are highlighted. The similarities are; both the schools uphold that liberation can be attained through knowledge. And, to attain this knowledge it requires the power to control body, mind, senses, intellect and ego. Yoga accepts three pramanas which are agreed by the Samkhya. These three Pramanas are; perception, inference and verbal testimony. There are twenty five metaphysical Principles as viewed by the Samkhya and it is agreed by the Yoga. The dissimilarities lie when Yoga states that there is only one and one Purusa is known as ‘Supreme self’ who is eternal, ubiquitous, beyond time and space. Rejecting this view, Samkhya expresses that there are many Purusas and hence, there are innumerable number of selves.

Now let us know the Patanjali’s organization of Yoga-sutras.

4.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE YOGA-SUTRAS

Patanjali’s Yoga-Sutras consist of four parts. These are:

- i) Samadhipada
- ii) Sadhanapada
- iii) Vibhutipada
- iv) Kaivalyapada

The first part deals with the introduction to the nature and methods of yoga in its various forms. It describes the various modifications of the organs including citta which is an internal organ of human being. The second part explains the causes of suffering and how to eradicate them. It talks about the law of karma and human bondage. The third part elucidates the concept how to achieve the supra-normal powers and in which ways yoga helps it. The last or the final part describes the nature of liberation and spiritual union with the supreme soul/self.

4.3 PSYCHOLOGY OF YOGA

Psychological foundation is the prerequisite to understand the path of yoga. In other words, a basic understanding of psychology helps to understand the path of yoga in a clear form. Thus, we need to understand in a priority basis ‘what is psychology of yoga?’. The most important element in the psychology of yoga is citta. ‘Citta’ means the three internal organs as described in the Samkhya philosophy- buddhi or intellect, ahamkara or ego, and manas or mind. It is the first-modifications of the Prakriti in which sattva guna dominates rajas and tamas.

It is material by nature, but due to nearness or closeness with the Purusa, it acquires consciousness. But when it relates to an object, it assumes the 'form' of that object. This form is called Vrtti or modification. Due to the modifications of Citta, the self knows the worldly objects. There is no real or actual modification occurred in the self. But due to the reflection of the Purusa in the modifications of Citta, there is an appearance of change found in it. Just as the moon appears as moving in the river and waves of the river appear as luminous, similarly Purusa appears as undergoing modifications and citta appears as conscious due to Purusa's reflection in it. When the knowledge of an object is attained the self ceases to exist from the modifications of Citta. It even detached from the association and aversion of the worldly joys and pain. This attachment and aversion is nothing but 'bondage'. To get rid from these bondage human beings need to control the modifications of citta. One can control the modifications of citta only by practicing yoga in continuous manner. In this regard, Patanjali defines yoga as the cessation of the modification of citta.

On the account of Yoga philosophy, citta has different stages and various forms. Let us discuss these issues one after the other.

4.3.1 Stages of Citta

There are five stages of citta called as 'citta bhumi'.

a) Ksipta (Restless)

This is the first-stage of citta. In this stage citta is very much distributed and attached with worldly objects. For example, Citta of those intoxicated by the possession of power and money.

b) Mudha (Torpid)

In this stage, tamas dominates the other two gunas; sattva and rajas. This stage of citta is known as mudha. For example, citta of the intoxicated persons.

c) Viksipta (Distracted)

This is the third stage of citta where sattva guna dominates the other two gunas. In this stage yoga begins and citta tries to attain god or supreme soul. Due to the sattva dominance, it is found that there is temporary ceasing of the modifications of the citta.

d) Ekagra (concentrated)

This is the fourth stage of Citta. In this stage, citta is fixed to some object due to the sattva preponderance. It is known as ekagra. For example, the flame of a candle light remains always pointing up without flicking hither and thither.

e) Niruddha (Restricted)

The fifth and final stage of citta is niruddha. In this stage the impressions remain in the citta after the cession of modifications. This stage is known as yoga.

Out of these five stages the last two are very helpful and hence useful in yoga. But the remaining stages are harmful for practicing in yoga and thus, these may be removed by practice.

