

Vethantham to Vethathiri Yogam

K. K. Aathava¹ and Dr. M. Jothilakshmi¹

¹Research Scholar, Vision for Wisdom, Bharathiyar University Coimbatore, India
Email: rjvalpr@gmail.com

²Asst. Professor, Department of Tamil, Bishop Heber College, Trichirappalli
Email: lec.jothilakshmi@gmail.com

Abstract

The Vedas have stories about the Hindu gods, instructions for rituals, hymns, poetry, and prayers. The word "Vedic" means something about the Vedas. The language of the Vedas is called Vedic Sanskrit. The **Vedas** are the four holiest books of the Hindu religion. They are believed to be one of the oldest books ever made by mankind. They are written in an old Indian language called Sanskrit. They have words (called mantras) which are chanted at the religious ceremonies.

Although they were finally written down in 1,500 BCE. They are actually much much older and were passed down orally from one generation to the next possibly over thousands of years. Later types of Hinduism that are very different from the types of Hinduism that follow the Vedas respect them. The four Vedas are: the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda.

Vethathirian Simplified Kundalini Yoga (SKY) - The human being is a combination of the physical body, mind and life force. To acquire and maintain inner peace and harmony, self knowledge and systematic physical and psychic practices are essential. The complete system, referred to as "SKY", evolved by Maharishi consists of the following.

Simplified Physical Exercise: To maintain health and prevent disease;

KayaKalpa Yoga: An ancient Siddha practice for enhancement of life energy;

Simplified Kundalini Yoga: A system of meditation Clarity and strength of mind;

Introspection: A practical methodology for sublimating the negative emotions of greed, anger, vengeance, worries, etc.

Key Words: Hymns, Rituals, Harmony, Enhancement, Sublimating, Introspection

Introduction:

Composed in Vedic Sanskrit, the texts constitute the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature and the oldest scriptures of Hinduism. Hindus consider the Vedas to be *apauruṣeya*, which means "not of a man, superhuman" and "impersonal, authorless". Vedas are also called *śruti* literature, distinguishing them from other religious texts, which are called *smṛti*. The Vedas are a large body of texts originating in ancient India.

The Veda, for orthodox Indian theologians, is considered revelations, some way or other the work of the Deity. In the Hindu Epic the Mahabharata, the creation of Vedas is credited to Brahma. There are four Vedas: the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda. Each Veda has been sub classified into four major text types – the Samhitas (mantras and benedictions), the Aranyakas (text on rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices and symbolic-sacrifices), the Brahmanas (commentaries on rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices), and the Upanishads (text discussing meditation, philosophy and spiritual knowledge). Some scholars add fifth category—the Upanasans (worship).

The various Indian philosophies and denominations have taken differing positions on the Vedas. Schools of Indian philosophy which cite the Vedas as their scriptural authority are classified as "orthodox" (*āstika*). Other *śramaṇa* traditions, such as Lokayata, Carvaka, Ajivika, Buddhism and Jainism, which did not regard the Vedas as authorities are referred to as "heterodox" or "non-orthodox" (*nāstika*) schools.

Despite their differences, just like *śramaṇa* traditions, various Hindu traditions dwell on, express and teach similar ideas such as karma (retributive action)

and moksha (liberation) in the fourth layer of the Vedas – the Upanishads. The Vedas are called *Marai* or *Vaymoli* in parts of South India. *Marai* literally means "hidden, a secret, mystery". In some south Indian communities such as Iyengars, the word Veda includes the Tamil writings of the Alvar saints, such as *Divya Prabandham*, for example *Tiruvaymoli*.

“Yoga is a complete process of perfection of an individual by developing consciousness to its fullness” -VETHATHIRI MAHARISHI. Man is mortal. His life is in between birth and death. Everyone has come to this earth with a return ticket. The date of onward journey is fixed but there is no date fixed for one’s return. Though man’s life span is 120 years, it depends on one’s health and his ability to maintain it.

Simplified Kundalini Yoga: (SKY) is founded by Thathuvagnani Vethathiri Maharishi who was born in the year 1911 in a village near Chennai, South India. His early life was struggle against poverty, but he won through sheer determination and self effort. Probing into origin and purpose of life, the self educated philosopher perfected the Simplified Kundalini Yoga, a safe and highly beneficial system of meditation and yoga exercises. Swamiji has served mankind for over 55 years in cause of world peace (ie) when each individual realizes the value of self and learns to preserve harmony with environment. If the life is to be happy, successful, and harmonious, good physical health is indispensable. Realizing the importance of proper exercise, and meditation, Thathuvagnani Vethathiri Maharishi has synthesized and simplified the earlier ones and dedicated to the humans.

Vedas:The Vedas are a collection of hymns and other religious texts composed in India between about 1500 and 1000 BCE. ORIGIN: The origin of the Vedas can be

traced back as far as 1500 BCE, when a large group of nomads called the Aryans, coming from central Asia, crossed the Hindu Kush Mountains, migrating into the Indian subcontinent. This was a large migration and used to be seen as an invasion. This invasion hypothesis, however, is not unanimously accepted by scholars today. All we know for certain, mainly through linguistic studies, is that the Aryan language gained ascendancy over the local languages in the Indian subcontinent. The language of the Vedas is Sanskrit, an ancestor of most of the modern languages spoken today in South Asia. Vedic literature is religious in nature and as such tends to reflect the worldview, spiritual preoccupations, and social attitudes of the Brahmins or priestly class of ancient India. The Vedas were first composed sometime around 1500-1000 BCE in the north-western region of the Indian subcontinent - present day Pakistan and northwest India - and they were transmitted orally over many generations before eventually being committed to writing. Like the Homeric epics, parts of the Vedas were composed in different periods. The oldest of these texts is the Rig-Veda, but it is not possible to establish precise dates for its composition. It is believed that the entire collection was completed by the end of the second millennium BCE.

