

CHAPTER – 3

AN ANALYSIS OF YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

The path of yoga is based on sound Psychological foundations. Hence to appreciate this path the psychology of yoga must be understood, first. The most important element in the psychology of yoga is 'citta'. Citta is the first modification of Prakrti in which there is the predominance of sattva over rajas and tamas gunas. It is material by nature, but due to closest control with the self or Purusa, it is enlightened by its light. When citta gets related to any object it assumes the 'form' of that object. This form is called 'vritti' or 'modifications'. Purusa is essentially pure consciousness and is free from the limitations of prakrti. But it wrongly identifies itself with its reflection in the citta and appears to be undergoing change and modification. According to 'Yogasutra', the self or Purusa really undergoes no change or modification. Because of its reflection in the changing states of citta. Purusa appears changing and citta appears consciousness. Just as the moon appears as moving when seen reflected in the moving waves'.¹

When the Purusa realizes that it is completely isolated and is only a passive spectator, beyond the play of Prakrti, it ceases to identify itself with its reflection in the citta with the result that the light is withdrawn and the modifications of the citta are stopped. This cessation of the modifications of the citta through meditation is called yoga. In the words of Patanjali –

'Yogaschittavrittinirodha'

(Patanjala Yoga – Sutra, 'Samadhi Pada', Sutra-2)

This above statement means – yoga is to restrain the mind stuff (citta) from taking various forms (vrittis, thoughts, modifications)

From the analysis of this definition, three matters are to be clearly understood, with all their implications and they are –

- 1) Citta, the modifications of which are to be arrested.
- 2) Vrittis of citta and their causes, and
- 3) Nirodha – cessation of vrittis.

In explaining these three, Patanjali has unfolded the richness of the secret treasure of yoga psychology which is of immense practical value in everybody's practical life, aspiring after peace and tranquility of mind and also for a clear understanding of the functioning of the mental process from the scientific point of view.

The yoga psychology states like to Katha – Upanisad that the natural tendency of the mind is to go outward and the method of spiritual discipline brings that flow of mind, inwards. In fact the stream of mind flows in two direction: it flows for good with discriminative knowledge and detachment and it flows for evil with attachment. The yoga psychology teaches the method of complete suspension of the flow of mind.

Reference :

- 1) S. Chatterjee & D. Dutta – An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, P-274.

3.1 CONCEPT OF CITTA AND ITS MODIFICATIONS

Citta is the most important product of yoga psychology. Patanjali uses the term 'citta' in the sense of antahkarana – the internal organ. It includes buddhi, ahamkara and manas and the citta itself which is the seat of memory with four distinct functions.

FORMS OF CITTA :

Citta is made up of three gunas or constituent principles of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and it always remains changing due to the preponderance of one guna over other. With this preponderance three main forms of citta can be noticed which are under –

- 1) **Prakhyā** : In this stage the citta is predominated by sattva guna and the tamas remains in subordination. In this form the citta aspires for different powers of yogas. Eg. – 'Anima' etc. It is regarded as the cognitive functions of citta.
- 2) **Pravrtii** : When the tamas guna becomes weak and the citta is predominated by rajas, it appears as enlightened and full of dharma, knowledge, renunciation etc. It is known as the cognitive function of the citta.
- 3) **Sthiti** : As the rajas is subordinated, the citta, predominated by the sattva element, gets established in its own form and attains the discriminating reason. This form of the citta is known as sthiti or retention.

MODIFICATIONS OF CITTA OR 'CITTA -VRITTIS'

The citta, inspite of being material, seems to be like living due to the reflection of the self in it. It is these changes in the citta which are known as its vrittis or modifications. These modifications are due to ignorance and their result is the bondage. Patanjali classified them into five broad divisions. They are accordingly mention below :

1) **Pramana** : Valid knowledge or knowledge about an object which is uncontradicted is called prama and the means of attaining such knowledge is called pramana¹. There are three pramanas viz. perception (Pratyaksha), inference (anumana) and verbal testimony (sabda). These three are the sources of true knowledge. The modifications of citta during any of these true cognition is called pramana. True knowledge is the knowledge of things as they really are in nature. The means to the attainment of true knowledge are known as pramanas.

2) **Viparyaya** : According to Patanjali 'Viparyaya is wrong knowledge formed of a thing as other than what it is.'²

Viparyaya is false knowledge because it is not a knowledge formed of a thing as it really is. It is such kind of mental modification which does not correspond with the real form of external object. Viparyaya is sublated by pramana, eg – illusion of seeing the moon double is sublated by the correct knowledge of one moon.