4.3.2 Forms of Citta

Since citta is embedded with three gunas -sattva, rajas and tamas, it constantly changes. This is so because of the dominance nature of one guna on others. Hence, there are three forms of citta noticed. These are;

- i) Prakhya
- ii) Pravrti
- iii) Sthiti

Prakhya

Sattva Guna is dominating in this stage. But, tamas remains as subordinate to sattva. The citta aspires for different powers of yoga in this form. For example, anima, siddhi. etc,

Pravrti

In this form, the citta is predominated by rajas. Tamas, here, becomes weak. Thus, this form appears to be enlightened. Example of this form of citta would be “dhyana” or “dharna”.

Sthiti

The citta is predominated by sattva, and rajas is subordinating to it. In this form citta holds its own form and differentiating from others.

Check Your Progress I

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) What is citta?

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An important aspect of citta is that it modifies. And, the modified citta is known as vrtti on the view of Yoga Philosophy.

4.3.3 Modifications of Citta

The citta gets modify or change and acquires consciousness due to the reflection of the Purusa or the self. But the real nature of citta is material. The changes in citta are known as modifications of Vrttis.

The modifications of citta are of five types. These are:

- i) Pramana (right cognition)
- ii) Viparyaya (wrong cognition)
- iii) Vikalpa (imagination)
- iv) Nidra (sleep)
- v) Smrti (memory)

Pramana

Yoga school, like Samkhya adheres to three pramanas. These are; perception, inference and sabda (verbal testimony). In the case of perception, the citta through sense organs (both external and internal) comes into contact with external objects of the world and assumes its form. In case of inference, the citta cognizes the generic nature of objects and this is equally applicable to verbal testimony also.

Viparyaya

The expression ‘Viparyaya’ is understood as ‘doubt’. To possess not determinate knowledge of an object is known as doubt. For example, seeing an object and not able to cognize whether it is a shell or a silver is resulted in doubt.

Vikalpa

It is the knowledge in which the object is known but the object does not exist. Thus, it is treated as merely a verbal cognition. For example, barren women’s child, horses’ horn, etc.

Nidra

Nidra is a mental modification where there will be no cognition. It is the knowledge of the absence of objects. In this stage, the citta is predominated by tamas. However, this stage won’t ignore the mild presence of knowledge while some body is in sleep. This is so because after waking up from sleep the person has consciousness that (s)he had slept well and knew nothing. Thus, some sorts of modifications are occurred even in sleep.

Smrti

Memory or smrti is the recapitulation or recollection of past experiences. Recapitulation is possible through our impressions that we left on the objects while cognized. Thus in this stage some sorts of modifications are found in citta.

Check Your Progress II

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Smrti (memory) is a modification of the citta. Explain it.

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4.3.4 Kinds of Klesas

There are several causes responsible for the disturbances in the citta. Among those a few are; attachment with objects of the world, cognizing the objects wrongly, inactivity, doubt, carelessness, etc. These causes arise because citta imagines itself as the agent and the enjoyer because of Purusa's reflection on it. Hence, we find the earthly sufferings (klesas).

The Yoga philosophy mentions that there are five kinds of klesas or suffering. These are;

- i) Avidya (ignorance)
- ii) Asmita (egoism)
- iii) Raga (attachment)
- iv) Dwesa (aversion)
- v) Abhinivesa (clinging for long life and fear of death)

Avidya arises when we cognizing the self as non-eternal and material. But the real nature of the self is bliss, eternal, and possesses pure consciousness. Asmita is wrongly identifying Purusa and Prakrti, and further, bringing them in an equal platform. But in reality, purusa and Prakrti are two distinct entities, thus, can't be equated with each other. Raga is the craving to get worldly pleasure like power, money, etc. Dwesa is anger in the means of suffering. The last, abhinivesa is fear of death which finds among all living beings in the earth.

4.4 THE EIGHT-FOLD YOGA (ASTANGA YOGA)

We the human beings have body, sense organs, and mind, hence, it is obvious to have sensual attachment and passion towards worldly objects. As a result, we have drawn in the river of bondage and worldly sufferings. To get rid of earthly suffering and to remove the ignorance that find within us, we have to conquer our sense organs, mind and even our bodily act. To do so the citta needs to be controlled. In this respect, yoga philosophy prescribes eight-fold path which helps to control our passions and craving for worldly pleasures.

These eight fold path are as follows.

