

## **Altering Domains of Yoga: An Arcane Discipline or Orthodox Philosophy?**

**R Ramanand**

*Centre of Social Medicine And Community Health Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi 110067India*

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**ABSTRACT:** The trajectory of Yoga talks a captivating account of pluralistic philosophies and cultural realms that crafted Yoga as a discipline. The ascetic, gnostic and mystical traditions have shaped Yoga as an organised discipline to accomplish the higher goals visualised in their ontological imaginations. From an ascetic, gnostic and mystic realm Yoga was thrown tangentially to the camp of Vedanta. The Vedantic redaction of Yoga in the later times re-interpreted the foundational values of Yoga to fit that into the epistemology of Vedanta. The story of Yoga from historical times is a brawl between irreconcilable axiologies.

**KEYWORDS:** Yoga, *Samkhya*, Semen, Root-Lock posture, Discipline, Philosophy

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Yoga has become a fashionable idea in the public imagination, and it has even become synonym to healthy living and lifestyle. On 2014 December 11<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations declared June 21<sup>st</sup> of every year to be celebrated as the International Yoga day. After this declaration, the insistence of Yoga in the parlance and memory of common people knew no bounds, as it superseded the academic, spiritual and health interests of Indologists, Spiritualists and Lifestyle enthusiasts.

The importance of Yoga soon became a much-discussed topic all over the world. Interestingly, the initial responses to Yoga were strange as it was introduced to the world as a Health-quotient of Spiritual India. In 1971, the forerunner of a new-age Yoga studio in America Sat Jivan Singh Khalsa told Huffington Post, "people confused Yoga and Yoghurt"(Gregoire, 2013). From that age of ignominy till now, Yoga has scaled enviable heights. It can be said that India's most famous cultural export, Yoga has morphed into a mass culture phenomenon. In the United States, in particular, Yoga has become a commodity. Statistics show that about 16 million Americans practise Yoga every year' (White, 2011,p.2)

From these current realities, it is essential to investigate the spirit of Yoga. Is there a clear answer to this question? If there is no answer to the question of what is Yoga, especially at an age it has been so secularised and made famous? These questions have to be read with the new, neatly power-packed commodity that Yoga has become.

This paper looks at the main argument if primitive societies have systematically developed Yoga as a discipline. Or is it an orthodox knowledge system? The answers to these two questions are an open-sesame moment to delve deeply into the history, philosophy and centuries of Yoga's transits, its ebbs and flows to morph into the current form.

The primary sources of this paper are selected chapters from *Patanjala Yogasutra*, *HathaYoga Pradeepika* by Swathmarama, *Gorakshasatakam*, *Bhagavatgita* and *Mahabharata-Shanti Parva*. Journal articles on Yoga from different sources are also used as secondary sources in this paper.

The paper seeks to answer the very pertinent question of how Yoga exalts and grows from the concept of merely being a life-style panacea to holistic health, to a discipline intended to enhance mystical, emotional experiences. It shall also be looking into the most popular and documented text of *Patanjala Yogasutra*, which helped Yoga develop its discourses into a systematised and ancient disciplinary form. Also it investigates the eight limbs of *Patanjala Yoga* following the ascetic-Yoga thought which existed before the era of composition the Yogasutra. The paper also looks to see Yoga as a philosophy authenticates and justifies the primitive paths traversed by this discipline.

### **Yoga, as a Discipline**

The scholars who searched for the seminal roots of Yoga discovered them in the crucial premises and milestones of the Indus Valley settlements. On the banks of the Sindu river, where the hidden memories of the Indus civilisation are deeply buried, perhaps nestles the hidden cache of yogic origins. Perhaps, that might have

been the time when even the nomenclature of Yoga was not existent.