Fallacious inferential knowledge and knowledge coming from unreliable words are included in viparyaya by Patanjali. Vacaspati Mishra has included doubt also in it.

3) **Vikalpa** : It is a mere verbal idea caused by words, to which no real facts correspond. For example, the phrase 'consciousness of

the soul' arouses the idea of two different entities (soul and consciousness) related together, whereas in reality there is no distinction between them (soul and consciousness being identical).

- 4) **Nidra** : The modification of the citta which is the subtraction of the knowledge of absence of anything is known as nidra. Due to preponderance of tamas in its vritti, there is absolute absence of the working and dreaming modifications. But this stage should not be conceived as the total absence of knowledge because after arising from sleep the person has the consciousness that he slept well. Hence sleep is also a modification.
- 5) **Smriti** : Smriti or memory is the remembering or reproduction of the experienced object. Thus, in smriti one cognises an object which was experienced in the past.

The word 'asampramosa' is used in a specific sense which means reproducing the object just as it was experienced without adding anything to it. Again by the use of this single words asampramosa, Patanjali distinguishes memory from imagination and fantasy which involve addition and alteration of the object experienced.

The above mentioned modifications cause samskaras or tendencies in the inner instrument, i.e. citta and in due course these tendencies again take the form of modifications. Thus, the cycle goes on forever.

References :

- 1) Dr. S. Das – A study on the Patanjala Yoga darsana, P – 67.
- 2) Ibid, P – 76.

3.2 STAGES OF MENTAL LIFE

The citta may remain in five different stages or levels. These mental stages are known as 'Cittabhumi'. The citta is constituted by the elements of sattva, rajas and tamas. The different levels of citta are determined by the different degree in which the elements are present in it. There are five stages of citta. They are accordingly –

1) **Ksipta** : In this stage the mind or citta is under the sway of rajas and tamas. Here the citta is very much disturbed and remains running after the worldly objects without resting in any object. This condition is not conducive to yoga, because it does not help us to control the mind and the senses.

2) **Mudha** : Mudha is due to an excess of tamas in citta or the mind which, therefore, has a tendency towards vice, ignorance, sleep, corrupt deeds and the like. For example, the citta of intoxicated persons.

3) **Vikṣipta** : In this level the mind or citta is free from the sway of tamas and has only a touch of rajas in it. It has the capacity of manifesting all objects and makes for virtue, knowledge etc. This is a stage of temporary concentration of citta on the mind of some object, which is followed by distraction. It cannot be called yoga, because it does not permanently stop the mental modifications nor end our troubles and destroy the mental affections of avidya and the rest.

4) **Ekagra** : The fourth stage of citta is called ekagra or simple pointed or concentration. The mind here is entirely dominated by sattva, while rajas and tamas are subdued. In this stage the mind remains steadily fixed on a particular object, just as the flame of the burning

lamp remains always painting to one side and does not flicker hither and thither.

5) Niruddha : In this stage the cessation of all mental modifications has been affected. Due to complete arrest of all mental modifications, the citta is left in its original unmodified state of calm and tranquility.

The last two levels are conducive to yoga is so far as both manifest the sattva element of this mind to the highest degree and are helpful for the attainment of the ultimate goal, viz. liberation¹. In fact ekagra or the stage of concentration, when permanently established, is called samprajnatayoga or trance of meditation, in which there is a clear and distinct conscioueness of the object of contemplation. It is known also as samaptti or samprajnata Samadhi. So also the state of niruddha is called asamprajnta Samadhi, because all mental modifications being stopped in this state, nothing is known or thought of by the mind.²

References :

- 1) S. Chatterjee & D. Dutta – An introduction to Indian Philosophy, p-278
- 2) Ibid, P-279.

3.3 CONCEPT OF KLESAS AND THEIR NATURE

Klesas constitute the unconscious region are the citta , According to Patanjali there are five klesas or sources of afflictions viz. Avidya , Asmita , Raga , Dvesa and Abhinivesa .

AVIDYA OR IGNORANCE :

Avidya consists in regarding an impermanent , impure , pain and not self as permanent , pure , pleasure and self.¹

Regarding the nature of avidya an another point should be noted that though the word avidya appears to be something negative, it has also a positive content like the word 'amitra'. The word 'amitra' does not mean a friend or non-existence of a friend, but positively one who is opposed to a friend, i.e., an enemy or foe. Similarly, avidya is neither right cognition nor absence of cognition but cognition that is contrary to right cognition, i.e., wrong cognition.

