

**THE HINDU PRĀNĀ IN ORAL TRADITION
WITH REFERENCE TO THE ARAMAIC
ROUHĀH**

Submitted

by

SIMLA HUNSRAJ

in partial fulfilment

of the

requirements for the degree

of

Master of Arts : Orality - Literacy Studies

University of Natal, Durban

1998

DECLARATION

I, Simla Hunsraj, declare that, except for quotations specially indicated in the text, and such help as I have acknowledged, this dissertation is wholly my own work, and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.

Signature: SHunsraj

Date: 09.04.1999.

Simla Hunsraj

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude many individuals who generously shared their expertise, time and patience enabling me to complete this dissertation:

Professor Sienaert for opening new doors of knowledge and for his continued encouragement.

Mohammed Seedat and Kasturi Naicker for their help in unravelling the mysteries of the computer.

Gita Rampersadh for line drawings of the yogic postures.

Ramesh Sirkissoo and Sanjeev Jugroop for their support and assistance.

Usha Debipersad and Seritha Surujpal for transliteration of the Sanskrit script and Pauline Singh for assisting with the editing.

My mother for her understanding and her respect for knowledge and the other members of my family for their support, in particular, my niece, Shastra, for spending long hours helping me to type and edit this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

The object of this dissertation is to illustrate the significance of *Prānā* (life breath):-

- As it obtains in the oral tradition
- With reference to the Aramaic *Rouhâh*
- In *Prānāyama* (breath control)
- In Surya Namaskar (Obeisance to the sun)

The role of *Prānā* in man was recognised and venerated since time immemorial. In the introduction, *Prānā* is perceived as a global, anthropological phenomenon.

Chapter one provides a theoretical framework linking *Prānā* to Oral Tradition by focusing on Marcel Jousse and his teachings; the Orality Perspective and the Orality - Literacy interface. Since the earliest record of the terms; *yoga*, *Prānā* and *Prānāyāmā* appear in the Vedas, the significance of the Vedas, especially as they exemplify oral expression, is mentioned.

Chapter two focuses on: firstly, *Prānā* within the context of yoga and secondly, *Prānā* and its relation to the Aramaic *Rouhâh*. The congruency of thought on the breath suffices to entrench *Prānā* as a global entity.

In chapter three, the enhancement of the quality and quantity of *Prānā* via *Prānāyāmā* (control of the breath) is discussed. *Prānāyāmā* sets out with the purpose of achieving complete harmonisation of the body-mind axis, and thereby proceeding to the divinisation of energy.

A cohesive whole is established by three essential and integrated elements; the breath (*Prānā*), the physical gesture (*asana*) and the spoken gesture (*mantra*) in Surya Namaskar. Oral features in these elements are analysed in chapter four.

The conclusion serves to emphasize that the wealth of oral tradition is amply evident in the concepts of *Prānā*, *Rouhâh* and *Prānāyāmā*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|
| CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK | |
| 1.1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.2 MARCEL JOUSSE'S ANTHROPOLOGY | 4 |
| 1.3 THE ORALITY PERSPECTIVE | 6 |
| 1.4 THE ORALITY – LITERACY INTERFACE | 9 |
| 1.5 THE VEDAS | 11 |
| CHAPTER TWO: BREATH - THE PRIMORDIAL GESTE | |
| 2.1 INTRODUCTION | 14 |
| 2.2 THE CONTEXT – YOGA | 18 |
| 2.3 PRĀNĀ AND ROUHĀH | 24 |
| 2.4 PRĀNĀ UPON DEATH | 29 |
| 2.5 PRĀNĀ IN THE PHYSICAL BODY | 32 |
| 2.6 FORMS OF PRĀNĀ | 33 |
| 2.7 PRĀNĀ IN THE SUBTLE BODY | 33 |
| CHAPTER THREE: PRĀNĀYĀMĀ | |
| 3.1 MEANING | 36 |
| 3.2 PRĀNĀ AND THE MIND | 36 |
| 3.3 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ – THE CONCRETE GESTE | 37 |
| 3.4 HOW PRĀNĀYĀMĀ WORKS | 38 |
| 3.5 HOW DISHARMONY OCCURS | 38 |
| 3.6 PRACTICAL EXPERIMENTS WITH PRĀNĀYĀMĀ | 42 |
| 3.7 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ – THE YOGIC BREATH | 44 |
| 3.8 TYPES OF BREATH | 45 |
| 3.9 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ IN PRACTICE | 47 |
| 3.10 ASANA | 48 |
| 3.11 MUDRA | 51 |
| 3.12 EXAMPLES OF PRĀNĀYĀMĀ | 52 |
| 3.13 MANTRA | 54 |
| 3.14 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ – THE SUBTLE DIMENSION | 59 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: SURYA NAMASKAR | |
| 4.1 INTRODUCTION | 62 |
| 4.2 FEATURES OF SURYA NAMASKAR | 63 |
| 4.3 POSTURES | 67 |
| 4.4 ELEMENTS OF ORALITY IN SURYA NAMASKAR | 79 |
| 4.4.1 THE CONCRETE REFERENT | 79 |
| 4.4.2 MIMISM | 80 |
| 4.4.3 RHYTHM | 81 |
| 4.4.4 BILATERALISM | 81 |
| 4.4.5 FORMULISM | 87 |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|----|
| 4.4.5.1 | THE PROPOSITIONAL GESTE | 87 |
| 4.4.5.2 | MNEMOTECHNICAL DEVICES | 88 |
| 4.4.5.3 | SYMBOLISM | 91 |
| CONCLUSION | | 92 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | 94 |

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to analyse the concept of *pṛāṇā* (vital cosmic force) as a universal anthropological phenomenon and to illustrate it in relation to:

- The Aramaic *Rouhâh* (the Breath)
- *Prāṇāyāmā* (Control of the Breath)
- Surya Namaskar (Greetings to the Sun)

At first it may appear that these are incongruent concepts but speculation reveals that 'breath' – known as *Prāṇā* in the Hindu context and *Rouhâh* in the Aramaic context is the common thread that is interwoven into each concept.

Prāṇā is seen within the context of Yoga which forms the cornerstone of Indian culture. The earliest evidence of the terms '*Prāṇā*' and '*Yoga*' is to be found in the ancient Vedas (Hindu Scriptures) that informs the life of a Hindu from birth to death.

The Vedas are composed of thematic elements and were repeated orally, resulting in the perpetuation of Yoga. The text contains oral elements which are invaluable in oral tradition.

In Yoga, man seeks perfection in the balanced interplay in him of these three powers which is dependent on:

- The Harmony of his being;
- The Development of his personality; and
- The Relaxation of his inner life.

He likes to think of divine grace as informing his energies and transposing his activities on a higher supernatural and divine plane. He does everything to dispose his faculties, body, soul and spirit so that a power from on high can take possession.

Botha avers, "Almost all forms of piety have in some sense or another oral aspects. In fact, for most of history, even in major sections of most contemporary societies, sacred texts have been and are memorised and recited, something one lives with orally and aurally. The recognition of the importance of oral speech and the oral sacred utterance is a major challenge for historical understanding, but even more so for cross-cultural communication." (1992 : 15)

Conceptually, *Prāṇā* and *Rouhâh* are remarkably similar. The most beautiful explanation of the creation of man and his actions are provided by the Palestinian milieu. God breathed into man the breath of life - the *Rouhâh*. The All-Mighty Energy is continually addressed. The congruency of thought regarding these concepts is made apparent. References from the two ethnic sources, the Hindu and the Palestinian milieus, used interchangeably in this essay, will demonstrate congruence of belief and practice.

Yogic culture recognises that man is influenced by, and acts upon, the impressions he receives from the universe. In Joussean terms, this is regarded as **Mimism**. Chopra (1990 : 215) elaborates, "The notion of reality is expressed in two words, 'Aham Brahmasmi' succinctly translated as 'I am the Universe'. In Sanskrit, it is 'I am Brahman'.

Brahman is an all-inclusive term and therefore untranslatable; it signifies all things in creation - physical, mental and spiritual - as well as their uncreated source."

In *Prāṇāyāmā*, (Control of the Breath) man intelligises his impressions for the achievement of things divine. The aim of *Prāṇāyāmā* is to improve the quality and quantity of *Prāṇā* - thus we note a controlled supervision of his impressions. "Man's great strength lies in the knowledge of how to play on the mechanisms accumulated in him and how to make them succeed". (Jousse 1997 : 133)

Any discussion on orality is incomplete without reference to Marcel Jousse. He identified the laws of anthropological expression: Rhythmo-Mimism, Bilateralism and Formulism. Jousse's laws and theories are inextricably woven into the fabric of this study.

Because rhythm is primarily and necessarily biological and therefore grounded firmly in man as *anthropos*, it is the central element to which he responds. Rhythm forms the basis of *Prāṇā*, *Prāṇāyāmā* and *Rouhâh*.

In *Surya Namaskar* (Greetings and Obeisances to the Sun), *Prāṇā* is utilized for the transformation of human consciousness. *Surya Namaskar* is a combination of gestes: breath, posture and recitation of meditative syllables (*Prāṇā*, *asana* and *mantra*) that together constitute a cohesive sublimation of human energy.

Formulaic techniques that have grounded *Surya Namaskar* firmly in oral tradition are clearly evident.

1.2 Marcel Jousse's Anthropology

This essay has been largely informed by the contributions of Marcel Jousse. A brief overview of his perceptions will serve to authenticate Jousse as most eminently suitable to comment on oral style. He is regarded as the discoverer of the existence of oral style but in his own words "to be exact, what I discovered was the Anthropology of Gesture which is more precisely, the Anthropology of Mimicry, which must be regarded as the common denominator of my work as a whole." (1990 : xii)

Jousse emphasised throughout his publications that oral did not imply expression by the spoken word only but by that which involves the entire body. He frequently referred to the oralness of his youth and its impact on his thinking. His books abound with the experiences in his childhood that bear testimony to the remarkable capacities of spontaneous or oral societies. These memories underpin his observation that illiterate does not mean unintelligent and that, in fact, knowledge is acquired by understanding the thought processes and perceptions of people of oral traditions.

He published several essays, some of which are translated by Sienaert in *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*. Many of these were controversial in the sense that they compelled theologians and leaders of other disciplines of study to rethink the origins of human expression. In his book, *The Oral Style and The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*, Jousse offers an exposition of anthropological laws:-

- Rhythmo-Mimism - actions that are replayed in the individual are reflections of the universe. These actions are, of necessity, rhythmic.

Human gestures obey the biological rhythm created by a concentration of energy followed by an energetic explosion.

- Bilateralism – The human structure conforms to two sides. Man has two symmetrical sides. He expresses himself bilaterally because of his bilateral constitution.
- Formulism - With rhythm and bilateralism interacting with each other, formulism is the natural progression. Mnemotechnic devices come into play arising from man's impressions. Formula becomes structured through constant and repetitive use.

These anthropological laws serve as a common thread linking disciplines such as History, Education, Psychology, Theology, etc. thus alluding to the crucial fact that orality is multidisciplinary. In the Foreword to *The Anthropology of the Geste and Rhythm*, the observation is made that "his holistic insights inevitably extended far beyond the confines of biblical exegesis, into the arenas of the origin and development of language; learning theory and practice; movement theory; reading and writing; the role of culture and tradition; the nature of oral composition and performance, and their roles in the complex fabric of ethnic and anthropological behaviour." (Jousse 1997 : ix)

Jousse makes extensive references to the Palestinian milieu. He claimed that profound knowledge was to be gained from an analysis of their tradition. The rhythmic schema that emanated from Jesus who lived in this oral world, the mnemotechnical devices and mnemonic faculties that moulded His consciousness were also available to the custodians of heritage of the time. His studies of the testimonies of oral people of the

past and present eg. Slavs, Ethiopians, Hindus and Muslims revealed the use of similar oral skills.

Jousse also explained the mutual effects of orality and literacy. Much of what is residually oral is present in literate man; there is much to be harnessed in recognizing the strengths of both especially with regard to cultural tolerance and personal identity.

A study of Jousse reveals his giftedness in describing the globality of the oral phenomenon that emphasizes our anthropological commonality.

1.3 The Orality Perspective

A study of the human phenomenon, his personality, his capacities, his beliefs, in fact, every component of the human compound can most appropriately begin with orality as a starting point. Orality is based on the essence of man as an organic being but he stands apart from other living organisms on the basis of his ability to transform energy to higher states of awareness. The gestures of the universe impressed upon man were meaningfully constructed into what Jousse termed ¹*corporeal-manual gesticulation* (physical gestures) which, through the ages, became concentrated into ²*laryngo-buccal gesticulation* (spoken language). The concept of orality is explained by this theory.

¹ corporeal-manual gesticulation – expressive gestures using the entire body.

² laryngo-buccal gesticulation – expressive gestures using speech.

The term 'oral' encompasses communication through the entire body. In an experiment undertaken at the National College for the Deaf in Washington, Mallery brought together Utah Indians and deaf people to observe the mode of communication between them. "The result of the research shows that the mimism of the deaf and that of all peoples [including our own, very much atrophied mimicry,] together constitute a language of humanity" (Jousse 1990 : 38). The corporeal-manual gesticulation of people dissociated by the culture of writing is a universal language and it forms the substratum of human thought.

Manual gestures and speech complemented each other. Man is impelled to replay his perceptions by hand and by sound, hence, verbal expression. Botha (1994 : 5) describes orality as "a comprehensive experience of symbols in the habitat of sound." At some stage, speech prevailed over manual gestures. Several factors account for a situation where, although there exists a synthesis of manual and oral modes of thought and expression, the oral mode predominates. Ribot (Jousse 1990 : 40) lists the physiological advantages :-

- it could travel over a greater space;
- it could operate in the darkness;
- it released man's hands to do other activities;
- it employed the mouth and the ear, both organs of a far more highly refined musculature than the hands.

Laryngo-buccal gesticulation employed by oral societies is richly represented by the actions of the universe around them. Consequently, orality is characterised by reference to concrete experience. Abstract thought was conveyed through language based on

concrete experience. Thought is expressed in the generation of ideas - propositional gestes. The automatic repetition of ³propositional gestes gives rise to parallelism which is the consequence of man being symmetrically two-sided. Parallelism is the constant urge of man for balance and it is manifested also in verbal language.

From this background, three anthropological laws of expression were identified by Marcel Jousse:

Rhythmo-Mimism, Bilateralism and Formulism. Man's physical structure reflecting rhythm and bilateralism pervades his psyche as well. As a result, his gesticulations are characterised by the constant need for equilibrium and this is achieved through formulaic expression.

