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The Illusion of Conjugal Sadhana

1. Introductory :

Many sadhakas have asked questions directly or indirectly regarding the topic of conjugal sadhana during the last five or six years. Due to lack of time, dearth of proper scriptures, and my limitations as a sanyasi (renunciate), I have answered them very briefly. I decided to write a critical appreciation of one of the following scriptures: Sivasamhita, Gherandasarhhita, or Goraksa Paddhati and include elaborate answers to all the relevant questions, but I have not been able to do so yet.

As I have been directing research for two years in the fields of yoga and music, it is proper that I provide the answers to the sadhakas' questions.

It is not correct that only complicated problems are put forth in the scriptures; the solutions to these problems are also given. It is true that these solutions cannot be understood logically. Logical reasoning would only make the problem more confusing. The solutions to the problems are obtained through regular sadhana (spiritual practice). In ancient times when the sadhaka (spiritual seeker) faced a problem at any stage of sadhana and could not find a solution, he would run to his Gurudeva (beloved teacher) and get a solution to his problems. This was the ancient way. This is correct, because when a mystery is revealed at the proper moment, the interrogator's doubts are allayed.

I have answered the questions of a few sadhakas hesitatingly, because if my opinion differed from that of their Guru, they would be on the horns of a dilemma. I have always first advised the sadhaka to seek his solution from his own Guru. Yet when they have insisted on my answer, I have given it to them.

The answers to the problems I have put forth are the solutions to the problems in this article. I have obtained them by my sadhana, study of scriptures and the guidance of my Sadguru. You may accept and respect them only if you find them to be true according to your own experience.

2. A Difficult Stage of Yoga :

There is only one yoga. It is of two types - Sakama and niskama. Both have various classifications and different spiritual accomplishments.

Whether it is Niskama Jnana Yoga, Niskama Bhakti Yoga or Niskama Karma Yoga, all have their beginning in Kriya Yoga, which itself begins with an important distinct stage. As this is a difficult stage of yoga, it is very difficult to become steady in it. The sadhaka who ascends to this stage is afflicted by a very strong sensual urge. Whenever he sits for his dhyana (meditation) session, he experiences intense arousal of the sexual instinct. Here the guidance of a Guru who is a perfect yogi is an absolute necessity. If proper guidance is not available to the sadhaka, he does not have the courage to continue with his sadhana. From here the two main types of yoga branch out.

In the first branch, the sadhaka allays his sexual desires with his wife in the natural way without asking her to meditate. Then he asks her to take meditation initiation from his Guru and both perform meditation together and take each other's help when their sexual appetite is aroused. The followers of the Vama sect perform group meditation. They fix a schedule and then take each other's help in allaying their desire.

The follower of the second sect does not take feminine help. He abandons his meditation room when his sexual desire is aroused. He resorts to several ways which intuitively occur to him, but he is faced with only failure. At this stage, only a perfect and accomplished Guru can give the correct guidance.

The serious sadhakas of the Jnana, Bhakti, or Yoga cults all believe that sexual desires diminish with their practice of meditation. Actually they increase, and when this happens, the sadhaka loses his faith. He tries to understand the reasons for this, but he cannot come up with an answer with which he can reconcile himself.

The cause of the arousal of sexual desire is that the sex center is also the center of yoga. The sexual fluid is the medium in both sex and yoga. The sex urge causes the sexual fluid to descend through ejaculation, and yoga causes it to ascend through sublimation.

The desire which is aroused at this stage of meditation is described in Srimad Bhagavad Gita as not contrary to the dharma or the law of religion. Lord Krsna says: "I am the strength of the strong, devoid of desire and passion. In beings I am the desire which is not contrary to the law of Dharma, O King of Bharatas (Arjuna)".¹

Moreover, the first stanza of Mangalacarana of Bhagavad Gita says : "I bow down to the Omkara which is merged with the Bindu which fulfils all desires, including liberation". Here Omkara indicates anahata nada (spontaneous sound) and Bindu indicates the stage of meditation.

3. Ancient Era :

In ancient India, the sanyasis (ascetics) lived and died in the forests. Meditation was their life's final goal. They lived with their wives, and these wives were not only wives, but also partners in their religious practice. The wives did not want pleasure, they were lovers of yoga and practiced self-control of the highest order. They lived with their husbands and led a very simple life.

