



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Editorial

This Divine Maya

By M. G. Satchidananda

"By these three kinds of becoming which are of the nature of the Gunas, this whole world is bewildered and does not recognize Me, supreme beyond them and imperishable."

- Gita VII.13

You, who aspire to realize the Truth of your existence must come to understand the principle of nature known as Maya, the power of mental delusion, by which the One appear to be many, through the separation within Your Self of the subject (the

Seer) and the object (the Seen). This power, acting upon your body, sense organs, and mind, obscures your vision of the Divine Presence. The "Gunas" referred to in the verse, are the modes or qualities of nature: *tamas* (inertia, doubt, confusion), *rajas* (action, movement, passion, agitation) and *sattva* (balance, calm, clear understanding). Swinging as you do daily on a pendulum between *tamas* and *rajas*, inertia and agitation, it is only during rare moments of calm, when *sattva* predominates,

and you transcend this duality, that you may begin to perceive the Presence, infinite and eternal, beyond the dramas of your daily life. Other-

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196 Mountain Road P.O. Box 90

Eastman, Quebec, Canada J0E 1P0

Telephone: (450) 297-0258, Fax: (450) 297-3957 email: info@babajiskriyayoga.net

Internet home page: <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net>



Kali over Shiva.

wise, enthralled by Maya's play you either run, pushed by *rajas*, after fleeting moments of happiness in objects of desire both material and ephemeral, pressed for time, wanting in power or money, pushed by

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habits, and constrained by the consequences of your past actions, or you collapse in *tamas*, in fatigue, doubt or discouragement. You are a plaything of Mother Nature's three forces, but blinded by egoism, you believe that such forces are your own.

Every yogic practice, every Kriya, has as its purpose to increase the presence of *sattva*, and to diminish those of *rajas* and *tamas*. For example, when you can overcome fatigue (*tamas*) when you practice the postures or *pranayama* energetically. You can overcome nervous agitation (*rajas*) by practicing slow deep breathing, and postures in a more relaxed manner, or through meditation, "letting go," of what is bothering you, developing insight into the source of your existential suffering, or by cultivating the Witness perspective by meditating during daily life. By remembering this as your purpose for practicing, your Yoga becomes a path toward spiritual enlightenment and freedom the Maya's delusion.

The Agents or Cloaks of Maya

According to the Siddhantha, the teachings of the Siddhas, your vision of the Divine's presence is obscured by the following agents or "cloaks" of Mother Nature's Maya.

1. *Raga*: passion, desire, clinging, attachment, aversion; small and great likes and dislikes; the constant seeking for emotional happiness in new experiences, including the emotions of depression, sadness, fear, anger, lust, pride, courage, acceptance, and peace. Yes, you do sometimes love to wallow in negative emotional states, believing perversely that if you indulge them long enough, they will bring about some sort of positive change. Or that they are like the weather, and you can do nothing to "let go" of them.

2. *Vidya*: partial knowledge; unlike the Divine which is omniscient. Because what you know is very limited, confined to what comes to you through the five senses, active memory, or inference, you are unable to see the big picture, that is, to see anything from the perspective of the whole, from the perspective of the Divine. The unknown creates fear, doubt, and misunderstanding.

3. *Niyati*: the karmic law, destiny, the opposite of the eternal freedom of the Supreme Being; you have no true freedom as long as your thoughts, words and actions are constrained by habits, *samskaras*, whose sum creates your individual karma. Destiny limits your best intentions and efforts.

4. *Kaala*: the belief that you are limited by time; the Divine lives in eternity. Consequently, you feel that you lack time to do what is required of you, or to fulfill the ego's desires. You live in fear of death, the end of time. You feel stressed by a lack of time; you suffer boredom when you don't know what to do with your time;

5. *Kalaa*: means "part;" here, partial functioning or limited activity; limited power; unlike the Divine, whose power is omnipotent, your power is constrained by the consequences of your past thoughts, words and deeds, merits and demerits.

Consequently, you do not enjoy Oneness, the tran-

scendental abidance in That which is beyond names and form, beyond all limitations in time and space. Instead, you constantly seek to avoid existential suffering, as it manifests through various emotional states, attempting to avoid it by chasing after new experiences, ephemeral sources of temporary delight, both great and small. You are plagued by doubts, you feel alone; you feel limited in your power to know and to act.

The Three Malas, fetters or stains

The Siddhas refer to three malas, stains or fetters, which bind the soul: *avidya* (ignorance of one's true identity; egoism), *karma* (the consequences of thoughts, words and actions), and *maya*, mental delusion. The practice of Yoga has as its purpose the purification of these three stains on our soul. *Maya*, does not mean that the world of nature is non-existent or deals with unrealities, but that lower nature, acting through its modes, or *gunas*, bewilders your knowledge, creates false values, envelops you in ego, mentality, sense physicality, limited intelligence and there conceals from you the supreme truth of your existence. This illusive *Maya* hides from you the Divine that you are, the infinite and perishable spirit.