The connection between Yoga and the Indus Valley was first broached by the Indian scholar Ramaprasad Chanda, who proposed that the sculpted figure that Marshall would identify as a priest had its eyes "neither wide open nor totally shut," as the Jaina Ādipurāna recommends for meditation, with its gaze fixed on the tip of its nose, as recommended in the Bhagavad Gita and common elsewhere in yogic literature. Chanda proposed a lineage for Yoga that the elements of pre-Vedic cults in Yoga is very much visible from the Āsanās practised today. Begins with the Indus Valley and continues through the Yatis of the Rg Veda and the Vratyas of Atharva Veda XV to historical yogic movements (Mcevilley, 1981,p.45)

The related debates which lead to the excavation of yogic origins are fascinating. Among the various debates about the Indus Valley Seal which dates back to 3000 BC, claim that it is Siva on the one hand and the other believes it is the naked ascetic of the Sramana Cult; however, the scholars engage themselves and unanimously agree with the sitting posture in the seal. The scholars solidly opine that the posture which is popularised in *HathaYoga* is called Moolabandhasana. Moolabandhasana, according to the scholars, is not just a sitting posture but a yogic posture with many spiritual meanings written into it. Interestingly, *Padmasana*, *Koormasana*, *Dhyanyogasana*, *Gorakshasana* (Srinivasan, 1976; Mcevilley, 1981; McEville, 2002; Dhyansky, 2017), were the sitting postures of as ancient as the Indus Valley Civilisation and scholars have noted that continued the way they were even during the time of *HathaYoga*. The most exciting feature of these asanas is their philosophy, which is deeply rooted in esoteric imaginations, seeks fulfilment through physical mortifications in the form of austere exercises. The seeds of Yoga have its origins in the pre-Vedic Shamanic traditions which might have later transformed into an ascetic discourse via Sramanism, and later stylising and transmigrating itself into the new form as postural Yoga.

The sitting posture of the Indus traditions has been very reverently described and detailed in *Akaranga Sutra* and *Kalpa Sutra* of the Jain traditions. *Kalpasutra*, mentions with sufficient clarity, Lord Mahavira's practise of penance to achieve these Yogic skills<sup>1</sup>.

Interestingly, these asanas, like Moolabandasana and Utkasasana, serve specific unique purposes for the physical and spiritual well-being of the humankind.

Swamy Satyananda Saraswathy cites *Hathayogapradeepika* and says that Moolabhandhasana is unique and is a rigorous sitting posture to practice.

Press the heels against the perineum and contract it firmly<sup>2</sup>. Draw the apana upwards. This is known as moola bandha." Here, the word apana refers to the function of the body, at all levels, gross and subtle, which expels energy and waste materials from the body. In the context of pranayama, apana refers to exhalation. "The downward action of apana should be directed upwards by contraction of the perineum "Moola bandha brings about the union of prana and apana, and nada and Bindu. This will bestow perfection in Yoga (Saraswati, 1989, p.560)

Swamy Satyananda Saraswathy claims that *Moolabandhasana* brings perfection and completeness in Yoga. This notion of perfection can perhaps explain the meaning of Yoga within the institution of postural Yoga. What is perfection in Yoga? Perfection in bonding all the physical desires and directing semen through the spine channel to *Sahasrara* Chakra through the yogic posture of *Moolabandhasana*. Those sages who could direct semen upwards were called *Urdhwaretan*. This term is used extensively in Vedic and Sramanic pieces of literature. John Marshall describes the Indus seal as sitting in *Moolabandhasana* as an *Urdhwamedhra* in his writings<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Kalpa* sutra reads as (as cited in Mcevilley, 1981, p. 51)

During the thirteenth year, in the second month of the summer ... on the northern bank of the river Rigupalika, in the field of a householder Samagra, in a northeastern direction from an old temple, not far from a Sal tree, in a squatting position with joined heels, exposing himself to the heat of the sun, after fasting two and a half days without drinking water, being engaged in deep meditation, he reached the highest knowledge and intuition, called kevala, which is infinite, supreme, unobstructed, unimpeded, complete and full.