These ascetics practiced their religion in their own way. The knowledge seeker studied the various scriptures and pondered on their readings constantly, trying to practice and research what they read. They carried out their practice with great enthusiasm. The ascetics who were fond of yoga practiced yoga, and those who believed in the Bhakti cult worshipped God. Thus all the ascetics led a religious life.

In those days, the initiation into sanyasa was not given to one and all. The brahmin who had conscientiously observed the rules and regulations of all three asramas (stations of life) - Brahmacharya, Grhastha and Vanaprastha - were considered to be fit for initiation into sanyasa. These ascetics lived in a separate forest, or they would roam from one forest to another. They would observe the vow of silence, solitude, and renunciation, and make efforts to be Urdhvaretas (yogis with totally sublimated sexual fluid) in order to achieve salvation. They would put on saffron robes and adopt an attitude of penance and renunciation which was considered more important than these robes.

Just as nature dons a special type of beauty in the autumn, summer, and rainy seasons, so also it dons new appearances during different life cycles. At the time when saints and ascetics were predominant, two different paths were followed - ordinary and special. In the ordinary path, people practiced ordinary celibacy and tried to lead the life of a Brahmachari (chaste-celibate). The people who followed the special path practiced yoga and tried to achieve perfection by becoming Urdhvaretas and accomplished yogis. Only a brave and great ascetic gathered the courage to follow the special path. The ordinary ascetics were considered unfit to practice yoga. So much importance was given to celibacy that the practice of celibacy became the main aim in the life of all ascetics and there was no one who believed in the practice of conjugal yoga. Due to the calmness prevailing in the minds of people, the practice of celibacy became easy in that age.

The people living in towns and villages were highly impressed by the life led by the ascetics in the forest. Not only that, but they made the life led by these ascetics their good in life and strove to live accordingly.

In those days, the perfect, accomplished yogi was considered a superman or Apta purusa,² and the books written by him were considered scripture.

Here is an example to show that the life of the ascetic was full of self-control:

One morning Yogi Yajnyavalkya, after finishing his morning ablutions, called his favorite wife Maitreyi. She came and sat before him with reverence and asked him why he had called for her. He said in a soft tone, 'I have made up my mind to don the saffron robes and so I wish to abandon this home and take up my abode elsewhere. I wish you to give me your permission'.

'Will you go away leaving me alone ?'

'I am not leaving you alone, I am leaving Katyayani (the second wife) with you. I wish to divide whatever belongings there are in this house between the two of you'.

The saintly Maitreyi did not give much importance to this proposal. She asked instead, 'Can I become immortal if I learn all the religious scriptures in the world?'

'No.'

'Then you should teach me the religious practice by which I may become immortal.'

Yogi Yajnavalkya gladly initiated her into the path of yoga. He then gave up his permanent abode and became a roaming ascetic, leading a life of total renunciation.

He is considered a great saint. If conjugal yoga were possible, would he have renounced domestic

life to lead the life of a roaming ascetic ?

4. The Middle Ages :

In the middle ages, the practice of ascetic self-denial decreased. This resulted in the forests and asramas becoming vacant. It seemed as if the ascetics had changed their nature and direction. They started living in towns or just outside the towns. They stopped being ascetics and became religious teachers. They started preaching religion everywhere.

The Sanatana Dharma was subdivided into various sects. The sanatanist called himself a Vaisnava, a Sakta, a Vedantist, etc. One religious sect censured the other, and hatred was bred between them. The importance of the Vedas, Puranas, and Upanisads decreased and the texts inspired by great religious teachers became the scriptures.

Due to the caste system, the schools run by Gurus and Risis stopped functioning. They were replaced by lectures and hymn-singing at different centers in the towns. The different sects took on the appearance of religious business centers whose main goal was to increase the number of their followers. It was a rat-race between the different religious sects. The greatness of the religious master was measured by the quality and quantity of his followers. If he had among his followers wealthy men and land-lords and had a large host of followers, he was considered a great master. If his followers were limited, he was considered of lesser status and caliber.

Sacrifice and dispassion decreased and the inclination for collection increased. Discussions of spiritual accomplishments and miracles were to be found everywhere in the towns. Various organizations, Tantrika and Yogika, and different practices of yoga were being established.

The once highly expensive salvation had become very cheap.

The conjugal practice of yoga started at the end of this age. This was the birth of the Vama Marga (left-handed path). Lord Siva, who conquered sexual power and then reduced Cupid to ashes, left the city for the forests, and the ashes of Cupid did not remain ashes but were transformed into godliness and came to stay in the towns where they were worshipped.