If you could see that that Divine is the real truth of your existence, all else also would change to your vision, assume its true character and your life and actions would acquire the divine values and move in the law of the divine nature.

Why is this Maya so hard to overcome?

Because it is still the Maya of the Divine. It is itself divine and is an evolutionary development from the nature of the Divine, in its divided subjective and objective and lower cosmic aspects, *sattvic*, *rajasic*, and *tamasic*.

"This is my Divine Maya of the Gunas, and it is hard to overcome; those alone who cross beyond it come to Me."

- Gita VII.14

It is a cosmic veil, which the godhead has spun around your understanding. You have to work out this web in yourself, leave behind your inferior nature and turn towards the original and supreme Godhead.

The Gita does not take refuge in Vedanta's view that the world is an illusion, dreamlike and that it only appears to be real when one is not viewing it from the perspective of the spiritual self. Despite the enormous logical difficulties in such a notion, including a failure to account for the origin of the illusion, the Gita only says that it is all a mysterious and incomprehensible partial consciousness which loses hold of the complete reality, lives in the phenomenon of mobile Nature and has no sight of the Spirit of which She is the active Power. When you transcend this *Maya*, in the stillness of your soul, the world does not disappear; it only changes its whole heart of meaning. In the spiritual vision you find not that all

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this does not really exist, but rather that all is, but with a significance quite different than it was before: all is self and soul and nature of the Godhead, all is Vasudeva. The world for the Gita is real, a creation of the Lord, a power of the Eternal, a manifestation from the Parabrahman (Supreme Being), and even this lower nature of the triple Maya (I am the body; I am the personality; I am the soul) is a derivation from the supreme divine Nature.

You, however, cannot take refuge altogether in this distinction that there is a double reality: an inferior active and temporal one and a superior calm, still and eternal reality beyond action, and that liberation (from suffering or reincarnation) is to pass from the partiality to that greatness, from the action to the silence. For the Gita insists that you can and should, while you live, be conscious in the Self and its silence and yet act with power in the world of Nature. And it gives the example of the Divine itself, who is not bound by necessity of birth, but free, superior to the cosmos, and yet abides eternally in action. Therefore, it is by putting on a likeness of the divine nature in its completeness that the unity of this double experience becomes entirely possible.

But how? The Gita teaches that you will easily be released from the appearances of the lower nature and ascend into the divine being, when, established in perfect equality, your vision becomes fixed upon what it refers to the as the Purushottama, the Supreme Godhead. It is the ishvara, the special Self, unaffected by desire, by the causes of suffering, not even by karma. It is also the soul of all the souls, the immutable Self of all, not impinged upon by the power of its own becoming, undisturbed by the play of nature's qualities, the gunas. This is expressed by the image Shiva lying on his back, with Kali (Mother Nature, Maya) standing above him, with one foot raised, but not touching Him.

Superior to both the mutable and immutable spirit, this Supreme Being is imminent and supportive in nature's creation (Gita XV.17-18). Here it is necessary to delineate the Gita's analysis of Nature and Spirit, Prakriti and Purusha. Originally, Samkhya, the philosophic system of Classical Yoga, refers to Purusha in the singular. The Upanishads, the origins of Vedantic Yoga, describe, in one verse, two Purushas like two birds on one tree, eternally yoked companions, one of whom eats the fruits of the tree, - the Purusha in Nature enjoying her cosmos, - the other eats not, but watches his fellow, - the silent Witness, withdrawn from the enjoyment; when the first sees the second and knows that all is his greatness, then he is delivered from sorrow. It indicates that in its higher status of unity the self is forever free, inactive, unattached, though it descends in its lower being into the multiplicity of the creatures of Prakriti and withdraws from it by reversion in any individual creature to the higher status. This refers to the notion of the double status of the one conscious soul: (a) the mutable Purusha here in nature, the various becomings of the soul and the multiplicity of the Divine; and (b) the immutable, immobile Purusha, the silent self, the unity of the divine Being, the Witness

of Nature, but not involved in its movements, free from Prakriti and its works.. To these two the Gita, developing the thought of other passages in the Upanishads, adds yet another, the supreme, the Purushottama, the highest Purusha, whose greatness all this creation is, who possesses both the mutable multiplicity and immutable unity. It reveals that there is a higher, conscious and divine Nature, by which the Lord becomes the individual soul, the Jiva. In the lower nature, each individual being appears as the ego; in the higher nature you are the Purusha. In other words, multiplicity is part of the spiritual nature of the One. This individual soul is myself; in the creation it is a partial manifestation of "Me."

"It is an eternal portion of Me that becomes the Jiva in the world of living creatures and cultivates the subjective powers of Prakriti, mind and the five senses."

-Gita XV.7

This idea of the Purushottama is the foundation of the highest Bhaktiyoga, which claims to exceed the rigid definitions of monistic philosophy. By adoration of the Purushottama and union with It, you can enjoy wholly its divine Nature.

Why does God who is good allow so much suffering in the world?