ASMITA OR EGOISM :

Asmita is the false conception of identity between purusa and prakrti and the absence of distinction between them .

Swami Vivekananda in his rajayoga has described asmita as the identification of external world and these instruments of seeing according to him are buddhi, ahamkara , manas and the indriyas.²

Due to this identification , i.e., being influenced by this asmita klesa , people want to assert himself and dominate over others .If , however , there is abstraction in this domination, then there may arise mental disturbances.

RAGA OR ATTACHMENT :

Raga is the acute thirst for worldly pleasure .The person who enjoyed pleasure once, impressions of such pleasures enjoyed are stored in his citta. Whenever he remember this pleasurable experiences, desire to have this arises again in his citta such desire for pleasure which is due to the remembrance of the pleasure enjoyed is raga .

DVESA OR AVERSION :

Dvesa is the anger in the means of suffering . It is the feeling of resistance, mental disinclination , desire to hurt and anger towards misery or objects of misery. The person who experienced misery once, impressions of such misery experienced are stored in his citta whenever he remembers these miserable experiences, the feeling of resistance or a version arises again in his citta.

ABHINIVESA OR WILL TO LIVE :

Abhinivesa is the fear of death. No- body, wise or ignorant, want to die. Everybody has the cravings like this- 'Let me never be non-existent; let me be alive.

Abhinivesa thus implies urge for life; i.e., continuity of life and looked from the other side it also implies the fear of death or annihilation.

Though avidya is one of the five klesar, it differs from other klesar in certain respects and possess a certain special status of its own. Avidya is the breeding ground of the other four klesar. The four other klesar namely, asmitaraga, dvesa and abhinivesa are the different varieties or aspects of avidya. They are not separated from avidya as

well. The five klesas are only five jointed parts. From avidya arises asmita, from asmita arises raga and dvesa, and from them arise abhinivesa which is the all pervading expression of avidya. The other four klesas are only different manifestations of avidya in different situations.

References :

1. Dr. S. Das - a study on the patanjali Yoga darsana, P-91
2. Swami Vivekananda- Rajayoga, P-1`73
3. Dr. S. Das _ A study on the Patanjali Yoga Darsana, P – 95
4. Ibid, P-97

3.4 ASTANGA YOGA AND ASTA SIDDHI

Astanga Yoga :

Yoga advocates control over the body the senses and the mind. A sound mind needs a sound body. Sensual attachment and passions distract the body as well as the mind. To overcome them and for the purification and the enlightenment of the citta, Yoga advocates eightfold limbs of discipline (astangayoga)

“Yogangaanusathanad ashuddhikshaye

Jnanadiptiravivekakhyate.”

(-----Patanjala Yoga Sutra, ‘Sadhana pada’, Sutra 28)

The above sloka means that by the committed practice of the limbs of yoga the impurities being destroyed, knowledge becomes effulgent up to discrimination.

It is very important to note that Patanjali uses the word ‘Anga’ which means limbs. Anga should not be translated as ‘steps, - This is because steps are always one after another whereas ‘anga’ indicates the simultaneous practice of all the eight ‘limbs (angas) of Yoga.’¹

Astangyoga is not a theory ; not a religion, not a belief, but a total way of life. It gives physical as well as mental peace, social co-operation and pleasure. Maharishi Patanjali in his ‘Yoga Sutra’ writes –

Yamaniyamaasanaprayanayama pratyahardharana

dhyanasamadhyashtavangani

(-Patanjala Yoga Sutra, ‘Sadhana Pada’, Sutra – 29)

The eight angas are accordingly Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

1) Yama :

‘Ahimsasatyaasteya brahmacharya aparigraha Yama’

(-Patanjala Yoga Sutra, ‘Sadhana Pada’, Sutra – 30)

Yama consists of five principles. They are accordingly -

i. **Ahimsa :** It is the abstention from all kind of injury to life or non – violence of all the yamas non-violence is regarded as the root of the other yamas. Remaining four yamas and five niyamas, only serve to make non-violence more perfect. Yoga holds that ahimsa should be the greatest ethical mean for all our conduct. It is by ahimsa alone that we can keep ourselves fit for the higher type of Samadhi.

ii. **Satya:** Satya or truthfulness consists of word and thought that are in conformity with fact.