Self-restraint and virtuousness were also disposed of and were replaced by indulgence and evil deeds. The Vaidika religion dimiselled, being replaced by un-vaidika traits. Truth was replaced by falsehood, straight-forwardness became crookedness. Hypocrisy in the name of yoga slowly took India into its clutches.

5. Abundance of Yogika Literature :

India is the land of origin of yoga, where the practice of yoga has been carried out individually, collectively, and comprehensively for thousands of years.

Therefore, there is, a constant critical evaluation of the results and influence of the various yogika cults. Plenty of literature is available. Therefore, any experienced yogi is able to ponder and think deeply over his experiences.

An ordinary individual or an ordinary sadhaka cannot assess correctly a perfect yogi or a good scripture. The correct assessment can be made only by an advanced yogi.

The scriptures are valuable not because they are ancient but because they contain the essence of the truth.

It is not easy to attain perfection. Perfect yoga is achieved after several lifetimes. Hence, yoga is divided into several major and minor branches, giving rise to many viewpoints. An ordinary sadhaka is not able to decide which of these viewpoints is the best.

It is imperative that the sadhaka has the blessing of Guru and God in order to accomplish Purnayoga. Moreover, this takes place only after years of sadhana. The sadhaka often stops his sadhana when he faces insurmountable difficulties. Such sadhakas later become popular and powerful. As they are in the position of teacher, their opinions are readily accepted by the masses. They consider their incomplete experiences complete and defame the best opinions of true yogis. Therefore, the ordinary sadhaka wanders in his search for the truth.

The perfect yogi does not consider knowledge, action and devotion different divisions of yoga, but considers divisions to be based on the nature of the sadhaka. He does not consider one type of yoga to be the best and the rest inferior. Only the incomplete sadhaka thinks thus and defames other paths, praising only his own.

The sadhaka chooses the type of yoga that suits his nature. He should first ask himself whether he is after the achievement of salvation or that of material wealth and fulfillment of lust. Depending upon the answer that comes from within, he should make the choice of his Guru. The Guru who himself strives for salvation looks to the fitness of his disciple and the materialistic and lustful Guru looks to the assets of his disciple before initiating him.

The sea of yogika literature is very deep and spreads far and wide. If you do not have a boat in the form of a Guru, you are bound to drown in it.

Yoga cannot be mastered only through the study of yogika literature. It is necessary to practice yoga in order to master it.

By the deep study of the best scriptures of knowledge, devotion, and yoga one achieves two principles of the highest order. The first principle is that in the first stage of yogika practice, one must achieve a pure body purified by yogika fire. That is the external sign of physical purity. The second principle is that there should be a total non-attachment in the second or final stage of yoga. Without the achievement of physical body purified by yogika fire, total non-attachment does not take place. The perfect yogi is one who has achieved these two principles in practice. The first stage is known as sabija samadhi, samprajnata samadhi, cetana samadhi, or savikalpa samadhi. The second and final stage is known as nirbija samadhi, asamprajnata samadhi, acetana samadhi, or nirvikalpa samadhi.

6. Teacher's Blessings :

The salient feature of an enlightened Guru is that he acquaints his disciple with all the different opinions on yoga and then explains why he has chosen his particular path. Only after expanding his principle fully does he give his disciple final initiation. If the disciple is to practice yoga while being away from the Guru, the considerate Guru gives him all the necessary guidance. He also explains the various mysteries being unravelled at the different stages of his sadhana. As the disciple proceeds from one stage to another, he comes to understand the mysterious teachings of his Guru.

Thus his path of progress is cleared of all obstacles. His practice of yoga is not delayed or brought to a stand-still by obstructions or doubts.

The best teacher blesses several disciples, but all of them are not equally fit. Moreover, they do not all practice their sadhana uniformly. Also, each one's environmental circumstances differ. Due to all these reasons, the results of their practice do not bear uniformity.

A question may arise at this point-who is the disciple who has been able to get the unreserved blessings of his Guru and what are his feelings towards his Guru ?

The disciple who has the unreserved blessings of his Guru is one who, in one birth or another, is able to reach his goal, who is never tempted to leave his path, who abandons materialistic gains in order to practice sadhana, making remarkable progress. He has complete faith in his Guru's words, takes up his smallest wish and fulfils it, leaving his sadhana aside, and considers his Guru's pleasure to be his pleasure.