When you look at life's dramas from the perspective of the ego, this oft repeated doubt becomes an enigma. But when you understand that suffering occurs because of Maya's power to delude your mind, and when you begin to see life's dramas from the perspective of the Witness Self, then you can begin to appreciate the Siddha's teaching that everything is an expression of the Lord's Grace. Nothing is happening to the true Self. Real change in the world can only happen as a result of the shifting consciousness of masses of individuals. Due to the nature of man, this can occur only from him having to overcome a multitude of difficult or excruciating challenges and critical mass events? "Suffering is the greatest teacher," because we are slow learners.

Ask yourself "Who suffers?" when the unexpected occurs. Immediately, this question will throw you back into the perspective of the Witness Self. Yes, there may be great pain in the physical body or emotional heart. There may be disappointment, fear, anger, frustration, or fury. But the truth is that You are not the pain, nor the emotions. You are their Witness. They come and they go, but you remain the Eternal Witness. You have within you the potential power and consciousness (kundalini) to love rather than to hate, to create what is good where there may be evil, to seek and find Truth in what is false or confusing.

The Five Divine Powers

Obfuscation, one of the five powers of the Lord as described in the Tirumandiram, obliges you to see through

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Siddhantha, Advaita and Yoga

with M. G. Satchidananda

Question: *Why have you decided to make this interview? What is its goal?*

Answer: If you want to know what is true and to avoid suffering, you need to ask some fundamental questions including: Does God exist? If so, how can I know God? Do I have a soul? Why was I born? What is the purpose of my life? Why is there suffering in the world? The goal of this interview, the reason I am making it, is to help the reader to gain a better understanding of some of the answers to these questions from the perspective of the spiritual traditions which have informed me on my spiritual path. Most Western seekers lack the knowledge of these spiritual traditions and their requirements. No amount of words can reveal truth, but some words can point towards it, provide a glimpse, and then one must go beyond the words, into the silence to realize them internally by identity. This is the approach of all spiritual traditions. The spirit has no form, so it cannot be captured in words. Only in silence. But one should not make the mistake of many Western spiritual seekers today, in their haste to become "enlightened," of ignoring or dismissing such questions. Spirituality does not mean "anti-intellectual." It does not mean that one simply needs to find the most efficient technique, or the best teacher, or run away from the world.

Question: *What is the relationship between Siddhantha, Advaita and Yoga?*

Answer: My teacher, Yogi Ramaiah used to say that Siddhantha begins where Advaita ends. And that Babaji's Kriya Yoga is the practical distillation of Siddhantha. But before answering this question, it will be necessary to discuss each of these.

Question: *What is Siddhantha?*

Answer: "Siddhantha" refers to the body of teachings

of Indian Yogic or Tantric adepts, known as "Siddhas" or perfected masters, those who have attained some degree of perfection or divine powers known as "siddhis." Aside from the "Siddhas" associated with Tibetan Buddhism, they are mystics who emphasized the practice of Kundalini Yoga to realize one's potential divinity in all five planes of existence. They condemned institutional religion with its emphasis on temple and idol worship, ritualism, casteism and reliance upon scriptures. They taught that one's own experience is the most reliable authoritative source of knowledge and wisdom and to acquire this one must turn within to the subtle dimensions of life through Yoga and meditation. Most of their writings go back 800 to 1600 years, as far back as the 2nd century, A.D. Anta means "final end." Siddhantha means the final end, conclusion or goals of the Siddhas, the perfect masters. It is also derived from citta and anta meaning that it is the end of the thinking faculty, therefore this is the final conclusion reached at the end of thinking. While they existed all over India and even Tibet, the tradition to which we belong, and whose literature we have researched, translated and published since the 1960's is from south India, and is known as "Tamil Kriya Yoga Siddhantha." The writings of the Tamil Yoga Siddhas were in the form of poems, in the vernacular language of the people, rather than Sanskrit, which was known only to the top most caste, the priestly Brahmins, who opposed them. Nowhere in their writings do they sing praises to any deities. Theologically their teachings can be classified as "monistic theism." But these do not attempt to create a philosophical system or a religion. They seek to provide practical teachings, particularly related to Kundalini Yoga, to realize Truth directly, and what one should

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the veil of Maya, to seek the Lord beyond the senses, beyond the workings of the gunas. The other powers of the Lord are Creation, Preservation, Dissolution and Grace. According to Siddhantha, the wisdom teachings of the Siddhas, the Lord creates the conditions in which each individual soul can take incarnation and work through its karmic consequences and lessons. It preserves life and some relationships long enough for the soul in incarnation to grow in wisdom as it experiences the limitations of egoism, wanting pleasure, avoiding pain. It dissolves these conditions, including relationships, to make way for the soul to have new edifying relationships, and at the end of one's life, to give a rest from the challenges of incarnation. It obfuscates or hides its Presence behind the appearances of the world, in order to oblige the soul to

seek wisdom and to transcend the ego's limitations. Grace is the response of the Lord to the call of the soul when it seeks to free itself from the ego's sufferings and to realize through the power of Love its Oneness with all. "It does not always give you what you want, but it does give you what you need." Grace actually manifests through all the powers of the Lord, including creation, preservation, dissolution, and obfuscation. Wisdom includes knowing this, and perceiving the potential lessons which every experiences bears. Grace unlike karma, is undeserved. It is the expresses the Lord's love for the souls, and guides each and every one of us from aloneness to All Oneness. Grace is infinitely patient, and gives unlimited opportunities learn from life's experiences Who we truly are. □



avoid on the spiritual path.