Speech is for the purpose of transferring knowledge to another. It is always to be employed for the good of others and not for their injury. It proves to be injurious to living being, even though uttered as truth, it is not truth. It is sin only. Though outwardly such a truthful course may be considered virtuous, since by this truth he has caused injury to another person, he has in reality violated the true standard of Ahimsa.

iii. **Asteya :** Asteya is the virtue of abstaining from stealing. Theft is making things one’s own unlawfully that belong to others. Abstinence from theft consists in the absence of the desire thereof.

iv. **Brahmacharya** : Brahmacharya or continence is the restraint of the generative organ and thorough control of sexual tendencies, carnal desires and passions.

v. **Aparigraha**: Aparigraha or non-acceptance of unnecessary gifts, is want of avariciousness, the non-appropriation of things not one's own.

These yamas explain the necessity of complete abstention from all the evil courses and tendencies of life realize the self in Samadhi

2. **NIYAMA** :

The second discipline is niyama or culture. It consists of five principles. In 'Yogasutra' Patanjali writes about the principles of niyama through the following sloka:-

'Sausasantosatapa svadhyayeshvarapranidhanani niyama.'

(-Patanjala Yogasutra, 'Sadhana pada,' Sutra -32)

Discipline of niyamas are as follows :-

i) **Sauca** : Sauca or cleanliness is the first Principle of niyama, cleanliness is of two types : external (bahya) and internal (abhiyantara). External cleanliness is the cleanliness of the body by water and other purifying articles. Internal cleanliness is the cleanliness of the mind, by purifying it of all impurities, attachment, pride etc; by cultivating goodwill, friendliness, compassion and cheerfulness.

ii) **Santosa** : Santosa or contentment is the absence of desire to possess more than is necessary for the preservation of one's life. It is the state of satisfaction with what one gets.

iii) **Tapas** : Tapas or penance means the strength of remaining unchanged in changes like that of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, standing and sitting , absence of speech and absence of all indications by gesture, and observing austere vows.

iv) **Svadhyay** : Study of scripture or svadhyaya means the study of makesasastras and repetition of the syllable 'aum' It also indicates the regular habit of study of religious books.

v) **Isvarapranidhana** : Isvarapranidhana or surrender to god means the bestowal of all our actions upon the God , i.e., to work not for one's own self but for God, so that a man desists from all desires for fruit there from.

These yamas, together with niyamas are called 'kriyayoga', by the performance of which men become fit to rise gradually to the state of Samadhi and attain Kaivalya.

3) **ASANA** :

Asana is the discipline of the body and it consists in the adoption of steady and comfortable postures. The discipline of the body is as much necessary for the attainment of concentration as that of the mind. Toga lays down elaborate rules for maintaining the health of the body and making it fit vehicle for concentrated thought. The asanas are effective ways by which all the limbs, especially the nervous system, can be brought under control and prevented from producing disturbances in the mind.

There are various kinds of asanas standing asana like tarasana, sitting asana like upavista konawsana ; back ward extension like ustrasana ; forward extension like padmahastasana ; twisting like parsavirasana etc. These can be properly learnt under the guidance of expert.

4) PRANAYAMA :

Pranayama is the regulation of the health. It consists in controlling natural breathing and subjecting it to a definite law. 'Prana' means the vital forces in one's own body. Ayama means controlling them. There are three sorts of pranayam – the very simple, the middle and the very high. When we begin with twelve seconds it is the lowest pranayama ; when we begin with twenty five seconds it is the middle one ; that pranayama is the best when begins with thirty six seconds.

There are three main steps in pranayam.² They are –

- i) **Puraka (Inhaling) :** The first step in the Pranayama is to take in as much air as possible.
- ii) **Kumbhaka (Retaining of the breath) :** After the maximum amount of air is taken, the next step is to retain it for half of the time taken in inhaling.
- iii) **Rechaka (Exhaling) :** The third step in Pranayam is to gradually exhale this air in almost the same time as taken in inhaling. Breath control is conducive to the concentration of mind. The art of controlling breath can be learnt only under the guidance of experts. Example of pranayama – Kapalvati.

5) PRATYAHARA :

It is the control of the senses and consists of withdrawing the senses from their respective external objects and keeping them under the control of the mind. Our senses have the natural tendency to go to the outward objects. They must be checked and directed towards the internal goal. It is the process of introversion. When the senses are effectively controlled by the mind, they follow, not their natural objects, but the mind itself. By practice in this mind of the aspirant is not disturbed by a worldly object even while he lives in the world. This state is very difficult, although not impossible to attain. It requires a resolution will and long practice to gain mastery over one's senses.