There is one point to be remembered here - Guru's blessings can be achieved only if there is God's blessings. Many great men consider God's blessings as the blessings of their Guru and reach their goal.

7. The Conflict of Prana and Apana :

Our yoga is known as Sahaja yoga (natural yoga), Sanatana yoga (eternal yoga), Anugraha yoga (yoga of grace), saranagati yoga (yoga of surrender), Atmasamarpana yoga (yoga of self-sacrifice), Prema yoga (yoga of love), Raja yoga (royal yoga), Maha yoga (great yoga), or Nirvikalpa yoga (yoga of the dissolution of the mind).

In Sahajayoga, the proficient master yogi awakens the vital power in his disciple with his blessings. This results in the involuntary performance of yogika kriyas (activities) in the disciple. He accepts that he does not do anything willfully and readily accepts the will of the Omnipresent.

This self-surrender does not bear with any argument; it is a thing to be experienced. Therefore, it is not possible for the layman to understand the second-hand descriptions of this experience.

By the stimulation of Prana, it slowly reaches the sex center. As soon as this happens, the conflict between Prana and Apana begins. This results in the awakening of sensual desires. In the beginning, the sadhaka comes to the conclusion that this is a short disturbance which will subside in a few days. But as he progresses, desire is on the increase. He continues his practice four, three or for years with full faith. Then his faith starts wavering. He cannot understand what to do. Only when he gets the guidance of an experienced master, is his problem solved and he is at peace with himself, after completely surrendering himself to his Guru.

Just as the traveller does not have to walk after he gets into a vehicle, so also the sadhaka does not have to bother about anything after surrendering himself to his master. He has only to follow the instructions of his master strictly and surrender himself completely.

The involuntary performance of yogika kriyas cleanses the body and mind and makes the sexual fluid sublime. Prana here is the main force. The descent of the sexual fluid is brought about by Apana. Due to this, Prana attracts Apana to rise. This kriya continues not for two or three years, but

for many years. Only a very brave sadhaka may tread this path which is strewn with obstructions like secret attractions toward social obligations, deep longings for miraculous powers, lack of scriptural knowledge, lack of proficiency of one's Guru, lack of faith, impatience and unsteadiness. It is said in Yoga cudamani, "Just as a bird on a leash is pulled back to its place, so also the soul which is bound by the qualities of nature is held back by Prana and Apana. Prana is the ascendant function and Apana is the descendant function. Thus Prana attracts Apana in the upward direction, and Apana attracts Prana downwards. Only he who experiences these natural movements of Prana and Apana knows yoga".³

The seat of Prana is the Anahata cakra (respiratory system). The seat of Apana is the muladhara and Svadhithana (reproductive system) cakras. The conflict between Prana and Apana goes on even in the body of a man not practicing meditation, but this conflict occurs in a special way in the body of a man practicing meditation.

Through meditation, the circulatory system is stimulated. This results in the stimulation of the organs which produce sexual fluid. The Apana vayu is dominant here. To prevent the activities of Apana, Prana descends and obstructs it. Apana attracts the sexual fluid towards the genitals, and Prana prevents it from going in the lower direction. Apana expands the Susumna. and Prana contracts it.

8. Solitary and Joint Meditation :

When the sadhaka is placed in the dangerous position mentioned above, he or she is attracted towards the opposite sex. At this juncture, it is of prime importance that the sadhaka be guided by an experienced Guru.

If salvation were possible with sexual intercourse, then it would be said that salvation is not meant for the ascetic sadhaka, but only for the worldly sadhaka. If this is the case, then the virtue of dispassion has no meaning. On the other hand, the holy scriptures prescribe that only the dispassionate sadhaka is eligible for the path of salvation. The materialistic sadhaka is not eligible for this great path.

There are thousands of examples in the Puranas citing cases where a certain ascetic is said to have practiced severe penance and deep meditation which resulted in the rocking of Indrasana (the throne of Lord Indra), making him (Indra) fear his own security. To end this insecurity, Lord Indra would call on a very beautiful nymph to go down to earth, attract the attention of the ascetic concerned, and destroy his penance. The nymph would go and disturb the ascetic by heavenly music and dancing, thus breaking his samadhi (union with the Almighty) and leading him astray into the realm of sensuality.

If sexual intercourse led one to salvation, then the presence of the nymph would have been a boon to the ascetic. But this is not the case; on the contrary, the appearance of the nymph turns out to be a curse. These citations prove that one should practice sadhana alone.