Because an oral society does not rely on books, formulaic expression becomes the means for the transmission of knowledge and the survival of cultural identity. This accounts for the phenomenal memory that enables oral man to recite thousands of lines. Such memory is facilitated by formula. Oral Formulaic Theory includes bilateralism, parallelism and mnemotechnic devices, eg. Alliteration, repetition, rhythmic schemas, use of metaphor and key words in a recitation.

³ propositional gestes – the successive phases of the gesticulation of an event as a whole.

Several researchers studying oral memory found that knowledge was preserved and transmitted in similar fashion, eg. Rattray who studied the Ashanti; Jousse who studied the Slavs, the Berbers, the Ancient Greeks and many more (1990 : 183-193) and Finnegan who studied the Limba (1988 : 130-149).

One of the characteristics of oral tradition listed by Turner is its complex and profound involvement with speech acts and performance utterances; "forms of language which linguistic philosophy has recently begun to explore and which are in turn connected to the most fundamental questions of truth, reality and being." (1986 : 68)

Finnegan comments on the study of Orality. "It has widened our horizons and drawn our attention to forms of human creativity before neglected or unnoticed, given us new questions to ask, encouraged re-analysis of what we thought we already knew, and above all, provided a comparative and unifying perspective on what used to be the work of many separated scholars." (1990 : 140)

By studying orality, credence is given to anthropological global style that encompasses all human endeavour. Our understanding of the range of human capacity and culture is extended.

1.4 The Orality and Literacy Interface

Orality and literacy are not mutually exclusive, neither are they antonymic concepts. Where cultural heritage and context are oral, a person cannot be illiterate. Illiteracy is only possible in a literate society and this occurs chiefly because of the given political

and economic power relations. Therefore, whereas orality is global and universal, literacy is not.

In cultural and societal history, writing is relatively recent. It is natural then, that the written and printed text contain certain formulaic structures evident in the communication of oral societies. The view held by many researchers is that orality informs writing, hence the orality - literacy continuum. Even today, mnemonic skills that were used as instruments to aid memorization are used extensively in writing also eg. repetition, use of metaphor and analogy, alliteration, etc.

Several crucial functions are fulfilled by writing. Coulmas (1989 : 4-5) classifies the functions of writing as follows:-

1. It has a mnemonic function in that it is memory supportive, eg. a university library where events can be recalled accurately.
2. It has a distancing function - where the communication range is expanded.
3. It has a reifying function. Language becomes the object because of its visibility and therefore assumes a detached form for analysis.
4. It has a social control function where the notions of standards and correctness are upheld through faith in the written form.
5. It is inter-actional. It serves to regulate and influence behaviour, eg. recipes, manuals, letters and wills.
6. It has a two-fold aesthetic function: in certain genres of novel and drama and in the medium by which they are cultivated, eg. in calligraphy, where the verbal message appeals both to the intellect and to the sense of visible beauty.

The technology of writing is relevant for: the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation; the spread of knowledge to a wider community and the appreciation of other cultures.

Botha succinctly alludes to the value of writing in sustaining religious belief. "In theocentric traditions, scripture is the place where God speaks to humans. In others, it is in the scripture that the primordial wisdom heard and taught by generations of prophets or spiritual teachers is recorded whether it be the Vedic mantra or 'So spreek die Here' (liturgy of the Dutch Reformed Church). Scriptures come alive as the sacred word of truth is spoken." (1992 :16)

The orality and literacy interaction enters into any discussion of human aspirations. Its relevance as it obtains in the concepts of Prana and Rouhâh are emphasized in this essay. All religious traditions of mankind have their origins in the oral past and it is in the scriptures that these traditions are upheld. The orality - literacy continuum is understood in this light.

1.5 The Vedas

The original source of the cultural life of a Hindu from his first breath to his last is traced to the teachings of the *Vedas* which form a part of Hindu scriptures. They are an extant body of literature with a total of 20380 verses. The *Vedas* were orally transmitted in the Sanskrit language, a language developed to a remarkable degree and which contains elaborate and detailed speech patterns. The Sanskrit language is an eternal entity.

Recording of the *Vedas* into writing extends the oral and literate functions as being co-eternal.

The *Vedas* encompass all forms of knowledge and are consistent with the principles of pure science. It is believed that the eternal knowledge of the *Vedas* is divine revelation given to ṛṣis (seers). The *Vedas* comprise of four books: *R̥gVeda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvaveda*. Vedic literature includes all literary works that emerged from the *Vedas* to the epic period during which the *Bhagavad Gita* was written. Disciples studied the *Vedas* for several years, scrupulously memorising each verse under the guidance of a *guru* (teacher). Even after the advent of writing, the *Vedas* continued to be committed to memory and to be recited for the purposes of sanctity. The preservation of the *Vedas* through millenium illustrate the remarkable capacity of oral memory. Research into the composition of the *Vedas* will reveal that oral skills were employed to facilitate the memorisation of thousands and thousands of lines. Upon listening to a recitation of the hymns, one is immediately moved by its deep philosophical significance enhanced by melodious rhythm. This is because Vedic hymns (*mantras and slokas*) were rhythmically composed.

The *Vedas* are versified in stanzas and each hymn contains a minimum of three and a maximum of fifteen verses in the same meter. According to Jousse, physiological rhythm is regularised in meter. (1990 : 98). Verses composed in similar metrical patterns act as formula for memory. Moktar quotes Milman Parry's working definition of a formula, "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea." (1995 : 22). Debipersadh (1995 :16) provides a structural representation of the general composition of hymns and stanzas contained in the *Vedas* which illustrate the role of formula as a mnemonic skill.

The teachings of the *Vedas* determine the personal, social and spiritual life of a Hindu from birth to death and it forms the basis of his understanding either philosophically or through ritual. They are of significance for an analysis of *yoga*, *Prāṇā* and *Prāṇāyāmā*.

The earliest references to the foregoing concepts are found in the *Vedas*. Yoga was imparted by preceptor to pupil in the oral tradition. Recently yoga is being revealed more and more as a truly global, anthropological phenomenon.

CHAPTER TWO

BREATH - THE PRIMORDIAL GESTE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the Beginning was the Breath

In the Beginning was the geste⁴

In the Beginning was the life

(Jousse 1997 : 192)

These lines by Marcel Jousse describe the Palestinian milieu - if not all oral tradition and we observe its profound source in the following lines.

And the All powerful one modelled

The Earthling man with the

Dust of the Earth

And he breathed into his nostrils

A breath of life

(Ibid : 462)

⁴ geste – a gesture that is expressed on account of one's impression and is anthropological and global.

Jousse goes on to say:

Never has ⁵mimismological intusception attained such a degree of perfection. Breath of God made the dust something analogous to God. In this we reach the most sublime limits of the anthropology of the earth and of the breath. (Ibid : 462-463)

The Palestinian milieu is rich with the mimodrama of this Omnipotent Energy. In the Hindu tradition, the Prāṇā is the Omnipotent Energy and cosmic force through which man becomes a respirating, living being and through which he is sustained. Although the concepts of Prāṇā and Rouhâh are of different ethnic sources, Prāṇā may be said to be the equivalent of the Rouhâh because of the striking similarities. It's yogic significance with reference to the Rouhâh will be illustrated.

"Prāṇā is the sum total of all energy that is manifest in the universe" (Seth 1990 : 110). All physical and mental energy is Prāṇā. On the physical plane, Prāṇā is visible as motion and action eg, breathing, talking, the digestion of food etc. On the mental plane, Prāṇā manifests as thought and reasoning, and on the spiritual plane, Prāṇā is absolute consciousness. This represents the path of yoga or the path of God. Moreover, it is the cornerstone of all human life. In yoga, the level of Prāṇā is raised and regulated through the practice of Prāṇāyāmā. To reach the subtle, one takes the help of the gross. Prāṇāyāmā implies a systematic regulation of the breath from the concrete involving physical control and then proceeding to the sublime.

⁵ mimismological intusception – the play and replay of impressions.

The mind and Prānā are inextricably linked. When the mind fluctuates, so does Prānā. Prānāyāmā helps to still the mind so that the flow of Prānā is like the flow of liquid and thus balance, rhythm and harmony is regained. In *The Oral Style*, Jousse writes,

“Oral Style is human expression full of gesture, full of melody, full of rhythm because full of organic function” (1990 : 109).

Prānāyāmā as a system of breath control is not only of physical benefit. The significance of the practice lies in the goal of human life which is union with the Creator.

The *Bhagavad Gita* (IV, 29) in referring to the different types of worship states

**Apānā juhvati Prānaṁ
Prāṇe pānam tatha'pare
Prāṇāpānagati ruddhvā
Prāṇāyāmā parāyaṇaḥ**

“Yet others are devoted to breath control having restrained the paths of Prānā and pour as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming and the incoming breath in the outgoing” (Radhakrishnan 1948 : 167). Thus revealing a subtle extension from a physical to a sublime space.

Several yogins maintain that Prānāyāmā is synonymous with the recitation of mantra - a group of rhyming words repeated meditatively. The practice of mantra recitation in synergy with Prānāyāmā will be discussed in general. In specific, the harmonious link between breath, the recitation and the concrete geste is illustrated in the SURYA

NAMASKAR – a series of yogic postures (asanas) dedicated to the worship of the sun. The SURYA NAMASKAR is discussed in Chapter four.

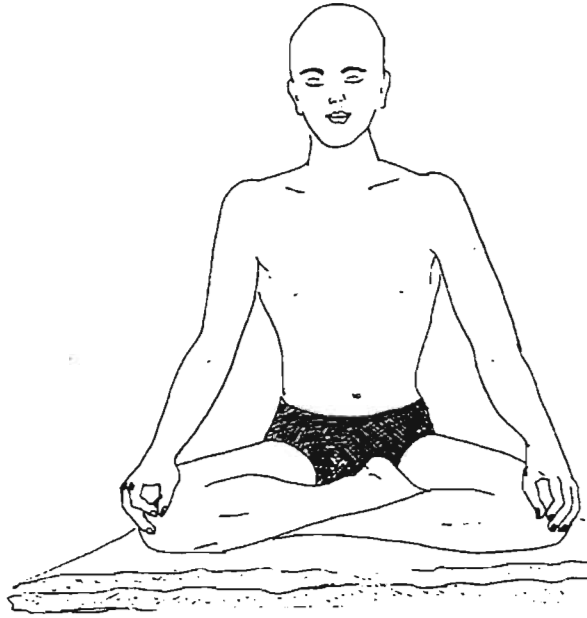
The cream of Indian culture is the ideology of yoga as pertaining to oral tradition specifically in the sense that it is transmitted from generation to generation from teacher (Guru) to pupil. Prāṇā, the ultimate propositional geste, is seen in this context.

It must be emphasized that the content of this paper focuses on yoga in its moderate form. Prāṇā as the Primordial and Sustaining Force of all yoga is discussed. There are several types of yoga practice and those pursuing benefits of such, must seek the expert guidance of a Guru, notwithstanding the theoretical knowledge obtained from books.

2.2 THE CONTEXT – YOGA

“Equilibrium is yoga” – Bhagavad Gita (11, 48)

(Radhakrishnan 1948 : 120).



Sanskrit Derivation

Yoga comes from the root word Yuj meaning union or yoke

Origins

Briefly, it may be stated that yoga is as old as civilisation itself since it represents the effort, the path, the progress and the end of human evolution. “It is said that God himself

revealed yoga. Such is the unique place that yoga enjoys in the cultural history of India.”
(Yogendra 1975 : 15)

Its origin may be traced to the period BC 10000 – BC 5000. William J. Flag opined in his book *Yoga or Transformation* – “A number of contemporary and obscure practices like the ancient yoga which existed ages ago could now even be traced in Egyptian Theurgy, Akkadian Tulla-intoonism, Chinese Taoism, Greek Stoicism and many similar developments prevalent among the primitive inhabitants of their respective places.” He proclaims further that the name and the thing are far older than the earliest traces of their records handed down to posterity in the scriptures. (Yogendra 1975 : 10)

Here-in lies evidence that yoga of itself is universal and elements thereof existed in oral style societies around the world. The earliest evidence of yoga appears to have been found during the archaeological excavations of Mohenjaro. These excavations revealed signs of ancient civilisation which flourished in India. Some stonelike seals found show Godlike figures in yogic postures. One seal is of the Deity, Lord Shiva, who, according to tradition, is the founder of yoga.

The earliest written use of the word yoga appears in the Rgveda. [mdL 4, SKT 24, mtr 4].

Without the practice of yoga,
Intellect does not develop,
Without good intellect,
Spiritual power does not grow.

The astounding realization is that even over 6000 years ago, it was accepted that the influence of the mind on the body is far more profound than that of the body on the mind. Yoga recognizes this fact and endeavours to systematize the psychic laws in relation to the physical. Since then, yoga has grown and altered continuously through thousands of years to meet the changing conditions of mankind. However, it has also been directed to allowing the individual to achieve his or her full potential as a human being.

Schools of Yoga

Yoga can be made to suit all types of minds in all aspects of life, in all circumstances, hence, the different schools of yoga each with the goal of uniting with the Super consciousness. The schools of yoga are:-

| | | |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------------|
| BHAKTI YOGA | - | the path of selfless service and devotion |
| JNANA YOGA | - | the path of knowledge |
| KARMA YOGA | - | the path of action |
| MANTRA YOGA | - | repetition of mantra |
| HATHA YOGA | - | from the physical to the divine |
| RAJAYOGA | - | meditation |

Patanjali – one of the foremost exponents of yoga (3rd century AD) formulated the eight-fold path of yoga called Astanga yoga. They are:-

1. Yāmā - Restraint
2. Niyāma - Observance
3. Asānā - Physical discipline

- | | | | |
|----|------------|---|------------------------------------------|
| 4. | Prāṇāyāmā | - | Control over bioenergy or breath control |
| 5. | Prātyahārā | - | Sense withdrawal |
| 6. | Dhāraṇa | - | Concentration |
| 7. | Dhyāna | - | Meditation |
| 8. | Sāmādhi | - | Absolute Consciousness. |

The first five constitute the psychosomatic approach and are referred to as external yoga. The latter three affect the psychic and are known as internal yoga. (Fleurstein 79-80).

In its broad sense, then, any effort or combination of efforts which make it possible to achieve the highest object of one's life came to be known as yoga.