<sup>2</sup> *Atha mūlabandhah*

*Pārshnibhāghena sampīdya yonimākuñchayedghudam*  
*Apānamūrdhvamākṛshya mūlabandhoabhidhīyate*

Pressing Yoni (perineum) with the heel, contract up the anus. By drawing the Apana thus, mula Bandha is made (Swatmarama, 2002)

<sup>3</sup> John Marshall describes the seal as follows The god, who is three faced, is seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of Yoga, with legs bent double beneath him, heel to heel, and toes turned downwards...over his breast is a triangular pectoral or perhaps a series of necklaces and torques....the phallus (*Urdhwamedhra*) [is] seemingly exposed. (Mircea Eliade, 1958, p.355)

Interestingly, many of the sects and cults who were outside or against Vedic practices like the *Vaikshanas*, *Vatarasanas*, *Maladhari*, *Yatis* and *Munis* were also termed as *Urdhwaretas*. The *Kesin* Hymn in the *Rigveda* about people with long dreadlocks were also looked at with vast academic interest world over (Werner, 1994). *Taittiriya* Upanishads term *Sramanas* as *Urdhwaretas* (Ghurye, 1952), and this is also another aspect which throws light into the fact there is an invisible thread that connects both.

Yoga was the lifestyle which was configured by the wandering ascetics who travelled horizonless, naked and in search of unravelling the cosmic and spiritual truths. We can see a long list of soteriological *dehavadis*<sup>4</sup> including the Gymnosophists, *Lokayatikas*, Jains, Buddhists (Levalley, 2000), and the *Nath* Yogis who followed them, *Siddhas* and *Sufis*, in the later times also manifested and practised their philosophy in the founding base of Yoga.

Among these ascetic orders, one of the common features that bind them all is the retention of bodily fluid, especially semen, through the practice of severe asceticism. *Gorakshasatakam* says thus:

*Yavad bindhu sthitho dehe twanmruthyubhayam kutah  
Yavad nabhomudra tavad bindur nagachhati*

While the Bindu remains in the body, there is no fear of death. As long as the Khecharimudra is continued, so long as the Bindu does not go down (Briggs, 1997)

Almost all Sramanic orders have had the practice of retaining semen in the body was practised in varying degrees. Many schools like the *Ajivikas*, Jains and *Teravada* Buddhists practised absolute abstinence and celibacy, while the *Yogacara* Buddhists and *Vajrayanis* interwove this practice of sexo-yogic techniques within the Tantric order, The Tantric Buddhism adopted the physical aspects of Yoga and nominally changed some tenets of the main concepts. The *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Sushumna* were substituted with *Prajna*, *Upaya* and *Avadhuti* (Dasgupta, 1922; Dasgupta, 1924) respectively. The Tantric Buddhism observes *Urdhwarethahood* and its accomplishments as follows

The flow of *Bodhicitta* is to be arrested through some process of Hatha-Yoga called *mudra*, *bandha* and *asana* and the *Pranayama* and it is held that through the proper practise of these processes the flow of *Bodhicitta* can be controlled by the Yogin under all circumstances. Now after the *Bodhicitta* is produced and its downward flow arrested, the *Bodhicitta* must march upward to reach the final stage in the *Usnisa-Kamala*<sup>5</sup> (Dasgupta, 1924,p.187).

Semen is the *Bodhicitta* element, that is mentioned here. Controlling and retaining semen within the body lead the yogi to experience esoteric sensations, and these sensations, according to ancient wisdom, are the pathways to the ultimate Nirvana or liberation of the body. One can see Yoga as a systematic and structured way of transforming ecstasy into esoteric experiences in the Shamanistic imagination. Even asceticism can be deemed as a preparatory pathway to the mystical paths, which leads to self-realisation<sup>6</sup> (Madsen, 2013).

The Yogi who attains the *Urdhwarethahood* through sustained abstinence and penance overcomes the destiny-driven sorrows of a common man and attains a transcendental state of mind. The spiritual superiority of Mahavira and other Tirthankaras mentioned in the Jain documents, and the accounts of spiritual skills exhibited by Buddha recorded in the *Buddhacharita*, and other Mahayana texts, the skills of *Makkhali Gosala* (Mircea Eliade, 1958; Mallinson, 2011), The miraculous powers of *Matsyendranath*, *Gorakhnath* of *Nath* tradition were all the result of the harsh *tapas* of abstinence, meditation and penance. The performance of these skills cannot be compared with the skills of an ordinary human being, and they proclaim that the yogis as different from ordinary human beings. Even Patanjali Yogasutra counts on these skills as exclusively a yogi's ascetic and esoteric asset. Many a time, throughout history, we can see that the obsession with attaining yogic and postural skills and their misuse was criticised as impediments to the path of enlightenment (James and Singleton, 2017). However, the

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<sup>4</sup> The *Dehavada* doctrine maintains body as miniature of the cosmos or in other words the Body i.e. the Microcosm is equal to Macrocosm. The dehavada doctrine that originated from the arcane asceticism of Indus valley is an important feature of all the Sramanic sects.

