

Important Features Of Hatha Ratnavali: The Yogic Text Of Srinivasa Yogi

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ABSTRACT: We come across many classical Hatha yogic texts like Hatha Pradipika,Gheranda Samhita and Siva Samhita etc.However **Hatharatnavali** of Srinivasa yogi is one of the vital hathayogic text because of its unique features and independent explanations.Like Hathapradipika it is not widely known to the yoga seekers and students.But still it is most popular one among the hatha yogic texts because of simple description and feature. Inclusion of astakarmas,eightyfour asanas,elaborate description on mudras and concept of pinda-brahmana(microcosm and macrocosm etc)are the important features of the text.The author has tried to describe in short the unique features of this classic hatha yogic text.

KEYWORDS: Astakarma, Bhrantibhastra ,Chakri karma,Bhrantibhastra

INTRODUCTION

There are many misconceptions about the traditional definition and concept of Yoga. In Hatharatnavali the author has tried his best to remove these misconceptions and has given the clear exposition of yoga. The important features of the book are eighty four asanas,description of astakarmas, ,elaborate description on mudras and concept of pinda-brahmana(microcosm and macrocosm) etc.

MAHAYOGA AND TYPES OF YOGA

While trying to remove the misconceptions of yoga In Hatharatnavali the author has tried give the clear exposition of yoga.Importance has been has given to PYS(Patanjali Yoga Sutra) particularly definition of” yoga chittavrittinirodha”.The author has termed it it as MAHAYOGA.I t has four subdivisions like Mantrayoga,Layayoga,Rajayoga and Hathayoga.

Mantrayoga

The letter ‘m’ represents mind or “manas’ and the letter”tra’ represents the life force “prana’.In mantayoga there is the union of manas(mind) and prana which is essential .

Layayoga

Through sanketa absorption of mind is takes place which is essential in layayoga.**Sanketa** means concentration at the back of the head at the level of the centre of the eye brows.Layayoga includes the Forgetting the objects of experience and absence of their reappearance as the characteristic feature of Laya.

Rajayoga

In this yoga prana is attracted upwards and establishes itself in the lotus of akasha in the head.In Samadhi state All perception and activities of mind are absent absent in Rajayoga.

Hathayoga

‘Ha’ represents the sun and ‘tha’ represents the moon.They also are said to represent ida and pingala.Balance in these two nadis is achieved through Hathayoga..The text incorporates ,10 mudras,eight kriyas,kumbhakas and 84asanas which are extensively dealt in it.So it can be concluded that unlike other hathayogic texts the scope and content of the yoga have been clearly and precisely described in the light of the characteristics of the four yogas.

Astakarma

There is a description of Satkarma as in other hatha yogic texts.But Srinivasa yogi has introduced astakarmas which includes cakri and gajakarani.Even while introducing the cakrikarma concept,Srinivasa yogi has even criticized Svatmarama yogi for not dealing with the topic in HathaPradipika.Srinivasa yogi has given much importance to the concept of cakrikarma in all the karmas.He claimed that the chakri karma process has descended from the guru tradition.

Nauli

Astakarma of Srinivasa yogi covers two fold nauli as **bhari nauli** and **antara nauli**.According to the yogi bhari nauli belongs to **Gauda** tradition whereas antara nauli has been propogated by himself.

Basti

There are two traditions of Basti as propogated by Srinivasa yogi.One is **Kapalika** tradition ,whereas other is **Carpata** tradition.In Kapalika tradition a wooden tube is used for basti whereas in Carpata tradition instead of tube calrikarma is prescribed.There are Some useful suggestion given by yogi Srinivasa regarding the practice of basti.Srinivasayogi yogi has advised to stay in a place protected from draught of wind.He has suggested to avoid food for an hour or so after practicing basti karma.

Neti kriya

The technique of neti kriya as discussed by Srinivasa yogi is different from those discussed in Hatha Pradipika and Gheranda Samhita. Use of the longer threads and simultaneous friction of both the nostrils have been advocated by Srinivasayogi and such descriptions are not mentioned in other hatha yogic texts.

Gajakarani

A different technique known as gurugajakarani has been introduced by the yogi in which use of coconut water or sweet water mixed with jiggery instead of plain water has been advocated.

Kapala bhastrika

The yogi has introduced a new type of kapala bhati known as kapalabhastrika which involves moving the head to the left and right while doing puraka and recaka. This movement of head is termed as **bhrantibhastra**.

Cakra purification

Srinivasa yogi has described purification of different cakras of the body by different methods or process of purification. Those are listed below.

Muladhara –cakrikarma

Svdhithana-vajroli

Nabhi-nauli

Anahata-dhauti

Visudha-dhauti

Ajna-trataka and neti

All cakras-basti and kapalabhati

Kumbhakas

Instead of eight kumbhakas the yogi has explained nine types of kumbhakas. A new kumbhaka known as bhujangakarani kumbhaka has been introduced. In this context he has omitted **plavini kumbhaka** and included **kevala kumbhaka**.

Mudras

There are many special features of this topic as explained by Srinivasa yogi.

Features

- New information like Mahamudra as described by Vasista.
- Practice of Mahavedha eight times a day.
- Importance on Teacher –disciple relationship.
- Exhaustive description of preparation of tube for vajroli practice.
- **Sabdagarbhachalana**-Jihvachalana considered as saktichalana and called as **sabdagarbhachalana**.
- Different synonymns for nadis like susumna, ida and pingala.

Astangayoga

Srinivasa yogi has an independent approach and did not follow the ancient tradition blindly. Srinivasa yogi did not accept **yama** as a separate anga under the classification of astanga yoga. So he divided niyama into two parts. He included ahimsa and brahmacharya in manasa niyamas. Satya was included in kayika niyamas.

Asanas

There is a list of 84 asanas in **Hatha Ratnavali** and few of them also have been described by Srinivasayogi.

Examples

- Samputita pankaja
- Ekapadamayura
- Saurasana
- Pindamayura
- Dandamayura
- Padapidanasana
- Panipatrasana

Sanketa

Bhrumadhyadrusti and Sanketa: Srinivasayogi, for the first time has revealed the secret of **bhrumadhyadrusti** through **sanketa**. He has stated that the place of concentration during bhrumadhyadrusti lies in the back of the head at the level of the centre of the eye brows. It seems that the yogi has considered the place of citta here and the concentration at this point may easily lead to the absorption of mind. To explain this point he has used the word **sanketa**. In another context, for the second time the **sanketa** term has been used in concentration with khecari, where the tongue is inserted in the cranial cavity and fixed at the particular place. He has explained **sanketa** as inserting the tongue in the spiral of the chains of ida and pingala which reaches the place of susumna resulting in absorption of the nectar oozing out of the moon located there.

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