The first step in yoga relates to the conditioning of the body-mind complex which should determine one's personal attitude to one's self and then to the society in which one lives.

In this regard, Ong states, "Self-consciousness is co-extensive with humanity.... . But reflectiveness and articulateness about the self takes time to grow" (Ong 1982 : 178).

After the body-mind axis, yoga takes us to higher realms of spiritual awareness. Many experts insist that it is impossible to aspire to a higher consciousness without first going through several disciplinary phases but for the moderate yoga enthusiast, this is not necessary. In the book *Yoga and Indian Philosophy* it is emphasized that yoga offers practical guidance also to non-specialists, that is to say, to the ordinary man who feels that he needs to do something for himself, yet cannot find or accept help from religion

and cannot wait until depth psychology develops its own methods and makes it available on a broad basis. (Werner 1977 : 169)

The connection between 'Yoga' from 'yug' meaning 'union with God' and 'yuj' meaning 'yoke' is clear in this extract from the Bible where Christ says:-

"Come to me, all you who bear the
Yoke and the Burden on your shoulder
And I will give you Rest
For I am meek and humble of heart
And you will find Rest for your souls
For my yoke is easy and my
Burden is light."

(Mathew 11 : 28 - 30)

In the sense that Christ said "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" and urged his disciples to follow him, he was teaching the path toward God, which is the purpose of Yoga.

Yoga may be said to be scientific because:-

- it is systematic
- it is not opposed to any method of scientific investigation
- it is universal in its application
- it is open to verification by personal experience

- the end result is the same for everyone

(Sachdeva 1978 : 95)

A number of students of yoga in the west are trying to put to practical test the claim of yoga that it can, by application of its techniques of mental training, develop spiritual experiences that transcend the normal capabilities of the mind. They cannot be called religious in the current sense of the word but they are certainly interested in the effects of yoga practice on more than just their health, their capacity to relax and some degree of peace of mind. They are attracted to yoga because it promises, through techniques of Buddha and Patanjali, specific results without committing them to Hinduism or Buddhism, etc.

This can be viewed as an important development in the impasse in which the western mind finds itself because of the advances and successes of science and technology. In this, we observe how balance, an integral feature of oral tradition is also sought after by man. Success in science and the material world must have an equivalent in the quest for depth in human life.

To this end, Jousse quotes Bergson:

"I have sometimes asked myself what would have happened if modern science instead of taking mathematics as its starting point and moving in the direction of mechanics, astronomy, physics and chemistry, instead of concentrating all its efforts on the study of matter had begun by considering the spirit." (1988 : 227)

Through yoga, every care is taken to maintain rhythm and balance within the body. The aim of explaining the concept of yoga bears significance as all yoga centres around the breath. Breathing forms the basis of yoga.

In the *Bhagavad Gita* (viii, 12-13), Krishna says

12. **sarvadvārāni saṁyamyā**
mano hṛdi nirudhya ca
mūrdhny ādhāvā'tmanah prāṇam
āsthito yogadhāraṇam

13. **aum ity ekāksaram brahma**
vyāharan mām anusmaran
yaḥ prāyati tyajan dehaṁ
sa yati parāmam gatiṁ

(All the gates (sense organs) closed, the mind confined in the heart, The Life Breath (Prāṇā) fixed in the head, concentrated by yoga, reciting the single syllable Aum, remembering me as he departs, giving up his body, he goes to the highest goal.)
(Radhakrishnan 1948 : 231-232)

2.3 PRĀNĀ AND ROUHĀH

Prāṇā may be superficially taken to mean 'the breath' but actually it means 'the life force within each one of us.' The manifestation of this life force is the breath of the nostrils. If that stops, as a rule, all other manifestations of life in the body stop also. Translating

Prānā as Life-Breath rather than as just breath goes some way towards indicating its broader dimension. It is the power within the breath that is the vital force in every being.

Prānā was in use in the Sanskrit language since very ancient times and has been referred to often in the Vedas. In the Atharvaveda, the text declares **Prānā as the fundamental basis of "whatever is, was and will be"**, and has compared Prana with the world of living beings to that of a father with his son. (Chand 1982 : 308)

At this juncture, it would be pertinent to refer to the Rouhâh, which in Hebrew, refers to the 'Breath of the nostrils.' "Many will be tempted to smile condescendingly at the primacy of the role of the humble nostrils in circumstances as grave as those of the intervention of the All-powerful Breath for the Insufflation of the Adam Earthling man ... All life and all understanding of life can be irradiated and manifested by the Breath that enters and leaves through the nostrils." (Jousse 1997 : 463)

The above quotation is ample evidence that the Breath is often trivialised as is the Prānā. Oxygen is required by the lungs so that the body functions and this it acquires via the nostrils. This is probably the sum total of thought on breath by the majority. Jousse brings this misconception to stark light. He further avers that the Palestinian paysan (man or peasant of the earth) of oral tradition fully understands the profound meaning of the Breath: the Breath through the nostrils grants life, understanding and knowledge because breath was breathed into man by God. In Aramaic, the Breath is referred to as Rouhâh.

In the most sublime geste, the God created man from dust and into the modelled dust He Breathed the Breath of life. This geste is referred to by Jousse as the Insufflation.

The understanding of the Anthropology of the earth and of the breath typifies the Palestinian milieu. The geste of the Insufflation of the nostrils by God is rooted in concrete density. It is not mythism, as Jousse points, out but “transcendent paysanism”.
(1997 : 463)

It explains:

- man’s origin – earth that is animated by the Breath of God
- man’s existence – everything that he is
- man’s demise.

The similarity of thought on Prānā is gauged in these lines in the *Atharvaveda*

(11,13)

Ko asmin Prānamavayat ko apānam

Vyānam, samānamasmin ko devo’dhi s’asraya puruse.

(Adorable God bestowed Prānā on Man.)

(Chand 1982: 391)

In the *R̥gVeda* it is stated:

Ayamiha Prathmo Dhoyi

Dhātrimirhota Yanjinṣṭo adhvaṛeṣ vīdyaḥ

Yamapnavāno Bragavo

Virurucurvaneṣu citram Vibhvam viṣevimṣe

(O men! You should meditate upon that God alone, who is the first and foremost liberal donor, unifier and Prana.)

Prānā is often considered the bio-energy that activates the human organism. Most experts agree that it is closely related to the air that we breathe. However, they also strongly affirm that air is only the physical vehicle to be used and manipulated in the process of extraction of Prānā.

“The universal force that manifests what the great consciousness planned in the ether is Prānā which for the west is made more comprehensive by the ‘Force of Form’. Form here is not confined to length, breadth and thickness but to motion, gravitation and, as Vivekenanda further extends it, ‘the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought force’. From thought down to the lowest physical force, everything is but the manifestation of Prānā.” (Vithaldas 1995 : 61)

Prānā becomes visible on the physical plane as motion and action and on the mental plane as thought. It is evident that Prānā, like the Rouhâh, manifests in concrete materialism and is simultaneously reflective of the Divine.

On the mental plane, Prānā is manifest in thought. It is Prānā which links the physical body with the astral. It is the force that connects consciousness and matter. All the great prophets and personalities are a store-house of Prānā. That is why people flock around gurus, saints and sages and why some people are more successful and more influential than others. This is nothing more than the natural capacity of a person to wield Prānā.

In this regard, Jousse asks of the word genius, "Do you still use that word? When a human being has taken the human gestures, kneaded them in his awesome fists and made them transparently one, you say, 'He is a genius'. You are right. It is a power which is greater than man. It is the breath that we always see. You have secularized it, but it still lives in your mouths." (Jousse 1997 : 55)

Why "mouths?" Because the mouth is the organ of speech and this occurs through the respirating throat. The most profound significance of the Rouhâh reveals the discovery made by the Palestinians that **human life centered around the nafsha throat which was irradiated by the Breath received in the nostrils.**

"And the Adam Anthropos became

A respirating, living nafsha"

(Jousse 1997 : 449)

The breath of the nostrils makes the throat a living throat. The breath of the throat is the Aramaic ⁶ nafsha. By the nafsha is implied the sine qua non of all giftedness, ability to recite, sculpt, in fact, of all man's gestures.

⁶ nafsha – the breath of the throat irradiated by the breath of the Creator.

In the *Atharvaveda*, this reference to the throat is made

Viśvam vāyuh svargo lokah kṛṣṇadram

Vidharāṇi niveṣ'yah

(the whole universe is life breath –
the throat is heavenly region.)

It is also common knowledge amongst yogins that pranic absorption takes place on a major scale in the thoracic region. (Saraswati 1991 : 172)

This is of great significance in Hinduism. Oral tradition in Hinduism is based on the recitation of Vedic scriptures and on the repetition of ⁷mantra. Reference to the reciting throat will be made in the section on mantra on page 54.

2.4 PRĀNĀ UPON DEATH

In the *Atharvaveda*, it is stated

Mitra enam varuno vā

Risādā jārāmṛtyam

Krnutam samvidāno

Tadagnirhotā vayunāni vidwān

Viśva devānām janimā vivakti

⁷ mantra – repetition of meditative syllables imparted by *guru* (teacher) to disciple. =

(Prānā and Apana are saviours from death and restrainers of body functions. Both act as the destroyers of the causes of death. Prānā brings back life.)

Here, again, a parallel can be drawn with ⁸concretism and the power of geste in the Aramaic tradition. Jousse illustrates this in the following example: "A dead child, whose Rouhâh has left him is laid on the table. The repossession of the breath has caused the cessation of life in the nafsha and in all the musculature and in the arms and legs. The assayer is the intermediary of the living one and alive within himself. In order to make the child 'relive' the assayer will play out a mimodrama of the creation. He makes each of his members coincide with the dead child's members. The life that is living in the Nabi is mimed and concretely materialised in the dead child.... which rewarms and primes the child's entire musculature" (Jousse 1997 : 492). The creation of man by the All-powerful one and the Insufflation is mimed to enable the child to live again. This is the universal or global import of the Prānā. Death is averted by Prānā.

The opening mantra (meditative syllables) of the Death ceremony in Hindu tradition is:

Prānebhyah sandhipati kebhyah Svāhā

(Salutations to the vital airs and their associated powers.)

(Debipersadh 1995 : 49)

The reference to Prānā at death reveals the importance of the breath in life and in death. Life is breath and the cessation of breath is death.

⁸concretism – denoting the state of action of the thing itself.

When Prānā leaves the body, there is no force to animate it. As long as Prānā is retained, the body will not die. Life is generated with inhalation. With exhalation, there is loss of Prana. Even if the body is in perfect health, death is inevitable when the flow of Prana is stopped.

Death, however, is not total. The physical body dies but not the soul. Death is not extinction. The Prānā does not die. It withdraws and returns to its source; it is said in the *Brihadarankya Upanishad* that when an individual dies, his limbs have been loosened because they are held together by air like a thread. (Saraswati 1991 : 171)

In *The Anthropology of the Geste and Rhythm*, it is stated "when a person dies, the Rouhâh or nasal breath, the global transcendent cause of anthropological life in the nafsha is taken away and returns on high from where it came. From then on we are dealing with a dead nafsha which is not, as it is strangely translated in our present day language, a dead 'soul'. Anthropologically and logically, we are dealing with a dead 'throat', with a breather that no longer breathes, with an eater that no longer eats and with a speaker that no longer speaks." (Jousse 1997 : 450)

The significance of the nafsha is revealed in the above lines. Jousse further clarifies this by saying that the nafsha is confused to be the soul but it is the breathing throat. He recalls that he has often witnessed that when a person in the country side dies, the paysan takes a glass against the frozen nostrils and looks to see whether the breath has passed onto it or passed away. This, he calls "*the rite of the breath*. The insufflation no longer rhythmed in the nostrils is called death". (Jousse 1997 : 403)

Here, the significance of the Rouhâh is clear. When a person dies, the mimodrama of death is played out.

Breath to Breath

Dust to Dust

But, it was necessary that the recreation respond to the creation and the ultimate geste is replayed in the resurrection of the dead.

Breath And with the Breath

You were You will again be"

(Ibid 1997 : 465)

2.5 PRĀNĀ IN THE PHYSICAL BODY

Prānā in the physical body operates through the respiratory mechanism – the nostrils, the lungs, the diaphragm and inter-costal muscles. The heart, the principal organ of the body, distributes aerated and purified blood through the arteries. All the senses work harmoniously so long as they receive a pure blood supply from the heart. The actions of the heart is involuntary. Yoga exponents believe that we can control the beat of the heart through the lungs; through the breath. The heart, lungs and brain are also interrelated. With every heaving of the breath, the brain cerebrates. Thoughts commence and correspond with respiration. Thoughts can be felt. When we think quickly, the breath vibrates with rapid alternation. When one is angry, the breath is tumultuous also. When a person is tranquil, so is his breath. Workshops on the effects of breathing are held regularly with the purpose of subduing negative thoughts and vibrations. Sri Sri Ravi

Shankar, the Founder of the Institute for Human Living, introduced a non-religious prisons programme in Durban in June 1998. The programme is aimed at inculcating calm and creative thinking through the Breath. (Natal Post : June 1998)

2.6 FORMS OF PRĀNĀ

In some of the written texts on yoga, the sub-manifestations of Prana are attended to:- A bird's eyevew is given here of the five primary forms of Prana and their functions.

| FORM | STATION | FUNCTION |
|-----------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Prānā | Head | Intelligence |
| 2. Udānā | Chest | Respiration, Energy |
| 3. Samanā | Umbilicus | Digestion |
| 4. Apānā | Pelvis | Excretion |
| 5. Vyānā | Heart and whole body | Circulation |

The table illustrates a structural breakdown of Prānā. The underlying thought is that Prānā, having a concrete referent, is of itself tangible and inexorably bound to the everyday values of life.

