Mr. U. Manikam completed a course at the Kamraj College, Tamil Nadu. A ten-day course was held for the members of Tuticorin Lions Club.

The first of the two 15-day summer camps at the Yoga Education Centre, Sevapoor will start on 29th April 1977. Mr. Manikam will conduct the camp.

Prof. Harendra Raval gave a talk to the members in the Ahmedabad Electric Company on Yoga and Personality. The Gujarat Vidhyapith started by Gandhiji at Ahmedabad made a resolution in favour of Yoga Education Centre, Ahmedabad to utilize the place of Kooohrah Gandhi Ashram for yoga activities. Articles on Yoga have appeared in the magazine Sandesh, which have been contributed by Prof. Harendra Raval and Dr. Pratiksha Raval.

Mr. Shantikumar Bhatt and Miss Nirmala Kinare conducted classes at Prempur Adhyatma Vidyabhavan, where 40 men and 25 women attended.

Among the new members of the NYC is Mr. M. N. Nair.

Shri Yogesh Sharma is actively engaged in promoting Yoga in Bikaner and Udaipur.

Shri Hansraj Yadav, conducted a second course at the Yoga Sadhana Kendra of the Benaras Hindu University. At the second Annual Day programme of the Yoga Sadhana Kendra, Dr. M. L. Dhar, Vice Chancellor of the B. H. U. presented the certificates and gave an address. Some of the participants of the course gave their impressions and Shri Hansraj Yadav conducted that part of the programme.

All the other yoga centres by the members of the National Yoga Council are functioning satisfactorily. There is a growing demand for more yoga teachers from various parts of India.
RATIONALITY OF THE EIGHTFOLD PATH
OF YOGA

by RAM SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

Patañjali has employed both the words āṅga and yogāṅga in the sūtras 2.29 and 2.28 respectively to refer to the well-known yogic exercises, namely yama, niyama, etc. There seems to be a subtle reason for using the word yogāṅga instead of using the word āṅga, as no logical fault seems to arise if the word āṅga (aid, accessory) is used in the sūtra 2.28. It seems that by using the word yogāṅga (i.e. by adding the word yoga with āṅga) Patañjali intended to suggest that acts like non-injury (ahimsā), truthfulness (satya), non-stealing (āsteya), cleanliness (śauca), austerity (tapas), devotion (īśvara-prāṇidhāna), postures (āsana), control of breath (prāṇāyāma), etc. might be either yogic or non-yogic in character. To be explicit: if non-injury, truthfulness, etc. are practised with a view to acquiring some goals as prescribed in the Yoganāstra, (such a practice depends upon the knowledge of the ontology of yoga) then, and then only, the acts like non-injury, etc., fall under the denomination of yoga-practice. If these acts are practised without accepting yogic ontology or ideal, or without any touch with the goals as prescribed in the yogasāstra, then they are no āṅga (auxiliary) to Yoga. This distinction is important as it differentiates yoga lore from non-yogic sciences. The word āṅga in yogāṅga is significant. An āṅga is that which exists for other or serves the purpose of other (parārtha). We will show later that acts like non-injury, etc. lose their value or meaning if they are separated from yoga.

It cannot be denied that acts like non-injury, truthfulness, etc. can be practised by one who has no touch with yogic ideals or yogic ontology, or who does not aspire for such goals as are prescribed in the yogasāstra. We are fully aware of the fact that not only the yamas and the niyamas but also prāṇāyāma and pratyāhāra can be practised by a person who has practically no touch with yogic viewpoint or yogic ideals. That such a practitioner acquires some benefit by practising these yogic acts cannot be denied. But the results he derives by practising prāṇāyāma, etc. in the said way are of least importance. In most cases such practices cause greater downfall and create various troubles in the mental life of the practitioner. Without yogic ideal, the practice of yogic acts becomes more or less artificial. Ancient sages laid much stress on the fact that acceptance of yogic ontology and yogic ideals is absolutely essential for a person who wishes to practise yogic acts (ahimsā, etc.) successfully. If non-injury (ahimsā) is practised for non-injury’s sake, the practice, aver yogins, will be of a very little value. Its effect will be of the least degree. Our age-long experience shows that a person cannot continue the practice of ahimsā, etc. for a long time unless he accepts yogic view-point and ideals wholeheartedly. Persons possessing no direct knowledge of yogic ontology and having no regard for yogic goals are often found to misuse these practices. Practice of yogic exercises without tattvajñāna is a danger².

The next important point regarding the āṅgas is their capability of dwindling the impurities (āsuddhīs). Since the root cause of these impurities is avidyā, they will not cease to exist naturally. Since these impurities affect the mental field of an aspirant, the removal of these impurities is of paramount importance. These āsuddhīs have been given an important place in the yogic literature. The Ahirbudhanyasāṁhitā informs us that the Hiranyagarbha yogasāṁhitā had one chapter on these doṣas or āsuddhīs. The Śānti-parvan treats of these doṣas in more than one place. We find some aphoristic sayings of ancient yogins on the doṣas or āsuddhīs, quoted in the works on philosophy and religion.

It should be noted in this connection that impurities are of various kinds and each yogāṅga is capable of dwindling a particular kind of impurity; e.g. the impurities capable of being eradicated by dhyāna cannot be eradicated by tapas or by truthfulness or by non-injury. Similarly the impurities

1. The Ahirbudhanyasāṁhitā (12.34) informs us that the Hiranyagarbha-yoga treatise dealt with these āṅgas in its first chapter (अनुसूत्रमययां वृत्त) (गोपतलस्त्राः शः).