Sectarian affiliation has no importance for Siddhas. They feel at ease among persons of all faiths. Their approach towards truth is to first experience it in samadhi, the mystical communion of cognitive absorption, and then to gradually surrender to it completely until it becomes their constant state of consciousness in the state of enlightenment. Their approach does not include attempts to build systems of philosophy or to construct religious belief systems. The Siddhas' poems show no trace of shared opinions or collective thinking; theirs is an "open philosophy" in which all expressions of truth were valued. Their poems and songs do not preach any doctrines; they only suggest a direction by which aspiration for a direct, intuitive, personal and profound realization of the Divine truth may be realized.

The Siddhas, however, used a forceful, vernacular language designed to shock people out of their conventional morality and egoistic delusion. They used the common language of the people, rather than the elitist Sanskrit, in order to reach their listeners. They urged their listeners to rebel against pretentious, empty orthodox beliefs and practices, including temple worship and rituals, caste, and petition like prayers. They taught that at a certain stage, once the process of surrender of the ego fully embraces the intellectual plane of existence, one's own experience, rather than scriptures, becomes the ultimate authority of one's truth. The Siddha is a free thinker and a revolutionary who refuses to allow himself to be carried away by any dogma, scripture or ritual. The Siddha is a radical in the true sense of the term, for he has personally gone to the "root" of things.

Question: *Why is Siddhantha "new"?*

Answer: Tirumular, probably the oldest of the Tamil Yoga Siddhas, states in his Tirumandiram, (5th century A.D.) that he is revealing a "new Yoga" (nava yoga), containing all of the elements referred to as "kundalini yoga" by Siddhas later, and which will bring about a complete transformation of the human condition, including the physical body. During the first millennia of the common era, the siddhas invented kundalini yoga, as a powerful means of Self-realization (samadhi). It was a product of their experimental efforts to find more effective ways to know the truth of things, beyond the heavily intellectual, ritualistic, devotional, or ascetic paths, and to transform human nature. It is "new" today because its Tirumandiram and the writings of the 18 Tamil Yoga Siddhas were unknown outside of Tamil speaking south India and Sri Lanka until they were first translated by us, and either ignored or misunderstood by Tamil scholars and pundits because of their deliberately obscure "twilight language." Because the Siddhas condemned the orthodox Brahmin pundits and priests, they also earned the ire of members of this community, who condemned them as magicians or worse. Consequently, their writings were not preserved in institutional repositories like temples and manuscript libraries, but only by hereditary families of

physicians, Siddha Vaidhyas, who kept their writings secret, applying them only for medical purposes. Because of the widespread ignorance of their teachings and the popular association of the Siddhas with "magicians" by the orthodox community, until recently, they have not been held in esteem in some circles of Indian society. I can vividly recall the sarcastic and emotional reply of one famous teacher of Vedanta, a renowned Swami and member of the Brahmin community, whose mother tongue was Tamil, when in 1986, I asked him his opinion of the writings of the Tamil Yoga Siddhas. And I recall the typical response from many persons in North India when I mentioned that our guru was Babaji Nagaraj. If they had read the Autobiography of a Yogi, they would ask "Is he still alive?" If not, and we mentioned that he had been alive for centuries, they would say something like: "Oh, he must have very bad karma, to be obliged to stay in this world of suffering for so long." Even the leading members of other lineages of the Kriya Yoga tradition have been unable to appreciate what is "new" with regards to Babaji and the Siddhas. Sri Yukteswar said with regards to Babaji: "He is beyond my comprehension." That is, his state could not fit within the paradigm of Vedanta, in which he was schooled. Yogananda and others could only conceive of him as an "avatar," an incarnation of God Himself, and "Christ-like," though Babaji has never referred to himself in such terms. In his Autobiography, on the first page of the chapter where he introduces the reader to Babaji, Yogananda mentions that like the Siddha Agastyar, he has been alive for thousands of years. Yogananda failed to grasp how close these two Siddhas really were, and that like Agastyar, Babaji was a human being who became a Siddha, not God, who became an avatar. Avatars are exceedingly rare. They are not found within the Saivite tradition, but only among the Vaishnava tradition, with its ten successive avatars, including Rama and Krishna. All of these responses reflect perspectives which are limited to the philosophical perspectives of the speakers, whether it be Vedantic, Samkya, Christian, or Vaishnava.

Sri Aurobindo is one of the few sages in modern times who could appreciate who the Siddhas were, including Tirumular, Babaji and Ramalinga.