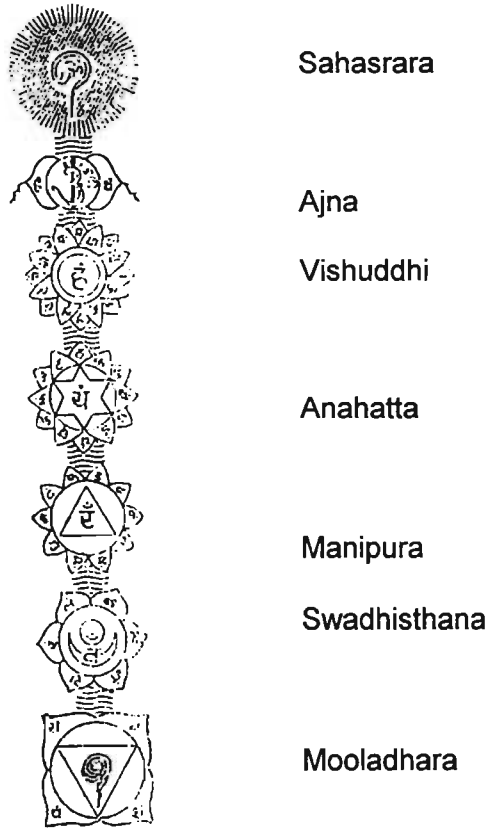
2.7 PRĀNĀ IN THE SUBTLE BODY

The geography of the subtle body has been incorporated into the mythology of the people who have lived beside the two great rivers, Ganga and Jamuna, since the dawn of civilisation. Ganga and Jamuna have always been the source of life-sustaining water

while Sarasvati is the subtle undercurrent of spiritual awareness which so tangibly permeates life on the Indian sub-continent.

In the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, one of three classic texts on Hatha yoga, it is stated that Prāṇā is accumulated in six main centres along the spinal column. These centres are located in the subtle body and correspond to the nerve plexus in the physical body. They are known as chakras. Chakra means a circle motion or wheel in which Prāṇā collects and forms circling masses of energy. Each chakra is a conjunctive point and influences gross and subtle states of awareness. The chakras are described in form, colour, sound and sometimes mystic symbolism, corresponding to letters of the Sanskrit alphabet and the deity in charge of the particular centre. An extension to this is that if our perception was finely tuned to the pranic body, we would see a light body in which there are thousands of fine wire-like structures. They are called nadis. Nadis are the flow of energy.

Chakras



All the chakras are threaded by the Sushumna or nerve in the middle of which is the kundalini. Kundalini is great cosmic force and rests in the solar plexus. That facet of yoga which deals with awakening of the kundalini for the apprehension of things divine is held in high esteem by Yogins. The *Upanishads* contain details of the power gained thereby. The goal of yoga, however is not to gain power. Such power is transitory and in the highest sense, totally spurious. The location of the chakras, its functions, etc. provide a highly structural approach and knowledge thereof is not a prerequisite in the quest for the eternal.

CHAPTER THREE

PRĀNĀYĀMĀ

The Well-Being of the Whole Being – is the premise upon which Prānāyāmā is based. It sets off with the salutary principle "Mens sano, in corpore sana." Dalal proclaims "There is no yoga without Prānāyāmā." (1992 : 16)

3.1 MEANING

The process by which the subtle or psychic Prānā is controlled by the regulation of breath is called Prānāyāmā. The breath is the external manifestation of Prānā and by controlling it, we can control the subtle forces within the body. Prānāyāmā is not only breath control but the control of the muscular force activating the lungs. The feature of Prānāyāmā breathing exercises is rhythm. In the cosmos, rhythm pertains solely to energy. In man it is necessarily biological. "It is certain that the tendency towards rhythm is a primary manifestation of the human form, a manifestation that is rooted deep in organic life" (Jousse 1997 : 21). Through a variety of respiratory exercises, the natural rhythm of the body is maintained and if for some reason, disharmony within the body occurs, Prānāyāmā helps in restoring that rhythm. Thus the purpose of Prānāyāmā is entire harmony and complete mental control and this it tries to do, among other things, by reducing the beating of the heart through restraining the breath.

3.2 PRĀNĀ AND THE MIND

According to Hatha-Yoga, mind and Prānā are linked. There is a close connection between the flow of respiration and the dynamics of the mind. Consequently, by

regulating Prāṇā, balance of mind can be obtained. "Usually the two do not operate simultaneously; either the mental force dominates or the vital energy is predominant. Yoga unites the two energies and channelizes them through to the Ajna Chakra in the medulla oblongata" (Sachdeva 1978 : 121). This implies that through Prāṇāyāmā, one reaches the dimension that will enable him to ascend to divine heights. Seen in this light, the definition of Prāṇāyāmā as merely breath control would rob it of its significance. Minus this significance, Prāṇāyāmā may be considered a good exercise but not a technique in the correct yogic perspective.

3.3 PRĀṆĀYĀMĀ – THE CONCRETE GESTE

In *The Oral Style*, it is stated that "gesture provides a wonderful example of the progress from the natural to the artificial" (1990 : 32). Prāṇāyāmā as gesture is both natural and artificial or deliberate. Whenever a person thinks intensely and deeply on a subject, his breath of itself assumes proper Prāṇāyāmic motion. S.C. Vasu's view is that when one observes the respiration of a child in deep sleep, one gets some idea of what the breath of a yogi should be. (1981 : 54)

Prāṇāyāmā is at once concrete and abstract because the importance of Prāṇāyāmā is due to the fact that Prāṇā and the spirit are closely related to each other. The pedagogical insight gained from the concrete geste is clearly evident. The manner in which the concrete relates to the abstract is alluded to in *The Oral Style*. "A concrete mechanism is always transferred into a sublimated mechanism" and "Abstraction is to draw geste which we replay in an interactional form out of the ambient real." (Jousse 1997 : 687; 646)

3.4 HOW PRĀNĀYĀMĀ WORKS

“A number of gesticulations of the most important vital organs are markedly rhythmic and can serve as a model for all physiological rhythms. We can cite, amongst others, the pulse and respiration” (Jousse 1990 : 15). Normally, the respiratory and cardiovascular system (lungs, heart and blood vessels) work automatically, although they can be consciously governed with will-power and awareness – the belief of yoga. In the link between heart and lungs, the nervous system plays a most important part in the monitoring of blood pressure and blood chemistry to ensure that everything is functioning smoothly. Any changes are detected by sensitive bio-receptors for pressure and chemo-receptors for detecting the level of oxygen and carbon dioxide. When change is required, signals are sent through the sympathetic or parasympathetic nervous system to either speed up or slow down the lungs or the heart and to adjust the peripheral resistance. Prānāyāmā, by raising the oxygen concentration, decreases the blood pressure in the fastest and most effective way thereby restoring the balance in the physical and mental functions.

3.5 HOW DISHARMONY OCCURS

Dr. Saraswati, in his book *The Effects of Yoga on Hypertension* categorizes the causes of imbalance into various modes that describe the route by which the energies from the mind enter the body and from there travel out again into the world and universe around us to be reflected back onto us once more in cyclical fashion. (1984 : 61).

Prānic imbalance in the body is represented by several factors:

Often, the chakra becomes misaligned when the central axis shifts so that the wheel describes an ellipse instead of a circle. (Saraswati 1984 : 55). A similar condition occurs when there is a blockage of Prāṇā in the *nadis* (energy channels). This is mainly due to chaotic thought patterns or a stressful life-style. Much human behaviour is the result of conditioned behaviour patterns implanted in the brain and mind especially during childhood. These may persist unmodified but more often become gradually adapted to changes in the environment. If we are late for work or caught in traffic, we become agitated because we are anxious to be elsewhere. Thus we have learnt the habit of anxious reaction.

The cycle of breathing is not harmonized with the rest of the body nor with the environment. Hence we take in enough oxygen but breathe too quickly to allow efficient transfer of oxygen in the blood to take place. Or we may not breathe deeply enough. Shallow inefficient respiration reflects mental tension and leads to chronic fatigue and low *prana sakti* (energy). Incorrect breathing becomes a habit and this can be broken by Prāṇāyāmā.

Prāṇic imbalance causes the adrenal glands to secrete excess adrenaline and nor-adrenaline. Adrenaline causes increased respiration, heart rate and blood pressure. Blood is shifted to the brain, heart and muscles from the digestive system. The Prāṇā system reflects into the body and mind. Furthermore, it reflects into our actions depriving us of effective and rational thought. The chaos of the external world is reflective of the chaos within.

Another example of the imbalance of cycles and internal rhythm is that of passengers on east-west airflights who experience time-lag and an unpleasant re-adjustment phase.

To be able to make sound decisions and act accordingly in any given situation, internal rhythm and balance must first be restored. **The practice of Prāṇāyāmā restores a greater degree of equanimity to the practioner than previously experienced.** C.G. Jung (Saraswati 1984 : 68) avers, "The man is ill, but the illness is an attempt of nature to heal him. We therefore learn a great deal for the good of our health from the illness itself; and that which appears to the neurotic person as absolutely to be rejected is just the part which contains true gold which we should otherwise never have found."

In the matter of increased improvement, Jousse also concurs: "In a normal state of equilibrium, the metabolic process is autonomous and already periodic. When some exceptional stimulus intervenes, dissimilation increases, resulting in a loss of energy, a dimunition of the digestive capacity and, in consequence, a loss of feeling and even the production of toxins, all phenomena characteristic of fatigue. However, by means of a defence mechanism, the dissimilation automatically sets off compensatory processes of assimilation, especially during any pauses that may occur; **the recuperation is sometimes even greater than the loss sustained**" (Jousse 1997 : 14-15). This extremely significant observation provides valuable input to the process of upheaval and healing in all aspects of human endeavour.

Prāṇāyāmā is a system of self-cure. By controlled breathing, the body and mind relaxes, allowing the blood vessels to relax ensuring a good supply of blood, oxygen and nutrition to the tissues. This, enhanced by the increased flow of Prāṇā, will feed the tissues aiding in regeneration and rejuvenation. The exercises are so designed that the effects reach the very ends of the peripheral nerve tips even to the capillaries that pierce and ply the hard bones to the marrow.

Lau Tzu, an ancient authority, quotes from the *Book of Changes* "But even if a man lives in the power (air, Prāṇā) he does not see the power. Just as a fish lives in water but does not see the water. A man dies when he has not life air. Therefore, the adepts have taught the people to hold fast to the primal and to guard the one." (Vithaldas 1955 : 64)

These hymns from the Vedas extol the virtues of Prāṇāyāmā :

The *Yajurveda* (19,90)

Avirna meṣo nasi vīryāya

Prāṇasya panthā amṛto grahā bhyām

Sarasvatyai pavākayai vraṇām

Nasyāni bahir badarāir jajāna

(Just as a child is born, the immortal path begins with controlling the breath.)

(7,2)

Yānām Kasā madhumatyasvinā surṇatāvatī

Taya Yajñām minikṣatam

Upayāma grhītousyaśvibhyām tvaiṣa

te yoni mradh vībhyām tvā.

(O student and teacher of yoga, you are resplendent like the sun and the moon. We (Gods) approach thee, who practice yogic laws of the control of the breath and the sweet methods of yoga.)

The *Atharvaveda* (17,5)

Śunam suphālā vi tudantu

Bhūmin śunam kināṣa anuyantu vāhaṇ

Śunāsīrā havisa toṣa mānā

Supippalā oṣadhi kartamasmai.

(The Prānās alone happily remove ignorance. May the ingoing and outgoing breaths controlled through Yoga, create for this soul fruitful sin-killing knowledge.)

3.6 PRACTICAL EXPERIMENTS WITH PRĀNĀYĀMĀ

The importance of Pranayama is recognized by some of the most celebrated medical authorities.

In an experiment cited by Suman Seth (1990 : 114), it was found that the average shallow breather was found to inhale about 0,50 litres of air per minute but the conditioned deep breather could draw in about 4 litres approximately 7 times the normal capacity. In a normal breath one takes in 0,47 litres of air. If one inhales deeply another 1,42 litres of air can be taken in. In addition to the normal exhalation, if force is used to exhale further, another 1,42 litres can be exhaled. The lungs still at that stage contains 1,42 litres of residual air. The quantity of air inhaled after a long exhalation can be simply calculated thus:-

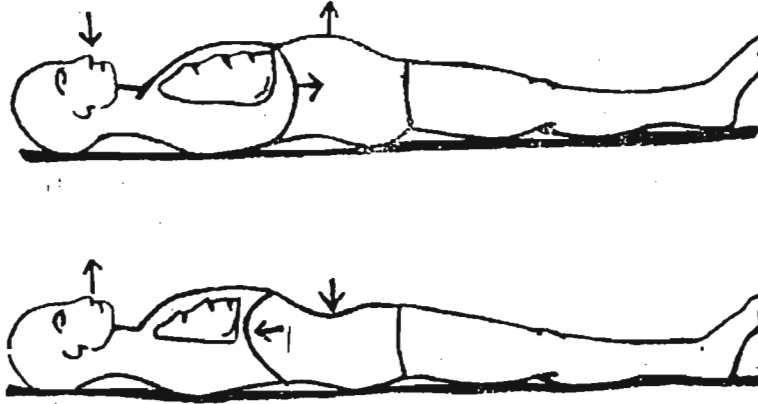
| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Normal Air | 0,47 litres |
| Supplementary Air | 1,42 litres |
| Complementary Air | 1,42 litres |
| Residual Air | <u>1,42 litres</u> |
| Total | <u>4,73 litres</u> |

4,73 litres is the average lung capacity. This means super-charging the body and mind with oxygen and Prāṇā.

Yogic breathing has been tested by Dr. Motoyama, Director of the International Association for Religion and Parapsychology in Japan. He showed that contraction and release of the abdominal muscle heightens mental and physical vitality. The plethysmograph of subjects practising deep abdominal breathing in an erect sitting position indicated an improvement in overall blood circulation. EEG tracings of brainwaves during abdominal breathing showed an increase in alpha waves indicating deep relaxation of the nervous system with practice. Motoyama states, "Pranayama is also seemingly able to hinder the occurrence of angina pectoris. Certain hospitals have been recommending that heart patients, particularly with angina pectoris, begin abdominal breathing when they feel an attack coming on. The reports are that this practice has been successful and that it is being continued." (Saraswati 1984:102)

3.7 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ – THE YOGIC BREATH

From the explanation thus far, then, one can surmise that Prānāyāmā involves deep breathing.



Yogic Breath

There is no strain in Prānāyāmā. Whilst inhaling, the abdominal area is expanded first, and then the chest until the maximum amount of air has been drawn into the lungs. Exhalation is done deliberately in the same manner. Inhalation is active, exhalation - passive. After each inhalation and exhalation, there is a state of pause so short that it escapes attention - this is breath retention. Retention is most important as it allows a longer period of assimilation of Prānā, just as it allows for more time for the exchange of gases in the cells. In yogic terminology,

Inhalation is Puraka

Exhalation is Rechaka

Retention is Kumbhaka

The ratio to be aimed at is 1:4:2 or 1:2:1

1 - inhalation

4(2) - retention

2(1) - exhalation

These ratios are indicative of the careful consideration of the concept of balance within the human anthropos which is manifested in his re-enactments. Herein lies evidence of ⁹binary and ternary balancing having the parallel in man's innate quest to obtain balance in the following ways:-

Man and his consciousness

Man and his environment

Man and God.