- i) Yama
- ii) Niyama
- iii) Asana
- iv) Pranayama
- v) Pratyahara
- vi) Dharana
- vii) Dhyana
- viii) Samadhi

Now let us discuss these points one after another in a sequential manner.

i) Yama

It is the control of mind, body, and speech.

The five yamas are:

- a) **Ahimsa**: it means to accept the principle non-violence. It upholds that not to kill or do any injuries to any living beings.
- b) **Satya**: Satya or truth says that to speak the truth and adhere to truth even in your thinking.
- c) **Asteya**: it upholds the principle non-stealing. This includes both not desiring on others' wealth and not stealing any goods from others.
- d) **Brahmacharya**: it is known as celibacy. Here one needs to control his/her senses towards the attachment of heavenly pleasures. It restrains somebody for not having sexual life.
- e) **Aparigraha**: it says not to accept and aspire for any sorts of unnecessary lavish things for life enjoyment like gold, diamond, etc.

All these yamas are badly required for the concentration of citta.

ii) Niyama

It speaks about the rules for possessing good conduct. There are five niyamas as follows.

- a) **Saucha**: it says about cleanliness which includes both external cleaning (e.g. bath, pure diet, hair cutting and cleaning, nail cutting etc.) and internal cleaning (e.g. friendliness, empathy, happiness, smile, etc).
- b) **Santosh**: it is understood as contentment. It means be satisfy with yourself whatever you attain or posses. In other words, "what you are, you must be happy with that".
- c) **Tapa**: Tapa or penance includes the power of tolerance. To tolerate extreme and maximum cold and heat, one needs to do the hard practices. And, this is possible through tapa.
- d) **Swadhyaya**: it says one needs to study religious scriptures to develop his/her spiritual knowledge. It is considered as one of the good principle to possess good conduct.
- e) **Iswara Pranidhan**: It says always remember God is the supreme authority and all mighty. One should completely surrender himself/herself to him. This is a practice which helps for the development of good conduct upholds by yoga philosophy.

iii) Asana

It is an advanced stage of yoga. It speaks about to do various bodily postures which helps to retain concentration of citta and even helps to control the body as well as mind. There are various types of asana. Among them, a few includes, padma, sirsa, chakra, garuda, maura etc. It is advisable to do regular practice of asana. The reason is, it not only controls the body such as keeps the body flexible, increase the immunity, etc. but also keeps the body free from diseases and make it strong and healthy. By doing regular asana one can control the different external and internal organs of the body.

iv) **Pranayama**

This is the fourth stage in the practice of yoga. Pranayama is understood as control of breath. It suggests that practicing pranayama helps the agent to control his/her inhaling and exhaling of breath. This helps the citta to remain concentrate and focused. Through pranayama one can control his/her body by doing some postures. This makes agent remains healthy and good.

Pranayama has three steps. These are;

- a) Puraka
- b) Kumbhak
- c) Recaka

The first step puraka conveys to take as much air as possible. It is known as inhaling. The second step Kumbhak expresses after inhaling as much air as possible tries to retain it for half of the time taken in inhaling. The third step 'recaka' states that gradually exhale the air by taking the same time that your had consumed while taking inhalation.

These three steps will gradually accelerate, so that in due course of time the agent may control his/her breath which helps the citta to remain concentrate and not disturbed.

v) **Pratyahara**

In this stage, the agent should control his/her sense organs for not being attracted by the worldly objects. He/she will try to restrain the sense organs for not clinging desperately for the objects of the world. Hence, craving for an object would be ceased. By practicing this yoga, the agent can keep his/her mind undisturbed from worldly objects even while living in the earth. To do this practice it requires strong determination and repression of the senses.

vi) **Dharana**

Our mind constantly shifts from one object to another. To keep our mind focused in one particular point and tries to check for its frequency of shifting one object to another is called as dharana. In this stage, the agent keeps his/her mind continuously engage in one object and tries to bring back the mind to that particular object if it is shifted to another object as quick as possible. Example, an agent tries to concentrate to the top of the flame of a candle, concentrating on the cap of a water bottle.

vii) **Dhyana**

It is one step ahead to dharana. In this stage, the aspirant becomes successful to remain concentrate on an object in a longer time. Here, the aspirant realizes the whole object by concentrating its one part. This step is known as meditation. It helps to realize the true nature of the citta.

viii) **Samadhi**

The eight and last step of yoga is known as samadhi. This is the apex stage of yoga. In this stage, the aspirant negates the differences between subject and object, realizes the true nature of the citta that how it attains the form of the object. Here, the process of concentration and the object becomes one and identical. This stage is known as cessation of modification of the citta.