Question: *What does Siddhantha tell us about the soul and its relationship to the body?*

Answer: Any metaphysics has to deal with three things God (Pati), soul (pasu) and world (pāsam) and the inter-relation between them. The body of course is part of the world. Siddhantha, as elaborated in the Tamil literature of south India teaches that by emanation from Himself, God Siva created everything -- the world, all things in the world and all souls -- and that each soul is destined to ultimately merge in advaitic union with Him, just as a river merges into the sea, or a wave originates from and returns to the ocean.

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God Siva created and is constantly creating, preserving and reabsorbing all things, emanating from Himself the individual soul of man, all the worlds and their contents. He is the Beginning and the End, the Author of Existence. He is both material and efficient cause, and thus His act of manifestation may be likened to sparks issuing forth from a fire or fruits emerging from a tree.

The individual soul: is in essence *sat chit ananda*, that is being, consciousness and bliss or unconditional joy. This essence of the soul is not different from that of God. It is not a thing, not an object. It is the Seer, not the Seen. It is the subject. It is an effulgent being, a body of light, *anandamaya kosha* – and it is created, evolves as a seemingly separate being and ultimately merges in undifferentiated union and oneness with God Siva, which oneness may be called identity.

But monistic Siddhanta also teaches that the soul is, in a temporary way, different from God. This difference exists with respect to the soul's individuality, not its essence. The body of the soul, *anandamaya kosha*, composed of pure light, is created, and it is limited. It is not Omnipotent or Omnipresent at its inception. Rather, it is limited and individual, but not imperfect. That is what makes for evolution. That is the whole purpose behind *samsara*, behind the cycles of birth and death, to lead this individual soul body into maturity. Of course, the various faculties of mind, perception, discrimination, which are not the soul but which "surround" the soul, are even more limited, and it would be, as stated above, folly to equate these with God Siva, to say they were the same as He. Ultimately, after many births and further evolution which follows earthly existence, this soul body does merge in God Siva. This merger is called *vishvagrāsa*. Then, of course, the soul cannot even say, "I am Siva," for there is no "I" to make the claim. There is only Siva.

The world and the soul are, in truth, but various forms of Siva Himself, yet He also transcends His creation and is not limited by it. Also, the world and the soul cannot stand independent of God, a fact which makes it clear that they are evolutes and not eternal entities. When world and soul are absorbed in His Divine Form at the time of *mahapralaya* -- the end of a cosmic creational cycle -- all three *malas* (*anava*, *karma* and *maya*) are removed through His grace, and the soul ceases to exist as an individual, losing its separateness through union and fulfillment in Siva. After *mahapralaya*, Siva alone exists, until creation issues forth from Him in yet another cosmic cycle.

Question: What is the Siddhas' conception of God?

Answer: They referred to God as "*Śivam*" without any limitations or attributes. *Śivam* is grammatically and philosophically an impersonal conception. As Siddhas say, the ideal name for *Śivam* is 'It', *adu*, 'Thatness', 'Suchness', or *Parāparam*; "Goodness," absolute Being Consciousness and Bliss: *sat chid ananda*. *Śivam* is not a personal God. It is a practice, an entryway. It is a foun-

dational consciousness or awareness. This attainment of awareness or *Śiva*-consciousness is *mukti* or liberation. Even though Tirumular speaks of the religious aspect of God, he believed in a Supreme Abstraction, a "Great Aloneness". His expression for this is *taṇi-uṟṟa- kevalam* (*mandīram* 2450). A deeper study of the concept of *Śivam* would reveal that it took two channels in Indian thought, one theistic with a personal or devotional relationship to God based on the method of *bhakti*, and the other Tantric, i.e., absolutist, based on *Kundalini Yoga* and *jñāna*. The *bhakti* method is a pluralistic one as reflected in the *Śaiva Siddhānta* school; the absolutistic method is the monistic one as reflected in the *Tirumandiram*.

In their poems they referred to the five cosmic actions of the *Sivam* as His blissful dance, all through his *Sakti*, or power, because of his love for souls.

1. Creation: of the world so as to provide to souls the means to grow in wisdom and to ultimately realize their unity in diversity;

2. Preservation: as souls become entangled in ignorance, delusion and *karma*, they are protected as sustained by various means and relationships, for their edification;

3. Dissolution: when souls are removed from incarnation in this world, they obtain a temporary respite from their suffering in the world, during which they prepare for their next incarnation;

4. Obscuration: the power which veils the soul's Oneness with *Sivam*, and which in effect obliges souls to seek wisdom, the Truth beyond the veil mental delusion, *maya*;

5. Grace: the removal of the three fetters or blemishes of the soul: ignorance, delusion and *karma*. Actually *Sivam*'s grace and love for all souls is bestowed in all five cosmic actions, helping each soul to grow in maturity, leading to liberation.

Through cosmic cycles of involution and evolution this dance goes on through aeons of time. Its ultimate purpose remains a mystery until the soul is liberated and reunites with the secret Self, *Sivam*.