<sup>5</sup> The *Usnisa-Kamala* in esoteric Buddhism is coterminous with the *Sahsradalapadma* (Crown chakra) used in HathaYoga.

<sup>6</sup> An ascetic overrides the inputs from the senses and the mind – the signals of hunger, thirst, lust, fear, desire, fatigue, heat/coldness, anger, sadness, and pain. The ascetic wants to turn his back on the desires and attachments of this world by disciplining body and mind. Ascetic discourses typically claim that during this process of pain and self-mortification the ascetic becomes purified and strengthens his will. This practice leads to freedom or other metaphysical benefits. This is what we might call the meaning of asceticism– ‘the signified’... In very general terms, it seems that ascetic practices of painful self-denial lead to Altered States of Consciousness (ASC). Various cultures and ascetic discourses then ascribed different meaning to such mental and physical efforts and to the ASC accompanying the painful efforts (Madsen, 2013,p.170)

critics themselves later acknowledged the attainment of these skills as the Yogi's expertise.

Systematic and organised traversal through the yogic world, according to Patanjali, will lead to the ultimate liberation of realisation of self. Even the *Ashtangamargas* which lay the foundational stone of Patanjali indicates the same. *Yama*<sup>7</sup> is the first session where a person has to undertake as part of his ascetic vow. *Yama*'s etymology is from the etymological root *yama* or *yat*, which means control (Ghurye, 1952). *Yati* is the person who has controlled his self. To the question, what exactly was controlled, indicates to the previous answers that *Yati* is the person who had the power to control his fluids, especially his semen.

An individual's quest to spirituality or asceticism or a group's quest for spirituality are two diverse paths. Superficially, the recluse ascetic life and the monastic life even look contradictory. Monastic life necessitates the need for seclusion and introversion in ascetic life to something extroverted and socially inclusive. The second Yogic session in Patanjali contains instructions to maintain Yogic discipline in groups or among monks. The way *yama* controls a reclusive ascetic, the very same way specific Yogic rules (*Niyama*) regulate the monks who lead lives in communities. If we look at it carefully, we can also understand that *Niyama* ascertain a reclusive ascetic life and lay down regulations for an ascetic social life intermittently.

The third session speaks about Asanas in Classical Yoga. If we ask the asana limb of classical Yoga is exclusively talking about root lock asana meant to draw semen up? the answer is negative. Asanas in *Yogasutra* are just stable and comfortable positions. We can also notice that the present plethora of asanas that we know come from plural Yogic traditions other than Patanjali. The question as to why Patanjali just superficially evaded the description and detailing of various *asanas* is a pertinent question. Patanjali has codified many other Yogic regulations other than the asanas, and it is logically convenient to believe that Asanas were envisaged for stable and for the comfortable posture of a yogi. It is beyond debate the fact that it requires constant practice and discipline to internalise a stable and comfortable posture. Particularly root lock asana needs disciplined practice for years.

Pranayama which follows the asanas indicates victory over the asanas (*asanajaya*). Pranayama is the act of controlling *prana* or the life-force precisely the way the Yogi wishes to inculcate and enhance introversion and *Pratyahara*; this indicates the sophistication of the yogic practices. In short, just by practising and emphasising on a sitting posture alone cannot merely result in Pranayama and *Pratyahara*. This should also make us rethink on the logicity on the modern-day projection of Yoga as a set of public drill performances alone.

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara are the external limbs of Yoga. Only through disciplined and systematic practise of these external limbs can one enter the internal limbs of Yogic life. The internal limbs of Yoga bestow divine sensations, which are similar to the ones attained through *tapas* and meditation. The third chapter of *Patanjali Yogasutra* is a manual to the confluence of the three internal limbs to achieve and experience the Yogic experience of ecstasy and bliss. When the Shamanic miracles traverse through Sramanic monastic stream, they reach a regulatory culmination in Patanjali's *Yogasutra*. Patanjali calls it *Vibhutis*.