Check Your Progress III

- Notes:** a) Space is given below for your answers.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.
- 1) List the eight fold path of yoga.

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Samadhi is of two kinds. Samprajnat or sabeej (attributed samadhi) and asamprajnat or nirbija (attributeless samadhi).

Samprajnat (Conscious Samadhi)

In this form of samadhi, the aspirant becomes aware of his/her concentration. When the citta is concentrated on one object, the similar kind of object of modifications occurs in the citta. This is known as conscious samadhi or samprajnat. Concentrating on one object leads to controlling the distracted mind which often attaches to different objects of the world. Thus, it is said that focusing on one object implies dissociating from other objects. Since attachment for worldly pleasures cause suffering, the attention towards a particular object removes worldly sufferings (klesas) and passion for worldly pleasures. This helps to receive the real knowledge of an object and becomes free from law of karma or karmic influx.

This conscious samadhi is further divided in four types. These are;

- a) Savitarka samadhi
- b) Savicar samadhi
- c) Sanand samadhi
- d) Sasmit samadhi

Savitarka Samadhi

In this stage, the citta is concentrated on a gross object and clearly identify it through meditation. For example, meditating to see the top of a nose.

Savicar Samadhi

In this stage, the citta is concentrated on subtle object and assumes its form. For example, concentrating on tanmantras (rupa, rasa, gandha, sabda, sparsa).

Sanand Samadhi

In this stage, the citta is concentrated on a sattvika subtler object and produces happiness and joy. It even helps in attaining bliss.

Sasmit Samadhi

In this stage, the citta is concentrated on the ego-substance which is identified with the self. Hence, individuality becomes an existent.

Asamprajnat (Supra-conscious)

This is the highest form of samadhi. In this stage, there will be no distinction found between subject and object. The worldly attachment and sufferings disappear. Thus, it is known as attribute less samadhi or nirbija.

Out of these eight stages of yoga, the first five are to be practiced by external means and the remaining three stages are to be practiced by internal means. This is so because the first five stages are merely preparatory to the latter three stages. The last three stages of yoga are directly connected with yoga.

Check Your Progress IV

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Discuss asamprajnat Samadhi.

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4.5 GOD AND LIBERATION

The Yoga school while accepting the existence of God explains the salient features of God that are found in ‘Yoga sutra’. According to the Yoga Philosophy, God is free from the law of karma, pain, pleasure, joys, and all sorts of worldly attachments. He is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. In the Yoga Philosophy, God is called as ‘Iswara’. He has eternal knowledge and bliss. His existence is beyond all limitations. He is the supreme authority. What he does, it is not for his own sake but only for the sake of the universe.

Since God is eternal, benevolent, all mighty and all pervasive, he is dissociated from law of karma. Therefore, he does not need any kind of liberation. An individual (Jiva) seeks liberation because he/she has to bear the fruits of his/her karmas. But God is transcendent to everything. Thus, he is detached from liberation. The Yoga school of liberation is named as ‘kevali’.

There are three arguments offered by the Yoga school for the existence of God. These are;

- i) **Scriptural testimony:** scriptures are ancient and old but stands as references for the existence of god. In Vedas and the Upanishads, it is described that God is the ultimate existence, eternal and sumum bonum of life.

- ii) **The efficient cause:** Prakrti and Purusa, since they are different and distinct in their nature, they can't come close to each other without intervention of an efficient cause. This efficient cause is 'God'. He is responsible for bringing prakriti near to the purusa. As a result, the world and living beings in it are created.
- iii) **The ultimate in hierarchy:** we the human beings possess limited knowledge. Hence, we have ego, intellect and buddhi. But God is free from all these properties. He is the 'Supreme Being' and the source of all substratum of the universe and became the creator of all living creatures in the earth. He is the creator and the destroyer of the universe. The whole world is so vast that an ordinary human being can neither create nor control over it. Hence, God's existence is acclaimed.