The above mentioned five stages are known, as external aids to yoga (bahirtanga sadhana). The remaining three stages are known as internal means (antaranga – sadhana). As a matter of fact the first five are merely preparatory to the latter three which are directly concerned with yoga. Even the Dharana, Dhyana and (Samprajnata) Samadhi are external i.e., bahiranga for the practice of Asamprajnata Samadhi.

6) DHARANA :

Dharana or attention is a mental discipline which consists in holding or fixing the mind (citta) on the desired object. The object thus attended to may be intra-organic like a part of one's body, i.e. one's navel, the midpoint of the eyebrows, the lotus of the heart etc, or it may be extra organic like the moon, the images of the God etc. The ability to keep one's attention steadily fixed on some objects is the test of fitness for entering the next higher stage of yoga.

7) **DHYANA :**

The seventh stage in the process of Yoga is dhyana or meditation. When the knowledge of a certain object of concentration is continued in a process, it is known as dhyana. This requires continuous meditation on the object of concentration. By it one has clear knowledge of object. In dhyana, in the beginning the aspirant knows only the different parts or forms of the object and gradually he realizes the whole of it. Thus, by dhyana the aspirant has the real knowledge of the object.

8) **SAMADHI :**

It means concentration. This is the final step in yoga. Here the mind completely absorbed in the object of meditation. In dhyana the act of meditation and the object of meditation remain separate. But in samadhy they become one. It is the highest means to realize the cessation of mental modification which is the end. Samadhy is of two kinds :

- a) Conscious or samprajnata Samadhi, and
- b) Super-conscious or Asamprajnata Samadhi

a) Samprajnata Samadhi : In this Samadhi the mind remains concentrated on the object of meditation. The meditator and the object of meditation are fused together, yet the consciousness of the object of meditation persists. It is the stage of Ekagra. It is also called sabiya Samadhi. This stage is said to be of four kinds :

i) Savitarka : When the citta is concentrated on a gross object of meditation like the tip of the nose or the mid-point of the eyebrow or image of the deity, it is called savitarka.

ii) **Savichara** : When the citta is concentrated on a subtler object of meditation like the tanmatras, it is called savichara.

iii) **Sananda** : When the citta is concentrated on a still subtler object of meditation which produces joy, like the senses, then it is called sananda.

iv) **Sasmita** : When the citta is concentrated on the ego-substance with which the self is generally identical, is called sasmita. Here we have conscious ecstasy where individuality persists.

c) **Asamprajnata Samadhi** : This is the highest form of Samadhi in which the distinction between the knower, knowledge and known, disappears. In it there are no klesas or attributes. Hence it is known as Nirbija or attribute less Samadhi. This form of Samadhi is also divided into two types, which are as under –

i) **Bhava Pratyaya Samadhi** : Samadhi is disturbed due to ignorance. Bhava means ignorance. Ignorance means seeing of self as not self. In this form of Samadhi only the samskaras of the passions remain. Thus the ignorance is not absolutely destroyed at this stage due to which even after the attainment of this stage the beings have to return to the world again.

ii) **Upaya Pratyaya** : In this type of Samadhi the ignorance is absolutely destroyed due to arousal of prajna. In it all the klesas are annihilated and the citta becomes established in true knowledge. This is the Samadhi of yogis. It breeds the pleasure of citta, concentration, knowledge etc.

Asamprajnata Samadhi is the highest form of yoga, which is divine madness, perfect mystic ecstasy, difficult to describe and more difficult

to attain. Even those who attain it cannot retain it longer. Immediately or after very short time the body breaks and they obtain complete liberation. The ecstatic states occur cannot be doubted. Plato regards “this divine madness” as “the source of the chiefest blessings granted to man”.

A yogin is believed to acquire certain extraordinary powers by the practice of yoga in its different stages like supernatural sight, pass through stone walls, etc. while this may be happened, the yoga system warns all religious aspirants not to practice yoga with these end in view. Yoga is for the attainment of liberation only.

Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi practiced together with regard to one object is called samayama. Once samayama is achieved then is gain the light of knowledge.