Question: What is the goal of Siddhantha?

Answer: According to the Tamil Siddhas or the realized souls, the ultimate goal of life is "complete surrender," which includes the realization of *vettivel*, "vast luminous space," cosmic consciousness, and then a progressive transformation of our human nature at all levels into a divine body, or *divya deha*.

The Tamil Siddhas relied on the individual's effort for the attainment of liberation as well as Divine Grace. This effort, this aspiration is represented by the upward pointing triangle; the grace is represented by the downward pointed triangle. Their combination, the double intersecting triangle, forms the basis of their most important *yantra*, a geometric object of concentration, and the integration of the spiritual and material levels of existence.

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Laya Yoga and the Five Elements

By M. G. Satchidananda

Today, Yoga is being presented mostly as a means of improving one's physical or mental health. While this is understandable in the modern materialistic culture, anyone who seeks to realize Yoga's original intent, spiritual Self realization and the overcoming of existential suffering, needs to have a basic understanding of the underlying principles of human nature and kundalini or laya yoga, as conceived by the Yoga Siddhas, the originators of Yoga.

Laya Yoga is the yoga of dissolution and an integral component of kundalini yoga as described in the tantric literature of the Siddhas. Kundalini yoga refers to those various kriyas (practical techniques of yoga) which involves pranayama, mantras, chakras, bandhas, mudras, hatha yoga asanas, to activate kundalini, one's potential power and consciousness. Laya yoga refers to the dissolution of one's habitual identification with the body-mind complex, resulting in the realization of one's true Self. Based upon the Samkhya classification of the tattvas or principles of nature, each of the five elements (bhutas) is associated with a different area in the body and chakras:

1. the earth, the material substance, or element, is associated with the root chakra, the muladhara, and the base of the torso, and is the medium of physical survival, and is characterized by inertia;
2. the element of water, is associated with the svadhisthana chakra, located in the coccyx, and is the medium of the emotions.
3. the element of fire, is associated with the manipura chakra, located opposite the navel,

and is the medium of desire, sensory perception and the autonomic nervous system and lower mind;

4. the element of air, is associated with the anahata chakra (heart center) and the vishuddhi chakra (throat center) and is the medium of the intellect, reason, communication.

5. the element of space, is associated with the ajna chakra (eyebrow center) and the sahasra chakra (crown center) and is the medium of intuition and superconsciousness.

Because of the limiting principles of human nature, known as ahamkara (egoism) and maya (delusion), and karma (consequences of thoughts, words and actions, driven by habits or samskaras), one identifies ordinarily with the physical body, the emotions and the movements of the mind and intellect. To purify oneself of egoism, the habit of identifying with what one is not, the Classical Yoga of Patanjali prescribes "Kriya Yoga," (Yoga Sutra I.12) the continuous practice of detachment from these movements in order to realize the Self, pure Witness consciousness. As few are prepared to practice this continuously he recommends and describes in the second chapter of the Yoga Sutras the 8-limbed Astanga yoga as a preparation (Yoga Sutra II.29).

Subsequently, the Siddhas experimented with many energetic techniques to activate the kundalini, realizing that "consciousness follows energy, and that energy follows consciousness." They discovered the basic principle of Tantra:

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Interview *continued*

The Siddhas insist on the value of Tantric Yoga as a means for the attainment of freedom and immortality within this world rather than in some heavenly afterlife. Liberation, moksa, or vidu (in Tamil) is a mystical state referred to as Yoga-samadhi by Tirumular.

*Inside the Yogic samadhi is the infinite space;
Inside the Yogic samadhi is the infinite light;
Inside the Yogic samadhi is the omnipotent energy
Yogic samadhi is what the siddhas are fond of.*
- mandiram 1490

It is not freedom or liberation from the cycle of incar-

nation, but freedom or liberation from the malas, or three blemishes or fetters of the human soul which bind it like three strands in a rope and limits its inherent qualities of sat chid ananda:

1. Anava: Ignorance of one's true identity, and consequent egoism;

2. Karma: the consequences of past actions, words and thoughts;

3. Maya: delusion, including its agents: partial knowledge, partial power, desires, time and destiny.

Continued at www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/Siddhantha-questions-and-answers-en.pdf



Laya Yoga *continued*

that transformation of human nature, (as distinct from escape from it) requires directing consciousness and energy from the lower to the higher psycho-energetic centers, or chakras. This is a process of sublimation of sexual energy, known as bindu, associated with the muladhara chakra, into a spiritual energy, known as ojas, which is associated with the sahasrara chakra. In the Siddha literature this process of sublimation is described as a kind of internal alchemy. Alchemy is the esoteric process of transforming base metals, such as lead, into gold. The Siddhas inform us that when this internal alchemy is completed, the physical body will glow like gold. They have described their resulting realization of the ultimate reality as "vast luminous space," or vettivel. (See the article on this subject in the previous issue of the Kriya Yoga Journal). "Space" the fifth element, is without any limitation and is therefore a fitting metaphor of kaivalya, or "absolute freedom," the title of the Yoga Sutra's final chapter. This includes freedom from desire, egoism, attachments and aversions of all kinds, karma and maya (delusion).