The external limbs of Yoga are considered to be the practical and routinised propensities, and the internal limbs indicate the exciting part which leads to mystical bliss and ecstasy. The practical and routinised part is the path of asceticism. The sensational or the *Vibhuti* part leads to Yogic mysticism. Patanjali transforms Shamanic mysticism to meditative mysticism and thereby rendering it a regulatory form of an organised discipline. In any Yogic discourse, we can perceive the depiction of the illusions of supernatural skills which existed in human historical imagination<sup>8</sup>.

The Kundalini Yoga which became much popular later has one of its main concerns with the state of *Urdhwaretha*, which the ancient systems of knowledge attained through sitting postures. During the Shamanistic times, the snake symbol indicated eroticism or sexuality which was later stylised in Kundalini as the Spinal serpent and the Yogic knowledge is an exponent in the awakening of the Kundalini. Many Yogic texts vouch for the fact that Kundalini is the life force which lays in dormant the human beings which can be awakened to transcendental emergence by Yoga. *Gorakshasatakam* talks about the Kundalini Serpent thus:

*Kandordhwam kundali saktirashtheadha kundalakrti*

*Brahmdwaramukham nityam mukkkhenachadya tishtati*

Above the the Kanda (male organ/ just below in uterus for women) Kundali sakthi forms an eight-fold coil she

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<sup>7</sup> *Ahimsa satyastheya brahmacharyaparigrha yama* ( Poonjaar, p.151)

<sup>8</sup> Yoga's ability to bestow supernatural powers upon its practitioners has always been central to its textual descriptions. Yogic powers run the gamut of human fantasies. They include flight, long-distance hearing and sight, omniscience, the ability to become infinitely small, large, light heavy or invisible, the ability to locate buried treasure, mastery of alchemy, and control over other people. One frequently mentioned power is simply the ability to do whatever one wants (James and Singleton, 2017, p.359)

remains there constant with her mouth closing the door of Brahma (the central channel (Briggs, 1997,p.293) According to *Gorakshasatakam* Kundalini controls the *Prana* and *Apana* , the vital airs in the human body, to operate. Life is bond by the life-force of *Prana-apanas*. The sex chakra is the adobe of the life force and the Yogi bonds *Prana* and *Apana*<sup>9</sup> through yogic practices and drives the life-force through the *Sushumna* (spine) to rouse the Kundalini. In Yoga sutra, if we examine the sutras close enough, Pranayama regulates both the *Prana* and *Apana* to arouse *Utkranti*. *Utkranti* is the upward stimulation and arousal of life-force<sup>10</sup>.

It is doubtful if the concept of Kundalini was that popular during the times of Patanjali's Yogasutra. In the text, we cannot see the use of Kundalini anywhere. But there is a clear indication that the containment and control is regarded as one of the prerequisite forces of celibacy as Yogasutra reads '*Brahmacarya prathishhtaayam Virya labha*' (Poonjaar, 2010).

The *Hathayogic* instructions have ancient details on the taming of Kundalini the spinal serpent, and this indicates the perenniality of the yogic cosmogony which existed in the banks of the Indus Valley. Though Yoga has the conferred meaning of connecting and conjoining disparities, the authenticity of the term can be better suited as a discipline, especially in the case of postural Yoga. Another meaning that can be conferred to Yoga is in the conjoining of *Prana* and *Apana*. Even that can only be attained through regular practice and discipline. Thus, discipline is the term best suited for Yoga.

### Yoga as Philosophy

We have seen that Yoga's growth and popularity were based more on Yoga's acceptance as a routine and physical discipline than a philosophy. The philosophy of Yoga is an admixture and a harmonic confluence of asceticism and mysticism. Yoga as a philosophy has the inherent internalisation of a gnostic tradition and claims to awaken the inherent knowledge of self-realisation through asceticism. This is very similar to the gnostic traditional practises seen in the Sramanic religions. The *Kevalajnana* and *Samajnana* of the Buddhist and Jain traditions can be seen as gradations towards a physical and spiritual discipline paving the way to mysticism. Yogasutra also points to almost the similar paths where *Kaivalyapadam* follows *Vibhutipaadam*.