Asta Siddhis :

According to yoga philosophy, the yogis attain various siddhis by the practice of the path of yoga. These powers are mainly of eight types and hence called Astasiddhi or Asta Aisvarya.⁴ they are outlined below

—

- 1) **ANIMA** – This is the power of become small like atom and to disappear.
- 2) **LAGHIMA** : This is the power to become light like cotton and so to fly away.
- 3) **MAHIMA** : This is the power to become big like mountain.

- 4) **PRAPTI** : This is the power to secure whatever is desired.
- 5) **PRAKAMYA** : This is the power by which all the impediments in the will power are removed.
- 6) **VASHITWA** : This is the power by which all the living beings can be conquered.
- 7) **ESHITWA** : This is the power by which one attains absolute mastery on all the physical objects.
- 8) **YATRAKAMAVASAYITWA** : This is the power by which all the desires are fulfilled.

The above mentioned eight siddhis can be used according to the wish of the yogi. But in the Yoga philosophy the pursuance of the path of the yoga for the attainment of these powers have been vehemently described because that results in misleading an aspirant from the path of yoga. The ultimate end of the yoga is not the attainment of these powers, but the realization of Moksha.

References :

- 1) N.R. Bhide – Yoga the way of life based on the vision of oneness, PP - 35-36.
- 2) Dr. Vatsyayan – Indian philosophy, PP – 181-182.
- 3) N.R. Bhide – Yoga – the way of life based on the vision of oneness, P-57.
- 4) Dr. Vatsyayan – Indian philosophy, PP – 183.

3.5 PSYCHIC POWERS

The popular cult of magic is mixed up with the religious scheme of salvation in the yoga. That certain magical powers are acquired during the course of the yogic sadhana. Samayama or concentration, is the means by which we acquire a knowledge of super sensuous object. While practicing samayama for realization of the ultimate goal of knowing the self as it is, the yogin may acquire a large number of super normal or miraculous powers called psychic powers. These latent powers and potentialities can be manifested by practicing samayama on different elements in various proportions and magnitudes. The yogin has discovered the technique of acquiring them.

According to Patanjali “(1) by practicing samayama on the three parinamesor changes of things, viz, dharma or characteristic, laksara or symptom and avastha or state of things ; The knowledge of the past and the future can be attained. (2) By practicing samayama on word, on the object implied by that word and on the idea there of separately which are ordinarily united, the meaning of sounds of all living beings can be comprehended. (3) By practicing samayama on impressions or dispositions in the form of dharma and odharma or merit and demerit the knowledge of previous birth can be attained. (4) By practicing samayama on pratyayas or notions, knowledge of other cittas (telepathy or thought reading) can be acquired. (5) By practicing samayama on the form of the body, the power of making the body concealed can be acquired and the practicant can, thus, remain unseen by others. (6) By practicing samayam on the strength of elephant and other animals, the strength of them can be obtained. (7)By practicing samayama on dhruva or polestar the yogin can obtain the knowledge of the motion of the

stars. (8) The cessation of hunger and thirst can be acquired by practicing samayama on the hollow of the throat and steadiness of the bidyca be obtained by practicing samayama on the never called kurma or bronchial tube. (9) Power of entering into the body of other persons can be acquired when the cause of bondage of the citta gets loosened and movements of the citta over the nerves are known by practicing samayama. (10) By practicing samayama on the relation between Akasa and the body, the yogin becomes light like cottonwell etc and attain the power of passing through Akasa and so on.”

“This perfections (siddhis) are attained through birth, drugs (Osadhi), spells (mantras), austerity (tapas) or concentration (Samadhi). Some are born with powers, since they had practised yoga in their past lives. Sometimes psychic powers are also attained by the use of drugs and anaesthetics. The use of drugs is not recommended in Patanjali's Yoga, though it is mentioned as one of the ways of obtaining perfections.

Though Patanjali describes the different psychic powers lying at the bottom of every body's citta and the processes of acquiring them, he declares that they are not desirable. These super normal powers prove to be a snare or obstacle for Samadhi or the realization of the true nature of the self. If the yogin becomes intoxicated by the acquisition of such powers and begins to demonstrate or utilize them for his selfish motive, he can not realize the ultimate goal. He only can realize the true nature of the self who rises above nature, transcends all psychic powers and enters into the realm of super consciousness which is beyond the plane of psychic phenomena.

References :

- 1) Dr.Saraju Das – A study on the Patanjali Yoga darsana , P.P – 146
– 150
- 2) Radhakrishnan – Indian Philosophy Vll. II , P – 367