Surrender means the state in which the independent Prana, which is totally free from the bonds of the mind during meditation, is allowed to perform actions through the medium of the body and organs without any obstructions. The Prana vayu is one of the five elements existing in nature. Though it seems dynamic, it is static. The source that instills life into Prana vayu is Paramesvara (God). It is not proper to abandon this state of surrender to God in order to seek the protection of the opposite sex, i. e. another person. In sexual intercourse, the mind becomes extrovert and the sensory

organs become uncontrollable. In spite of all this, sadhakas - both male and female - say that they experience the vital power functioning forcefully when they have sex.

This experience is a result of their involvement in sexual pleasures and is an illusion. This gross observation is miles away from the truth. The force that they experience is not that of Prana but that of the mind. Yes, during meditation the Prana sometimes becomes powerful, but it is never distracted. It is always calm. In this condition, it is not present in the external organs. It flows in the nadis or in the internal bodily passages.

When husband and wife perform meditation together, their minds naturally dwell on each other. Therefore they are very soon affected by the force of lust and become excited. As clothes are obstructive during meditation, usually only the genitals are covered by a minimum of clothing. The limbs are revealed. This also is a cause of excitement. Thus the presence of someone of the opposite sex is undesirable and obstructive.

Moreover, during meditation, when desire is awakened in the male, it may not have awakened in the female and vice versa. Under these circumstances, he or she forces himself or herself on the other, breaking the other's meditation and causing the other to give in to his or her wishes.

Along with this, the couple who practice meditation together make another mistake. When the sexual instinct is aroused while meditating alone, it subsides in few moments. But before it subsides, the sadhaka gets himself in a more excited state and leads his partner also into his path.

In the meditation sessions of Vama margis (followers of the left-handed path) where sadhakas of both sexes perform meditation nude, lust is the prevalent feature, so participants are soon agitated by it. Moreover, free sex is dominant in this path and so it is easy to come in contact with new people every time. People who engage in these practices are only looking for new acquaintances and free sex. Thus the object of meditation is lost and enjoyment takes its place.

These sadhakas argue that just as you need iron to cut iron, so also you can conquer lust with lust. The argument seems convincing, but it is not correct; it can be proved to be false. It is true that iron cuts iron, but only an iron with a sharp edge can do so. If the iron used for cutting is not sharp it cannot be used as a cutting agent.

When one resorts to the help of the opposite sex in meditation, the independent Prana becomes dependent, and yoga is transformed into enjoyment. The sadhaka should never forget that in sexual enjoyment there is a fusion of the male and female, while in yoga the union is that of sadhaka and the Lord Almighty. The support of siddhasana and mudras and pranayama helps the Apana to ascend and open the gateway of salvation and closes the path leading to downfall. Through sexual intercourse, the Apana becomes descendant and never opens the closed gateway leading to salvation.

Due to the various yogika kriyas, the purification of the blood takes place and the sexual fluid in its purest form is produced. It is sublimated and ascends of its own accord when Prana becomes intensified. This causes the intense sensation in the genitals.

In the solitary meditation of a non-attached sadhaka, the mind is introverted, all the organs are steady, and Prana is free. The passion which is aroused in this state is yoga and not a state of enjoyment. Lord Krsna has kept this stage of yoga in view and has cited the yogi who at the end of Karma yoga abandons passion and becomes dispassionate. He says, "In this way, control your

sexual fluid with a steady mind, considering passion to be beyond intellect and abandon the great enemy in the form of lust (i. e. become an Urdhvareta by sublimating your sexual fluid)".⁴

In this stage, the Prana becomes more powerful with the help of siddhasana and various mudras and pranayamas. As long as the Prana does not become all-powerful, it is vanquished over and over again by Apana. It can be said that Apana becomes victorious in the primary and secondary stages and Prana becomes victorious only at the end. The final victory is the victory that counts. After this victory, the sadhaka does not remain a sadhaka any longer but becomes an Urdhvareta yogi. Subsequently, he achieves the divine body purified by yogika fire, divine consciousness, and complete dispassion. He then ignores even miraculous powers and omnipotency and tries to master Nirvikalpa samadhi. Finally, he becomes a superman or a divine being. Sri Govindabhagavatpadacaryaji, the Guru of Sankaracarya, has said, "Salvation is the result of knowledge. Knowledge is the result of yogika practice and yoga is practiced through the immortal body. The ordinary body is mortal, but the body which is the result of the fusion of Siva (cosmic male principle) and Parvati (cosmic female principle) is immortal".

