The powers of the mind are like rays of light dissipated; when they are concentrated they illumine.

Swami Vivekananda

Introduction to Yoga

Beginning with the history of Yoga, detailed through the existing historical record, the common terms translated and defined, and concluding with the integration of Yoga into the Western Esoteric system of Magick and Mysticism.

♦ History ♦

Stone Seals (circa 2000 b.c.) Depicting figures performing Yogic postures, discovered in the Indus Valley in India, representing the oldest surviving record of a Yogic tradition.

The Vedas [Sacred Knowledge or Wisdom] Representing some of the oldest scriptures in the world, placing Yoga as one of the first mystical sciences. They are a collection of Yogic hymns, incantations, teachings and considered divine revelation.

The Vedas were later divided into four principle books, these being the:

- **Rig Veda** [Knowledge of Praise] (Book of Mantras)
- **Yajur Veda** [Knowledge of Sacrifice] (Book of Rituals)
- **Sama Veda** [Knowledge of Chants] (Book of Songs)
- **Atharva Veda** [Knowledge of Atharvan] (Book of Spells)

Each of the Vedas contains four sections or parts¹:

- **Samhita** – hymns, prayers, sacrificial formulas, and litanies.
- **Brahmanas** – treatise to explain the significance of the rituals.
- **Aranyakas** – forest-texts used when withdrawing from society.
- **Upanishads** – discussing the transcendental self & its relation to reality

¹ Many of the sections overlap into one another.
**Bhagavad-Gita** [Song of the Blessed One] (approximately 500 B.C.) The first scripture devoted entirely to Yoga. Its seven hundred verses are a conversation between Prince Arjuna and the God-Avatar Krishna.

**Yoga-Sutra** (approximately 150 B.C.E.) The first standardization of Yoga recorded in one hundred and ninety-five sutras\(^1\) that comprise the eight steps and philosophies of meditative discipline.

♦ **Common Terms** ♦

**Yoga** – defined as Union or Integration. There are six branches of Yoga the Probationer must be familiar with:

- **Raja Yoga** [Union by Will] – this form involves control of the conscious mind and the mental processes by selective meditation.
- **Hatha Yoga** [Union by Courage] – this form involves maintaining the health, control and stability of the body through physical exercise and training.
- **Gnana Yoga** [Union by Knowledge] – this form commences with a study of the impermanent wisdom of the world, and ends with the knowledge of the permanent wisdom of the soul.
- **Bhakti Yoga** [Union by Love] – this form requires complete and total devotion to a god until the initiate becomes one with their chosen deity.
- **Mantra Yoga** [Union through Speech] – this form consists of repeating a name, word, chant, sentence or verse over and over to purity, through the elimination of distraction from the mind.
- **Karma Yoga** – [Union through Work] this form concentrates on exercises for control so that, as an end result, the mind will command the body.

**Advaita** – non-duality, teaching that there is only ‘one reality’, ‘one unity’, the Atman.

**Ahamkara** – the ego.

**Akasha** – the ether of both space and consciousness

**Amrita** – the immortality of the soul, also the transformation of the physical body into the divine body.

**Ananda** – bliss or ecstasy.

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\(^1\) Aphorisms.
Asana – physical and mental posture.
Atman – essence that is eternal, unchanging, and indistinguishable from the essence of the universe and therefore is the true universe, also called the ‘one reality’ or the ‘ultimate existence’.
Bodhisattva – enlightenment for the sake of all other beings and the Yogic equivalent of the Great Work.
Brahma – the Creator and the first principle to emerge out of the Atman.
Brahman – the source and power sustaining the Atman.
Chakras – the wheels, seven energy centers of the body, these being:
- **Muladhara** [Gonads] – lotus flower of four petals containing a triangular yoni symbol. Bodily located between the lingam/yoni and anus at the base of the spine (diagram 12 a.).
- **Svadisthana** [Adrenal] – six-pedaled lotus flower. It is located in the navel (diagram 12 b.).
- **Manipura** [Lyden] – ten-pedaled lotus within a ten-pedaled sphere of the sun. It is located at the sternum (diagram 12 c.).
- **Anahata** [Thymus] – twelve-pedaled lotus. Located at the heart (diagram 12 d.).
- **Vishuddha** [Thyroid] – lotus with sixteen petals. It is located in the throat, just below the larynx (diagram 12 e.).
- **Ajina** [Pineal] – two pedaled lotus between the eyebrows (diagram 12 f.).
- **Sahasrara** [Pituitary] – thousand and one pedaled lotus with a downwards looking yoni (circle) in the center. Within the yoni is the mystical moon. It is located above the head as a crown (diagram 12 g.).

Cit – the higher consciousness.
Citta – the ordinary consciousness.
Dharana – singular focus or singular concentration.
Dharma – virtue or righteousness.
Dhyana – the result of Dharana.
Diksha – initiation.
Guru – a spiritual teacher.
Jivan-mukta – equivalent to an Adept within.
Jnana – knowledge or wisdom
Karma – any action and the reactive consequence.
Kundalini – spiritual energy existing at the lowest Chakras of the body.
Lingam – the phallus, also called the ‘wand of light’.
Manas – the lower mind as bound to the senses.
Mandala – the circle, circular designs symbolizing assorted deities or ideas.
Mantra – sacred sound, also holy phrases.
Maya – illusion by which the world is seen as separate from the Atman.
Muni – a sage and equivalent to a Master of the Temple.
Nadi-shodhana – channel cleansing, the practice of purifying the conduits by means of Pranayama
Neti-neti – expression of the Atman as being beyond all description.
Niyama – ‘good works’ self-control, virtue.
Om – the original Mantra symbolizing the birth of the Atman
Paramatman – supreme self, equivalent to the Holy Guardian Angel.
Paramahansa – an Adeptus.
Prana – breath or breath of life or breath is life.
Pranayama – breath control.
Pratyahara – to mentally withdraw or sensory inhibition.
Samadhi – the supreme state of realization.
Sat – the being and truth of the Atman.
Shishya – a student.
Siddhi – spiritual perfection through identity with the Atman. Also, the worker of miracles.
Sutra – aphorisms.
Tantra – motion, usually in the form of sexual Yoga.
Turiya – visions or the fourth state of consciousness.\(^1\)
Yama – ‘moral qualities’ control.
Yoni – the vagina, also called ‘the source’.

♦ Integration of Yoga into the Western Esoteric System ♦

In the beginning, Yoga was a method of self-realization wherein the knowledge of ‘how’ and the disciplines of ‘what’ were taught, leading the Shishya to the self-discovery of ‘why’ and the autonomous pursuit of the Great Work.

Over thousands of years, the doctrines and adaptations of many religions penetrated the original Yogic teachings and cluttered the system. Yoga was incorporated into organized religion and, by extension, into the political realm.

Stripping the clutter and including only the knowledge and discipline necessary to guide initiates to the end result, constitutes the methodology used to infuse Yoga into Western Mysticism. Simply put, returning the method to that of self-realization.

It will become readily obvious that all of the systems of Magick and Mysticism, including the Qabalah, Magical Alphabet, and Ceremonial Ritual, have been reformed and integrated in exactly the same way and with the same purpose – returning the methods to that of self-realization.

\(^{1}\) The first three are waking, sleeping, and dreaming.
Diagram 12 a.
Diagram 12 b.
Diagram 12 c.
Diagram 12 d.
Diagram 12 e.
Diagram 12 f.
Diagram 12 g.