3.8 TYPES OF BREATH

There are basically three types of breath:-

1. Low or abdominal breathing
2. Mid or Costal breathing
3. High or clavicular breathing.

⁹binary and ternary balancing – one geste triggers off one or two others in balance with the first.

Abdominal Breathing is also known as diaphragmatic breathing. By breathing deeply, the abdomen rises, flattening the diaphragm and thus allowing greater expansion of the lungs. This seems contradictory to the stereotype where we are advised not to use the stomach to breathe but it is often argued by yogins that breathing using the stomach as part of the breathing mechanism cures many ills.

Costal Breathing or thoracic breathing. Whilst inhaling slowly the ribcage and chest expands.

Clavicular Breathing – Here the smallest and uppermost part of the chest and lungs, the apex, is used. The apex contains most of the locked residual air. It is often the area where tuberculosis and certain other diseases start and it is therefore necessary to activate this area in order to alleviate disease. This type of breathing, however, is done singularly as a habit by most people and is the worst form of breathing. It requires the greatest expenditure of energy with the smallest amount of return.

The Complete Breath – The complete breath is the manner in which everyone should breathe and is a combination of the above three. It involves breathing deeply through the nostrils – first expanding the abdomen, then the chest and finally the upper chest. It is one continuous wave-like movement. Exhalation is done in a similarly controlled movement starting with the drawing in of the abdomen and ending in relaxation of the chest and entire musculature. This type of breathing has been known to decrease susceptibility to several illnesses, eg. asthma, cardiac troubles and high blood pressure and forms the basis of Prāṇāyāmā breathing. Breathing exercises designed to alleviate particular pathological conditions and to enhance the Prāṇā for the attainment of

complete balance are designed around the complete breath. They are often accompanied by specific postures (asanas).

3.9 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ IN PRACTICE

1. The Body

The harmonious regulation of breathing cannot be attained unless the body is in a correct posture - one which gives the greatest freedom and poise. The different parts of the body must easily assume a balanced posture to enable the person to practice Prānāyāmā at will.

2. The Mind

During the practice of Prānāyāmā, the mind has the tendency to wander among the multitude of thoughts and emotions which arise. The awareness is rapidly dissipated by their force. It is not sufficient to merely perform Prānāyāmā mechanically, whilst the awareness is rambling in the quagmire of illusory thoughts. There must be concentration upon the present moment. Mind, body and Prānā must co-operate to work in unison.

3. The Soul

The awareness can be fixed by a meditative thought, meditative syllables (mantra) or on counting of the ratio of inflowing and outflowing breath.

BENEFITS

The benefits of Prāṇāyāmā are many and varied, the most significant of which are listed below:-

1. Reduces mental tension.
2. Rebalances and enriches supply of Prāṇā.
3. Reharmonises the endocrine.
4. Regeneration of tissues through redirection of Prāṇā.
5. Strengthening of the entire respiratory mechanism – the Central Nervous System, the inter-costal muscles and the diaphragm.
6. Removes toxins and nourishes the body so that resistance against disease is increased.
7. Strengthens the mind-body complex so that acquired and hereditary weaknesses are removed.
8. Increases concentration and facilitates meditation.
9. The yogin easily proceeds from Hatha yoga to Raja yoga to pursue the higher path.

3.10 **ASANA**

As mentioned previously, Prāṇāyāmā is practised within the context of Hatha yoga implying that the goal of Prāṇāyāmā is that of the endeavour of Hatha yoga i.e. of achieving the highest goal via the body. Hatha yoga is a system of exercises or postures (asanas) to be assumed for the purpose of:

- purification of the body
- good health
- heightened concentration for the purpose of meditation

Tradition has it that there are 8 400 000 asanas, which are as many asanas as there are forms of life. However, in almost all yogic texts, thirty three asanas are expounded upon fully for their impact on and suitability for meditation. Hatha yoga has been practised for thousands of years and is based on the concreteness of oral tradition. 'Ha' – means the mind or mental energy; 'tha' – Prāṇā or vital life force. Thus, denoting the union of the two forces in the body which lays the foundation for the transition to the path of spiritual illumination – Raja yoga. Although Hatha yoga is a method for preparing the system for spiritual awakening, it is also a very important science of health. Even if the discipline is sought out for good health without faith or belief in spiritual life, one's whole being is nevertheless affected by the practice. The higher brain centres are activated. The effect of creating a harmonious psycho-physiological balance is definitely a worthwhile fruit. Perhaps from the view of modern medical science, which is researching Hatha yoga as a system of vitality, these benefits are sufficient.

Asanas are not gymnastic exercises requiring strain or muscle development. They must be seen as a state of being - for their correct performance requires participation of one's whole being. Through the effect on the endocrine gland, asana helps to rebalance the chakras and the whole body is made to pulsate synchronously with life-giving Prāṇā. For the purpose of Prāṇāyāmā, particular asanas are co-ordinated with breathing technique to enable restructuring and mobilisation of prāṇic energy. All asanas lay strong emphasis on the control of breath but three asanas are most frequently assumed for the sole practice of Prāṇāyāmā. They are:

Padmasana (lotus pose). This is regarded as the king of all poses. It entails sitting cross legged with each foot on the opposite thigh.



Vajrasana (thunderbolt pose). Sitting on the heels.



Shavasana (corpse pose). Lying flat on the back.



The prevailing focus of all three positions is that the spinal column remains straight (not stiff) to allow for free flow of Prāṇā.

3.11 **MUDRA**

The word mudra means 'seal ' or 'mystery '. They are gestures focused at drawing energy to particular parts of the body and depend greatly on mastery of the breath.. Mudras are an extension of asanas and they confer great success in yoga. During the practice of Prāṇāyāmā or meditation in padmasana, the position of the hands and fingers (mudra) are of significance. In yoga, all the fingers have symbolic names and represent certain energies. The thumb represents the higher and universal self and the index finger represents the individual. The union is thus represented by touching the tip of the thumb with that of the index finger in a circle. This geste is a *mudra*. The joining of the two fingers describe an energy circuit. The hands rest upon the knees; palms either upturned or facing down.

On the importance of the hands, Jousse opines that man took reality in his hands before bearing it in his voice. We think not only with the brain but with our hands, and with our entire being. "If it is the organic and spiritual being as a whole that receives, mimes and reproduces impressions, careful observation will reveal in the case of undissociated individuals and children, the importance of the hands in particular, how they habitually do, and thus represent everything by means of their hands. The hand with its gestures is an extremely sensitive amplifier of microscopic reviviscent gestures; it plunges us into the process of thought in the making." (1990 : 35)

3.12 EXAMPLES OF PRĀNĀYĀMĀ

There are eight varieties of Prānāyāmās in the classic texts. The examples of Prānāyāmā cited here are adapted from the traditional exercises for practical advantage.

i) Mahat Yoga Prānāyāmā (Grand Yoga Breath)

Sitting in vajrasana – the practitioner first fills the abdominal area with air to the count of 3. The chest is next filled with air to the count of 3. The clavicular area is filled with air to the count of 3. The air is then released starting from the abdominal area in the same sequence. The particular benefit of this exercise is that it re-establishes harmony with the respiratory centre of the brain. Rhythm forms the predominant feature of mahat yoga Prānāyāmā.

ii) Nadi Shodana (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

Sitting in a position that is comfortable with the spine erect, the practitioner forms the *mudra* (position of fingers) with one hand and places this on the knee of the same side. The other hand controls the breath using the thumb and ring finger. The first breath is inhaled through the right nostril while the ring finger is pressed lightly on the left nostril to block off the air. This is done to the ratio of 5:5 increasing or decreasing in number as is deemed possible.

The specific benefits are that it establishes equilibrium of the positive and negative currents in the body, strengthens the nerves and stabilizes the mind. It is common knowledge that at times one nostril seems to be freer than the other. This process

alternates with regularity because nature follows a certain rhythm of left and right. Sometimes our inhalation takes longer than the exhalation. Sometimes we quite avidly gasp for breath. Prānāyāmā introduces harmony and rhythm into such irregular performance. Herein lies evidence of man's physiological bilateralism. Since breathing through the left nostril revives the respiratory apparatus of the right consequently rejuvenating the left half of the body and vice versa, synonymic and anti-thetical balancing is evident.

iii) Savithri Prānāyāmā (Rhythmic Breath)

Sitting in Vajrasana with both hands on the knees and with the formation of the fingers in the mudra described, the practitioner attempts to achieve the following rhythm:

| INHALATION | RETENTION | EXHALATION | RETENTION |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| 6 | 3 | 6 | 3 |

The goal is to become accustomed to the rhythm and when that is achieved, to increase the duration of the retentive breath to twice the count. Proficiency in retention of the breath (Kumbhaka) renders innumerable benefits.

Prānāyāmā is pursued with effortless diligence ensuring that the poles of up and down, in and out and left and right are equilibrated. Proficiency in retention of breath (kumbhaka) is also aimed at. Effort should play no part in Prānāyāmā for this is the gentlest of all arts, to many; it is even regarded as the supreme art of life.

3.13 **MANTRA (REPETITION OF MEDITATIVE SYLLABLES)**

The power of the spoken word is most clearly demonstrated in the practice of mantra. Speech is recognized as man's greatest achievement. Mantra yoga is a means of raising speech to a higher level. The repetition of mantra is an extension of the concept of man as a reciting being.

And the earthling-man

became a living, eating and reciting throat.

(Jousse 1997 : 462)

Mantra is the meditative repetition of divine syllables with the intention of obtaining tranquility and, as mentioned previously, it is synonymous with Prāṇāyāmā. An analysis of mantras indicate oral skills: ¹⁰rhythm, binary and ternary balancings and ¹¹formulism.

A mantra is not a magical expression that endows instant mystical powers nor does it enable the reciter to perform miracles. It is a device employed by ancient masters for the apprehension of heightened awareness. These were imparted to disciples who had a genuine thirst for divine knowledge. Mantras are not necessarily eastern. Repetition of 'Praise the Lord' or 'I am the Supreme' are also mantras. In the *Brahma Vidya Upanishad*, it is stated that the mantra of identification 'I am He' abides in the body of all beings at the place where the in-coming and out-going breaths merge.

¹⁰rhythm – energetic explosion of energy balanced with periods of rest.

¹¹formulism – mnemoteinmic devices arising from rhythm and bilateratism.

Although a mantra can be repeated either orally or mentally, the importance of the sound of the mantra has been extolled. A mantra is given verbally to the student by the teacher. Therefore, Guru (teacher) and sound are paramount as they are in the Palestinian milieu. In Joussean terminology, this is referred to as the “manducation of the teacher” because teaching is living and if “more than any other creature, man is a teachable being, it is because primordially, the All-Knowing one breathed into his nostrils the Breath that, raised to a higher degree will be the breath of a specialized teacher.” (Jousse 1997 : 491)

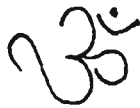
From the external sounds man ascends from height to spiritual height and hears in these realms, various melodious sounds unheard of by the external ear - reflecting the transition from the concrete to the sublime.

From the foregoing explanation it can be surmised that for several seers, a distinction between the breath and sound do not exist. They are one and the same.

Sound therapy, especially in the form of music has been applauded by experts worldwide. Dr. Lesser Lazario of Vienna cured himself and many of his patients by sound therapy which consisted of sounding all the vowels with the full power of the breath. He spent twenty-five years of his life in the study of the effects produced on the body by vibrations of sound. (Dalal, 1992 : 55)

Aum

Very often, breathing exercises are accompanied by the repetition of AUM or Om. O is the diphthong of the simple vowels A + U. The symbol for Om is



Whilst a most economical word, AUM is infinite and contains in itself the sum of all human experience. There is an entire literature on the significance of Om. The three letters are symbolic of the three attributes of God:-

- A (Akara – Creator) denotes the power of God to create the world.
- U (Ukara – Preserver) denotes the power of God to preserve or sustain the world
- M (Makara – Dissolver) denotes the power of God to dissolve the world.

Aum is also categorized thus:-

- A - represents a waking state or the conscious world.
- U - represents a dream state or the intermediate realms.
- M - represents deep sleep or the unmanifest and transcendent stage.

Om is considered to be the sound of all sounds and marks the beginning and end of life.

A parallel can be drawn from *The Anthropology of the Geste*. The Palestinian mechanism of the breath shows a truly admirable understanding of the two aspects in man which are primordial and final: the breath of the nose and the breath of the throat.

We can see this in the new-born baby, and we can see this in the person dying." (1997 : 306)

Most mantras have Om prefixed, eg.

Om Prajāpataye Svāhā

(Salutations to God Almighty).

Om moves the Prāṇā or the cosmic vital force. In man, Om is expressed through Prāṇā vayu or the Vital breath. Hence it is called *Pranava*. "In every breath man utters it, repeats it unintentionally and inevitably. Every vibration in the body and the universe emerges from Om; is sustained in Om and returns to Om." (Kashavadas 1991 : 25). Om pervades life and occurs through Prāṇā. Om is an example of what Jousse calls the dance of the motor apparatus of respiration and of all the muscles used in verbal articulation.

When the sounds of Om are accompanied by respiration, the vibrations massage various important organs, reaching the deep lying tissues and nerves and increasing the stimulation of hormones into the blood. Mantra repetition and sound vibration also help in holding the concentration.

***Pranava Prāṇāyāmā* (Breath control to the sound of Om)**

It is not necessary to believe that Om is a sacred word, only that it is unique and has powerful effects when combined with breathing. The practitioner sits in a straight-backed position. He inhales in the manner of the complete breath and as he exhales from the

abdominal area, he sounds the [AAA] of the AUM audibly then [OOO] audibly from the mid chest area proceeding to the [MMM] from the clavicular area until all the air is exhaled. The [MMM] sound is consciously vibrated in the head. Inhalation and exhalation is balanced to the ratio of 4 : 8 increasing up to 10 : 20.

This type of breathing has powerful health benefits. The vibrations reach down to the air in the lungs stimulating the pulmonary cells and producing significant effects on the endocrine glands. The vibrations have extensive effects on the entire system because it serves as an internal vibro-massage. The cranial nerves are also benefitted by the high [MMM] sound. Apart from health benefits, a sense of complete harmony and peace pervades the mind and body.