9. Self-Sacrifice :

The sadhaka who rejects mudras and siddhasana has not resorted to surrender to God or self-sacrifice. There is no self-sacrifice in sexual intercourse. One can tread the yogika path only through self-sacrifice. With the disappearance of self-sacrifice, the love for the Lord is also broken. Devotion, Knowledge, and Yoga disappear; there remains only one element-lust.

10. Obstacles and Remedies :

Some people say, "By taking up siddhasana and mudras, the attraction and inclination towards the opposite sex increase. Under these circumstances, mental impurities increase also. If a renunciated couple practice yoga together they will expedite their progress".

When during meditation the Svadhisthana cakra is illumined by yogika fires, the sexual instinct becomes intense. The sadhaka has to sublimate this intense sexual feeling. In order to do this, he or she should not seek the opposite sex. If it had been possible to sublimate one's sexual feelings with the help of the opposite sex, then this whole world would have been the ideal place for penance and all householders would have become Urdhvareta saints.

During meditation, control over the genitals is achieved by the practice of siddhasana and mudras which make Apana move upwards. In sexual intercourse, neither siddhasana nor the important mudras manifest. As a result, there is no control over Apana and thus only pleasure is gained and not liberation.

As the genital region becomes very sensitive during meditation, the sadhaka's mind becomes full of licentious thoughts. This inevitable situation must be patiently tolerated. Lord Krsna mentions this stage of meditation: "Arjuna ! Even though one strives to practice yoga and is ever so discerning, his senses lead his mind away by force".⁵

The sadhaka watches as a witness the various actions performed by Prana during meditation. In the same way, he should also watch the vicious sensuous wanderings of the mind.

Lord Krsna has in mind the above situation when He gives guidance to the sadhaka in the Bhagavad Gita : "One whose intelligence is established in the Divine, abandons both good and evil. Therefore, Arjuna, devote yourself to yoga; yoga is skill in action". ⁶

The sadhaka who has surrendered himself to the Lord should not think of the good or evil nature of any action which is performed by Prana during meditation. He should duly seek to maintain a high level of meditation. In the above stanza, Lord Krsna has called him the yogi "whose intelligence is established in the Divine".

The Lord Himself lends clarity to this elsewhere by saying, "Oh Arjuna, during yogika meditation, perform all acts with a sense of detachment without concern for achievements or failures, because the equanimity of intellect is itself called yoga". ⁷ As long as the sadhaka is affected by happiness when faced with success or by sorrow when faced with failure, his mind does not become detached. The perfection of yoga depends on detachment. This detachment is not possible without the sense of self-sacrifice complete surrender to the Lord.

The Muladhara cakra and the Svadhithana cakra are related to each other. The Apana vayu rules these two regions. There is a collection of 72,000 nadis (bodily passages) in the legion of the Apana vayu. Without the help of the kundalini, the purification of these nadis is not possible, to achieve the purification of these nadis is like crossing the Vaitarani river, a river which is said in the Puranas to be situated between Mrtyuloka (earth) and Yamaloka (the other world). It is full of very hot blood, bones, hair, etc. Sinners flounder in this river, unable to swim across it. Holy people swim across it by holding on to a cow's tail. Yogis consider the body, filled with blood, bones and hair, as the Vaitarani river. They use the cow's tail in the form of Kundalinl to cross the river and become immortal. It is better to die once while living with a smiling countenance than to die thousands of times crying and unwilling. To die a living death means to surrender oneself to God and to sacrifice oneself at his lotus feet.

Lord Siva has preached in Siva Samhita, "Sakticalana mudra is that mudra in which the wise sadhaka should capture the Apana and forcibly attract the dormant kundalinl power to ascend. Thus, this all-powerful mudra when practiced destroys all diseases and lends longevity to life. Its practice awakens the kundalinl and makes it ascendant. Therefore, those yogis who aspire for miraculous powers should practice this mudra. By its practice, the body is purified and the eight major miraculous powers, including the power of becoming microscopic like an atom are achieved". ⁸

It is said in Hathayoga Pradipika, "One who has been able to accord movement to Sakti (power) is entitled to achieve miraculous powers. What more can be said ? He can miraculously attain immortality". ⁹

In Gheranda sarhhita it is said, "He who regularly practices sakticalana mudra attains divine body purified by yogika fire. He achieves miraculous powers and all the diseases in his body are destroyed". ¹⁰

11. Vajroli mudra :

Vajroli mudra is included in the ten very important mudras in ancient yogika scriptures. In the sexual act, the Apana is thrown outside the body with force; in yoga, the Apana is forcibly drawn into the body. This internal suction is known as vajroli mudra or yoni mudra.