*Samkhya* and the *Yogic* Philosophies are spiritual twins, and they have developed along with the same permissive premises (Dasguptha, 1924). Yoga has adopted many of *Samkhya* philosophies and is often known as *Samkhya Yoga* or Patanjala *Samkhya*. Patanjali's proclamations also point to the fact that Yoga is a part of *Samkhya pravachanasutra*. All these points to the fact that the *Samkhya* philosophy is seamlessly integrated, without an inkling of doubt, to Yoga. In *Samkhya* School broad-spectrum, did not only primitive wisdom of the shamans, the ascetic values of the Sramanistic school, but also the anti-Vedic structures were present. Strangely, in the later times it was assimilated and inducted into the Vedic system by conferring an orthodox philosophy status.

The way Patanjali wove together the Yogic traditions to compile the Yogasutras, *Kapila* compiled and anthologised the extant philosophies and knowledge systems to author *Samkhya sutras*. However, to allege exclusive authorship of the *Samkyasutras* can turn out to be a historical or logical fallacy. The most primitive *Samkhya* extant manuscript is *Ishwarakrishna's Samkhya karika*, and he is known to be a follower of *Kapila*, *Panchashikhan* and *Asuri*. Nevertheless, then even before *Ishwarakrishna*, *Caraka* cites *Samkhya* sutras and even the epic *Mahabharata* projects *Samkhya* as the most enlightening knowledge system. Notwithstanding, there are a lot of differences under towed in *Caraka's Samkhya* compared to *Ishwarakrishna's* compilation.

Considering the *Karika* of *Ishwarakrishna* Dasgupta says

The fact that *Caraka* did not refer to the *Samkhya* as described by *Ishwarakrishna* and referred to in other parts of *Mahabharata* is a definite proof that *Ishwarakrishna's Samkhya* is a later modification... Wasselief says quoting Tibetan sources that *Vindhyavasin* altered the *Samkhya* according to his views. *Takakusu* thinks that *Vindhyavasin* was a title of *Ishwarakrishna* (cited in Chattopadhyaya, 1959 p.107)

If we search for the seminal origins of the *Samkhya s*, we can see that the transmigration of the body, as well as nature, intersect at the primitive belief of animism. The foundational cause and effect theory was almost as synonymous as the *Svabhavavada* of Ajivikas (Basham, 1951), points to the fact that the *Samkhya* Philosophy was outside the Vedic traditions and sometimes, even opposed the Vedic authorities. Zimmer observes

The fundamental ideas of *Samkhya* and Yoga, therefore, must be immensely old. And yet they do not appear in any of the orthodox Indian texts until comparatively late-specifically, in the younger stratifications of

<sup>9</sup> apanah karsati pranam prano'panam ca karsati  
urdhvdah samsthitavetau samyojayti Yogavit

*Apana* pulls *prana* and *prana* pulls alternatively an adept in Yoga causes in the union of these two, lower and upper airs (Briggs, 1997, p.292)

<sup>10</sup> Later during the Vedantic redaction Yogasutra started, *Utkranti* is translated as the movement of *Jeeva* (Individual soul) towards higher worlds. Doubtlessly, an attempt dismisses the true spirit of Yoga

the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita'... He further argues 'Samkhya and Yoga represented a later psychological sophistication of the principles preserved in Jainism, and prepared the ground for the forceful, anti-Brahman statement of the Buddha' (Zimmer, 1952; Chattopadhyaya, 1959)

After this, we can notice the strange phenomenon of the internalisation of the non-Vedic or anti-Vedic Samkhya thoughts into the Vedic traditions. We have only certain fragments of the Samkhya thought and philosophy left, and much has been destroyed by the ravages of time. In the little remnants of what is left, we can see intellectual interventions in the Samkhya philosophy which steered its course from being Atheistic gnostic tradition to theistic Vedic tradition. The systematic appropriation of the Samkhya metaphysics and Yoga happened then. Samkhya is also said to have professed atheism as Samkhya doesn't believe in anything other than divinity outside the self. However, again, we have to think logically if Samkhya s<sup>11</sup> ever believed in celestial gods. The Samkhya s who professed the path of asceticism and mysticism believed that the ultimate knowledge is above all these. They also perhaps took an apathetic look at acquired skills like siddhis, but interestingly, we can observe that they gave much importance to Yoga. On the contrary, we can see that Yoga looked at Siddhis with interest and commitment. How could two knowledge systems/epistemes with similar philosophical bearings look at the idea of acquired skills or siddhi so differently is a question that ought to be pondered? At the same time, it also remains a puzzle when we think that the Samkhya s believed that knowledge is incomplete without Yoga and its practice, it would lead to delusions of the mind. It will not be wrong to assume that of the two similar philosophies, one could have diverged on the idea of siddhi with a possible, successful intervention from the Vedic stream of knowledge.