Breathing synchronised with *mantra* (repetition of meditative syllables) encapsulates the Hindu oral tradition. It was through repetition and recitation of *mantras* and *slokas* (hymns) of the *Vedas* that Hinduism has been perpetuated. The nasal breath irradiates life into the nafsha throat and transforms it into a living and speaking throat. Encapsulated here is also the whole of Palestinian anthropology and the science of living memory as embedded in what Jousse terms ¹²“Pearl lessons”

¹²pearl lessons – traditional elements which have become oral through ages through the mechanism of anthropological expression.

a

The lessons which I recite to you

b

c

Breath they are

and life they are

(1997 : 191)

3.14 PRĀNĀYĀMĀ – THE SUBTLE DIMENSION

Very often, instead of translating the word as Prānā-yāmā meaning restraint and control of Prānā – the word is translated as Prānā-āyāmā where the second term means to extend or expand. One interpretation is to lengthen both in space and time the gap between the inbreath and the outbreath. The process involves a very gradual transition from a gross activity to a subtle one. It implies going beyond the boundaries of inhalation and exhalation – increasing one's awareness of the interval where both the breaths meet each other "in the most subtle of embraces – so that one can hardly tell the one from the other in perfect union (Ha-tha) and to dissolve later in a point of infinitesimal bliss." (Pranavananda 1992 :16)

The *Tejo-Bindu Upanishad* (1, 32-33) describes Prānāyāmā in mystical terms. "The conviction of the unreality of the world is called breathing out. The repeated principle "I am the Supreme" is called breathing in. When this feeling is permanently fixed in the mind, it is called holding the breath. Such is the breath-control of the wise." (Pranavananda 1992 : 30)

Patanjali, in a few aphorisms, helps to elucidate the subject.

- i) “[The movement of breath] transcending the external and internal sphere is the fourth dimension. Within the enstatic state breathing becomes so reduced that it cannot be detected by unaided observation and can continue for considerable periods. It is not a form of voluntary breath control at all but a physiological correlate of an extraordinary state of consciousness.” (Fleurstein 1979 : 92)
- ii) “Breath control interiorises the consciousness further, inducing a peculiar condition of inner luminosity.” (Fleurstein 1979 : 93)

Initially, *Prāṇāyāmā* is inhalation, exhalation and retention regulated by place, time and number, but the fourth aspect is when the breath becomes so subtle that it enables the yogin to attain supreme harmony and perfect equilibrium of the pranic system.

Arundale elaborates by pointing out *Prāṇā* as having bilateral features. The pranic system operates in terms of a three-fold polarity:-

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Left (' <i>Ida</i> ') | Right (' <i>Pingala</i> ') |
| Up (' <i>Prāṇā</i> ') | Down (' <i>Apāṇā</i> ') |
| In (' <i>Sah</i> ') | Out (' <i>Ham</i> ') (Pranavananda 1992 :117) |

The *Ida* is the path of the upward flow of *Prāṇā* also known as *Prāṇā*. It is connected to the left nostril and the right hemisphere of the brain. *Pingala* is the downward flow of *Prāṇā* known as *apana*. It is connected to the right nostril and the left brain hemisphere. *Sah* and *Ham* represent a mantra often regarded as synonymous with the inward and outward breath respectively, together resulting in *soham* (so am I).

The meeting point of all these when perfectly harmonized is the crown of *Prāṇāyāmā*. It is a point where movement and rest co-exist in perfect equilibrium. This stage accompanies the various stages of meditation and dictates the stage of absolute absorption when the knower, the knowledge and the known become one. "The rhythm or law of the Ceaseless Breath is surely not one of the ultimates but perchance even the ultimate." (Pranavananda 1992 : 117)

CHAPTER FOUR
SURYA NAMASKAR
(SALUTATIONS TO THE SUN)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the *Vedas*, it is stated:

Udānādityaḥ kṛimīnihanti —

(The rising sun destroys germs.)

Ārogyam Bhāskarādīcchet

(Health must be got from the sun.)

Surya Namaskar means obeisance to the sun.

Surya – Sun

Namaskar – Obeisance – Greetings – Salutations

Surya Namaskar is a combination of physical gestures, breath control and repetition of meditative words. Jousse's book, *Le Parant La Parole et le Souffle – "The Speaker, the Word, and the Breath"* concentrates on the anthropology of language and of significant gesture: human mimism is inseparable from the style with which the very being of man expresses itself, his body, his hands. The learner becomes, from childhood, the living receptacle of a family and national radiation which is received as being divine and making divine: it is creative, accepted eternal word, it is also the truth, the *souffle de verite* – the breath, the spirit of truth." (Sienaert 1990 : 101)

The exercises in the Surya Namaskar were designed for mental, physical and spiritual benefit. The sun is a tangible manifestation of divine grace and worship in the form of the sun concretises divine experience. The original sanskrit name *Sashtanga Surya Namaskar* means obeisance to the sun with eight points of the body which touch the ground in the sixth position. Surya Namaskar is an ancient system of exercise which combines seven yoga asanas (postures) in a sequence of twelve movements and involve the entire musculature. Five of the postures are repeated. Traditionally, Surya Namaskar is performed facing the rising sun in an attitude of worship. In ancient days it was performed daily, singly or in a group. Surya Namaskar consists of five essential features. When all are integrated, the best possible results are gained from this practice.

4.2 FEATURES OF SURYA NAMASKAR

i) Physical Postures

There are twelve physical postures which correspond to the signs of the zodiac and have deep symbolic significance.

ii) Breathing

Each position is associated with either inhalation, retention or exhalation of breath, so that the whole sequence is synchronised with breathing. Breathing is not unnatural or forced. It flows gently.

iii) Concentration

Concentration is achieved by repeating the mantras (repetition of meditative phrases) associated with each position which are uttered mentally or out loud. "These mantras are a combination of sounds - phrases or syllables - which have been heard in deepest meditation by saints and sages" (Saraswathi 1984 : 166). They are evocative sounds which, through the power of vibration have subtle, yet potent and penetrating effects on the body and mind. The inclusion of chakra (wheel of energy) concentration is to emphasize that Prāṇā must not be trivialised as air. It is the breath of God, it emanates from celestial heights and great power is generated by Prāṇā.

iv) Awareness

This is essential in *Surya Namaskar* as it is in all yogic practices. Without concentration and awareness, most of the benefits which can be gained from this practice are lost.

v) Relaxation

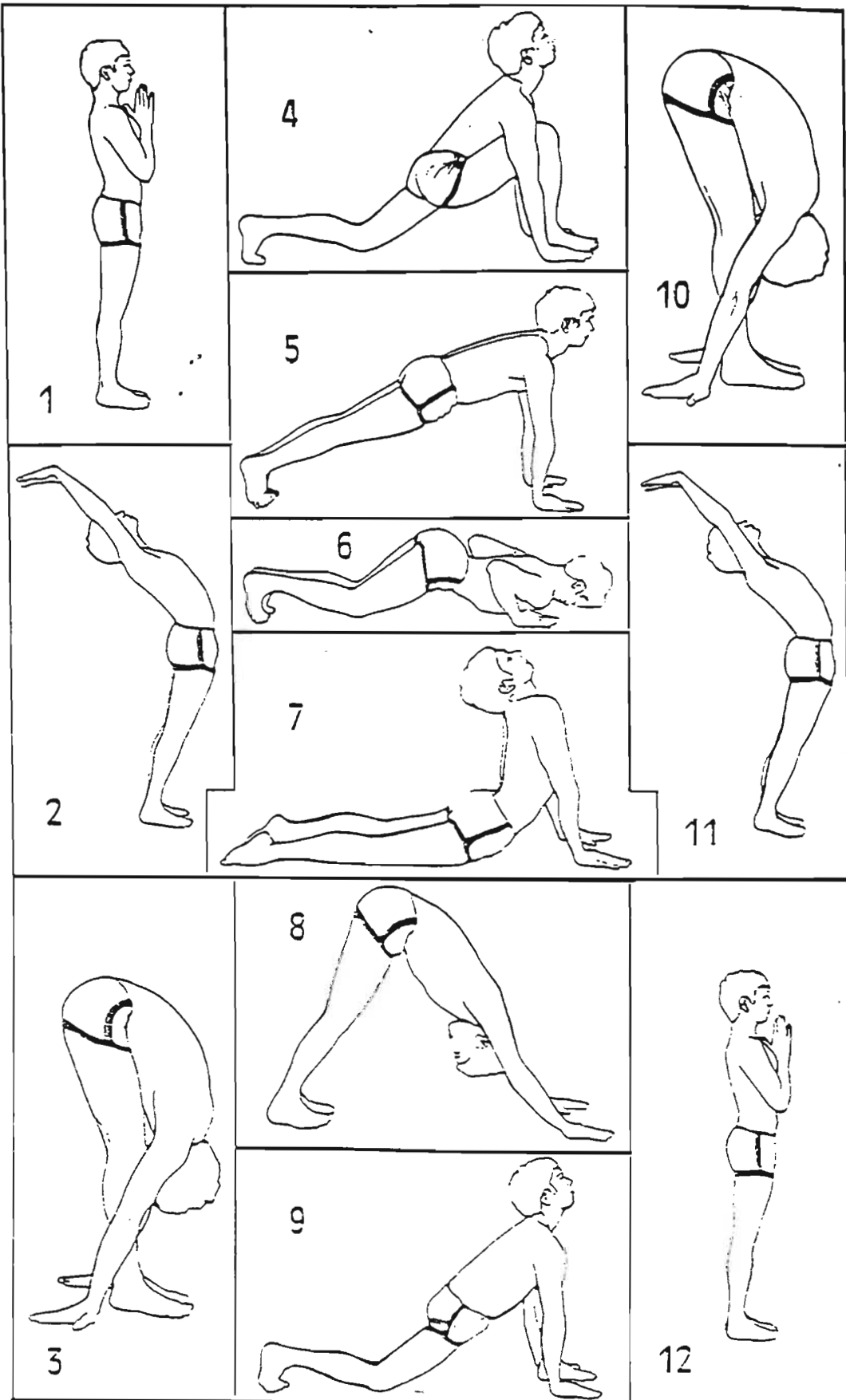
Relaxation is necessary on completion of the practice to allow the body to calm itself and integrate the benefits gained.

It is usually recommended that one first familiarize oneself with the twelve positions. Thereafter the breath is synchronised with the physical movements. The awareness is focused on breath and movement. Finally, the mantras are learnt and synchronised with each position. Some texts also highlight the particular chakra (wheel of energy) where there is a concentration of Prāṇā in each position. A complete round in *Surya Namaskar*

is considered to be twenty four postures. In the first half of the series, positions 4 and 9 are executed with the right leg brought forward and the left leg stretched behind in a lunge-position. In the second half, positions 4 and 9 are repeated but the opposite side of the body is treated.

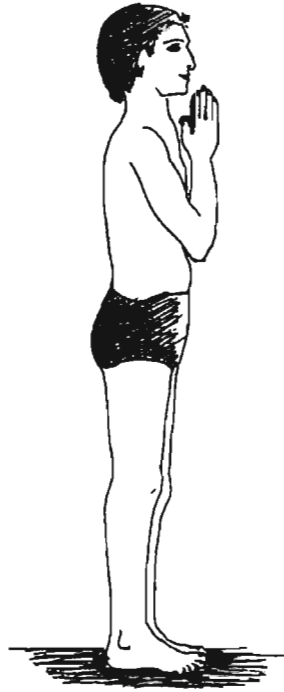
At first, Surya Namaskar is performed slowly to ensure correct development of the movement and breathing. However, with regular practice, the practice is speeded up but with care that the breath does not become shallow. The number of rounds depend upon the individual. It is advisable to perform one or two complete rounds and thereafter remain in the final relaxed pose for a few seconds breathing normally. Shavasana (the corpse pose accompanied by deep breathing) is always practised at the end of the series for three to five minutes. Minor variations of the Surya Namaskar are taught by different yoga teachers. Illustrations and a description of the poses follow.

SURYA NAMASKAR



4.3 POSTURES

Position 1 *Pranamasana* (Prayer Pose)



The practitioner stands erect with feet together. The palms are placed together in front of the chest. The entire body is relaxed.

Breath

Normal

Concentration

Anahata chakra

Mantra

Om Mitraya Namaha

(Salutations to the friend of all)

Pranamasana prepares the practitioner physically and mentally for the exercises that follow.

Position 2 *Hasta Uttanasana* (Raised Arms Pose)

Both arms are raised above the head. The arms are separated by a shoulder's width. The head and upper trunk are bent slightly backwards.

Breath

Inhalation while arms are raised.

Concentration

Vishuddhi chakra

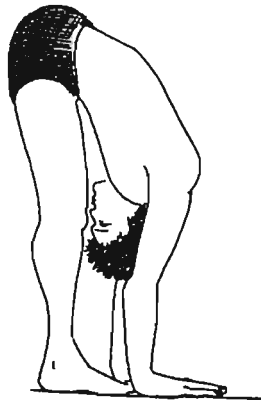
Mantra

Om Ravaya Namaha

(Salutations to the shining one)

Benefits: Develops the respiratory system and spinal nerves. Improves digestion and stretches the abdominal viscera.

Position 3 *Padahastasana* (Hand to foot pose)



The practitioner bends forward to touch the floor with hands or fingers. The forehead touches the knees without any strain. Legs remain straight.

Breath

Exhalation on bending forward with contraction of abdomen

Concentration

Swadhistana chakra

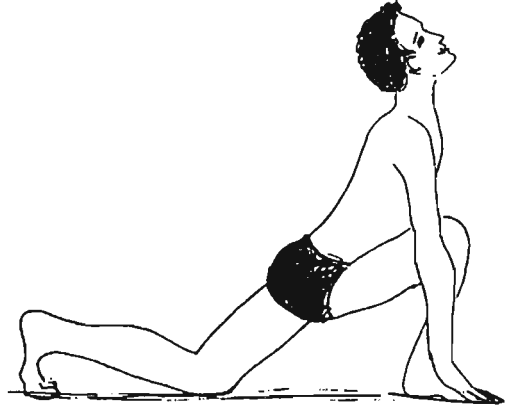
Mantra

Om Suryaya Namaha

(Salutations to the sun – the giver of energy)

Benefit: Cures abdominal ailments. Improves digestion and blood circulation. Makes the spine supple.