Check Your Progress V

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Explain the causes for the existence of God in a brief manner.

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4.6 LET US SUM UP

Yoga sutras are the basic text of yoga philosophy. These are written by Patanjali. The Samkhya philosophy is closely associated with the Yoga philosophy. In this regard, the Gita says, Yoga and Samkhya are the practical and theoretical sides of the same system.

One among the other dissimilarities between these two schools is Yoga accepts only one purusa whereas Samkhya accepts the existence of many purusas or selves.

Organization of the yoga sutra

Patanjali prescribes the following organization of the yoga sutras.

- i) Samadhipada
- ii) Sadhanapada
- iii) Vibhutipada
- iv) Kaivalyapada

Orthodox Systems-1

The citta is an important element of the psychology of yoga. There are five stages of citta. These are;

- i) Ksipta (Restless)
- ii) Mudha (Torpid)
- iii) Viksipta (Distracted)
- iv) Ekagra (Concentrated)
- v) Niruddha (Restricted)

The citta has three forms. These are;

- i) Prakhya
- ii) Pravrti
- iii) Sthiti

The citta modifies due to the reflection of the Purusa on it. It is known as citta-vrtti. There are five types of modifications found in the citta.

- i) Pramana
- ii) Viparyaya
- iii) Vikalpa
- iv) Nidra
- v) Smrti

We the human beings suffer because of the modifications of citta, which is known as klesas in Yoga philosophy. Klesas are of five kinds.

- i) Avidya
- ii) Asmita
- iii) Raga
- iv) Dwesa
- v) Abhinivesa

The eight fold yoga

- i) Yama – non violence, non-hatred
- ii) Niyama- cleanliness, reading religious scriptures
- iii) Asana- to do different postures
- iv) Pranayama – control of breathe
- v) Pratyahara – controlling passions for objects
- vi) Dharana
- vii) Dhyana
- viii) Samadhi

Samadhi is of two types.

- i) Conscious Samadhi (Samprajnata)
- ii) Supra-Conscious Samadhi (Asamprajnata)

Further, samprajnat samadhi is divided into four kinds.

- i) Savitarka Samadhi
- ii) Savicar Samadhi
- iii) Sanand Samadhi
- iv) Sasmit Samadhi

According to the Yoga philosophy, God is known as ‘Iswara’. He is the creator of this universe. He is beyond time and space. He is eternal, all pervading, and free from liberation. A jiva or an individual seeks liberation because of his/her karmic influx. But God is beyond the karmic chain. He is almighty, benevolent and sumum bonum of one’s life. ‘Liberation’ in the Yoga philosophy is known as “kaivalya” and the aspirant to attain the liberation is known as ‘kevali’.

4.7 KEY WORDS

Citta : Citta (Pali) is one of three overlapping terms used in the to refer to the mind, the others being manas and vijnana. It primarily represents one’s mindset, or state of mind.

Klesas : Klesa is the source of suffering.

4.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

The most important element in the psychology of yoga is citta. ‘Citta’ means the three internal organs as described in the Samkhya philosophy- buddhi or intellect, ahamkara or ego, and manas or mind. It is the first-modifications of the Prakriti in which sattva guna dominates rajas and tamas.

Check Your Progress II

Memory or smrti is the recapitulation or recollection of past experiences. Recapitulation is possible through our impressions that we left on the objects while cognized. Thus in this stage some sorts of modifications are found in citta.

Check Your Progress III

The eight fold path of yoga are as follows.

- ix) Yama
- x) Niyama

Orthodox Systems-1

- xi) Asana
- xii) Pranayama
- xiii) Pratyahara
- xiv) Dharana
- xv) Dhyana
- xvi) Samadhi

Check Your Progress IV

Asamprajnat samadhi is the highest form of samadhi. In this stage, there will be no distinction found between subject and object. The worldly attachment and sufferings disappear. Thus, it is known as attribute less samadhi or nirbija.

Check Your Progress V

As per the yoga school of thought the existence of God can be proved from the fact that the Holy Scriptures testify it. Also, God's existence is a necessity for the two distinct substances of prakriti and purusha to come forming a union. Also, He is the culminating point in the gradation of the things.