

**A TREATISE ON  
THE YOGA  
PHILOSOPHY**

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A Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy by N. C. Paul

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A TREATISE  
ON THE  
YOGA PHILOSOPHY,

BY

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## PREFACE.

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The present Treatise contains the theory and practice of the Yoga, one of the six systems of doctrine held by the Hindus.

The Yoga treats of various processes, by which the Hindu Ecstatics acquire the power of abstaining from eating and breathing for a long time, and of becoming insensible to all external impressions.

The Hindu mystics (*yogís*) who practise yoga, retire into subterranean retreats (*guphá*), they abstain from common salt, and are extremely fond of milk, on which they chiefly live: they are nocturnal in their habits, keeping retired in the day; they are slow in their motions, and torpid in their manners; they eat and walk during the night. They practise two postures, termed *Padmásana*, and *Siddhásana*, with a view to respire with the least possible frequency. They also dread the rapid changes and inclemencies of the weather.

When the *yogís* are able to practise the above quiescent postures for the period of two hours, they commence to practise *Pránáyama*, a stage of self-trance which is characterised by profuse perspiration, tremblings of the system, and a sense of lightness of the animal œconomy. They next practise *Pratyáhára*, a stage of self-trance in which they have the functions of the senses suspended. They then practise *Dharana*, a stage of self-trance in which sensibility and voluntary motion are suspended, and the body is capable of retaining any given posture, the mind being said to be quiescent in this stage of self-trance.

The *Yogís*, after attaining the stage of *Dharana* (cataleptic condition), aspire to what is termed *Dhyána*, a stage of self-trance in which they pretend to be surrounded by flashes of eternal light or electricity, termed *Ananta-jyotí*, (from

two Sanskrit words signifying endless or all-pervading light), which they say is the universal soul. The Yogis in a state of Dhyána are said to be clairvoyant. The Dhyána of the Yogis is the Turyá avasthá of the Vedantists—the ecstasy of the Physician, the self-contemplation of the German mesmerisers, and the clairvoyance of the French philosophers.

Samádhi is the last stage of self-trance. In this state the yogis, like the bat, the hedgehog, the marmot, the hamster, and the dormouse, acquire the power of supporting the abstraction of atmospheric air, and the privation of food and drink. Of samádhi or human hybernation there have been three cases within the last 25 years. The first case occurred in Calcutta, the second in Jesselmere and the third in the Punjab. I was an eye-witness of the first case.

Of samádhi there are two varieties, termed Samprajna and Asamprajna. Colonel Townsend, who could stop the motion of his heart and arteries at pleasure, and could die or expire when he pleased, and again revive, was a case of Samprajna samádhi.

The Jesselmere, the Punjabi, and the Calcutta yogis, who assumed a death-like condition by swallowing the tongue, and who could not revive of themselves at pleasure, were cases of Asamprajna samádhi, as they were all resuscitated by others who drew the buried tongue out of the fauces and restored it to its normal place.

On account of the real obscurity of the nature of the Yoga philosophy, and of my utter ignorance of the Sanskrit language, in which all the standard works on Indian mysticism are written, I must crave some indulgence if I have failed to do full justice to the subject of self-trance as practised by the cold-blooded and hybernating philosophers of the East.

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BEFORE entering on the consideration of the elements of human hybernation or Yoga, it may not be altogether uninteresting to give a full account of the nature of the expired air, which the Sanskrit authorities term Prána.

The expired air contains more caloric and more watery vapour, is more elastic, and is of less specific gravity than the inspired air. The average temperature of the expired air is 99·5 F.

The average quantity of watery vapour expired in 24 hours by an adult, in temperate climates, is 7,819,222 grains. The bulk of carbonic acid in the 100 parts of the expired air, varies, according to different authorities, as shewn by the table following:—

<i>Authorities.</i>	<i>Average percentage of carbonic acid by volume.</i>
Prout, .....	3' 45.
Coathupe, .....	4' 02.



Thompson, .....	4' 16.
Vierordt, ..... ..	4' 334.
Brunner and Valen-	
tine, .....	

The quantity of carbonic acid evolved during the day is greater than what is excreted during the night.

For every 12 volumes of carbonic acid evolved during the day, 10 are exhaled during the night. The quantity of carbonic acid evolved in respiration is considerably increased after a full meal. Hence, moderation in diet, termed *Mitáhára*, is recommended to persons who practise the suspension of the breath. Sequin found that when he was in a state of repose, and fasting, he vitiated only 1,210 cubic inches of oxygen, while, during digestion, this bulk was increased to between 1,800 and 1,900 cubic inches.

With a view to expire less carbonic acid, many *faqírs* fast during the day and take one moderate meal during the night. These are called *Nakta-bhojí*.

Exercise increases the amount of carbonic acid in the expired air in a given time. Aware of this fact, the ancient Hindu philosophers prescribed slow movements to such as wanted to exhale less carbonic acid.

*Yogís* are recommended to move slowly in order to render their respiration less frequent.

### TEMPERATURE.

Human beings deteriorate a greater quantity of air in a cold than in a warm medium; that is to say they, exhale more carbonic acid in a cold atmosphere than in a hot one. Hence the Yogis are recommended to dwell, like the burrowing animals, in subterranean retreats which are remarkable for possessing a uniform temperature. The nearer the temperature of the external air is to the animal heat, the less is the quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air. Hence the appetite for food at the equator is less keen than in the polar regions. The appetite for food is in proportion to the quantity of carbonic acid exhaled during a given time. In a confined atmosphere less carbonic acid is evolved than in the free ventilated air. Hence a Yogí delights to live in a guphá (subterranean cell) having a small door which is blocked up with clay by his assistant.



### LOUD SPEAKING.

The amount of carbonic acid exhaled in a given time is greater in loud speaking than in a state of silence. Hence a Yogí is recommended to practise Maunavrata,—taciturnity, or the vow of silence.



### MENTAL LABOUR.

Mental labour diminishes the quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air. Hence the Yogís are re-

commended to avoid physical exertions, and to engage in meditation.

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### MENTAL ABSTRACTION.

When the mind is abstracted from its functions the amount of carbonic acid is lessened. Hence the Yogis are recommended to fix their sight on the tip of the nose or upon the space between the eye-brows. These peculiar turns of the axes of vision suspend the respiratory movements and generally produce hypnotism. This process is termed *Trátaka* in Sanskrit.

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### REST.

The quantity of carbonic acid exhaled in a given time is less in a state of rest than in one of exercise. Hence the Yogis are recommended to sit in the two tranquil and quiescent postures termed the *Siddhásana* and *Kamalásana*, of which a circumstantial account will be given while treating of human hybernation.

The longer the state of rest is continued the less is the quantity of carbonic acid evolved from the gradual decrease of the number of respirations. This is better illustrated by the following paragraph quoted from a standard work on Natural History.

“In a specimen of *Bombus terrestris*, which remained at rest for about half an hour, the respira-