In seeking to gain leverage on these formidable obstacles, the Siddhas developed, and experimented with many kriyas (practical yogic techniques). Anyone who has ever tried to overcome a bad habit, or to overcome some attachment or aversion can appreciate how difficult it is, due to the inherent resistance our habit driven human nature. The Siddhas discovered how to leverage each element's inherent qualities in order to dissolve or sublimate one element into another progressively.

1. To dissolve earth, for example, one needs water. Earth's quality of inertia and habit is dissolved by water's positive emotions for change, including aspiration and motivation, and the kriyas, which move the body.

2. To dissolve water, into steam, one needs fire. All emotions are unstable, and most of them are negative, and at best they provide only fleeting movements of happiness in the vital body. The practice of pranayama breathing enables one to calm the emotions.

3. To dissolve fire one needs air. Emotions that involve resistance to the practice of and social principles of Yoga, the yamas, and the purification of desires and aversion give rise to heat. When one applies one's willpower and perseveres with concentration and mental control, guided by intelligence, reason and understanding, despite the resistance, desires and aversions are eliminated.

4. To dissolve air one needs space, the fifth element. When one directs one's breath and concentration on the chakras in the head, one can silence the mind's movements and enter into the silence of samadhi.

The kriyas used in Laya Yoga involve the practice of the most important practices in Babaji's Kriya Yoga:

Kriya Kundalini Pranayama, as well as bandhas, muscular locks, mudras, psycho-energetic gestures, the 18 asanas of Kriya Hatha Yoga practiced with awareness of their energetic effects, meditation on the chakras, chakra mantra repetition, and the simultaneous use of the chakras mantras, visualization and asanas, as one focuses on each respective chakra. These methods are taught only during initiation, so that they may be learned correctly and in the proper order and context. They bring about an integral development in all five planes of existence. Aside from these, there are many other things which are integral to Laya or kundalini yoga:

1. A sattvic (calming and balanced) diet,
2. The observance of the yamas or social restraints (Yoga Sutra II.30) including :

a. ahimsa: non-harming, in thought, word and deed;
b. satya: being truthful, avoiding exaggeration, speaking only what is necessary and helpful;

c. brahmacharya: being chaste in thought word and deed; ideally, it includes celibacy, or abstinence of sexual activity, until and unless one has purified oneself of sexual desire, is trained to engage in tantric practices with a partner, and established in the witness consciousness;

d. asteya: non-stealing; "wealth comes to all those established in non-stealing" (II.37)

e. aparigraha: greedlessness;

3. the cultivation of aspiration, rejection of what resists purification of egoism in all its manifestations, and surrender to the Supreme Being. See the articles on this subject in the Kriya Yoga Journals Winter and Spring 2006 on our website "Articles" page at <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/articles.htm> For the Siddhas, the "Supreme Being" is "the supreme abstraction," or "ishvara" which means literally, "the special Self": whom Patanjali says is that part of each of us who is "untouched by any afflictions, actions, fruits of actions or by any impressions of desire." (I.24) Aspiration is the opposite of "desire." It is the call of our soul for freedom from the manifestations of egoism (lust, anger, pride, greed), and to realize Oneness with all and the "True, the Good, and the Beautiful."

4. the practice of karma yoga which involves selfless, skillful service or action without attachment to the results. This enables one to channel the awakened kundalini energy with love into all human endeavors, and to avoid the pitfalls of spiritual egoism, seeking of spiritual powers, and other manifestations of egoism.

Knowledge, with practice, with devotion "they come unto Me" says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. May all readers apply themselves to the practice of Laya Yoga, with Love in their hearts, and informed by the wisdom of the Siddhas. □

News and Notes

Dr. Laurier-Pierre Desjardins, D.O. is offering a 3-day course of Functional Anatomy and Yoga at the Quebec Ashram, as part of our Deepening Your Practice Teacher



Dr. Laurier-Pierre Desjardins

Training, from Wednesday, August 27, 10 am through dinner Friday evening, August 29.

We have decided to open these three days as a separate program to Babaji Kriya Yoga students. Dr. Desjardins is a charming and dynamic speaker and yogi. His deep understanding of the body and his intuitive awareness is sure to increase your understanding of how Yoga works on the physical body and to inspire your practice.

This 3-day workshop will be an amazing experience of new knowledge of the living physical body, its construction and how to relate this to Prana and the proper practice of Yoga. We will navigate between what we have now and what is possible through links made between Yoga, its practice and the human potential. We will look at the concepts of Prana and how to achieve the best health at all levels of being by using that understanding in our practice. You will be introduced to the concept of co-contraction to develop more flexibility, laxity, suppleness and strength and be taught how to free your core! You will learn how to work with your limitations to deepen your postures and care for an injury should it occur. The workshop is interactive offering

both exercises and practices of health and experiences of healing.