Position 4 *Ashwa Sanchalasana* (The Equestrian Pose)



The right leg is stretched back as far as possible. The left leg is simultaneously bent. The arms remain straight in the same position. In the final position, the head is tilted backwards, the back is arched and gaze directed upwards.

Breath

Inhalation whilst the right leg is stretched back

Chakra

Ajna chakra

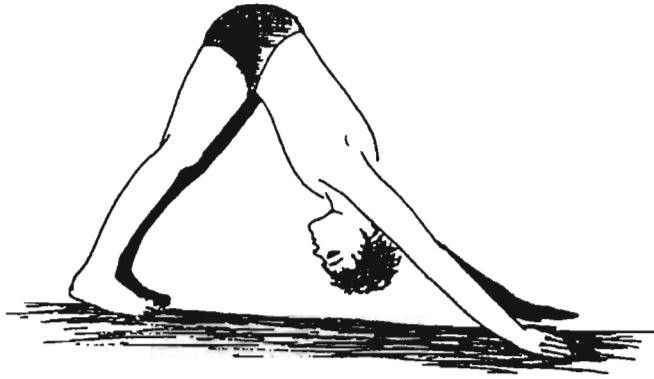
Mantra

Om Bhanave Namaha

(Salutations to He who illumines the universe)

Benefits: Massages abdominal organs and improves blood circulation.

Position 5 *Parvatasana* (Mountain Pose)



The left foot is straightened and placed beside the right foot. The head is lowered between the two arms. Legs and arms are straight touching the floor. The body forms two sides of a triangle.

Breath

Exhalation as the trunk is bent

Chakra

Vishuddhi chakra

Mantra

Om Khagaya Namaha

(Salutations to the One in the sky)

Benefits: Cures nervous disability, diabetes and arthritis. Aids concentration.

Position 6 *Astanga Namaskar* (Salute with eight limbs)

The body is lowered to the ground, so that in the final position – the toes of both feet, the knees, the chest, the hands and the chin touch the ground. The hips and abdomen are raised slightly off the ground.

Breath

Retention – the breath is held

Concentration

Manipura chakra

Mantra

Om Pushne Namaha

(Salutations to the Giver of strength)

Benefits: Strengthens the musculature, expands the chest and improves digestion.

Position 7 *Bhujangasana* (Serpent Pose)

The body is raised from the waist by straightening of the arms. The head is bent backwards.

Breath

Inhalation

Concentration

Swadhisthana chakra

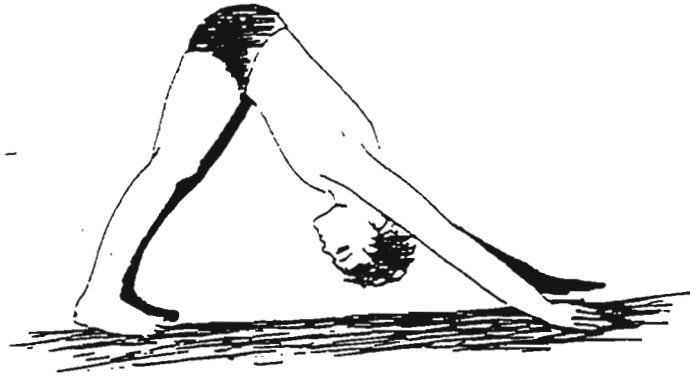
Mantra

Om Hiranyagarbhaya Namaha

(Salutations to the Golden Cosmic Self)

Benefit: Helps the practitioner acquire balance.

Position 8 *Parvatasana* (Mountain Pose)



This asana (posture) is a repetition of variation 5. From the arched back position, the mountain pose is assumed.

Breath

Exhalation

Concentration

Vishuddhi chakra

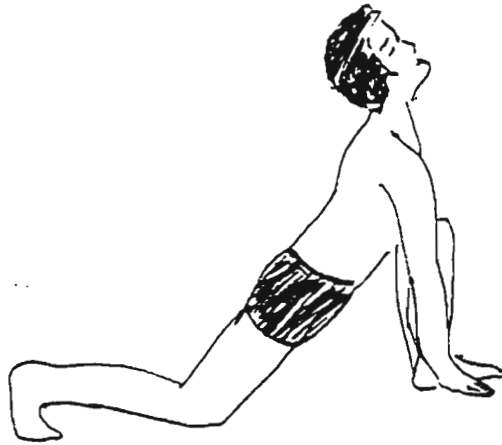
Mantra

Om Marichaya Namaha

(Salutations to the Lord of the dawn)

Benefits: Cures nervous disability, diabetes and artheritis. Aids concentration.

Position 9 *Ashwa Sanchalasana* (Equestrian Pose)



The left foot is brought forward so that it lies parallel to the hands. Simultaneously, the right knee is lowered to the floor.

Breath

Inhalation

Concentration

Ajna Chakra

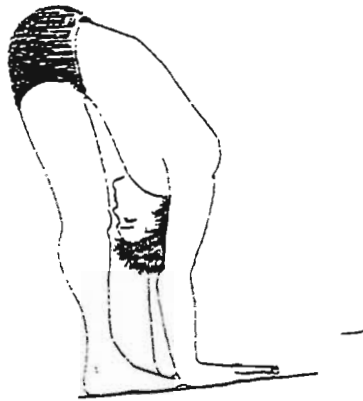
Mantra

Om Adityaya Namaha

(Salutations to the Son of Aditi)

Benefits: Massages abdominal organs and improves blood circulation.

Position 10 *Padahastasana* (Hand to Foot Pose)



A repeat of position 3. The right foot is placed next to the left. Both legs are straightened.

Breath

Exhalation

Concentration

Swadhistasana chakra

Mantra

Om Savithre Namaha

(Salutations to the Benevolent Mother)

Benefits: Cures abdominal ailments. Improves digestion and blood circulation. Makes the spine supple.

Position 11 *Hasta Uttasana* (Raised Arms Pose)



A repeat of position 2.

Breath

Inhalation

Concentration

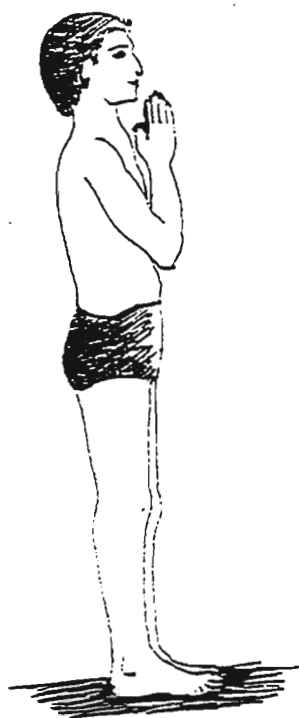
Vishuddhi chakra

Mantra

Om Arkaya Namaha

(Salutations to He who is worthy of being praised)

Benefits: Develops the respiratory system and spinal nerves. Improves digestion and stretches the abdominal viscera.

Position 12 *Pranamasana* (Prayer Pose)

This is the final pose and is the same as position 1.

Breath

Exhalation

Concentration

Anahata chakra

Mantra

Om Bhaskaraya Namaha

(Salutations to the One who leads to enlightenment)

Benefits: Allows the practitioner to recollect his energy and redirect his thoughts to the divine.

The overall benefits of the Surya Namaskar are many and varied. Yoga texts abound with praise for this system of exercises which are not only physically and mentally beneficial but which – from its concrete basis, spiritual awareness develops. From the visible grows love for the invisible.

4.4 ELEMENTS OF ORALITY IN SURYA NAMASKAR

The principles and concepts governing oral style expression are applicable to a study of Surya Namaskar. It shall be illustrated how the breath, the physical geste and the spoken geste are interwoven to perpetuate the practice of Surya Namaskar in oral tradition.

4.4.1 The Concrete Referent

Human awareness is in the beginning physical. The Surya Namaskar is an example of a concrete geste within the context of the sublime. The physical manifests in the form of gestes, the breath and the repetition of mantra and is symbolic of man's reverence to the creator. Jousse clearly enunciates "Man is a composite of flesh and spirit. He is therefore a being for whom the invisible world exists... The sublimation of that which is concrete is a veritable drama when played out in man. The magnificence of man's creation of symbol and analogy cannot be extolled too highly. As a result, man is able to take each of his mimismological gestes and to sublimate its meaning" (1997 : 74 - 75). *Rsis* (seers) worked out this system of exercises in Surya Namaskar revering the various modes of the sun as analogical to the creating power of God.

4.4.2 Mimism

"Anthropos is universal man impressed by the universe. His body plays out the receptions of the universe, replays them, stores them and revivifies them in expressions that are the mimisms of the whole human compound: corporeal, ocular, auricular manual and laryngo-buccal" (Fanning 1993 : vii). This is the geste of man.

Oral implies the entire body when communicating. The worship of the sun in a series of physical gestes provides evidence of mimism. The Surya Namaskar demonstrates man's ability to conduct the geste purposefully. It constitutes action directed to an element of nature pervaded by God. The sun has life-giving properties and symbolizes the rebirth of the soul. Reverence for nature has always been a distinguishing characteristic of oral tradition.

In Surya Namaskar the voluntary element of mimism, **imitation**, is present. The pupil initially imitates the teacher until the lesson, by virtue of anthropological laws, becomes automatically absorbed into his being and becomes his own.

Yogins perform the Surya Namaskar daily at dawn facing the sun. Mimism is evident also by dint of this ritualistic feature. Frederick Turner enunciates "Ritual is a fundamental link to oral tradition. In ritual, human beings decide what they are and stipulate that identity for themselves" (1986 : 70). The sacred experience through the Surya Namaskar sustains the faith and framework of understanding whereby yogic culture is perpetuated and renewed.

4.4.4 Rhythm

The rhythm of the breathing exercises is reflected to some extent in the accepted scientific fact that the brain generates electricity under the influence of rhythmic chemical reactions, whereby the thinking processes and other bodily functions are carried out. (Vithaldas 1995 :18)

Each asan (pōsture), Prānā (breath) and mantra (meditative expression) is intrinsically interwoven in a unique expression of rhythm. The essential feature of the Surya Namaskar is rhythm. Innate rhythm is expressed in man's words and actions. In this profound exercise, each breath flows into the next, each posture is meant to gently proceed to the next and the mantras are repeated continuously in a smooth rhythm which strengthens and rejuvenates internal rhythm. As a result, a sense of balance within the practitioner is achieved – balance in his physical and mental states. Balance engenders freedom to choose what one becomes. Rhythm in Surya Namaskar is reinforced by bilateralism.

4.4.4 Bilateralism

"If man *ex-presses* himself in balancing, it is because he has two symmetrical sides. This living law of the human organism is inescapable... man is an interactionally and bilaterally miming animal." (Jousse 1997 : 269). It is the bilateral nature of man by which he is rhythmmed. We observe bilateralism in everything that we are and everything that we do. The breathing of the heart, the pumping of the blood, the function of breath, the succession of thoughts, one immediately replacing another – are examples of

bilateralism. The importance of man's bilateral nature becomes obvious in the execution of Surya Namaskar.

In *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*, the concept of a triple bilateralism is classified that as of up and down, the right and the left, the front and the back. An analysis of the asanas in the Surya Namaskar will illustrate these balancings.

| ASANA | MOVEMENT | PRANA |
|-------|----------|------------|
| 1 | Balanced | Normal |
| 2 | Up | Inhalation |
| 3 | Down | Exhalation |
| 4 | Right | Inhalation |
| 5 | Front | Exhalation |
| 6 | Balanced | Retention |
| 7 | Back | Inhalation |
| 8 | Front | Exhalation |
| 9 | Left | Inhalation |
| 10 | Down | Exhalation |
| 11 | Up | Inhalation |
| 12 | Balanced | Exhalation |

Bilateralism in Asana (Posture)

Each upward movement is balanced by a downward movement. In raising the hands up above the head (asanas 2 and 10), the practitioner pays respect to the sun above which is indicative of his aspirations to divine heights. This is balanced by touching his hands down to the floor to show his respect for the earth.

Asana 1 is significantly paralleled by asana 12. The beginning and the end of the series is marked by the clasping of the hands together in a salutation or prayer mode. This is symbolic of the aspirant's reverence to the sun. Asanas 1 and 12 are balanced by asana 6 which represents the aspirant's ultimate desire to attain equilibrium.

In asanas 4 and 9, the right and left sides of the body are inclined towards the sun. By alternating the posture, man offers himself, every part of him, as worship. From a physiological point of view, it is normal to alternate the use of the left and the right so that the toxic effects of fatigue are reduced by intervening periods of relaxation and rest. Asanas 5 and 7 illustrate the front and back postures. In asana 5, the front of the body is treated and in asana 7, the back. We are constantly moving forwards and backwards. The gesture of leaning forward at a low level and lifting oneself up and moving backwards is commonly seen in a variety of activities. In formulating the Surya Namaskar, this bilateral aspect of man was carefully considered as was the need for balance in these activities. When the body leans forward, immediately it tries to readjust itself to create balance. The balance between asanas 5 and 7 – forward and backward movement is created by asana 6.

Asana 6 is known as *astangasana* meaning to worship the sun with eight points of the body. One observes that in this position perfect balance is maintained by the parts of the anatomy that have contact with the floor. The right knee is balanced by the left as with the alternate feet and hands; the chest is balanced by the chin as a seal of bilateral balancing.

Bilateralism in *Prānā*

Prānāyāmā or the control of *Prānā* forms an important, if not the most important, segment of the triad in the Surya Namaskar. The concentration of *Prānā* is centred at particular chakras mentioned indicating that, further to promoting the smooth flow of *Prānā* through the body, it also plays an esoteric role in the well-being of the whole-being. The rhythmic control of the breath is enhanced by its bilateral reference. The breathing pattern outlined in the previous table describes *Prānāyāmā* in relation to the asana and the mantra. For every upward and/or backward movement, the breath is deeply inhaled. For every downward and/or forward movement, the breath is deeply exhaled. Every inhalation is balanced by a parallel exhalation.

Physiological bilateralism in man is also manifest in *Prānā* that goes upward from the navel referred to also as *Prānā*. The air that goes downward from the navel is known as *apana*. Balance is represented by both the *Prānā* and *apana* converging in the Sushumna (the energy channel that links the chakras) through practice of *Prānāyāmā*. Of significance is the **retention** of breath in asan 6. Retention of breath denotes a transcendental awareness. Yoga Vasistha, one of the greatest sources on direct experience of the transcendent says, "When there is effortless suspension of breath, that is the Supreme State. It is the Self. It is pure infinite consciousness. He who

receives this does not grieve". (Chopra 1990 : 190) This state represents balance between inhalation and exhalation as well as the balance in life fervently longed for by so many. It is an accepted fact that one's body responds to one's state of awareness. Bilateralism legitimizes the body-mind connection.