Experiments are carried on in every field of life. I will here mention one experiment. This is not

prescribed by a Purna yogi (I personally do not recommend it) but by an ordinary sadhaka; however, a certain section of society is attracted towards this sort of experiment. It is as follows :

Take a thin, straight lead rod about ten inches long. Lubricate it with oil and introduce it into the urinary tract up to the length of nine inches. Then take a thin hollow silver rod bent at one end. After introducing it into the genitals, slowly blow into it to clean the urinary tract.

Then try to draw in water through the genitals. Once this is learned, try to draw in milk in the same way.

The married sadhaka should draw the Apana upwards with the help of khecari mudra and uddiyana bandha at the end of sexual intercourse, drawing the semen and female discharge into his testicles.

In ancient scriptures, vajroli mudra is mentioned, but the above-mentioned practice is not described. Sadhakas who practiced this technique existed in the past and exist in the present day, but I have not read or heard of any couple having attained the higher stage of yoga or the divine body.

This whole experiment arises out of ignorance. It is mentioned that the married sadhaka should, at the end of sexual intercourse, perform khecari mudra and uddiyana bandha, and thus make the Apana vayu ascendant and draw his semen along with the female discharge into his testicles. To draw water and milk into the genitals is possible. In the same way, it is possible to draw the semen and female discharge inside. This appeals to one's intelligence.

It is a well-known fact that semen and urine both pass out of the genitals, but they use different tracts. The urinary tract lies further in than the seminal tract. It comes downward, meets the seminal tract, and then comes into the genitals and is thrown out.

Milk and water may be drawn into the genitals. But does the water, milk, semen or female discharge drawn into the bladder reach the testicles ? No.

Water goes into the bladder and comes out along with the urine. When milk is drawn in, it also comes out with the urine. If the suction of water or milk results in their being thrown out with the urine, can one expect anything different with semen or female discharge ? And if this is the case, how can one achieve divine body in this way ? It does not bear scientific scrutiny.

Yes, one can use a lead or silver pipe to purify the genitals. In the same way, one can draw in water or milk. This makes the practice of celibacy easy to a certain extent. But sexual intercourse is harmful.

Certain sadhakas who follow the above experiment consider khecari mudra a necessary part of it. So, carrying out this experiment, they sever the thin ligament underneath the tongue and try to achieve it. After long practice, a few sadhakas do succeed in introducing their tongue into the nasal passage. But khecari mudra performed in an artificial way is not beneficial.

The sadhaka who practices sahaja yoga achieves khecari mudra in a natural way. He does not have to sever the thin ligament under the tongue artificially; it is severed of its own accord due to yogika fire kindled by his sadhana, and all the other aspects of khecari mudra also occur involuntarily. During the three stages of samprajnata yoga - savitarka, savicara, and sananda samapattis - the Apana vayu remains indomitable. The Prana is defeated again and again, and so it cannot perform vajroli mudra-the contraction of the genitals - successfully. Yet, in the first three stages, when the

Apana vayu pushes the semen towards the genital outlet, the Prana performs vajroli mudra. and attracts the sexual fluid in the opposite direction. In the fourth stage of sasmita samapatti, the Prana becomes very strong and the Apana becomes extremely weak, and vajroli mudra. can be performed successfully.

During the practice of savitarka, savicara, and sananda samapattis, beautiful and handsome images of women and men appear before the mind's eye and tempt sadhakas. But when they enter the stage of sasmita samapatti, their rajoguna and tamoguna become weak, and sattvaguna achieves dominance. So sensuality or lust does not trouble them. Just as children remain unmoved by passion when they see each other naked, the yogi in the final stage of sasmita samapatti is not moved to passion by the appearance of naked nymphs.

After the achievement of vajroli mudra, the sexual fluid of the sadhaka is not destroyed, and so he or she can become an urdhvareta and achieve a divine body, divine consciousness and complete detachment.