As Yoga evolved itself philosophically, there was a deliberate attempt to locate it from subjective experiential realms to real ones from the times of Vyasa to Vivekananda. Here we can observe that Yoga makes a quantum leap from the anti-Vedic premise gnosticism of the Samkhya philosophy to a theistic postulate. The history of Yoga can be read as the systematic decline of philosophy from asceticism and Siddhis through discipline to that a conventional logic of Vedanta. Along with that, a schema of transforming the gnostic/agnostic philosophy of the Yoga into a theistic discipline can be logically discerned. This is substantiated by the fact that we can see that Yoga does not give any indications of celestial gods or the cosmic creator in any clear terms, it agrees the Samkhya n understanding and proclaims 'Klesakarma vipakashairaparamrushta purusha visesha iswara'<sup>12</sup>(Poonjaar, 2010). All the visions of god took a hierarchic pantheon-ship when it reached the age of Bhagavatgita and the concept of god took a personalized form. The gnostic soteriology in the Samkhya philosophy modifies into religious soteriology at the age of Gita. In Yoga, the concept of god is an ingenious realm based on the foundational philosophical premises of the Samkhya .

According to Sramanic visions a man unbound by three basic precepts which cause sorrow becomes god. Human suffering has been interpreted as sorrow, and it has been extensively debated upon by Ajivika and Buddhist traditions. Samkhya reintroduces human suffering as the triad of *adibhauthika*, *adhyadhmika* and *adidaivika*. The next one is the philosophy of Karma which is authoritatively a Sramanic religious contribution. The Sramanic religions establish a revolutionary idea that Karma decides destiny as opposed to the former Yajna civilisations which placed a pantheon of gods and their wrath and blessings as controlling human destiny (Pandey GC, 1978). The fruit of Karma is *Karmaphala* or the retribution of Karma. Any being without Karma or its karmic repercussions is god. This is a complete contradiction of the Vedic concept of gods who abide in the uppermost horizons.

In this context, it is evident that the omnipresent, omniscient God who unites both the Jeevatma and Paramatma must have only evolved towards the later stages of Yoga. The meaning of Yoga in the Sanskrit lexicon is also quite varied and different from each other. Yoga in Sanskrit lexicon has a broader range of meanings than any word has. The act of yoking an animal, as well as the yoke itself, is called Yoga. Yoga in Astronomy means a conjunction of planets, stars or constellations (White, 2011). Many layers of meanings can be excavated from the word Yoga, and it will not be just enough to restrict, and tie-down its meaning to the Sanskrit root, Yuj. It will not be an exaggeration if we assume that the Vedantic idea of the Brahma- Jeevan confluence and union are eventually established through the word, Yoga. We can also notice the philosophical stance of the Vedanta, that the cosmos is Maya and reality is an imagined perception is in complete opposition and contradiction to that of the Samkhya -Yoga that the universe is Truth/real. Yoga, as a philosophy in the present state, is enmeshed in two opposing strands of epistemes, whether it is atheistic/ theistic or Vedic/nonvedic. The clarity of Yogic perceptions has changed overtime to tremendous historical instances of assimilation and the interchange of philosophical ideas.

A cultural and semantic confusion has transformed Yoga into Yoghurt. if we look into Yoga's history, we will be tangled in many exciting puzzles in philosophical histories and also in many serious ideational

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<sup>11</sup> Followers of Samkhya tradition

<sup>12</sup> god is the one who is free from all klesa (sufferings), karma (duty) and Vipaka (the result of the duty aka Karmphala)

confusions.

#### **DISCLOSURE**

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST: THE AUTHOR DECLARE THAT HE HAS NO  
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