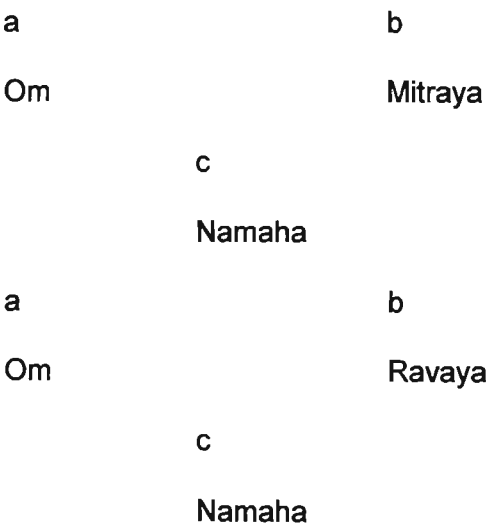
Saraswathi (1991 : 51) comments on left and right balancing of pranic energy as depicted in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*.

Ida is the nadi (energy channel) connected to the left nostril and the right hemisphere. *Pingala* is the nadi connected to the right brain hemisphere. In the same way that the right hemisphere governs the left side of the body, on a pranic level, *ida* also controls the functions of the left side of the body, likewise *pingala* and the left hemisphere governs the right side of the body. Just as the brain hemispheres and nostrils alternate their functions in 90 minute cycles, so do the *ida* and *pingala*.

Ida and the right hemisphere activate an introverted state of awareness, orientation in space, artistic, creative and musical ability. Conversely, *pingala* and the left hemisphere externalize the awareness. The approach becomes logical, sequential, mathematical and analytical. *Ida nadi* controls subconscious activities and *pingala* is responsible for conscious and dynamic functions. When these forces are balanced and operating simultaneously – it indicates that the *sushumna* is functioning at optimum level. The object of Hatha yoga practice, specifically *Prāṇāyāmā*, is to increase the duration and flow of *Prāṇā* in the *sushumna* and the period when *Prāṇā* in both nostrils flow simultaneously. Then **Balance** is created in the physical and mental functions.

Bilateralism in *Mantra*

The mantras in Surya Namaskar are also carefully bilateralised. The global mechanism is transferred into the oral mechanism. Man's innate bilateral nature is manifested in his recitatives. Jousse describes these recitatives as rhythmic schemas and explains that rhythmic schemas are generated in binary and ternary formulations. In the following examples, bilateralism and balancings are illustrated.



Om is reverence to the All-creating, the All-sustaining and All-dissolving one. Mitraya and Ravaya refer to the specific aspects of the sun that are being revered. Namaha means Salutations.

The Referents, Mitraya and Ravaya, etc. provide the balance between Om and Namaha which are constant. The formulation of these mantras reflect the influence of bilateralism and their repetition emphasize the imprint of balanced thought. Bilateralism is also paramount in oral tradition because of its contribution to the construction of meaning

which accounts for the perpetuation of the Vedas. In the Surya Namaskar, balance is achieved between the breath of the nostrils and the breath of the throat.

The wealth of oral tradition becomes more evident in the given examples of the great law of bilateralism which accounts for so much. Bilateralism masters the anthropos and enables him to balance his world.

4.4.5 Formulism

Formulism refers to the ability of man to crystallize all his experiences and to express them in the form of propositional gestes.

4.4.5.1 The Propositional Geste

Each of the postures, one flowing into the other, each of the breaths and each of the mantras constitute propositional gestes. Fanning (1993 : 19) reaffirms Jousse's view that it is not the word that is the unit of thought and expression but the propositional geste. In *The Oral Style* (Jousse 1990 : 55) the following definition is given, "The real and living unit, is not the gesture or the isolated sign, nor the word (that voiced gesture) but the sentence, or complex whole, whatever its length, which expresses a complete and indivisible meaning. The significance of a gesture is determined by the context only."

In each of the mantras as well as in the entire Surya Namaskar, a complete and indivisible meaning is expressed; eg. in the mantra

Om Marichaya Namaha.

(Salutations to the Lord of the Dawn)

The sun is more than a natural phenomenon. It is also the bringer of the dawn. The contextual meaning of the above mantra is apparent in that the sun is a natural phenomenon sublimated and therefore to be revered. The sun's power is acknowledged in a series of elements which together blend into a unity – one unique act.

In Surya Namaskar the three most significant elements of the anthropos are evident:-

- i) Breath – breathed into Man by God and by which he lives.
- ii) Corporeal-manual gesticulation – physical gestures.
- iii) Laryngo-buccal gesticulation – spoken gestures.

4.4.5.2 Mnemotechnical devices

Orality in the Surya Namaskar is also evident in the ample use of mnemonic skills.

- i) Repetition

All the asanas (postures), the mantras (recitatives) and the breaths are repeated in parallel balancings. The repeated use of the syllable *Om* denotes; firstly, reverence for the sun and all its properties and secondly, reverence to the Almighty of whom the sun is a manifestation. The repetition of *Namaha* underpins the worshipper's devotion and is also an appeal for acceptance of the prayer. *Om* and *Namaha* are also key words in the

mantra and impel the practitioner to the next mantra as a successive clause in the propositional geste.

ii) Short Recitatives

All the mantras as well as the postures are short and precise. Brevity accentuates profound meaning as well as aids memory.

iii) Assonance

In order to illustrate assonance, the mantras are placed in paralleled blocks as follows:-

| | |
|----|---------|
| a | b |
| Om | Mitraya |
| | c |
| | Namaha |
| Om | Ravaya |
| | Namaha |
| Om | Suryaya |
| | Namaha |
| Om | Bhanave |
| | Namaha |
| Om | Khagaya |
| | Namaha |
| Om | Prshne |
| | Namaha |

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Om | Hiranyagarbhaya |
| Namaha | |
| Om | Marichaye |
| Namaha | |
| Om | Adityaya |
| Namaha | |
| Om | Savithre |
| Namaha | |
| Om | Arkaya |
| Namaha | |
| Om | Bhaskaraya |
| Namaha | |

The first instance of assonance is evident in the emphasis of O in Om in the first block. In the second block, the first syllable of the names of the sun is stressed. In six of the names, the a is present in the first syllable and is therefore stressed giving rise to assonance. Assonance serves the same purpose as alliteration which is to link the balancings so that the interweaving of assonance and meaning “dovetails the sentences into each other and allows neither the meaning [nor the reciter’s memory] to give out before the performance is finished” (Jousse 1990 : 190). The result is that each mantra triggers off the succeeding one.

iv) Rhyme/Rhythm

The use of rhyme greatly contributes to the cohesion of the mantras. The mantras is linked by rhyme in their respective blocks. In blocks a and c, rhyme is obvious. In block b

– the last syllable of each name, in recitations 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 12 rhyme as do the last syllables in recitations 4, 6, 8 and 10 thereby creating sound-sense connection. Consequently upon recitation of the mantra, there emanates a melodious rhythm.

v) Honorific Names

“Name is the essence of the thing,” its “essential action” (Jousse 1997 : 196). The heavenly Beings classed in the category of the sun are revered in the Surya Namaskar. These honorific names serve to conjure up the respective attributes in the mind of the practitioner and also serve as a mnemotechnical device to aid memory.

4.4.5.3 Symbolism

Finally, **symbolism** is borne in the following parallel. Dawn heralds light. Light represents knowledge and darkness represents nescience. Surya Namaskar is acknowledgement of the need for light with its message of hope, new insight, happiness and perseverance. On another level, worship of the sun is also an exhortation for the dispelling of ignorance and the search for the divine light within.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to demonstrate that orality is integral to the perpetuation of yogic culture, specifically in relation to the concept of Prāṇā. Breath is one's birth right.

The veneration of God for the gift of breath is common in all cultures. That commonality is demonstrated in the relation between the Yogic concept of Prāṇā and the Aramaic Rouhāh. They bear remarkable similarities. Using data from both the Hindu and the Palestinian milieus suffice to demonstrate universal laws.

Mysticism can be approached rationally. Equally important contemplative interests and intellectual pursuits can be fruitfully combined in one person. This lesson is not new for it has long been taught within the context of spontaneous ethnic milieus.

Albert Einstein said, "The most beautiful and the most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical." In a similar vein, world-renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin remarked, "I am a better violinist because of yoga."

Yoga is an anthropological phenomenon as the aim of yoga is to transform one's energy from a lower to a higher consciousness. It was in the oral tradition that the concept of Prāṇā, which is central to yoga, was faithfully transmitted from generation to generation. The Orality - Literacy continuum is of significance as the Vedic text is co-responsible for upholding yogic traditions and customs. The text itself contains oral elements that serve as invaluable tools for memorisation.

Universal laws that underlie oral tradition were identified by Marcel Jousse. One cannot but be struck by his giftedness in describing the oral phenomenon. His reference to the Palestinian understanding of the Rouhâh and his laws and theories illustrate that Prāṇāyāmā and Surya Namaskar are firmly grounded in oral tradition.

Arising from the profound meaning of the concept of Prāṇā and the significant role played by oral formulaic style in preserving the originality of Prāṇāyāmā and Surya Namaskar, further food for thought is provided. Scope for further research could include:

- An analysis of the concept of the breath as it obtains in other ethnic milieus.
- An investigation into the relation between the breath and speech in different ethnic milieus.
- A study of the relation between the sign language of the deaf and hand gestures employed in Prāṇāyāmā and in yoga in general.
- Speculation on oral elements in Vedic hymns.

Through this dissertation, an attempt was made to show that the wealth of oral tradition has kept alive the dual purpose of human life; the physical and the spiritual. The concept of yoga is frequently misunderstood. However, as often as its meaning is lost, it is also found. It is hoped that by an investigation of the concepts of *Prāṇā*, *Prāṇāyāmā*, *Surya Namaskar* and *yoga*, this dissertation has contributed, in some measure, to a finding of a realistic idea of yoga and its transmission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Botha, P.J.J. 1991. *Orality, Literacy and Worldview: Exploring the Interaction in Communication*. 17 (2) 2-15

Botha, P.J.J. 1992. *Oral and Literate Tradition*. The text of a lecture delivered at the University of Natal, Durban.

Chand, D. 1982. *The Atharvaveda*. (A Translation) Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers: New Delhi.

Chand, D. 1988. *The Yajurveda*. (A translation) Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers: New Delhi.

Chopra, D. 1990. *Quantum Healing. Exploring the Frontiers of Mind / Body Healing*. Bantam Books: New York.

Conolly, J.L. 1995. *From Mimism to Music in the Child. An Oral-Style Contextual Reading of the Primary Learning Theory of Marcel Jousse with special reference to Rudolf Laban*. (Masters Dissertation) University of Natal : Durban.

Coulmas, F. 1989. *The Writing Systems of the World*. Blackwell: Oxford.

Dalal, N. 1992. *Yoga for Rejuvenation*. Orient Longman Ltd.: Hyderabad.

Debipersad, C. 1995. *Orality and the Sixteen Vedic Sanskaras*. (Masters Dissertation) University of Natal, Durban.

Fanning, R.P. 1993. *The Anthropology of Geste and the Eucharistic Rite of the Roman Mass*. (Masters Dissertation) University of Natal, Durban.

Finnegan, R. 1988. *What is Orality if Anything?* Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. 14. 130 - 149.

Fleurstein, Georg. 1979. *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali*. W&J Mackay Ltd : Great Britain.

Griesel, H. 1990. *Literacy and Orality: Reading in a Rural Context*. (Working Document for a seminar presented at the African Seminar Series) Centre for African Studies: UCT. 39 - 47.

Jousse, M. 1997. *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*. (Translated by E.Sienaert in collaboration with J. Conolly) Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal: Durban.

Jousse, M. 1990. *The Oral Style*. (Translated by E. Sienaert and R. Whitaker) Garland: New York.

Kashnavadas, S. 1991. *Gayatri*. Motilal Banarsidas Publishers: New Delhi.

Moktar, H. 1995. *A Study of the Bhagavad Gita as an example of Indian Oral-Literate Tradition*. (Masters Dissertation) University of Natal, Durban.

N.I.V. 1983. *The Holy Bible*. CTB Book Printers: Cape Town.

Ong, W. J. 1982. *Orality and Literacy. The Technologising of the Word*. J.J Press Ltd: Great Britain.

Parivajaka, S. 1989. *Yoga Mimansa*. Arsh Sahitya Prachar Trust: India.

Pranavananda, Y. 1992. *Pure Yoga*. Motilal Banarsidas Publishers: New Delhi.

Radhakrishnan, S. 1948. *The Bhagavad Gita*. (A translation) Unwin Publishers: Great Britain.

Sachdeva, I.P. 1978. *Yoga and Depth Psychology*. Shri Jaindra Press: New Delhi.

Sarasvathie, M. et al. 1986. *Rigveda*. Volume iv. (A commentary) Sarvadeshnik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha: New Delhi.

Saraswathie, S.M. 1991. *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. Sri Satguru Publications: Delhi.

Saraswathie, S. 1984. *The Effects of Yoga On Hypertension*. Ashram Graphics: Bihar.

Seth, S. 1990. *Practical Yoga*. Vikrant Printers: Bombay.

Sienaert, E.R. 1990. *Marcel Jousse: The Oral Style and the Anthropology of Gesture*. Oral Tradition: 5/11, 91 - 106.

Sivananda, S. 1990. *Enlightened Education*. (Adapted by Sri Swami Sahajananada)
Sivananda Press: Durban.

Turner, F. 1986. *Performed Being. Word Art as a Human Experience*. Oral Tradition:
1/1, 66 - 109.

Vasu, S.C. 1981. *An Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*. Takshila Hardbounds: Jullundur.

Vithaldas, Y. 1995. *The Yoga System of Health*. Faber and Faber Ltd.: London

Werner, K. 1977. *Yoga and Indian Philosophy*. Shri Jaindra Press: New Delhi.

Woods, J.H. 1992. *The Yoga System of Patanjali*. Motilal Banarsidas Publishers: New
Delhi.

Yesudian, S. & Haich, E. 1956. *Yoga - Uniting East and West*. Tinling and Company :
Great Britain.

Yogendra, S. 1975. *Facts about Yoga*. Examiner Press: Bombay.