The tongue of the sadhaka practicing sahaja yoga enters the cavity of the skull known as the tenth gate of Vyoma cakra after two or three years practice. But it cannot completely prevent the loss of the sexual fluid for several years. Only in the final stage of samprajnata samadhi (i. e. sasmita samapatti) can one completely prevent this loss. Then sakticalana mudra disappears forever and is replaced by the powerful vajroli mudra.

In India even today there are a few secret sects of Siva, Vaisnava, and Sakti cults where men and women practice meditation together and try to achieve perfection in yoga. This path is called Vama marga (left handed path). It only spreads licentiousness, and the generation which follows becomes lusterless and uncultured.

Saktipata initiation is meant only for those sadhakas who aspire for liberation. Even though it is the best type of initiation, it is not very useful for householders because the aim of yoga differs for the householder and the ascetic. The householder is motivated by desire and is eager to achieve materialism and the satisfaction of sensual desires, while the ascetic, being dispassionate, aspires only for liberation.

Self-restraint and limited companionship of women or men should hold a place of primary importance in the practice of yoga for the ordinary person. The more restraint one practices, the more spiritual power he attains. With this power, he achieves wealth, spouse, children, fame, and other material achievements. He must find ways to conserve his sexual fluid. If a householder receives saktipata and practices it zealously, he becomes scattered, unrestrained, and talkative. As a result, he fails in the eyes of society and becomes frustrated.

On the other hand, celibacy is of prime importance for the renunciate, ascetic sadhaka. As he aspires to be a perfect yogi, he has to wage a war vehemently against lust. When the sexual desire is stimulated, he tries to curb it by making the Apana ascendant. Desire and lust are stimulated by the practice of siddhasana. The yogi who wants to become an Urdhvareta should welcome the spontaneous occurrence of siddhasana. That posture stirs up the sexual senses and then helps to sublimate the sexual fluid through yogika techniques. The ordinary man is ignorant of these yogika techniques, and so he becomes very sensual through the practice of siddhasana. Siddhasana is meant for perfect yogis and not for ordinary householder sadhakas.

The sadhaka striving for liberation does not necessarily get it in one birth. He has to take many

births and continue his efforts constantly.

Moreover, this practice of yoga is full of obstructions and may be successfully practiced only by a brave sadhaka or one who is steadfast in his goal. It is said in the Siva Sarhhita : "There are countless and insurmountable obstructions in this path of yoga. These obstructions are terrible and fearful. Yet the yogi should not abandon his practice of yoga even at the hazard of his life".

In certain yogika texts, it is said that one can achieve vajroli mudra in the company of a woman. But it is necessary to seek the guidance of a proficient Guru. Yes, there are stanzas which can be interpreted thus, but they definitely have a different meaning. Certain materialistic Tantrika masters were married householders. To increase the validity of their married status, they directed the people to pursue conjugal sadhana. Moreover, the teacher of the Vama marga gave importance only to conjugal sadhana. Thus only materialistic-minded teachers popularized this path.

Those people who believe that they can achieve the purified divine body by attracting their own semen along with the ovum into their bodies are sadly mistaken. I have already stated that the semen or ovum thus drawn only goes into the bladder and is rejected with the urine.

The semen which emerges from the testes in childhood mixes with the blood, resulting in the development of the mind and the body. With the advent of youth, the semen no longer mingles with the blood, but attempts to leave the body through the genitals.

The opposite of lust is yoga. The best yogis know this. Their seminal fluid mixes with their blood by yogika techniques. As a result, they become young, reverting from old age to youth and childhood. This is a natural physiological and scientific process.

Pure divine body is the body and similarly pure divine mind is the mind. Why, then, should the yogi desire such divine body and mind ?

The yogi does not have any desires. If he has desires, he cannot be called a yogi. The yogi aspires only for God-realization and to merge with God. In order to achieve God-realization, it is necessary that he possess a pure body and mind. After having a full meal, the beggar does not want left-overs. Why then should the yogi wish for anything else, after he has achieved oneness with God ?

- 1 Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 7, verse 11.
- 2 Aptastu Yatharthavakta. 'Apta' purusa means one who has experienced truth in the real sense and speaks only truth.
- 3 Yoga cudamani, stanzas 29, 30.
- 4 Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, verse 43.
- 5 Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, verse 60.
- 6 Ibid., Chapter 2, verse 50.
- 7 Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, verse 48.
- 8 Siva Sarhhita, Chapter IV, verses 105-108.
- 9 Hathayoga Pradipika, verse 120.
- 10 Gheranda sarhhita Chapter 3, stanza 60.