2. Cf. the aphoristic saying योगसांविकताः : quoted in the Vivarapā commentary on the Yogasūtra 2.28. Vide Sāṭśrakabhūya अनु तत्त्ववर्णनायो शः : (II.1.3)
capable of being eradicated by the yamas or the niyamas cannot be eradicated by the practice of the yogic postures (āsanas) even if they are practised to the highest degree of their development.\(^3\)

Now we are to say something about the validity of the eightfold path of yoga. Truly speaking, it is not a ‘logical division’, for there is no breaking up of the class yogāṅga into its eight constituent sub-classes according to a certain ‘principle of division’. There seems to be no fundamentum divisionis in the eightfold division of yogāṅga. Some āṅgas are evidently more subtle than the others.

The eightfold āṅgas seem to have their concern with the external and the internal life of an embodied sentient being who possesses an organic as well as an animal life. Each aspect or phase of this life has its specific character with specific functions. Each of these aspects or phases does not possess the same potentiality, importance and value. Each aspect has its own impurities which can be chiefly eradicated by one particular āṅga. (All the āṅgas help one another; this is why the field of operation of one āṅga cannot be strictly detached from that of the other āṅgas).

The aspects stated above and the corresponding āṅgas are as follows:—

(i) The field of yama is behaviour towards others; (ii) the field of niyama is one’s own behaviour towards one’s personality; (iii) the field of āśana is one’s own physical body (material causes of the body and it’s function as well); (iv) the field of prāṇāyāma is the vital forces as well as the most subtle parts of the living organism; (v) the field of pratyāhāra is the organs with their functions; (vi) the field of dhāraṇa is the fluctuations of the mind; (vii) the field of dhyāna is āhānākāra, the dynamic ego and to some extent the latent impressions; (viii) the field of samādhi is the pure empirical ego which is not disturbed by fluctuations but is liable to be disturbed by latent impressions (saṃskāras).

3. It is samādhi that can bring about the result of the other seven āṅgas. But it should be borne in mind that samādhi cannot be acquired unless the other āṅgas are practised properly.
According to yogins, aśuddhi lies in such acts as are done chiefly under the guidance of avidyā, etc. That anti-yama acts, namely ahiṁśā, asatya etc., possess impurity can be demonstrated by the disturbances, disorders and troubles caused by them. Any act guided by avidyā, etc. invariably creates certain rajasa and tamasa effects which augment distractions (vikṣepas) and weakens the sāttvika powers inhering in the sentient beings.

We shall show later that each of the aṅgas has original and gross forms. The gross form has gradations and they change according to the change of time, place, etc.

It is to be noted that the aṅgas can be practised in an artificial way also. Being incited by greed etc., one can perform ahiṁśā etc. with a view to acquiring name and fame. Ahiṁśā practised in this way produces a little effect in the mental field of the practitioner. Though such an artificial practice does not deserve praise yet it has its own utility and we welcome a person even if he practises yoga with a view to acquiring worldly ends. As there is sāttvika temperament or nature, so there also is tāmasa temperament or nature. A person possessing tāmasa guṇa in abundance cannot perform an act leaving all his worldly interests wholeheartedly. This is the reason for prescribing tāmasa means in the śāstras.

There is a tradition which speaks of six aṅgas and does not regard the yamas and the niyamas as the aṅgas. Since without the following up of these two, nobody can acquire vivekakhyāti, it is quite reasonable to accept them as aṅgas. The reason that bestows the position of aṅga to the āsana, prāṇāyāma, etc., bestows the same position to the yama and the niyama also. It should also be noted that the practice of yama-niyama is not altogether rejected by those who do not regard them as the aṅgas of yoga.

The relation between the following up of the aṅgas and the dwindling of the impurities is that of cause and effect. The dwindling of the impurities does not, as a matter of fact, produce the enlightenment of knowledge (jñānadīpti). According to the view-point of the Sāmkhyayoga school, jñāna is always existent in the citta in a latent state, being overcome or covered by the impurities. The existent jñāna is gradually manifested according as the impurities are removed. Because of its negative character, the dwindling of impurities cannot be regarded as the efficient cause of the rise of jñāna. This dwindling may however be regarded as inseparably connected (avijnābhāvin) with the rise of jñāna. Every student of yoga should carefully note the fact that divinity inherently lies in him in a potential or latent state and the yogic practices cause it to come into a gross or active state.

It is remarkable to note that the development of the enlightenment of jñāna has a definite end. It is held that as soon as it reaches the stage of vivekakhyāti (discriminative discernment) it ceases to develop. As to why development ceases at this stage, yogins offer the following reason. The knowledge of an object goes on developing if the object is mutable or changeful. Since vivekakhyāti is associated with puruṣa, the immutable principle, the process of the development of knowledge ceases. The knowledge called vivekakhyāti has neither variation nor gradation.

The question as to why these eight aṅgas have been mentioned separately from the twofold means of abhyāsa-vairāgya or why these two means (upāya) have not been included in the eight aṅgas will be discussed in a future article. In this regard, our views are different from those of the commentators.

4. The six aṅgas are not enumerated in the same way in all schools. Some accept the last six aṅgas as mentioned in the Yogasūtra, others enumerate the aṅgas as pratyāhāra, dhyāna, prāṇāyāma, dhyāna, tārā and samādhi. We have a different kind of enumeration of the eight aṅgas, Vide the Yogapāda of the Mrgendra Tantra.