Dr. Desjardins is a highly respected Osteopath and professor of Osteopathy. Each year he gives Advanced Functional Anatomy Courses for Yoga Schools all over Canada and Germany. He has been a practitioner of Babaji's Kriya Yoga for over 25 years and has developed this course specifically for us.

Price of the 3 days, including room and meals is \$300. We hope to see you there! Contact Durga if you have questions!

durga@babajiskriyayoga.net

To register contact the ashram
info@babajiskriyayoga.net or
450.297.0258

Pilgrimage to Badrinath in the Himalayas, September 24 to October 14, Join us for an life changing, unforgettable pilgrimage to the place where Babaji attained soruba samadhi, the ultimate state of enlightenment. Visit the new ashram in construction at Badrinath, where we will have a mantra yagna. See the details at:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm



Badrinarayan temple.

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec June 20-22, and October 24-26, 2014.

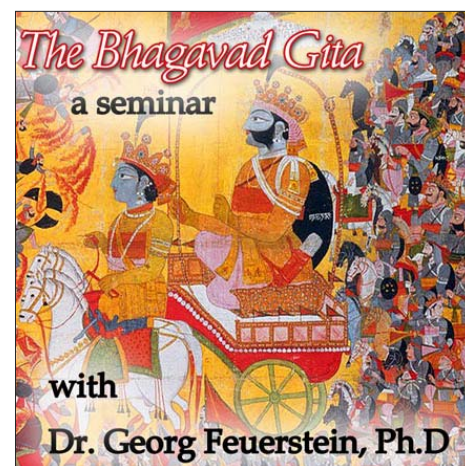
Third level initiations will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda; in Estonia August 14-21, and Dole France, August 25 to September 1, 2014. Also review sessions July 11-13 (French) and August 8-10 (English) at the Quebec ashram. Attain the goal of Self-realization with

powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

Two new video recorded seminars with Dr. Georg Feuerstein, Ph.D: The Bhagavad Gita and Tantra.

These are rare recordings, each seminar nearly six and one half hours in length, by perhaps the West's greatest scholar of Yoga in modern times, the late Dr. Georg Feuerstein, (1947 to 2012). Those who have enjoyed reading his more than thirty books on the subject of Yoga will enjoy even more listening to and watching one whose great scholarship was uniquely informed by his profound experience of the deeper dimensions of Yoga.

The Bhagavad Gita: Values for the 21st Century, a video recorded seminar with Dr. Georg Feuerstein, Ph. D, at the Babaji's Kriya



Yoga Ashram in St Etienne de Bolton, Quebec, Canada on June 30, 2001. 6 hours 22 minutes. \$29.95. The Bhagavad Gita or Sacred Song is one of the world's most important sacred texts. It celebrates the relationship of man with God, the intense joy of Divine Love and the realization of the Self through Yoga. In the form of a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna on the eve of a battle, Krishna teaches the fearful Arjuna the need for action and the requirement that he – like all mankind – take his place

Continued on Page 10

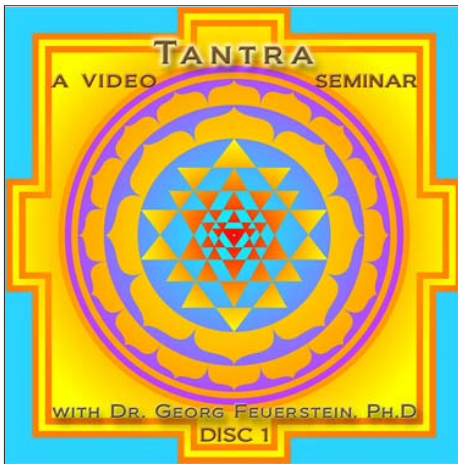


News and notes *continued*

in the world with faith and love.

Tantra: a video recorded seminar with Dr. Georg Feuerstein, Ph.D., at the Babaji's Kriya Yoga Ashram in St Etienne de Bolton, Quebec, Canada, July 1, 2001. 6 hours 24 minutes. Price: \$29.95. The spiritual tradition known as Tantra, often associated with Kundalini Yoga, teaches that enlightenment must embrace all dimensions of our existence, including the physical. It involves removing subconscious obstacles through various methods, including mantras, hatha yoga, kundalini breathing, and the worship of the divine shakti or power, first externally, and then internally.

To order these go to:
www.babajiskriyayoga.net.



Tirumandiram: A second edition, in five volumes, with a total of 3,770 pages, is now available for order at: www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm. The Tirumandiram, by Siddha Tirumular is a sacred, monumental work of philosophical and spiritual wisdom rendered in verse form, translated into English, with commentary, explaining the meaning of each verse. En-

cyclopedic in its vast scope, addressing different aspects of Yoga, Tantra and the philosophy of the Yoga Siddhas: Saiva Siddhanta. The last volume also contains presentations from two philosophical schools of Saiva Siddhanta, a glossary, a select bibliography and index.

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