Structure of the Vedas:

The basic Vedic texts are the Samhita "Collections" of the four Vedas: Rig-Veda "Knowledge of the Hymns of Praise", for recitation. Sama-Veda "Knowledge of the Melodies", for chanting. Yajur-Veda "Knowledge of the Sacrificial formulas", for liturgy. Atharva-Veda "Knowledge of the Magic formulas", named after a kind of group of priests. The Vedas are the four holiest books of the Hindu religion. They are believed to be one of the oldest books ever made by mankind. They are written in an

old Indian language called Sanskrit. They have words (called mantras) which are chanted at the religious ceremonies.

The four Vedas are: the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, the Atharva Veda. Rig Veda is the first Veda of the four Vedas. Rig Veda means a Veda of praise. This Veda has several verses (hymns). These hymns praise a number of gods. This Veda is also the oldest Hindu holy book. Sama Veda is the second Veda of the four Vedas. Sama Veda means the Veda of sacred songs. This Veda also has many hymns. They were sung by the Hindu priests and other Hindus during religious activities. Yajur Veda is the third Veda of the four Vedas. Yajur Veda means the Veda of the Yajus. Yajus were mantras sung during religious activities. Yajur Veda is divided into two parts. The name of the first part is Black Yajurveda, called Taittiriya. The name of the second part is White Yajurveda, called Vajasaneyi. Atharva Veda is the Fourth Veda out of the four Vedas. Atharva Veda means the Veda of knowledge, spiritual and mental. The Atharva Veda holds key for the massive vedic knowledge on the sciences like Medicine, Sorcery and has many facts that current generation is still trying to crack.

Vedanta renounced all ritualism and radically re-interpreted the notion of "Veda" in purely philosophical terms. The association of the three Vedas with the bhūr bhuvah svaḥ mantra is found in the Aitareya Aranyaka: "Bhūḥ is the Rigveda, bhuvah is the Yajurveda, svaḥ is the Samaveda" (1.3.2). The Upanishads reduce the "essence of the Vedas" further, to the syllable Aum (ॐ). Thus, the Katha Upanishad has: "The goal, which all Vedas declare, which all austerities aim at, and which humans desire when they live a life of continence, I will tell you briefly it is Aum" (1.2.15)

Later Vedic period: Vedanga: Six technical subjects related to the Vedas are traditionally known as vedāṅga "limbs of the Veda". V. S. Apte defines this group of works as: "N. of a certain class of works regarded as auxiliary to the Vedas and designed to aid in the correct pronunciation and interpretation of the text and the right employment of the Mantras in ceremonies." These subjects are treated in Sūtra literature dating from the end of the Vedic period to Mauryan times, seeing the transition from late Vedic Sanskrit to Classical Sanskrit. The six subjects of Vedanga are: Phonetics (Śikṣā), Ritual (Kalpa), Grammar (Vyākaraṇa), Etymology (Nirukta), Meter (Chandas), Astronomy (Jyotiṣa).

Pariśiṣṭa: Pariśiṣṭa "supplement, appendix" is the term applied to various ancillary works of Vedic literature, dealing mainly with details of ritual and elaborations of the texts logically and chronologically prior to them:

the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Sutras. Naturally classified with the Veda to which each pertains, Parisista works exist for each of the four Vedas. However, only the literature associated with the Atharvaveda is extensive. The Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Pariśiṣṭa is a very late text associated with the Rigveda canon. The Gobhila Gṛhya Pariśiṣṭa is a short metrical text of two chapters, with 113 and 95 verses respectively. The Kātiya Pariśiṣṭas, ascribed to Kātyāyana, consist of 18 works enumerated self-referentially in the fifth of the series (the Caranavyūha) and the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra Pariśiṣṭa. The Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda has 3 parisistas. The Āpastamba Hauthra Pariśiṣṭa, which is also found as the second praśna of the Satyasādhā Śrauta Sūtra', the Vārāha Śrauta Sūtra Pariśiṣṭa. For the Atharvaveda, there are 79 works, collected as 72 distinctly named parisistas.

Puranas: A traditional view given in the Vishnu Purana (likely dating to the Gupta period, attributes the current arrangement of four Vedas to the mythical sage Vedavyasa. Puranic tradition also postulates a single original Veda that, in varying accounts, was divided into three or four parts. According to the Vishnu Purana (3.2.18, 3.3.4 etc.) the original Veda was divided into four parts, and further fragmented into numerous shakhas, by Lord Vishnu in the form of Vyasa, in the Dvapara Yuga; the Vayu Purana (section 60) recounts a similar division by Vyasa, at the urging of Brahma. The Bhagavata Purana (12.6.37) traces the origin of the primeval Veda to the syllable Aum, and says that it was divided into four at the start of Dvapara Yuga, because men had declined in age, virtue and understanding. In a differing account Bhagavata Purana (9.14.43) attributes the division of the primeval veda (aum) into three parts to the monarch Pururavas at the beginning of Treta Yuga. The Mahabharata (santiparva 13,088) also mentions the division of the Veda into three in Treta Yuga.

Upavedas: The term upaveda ("applied knowledge") is used in traditional literature to designate the subjects of certain technical works. Lists of what subjects are included in this class differ among sources. The Charanavyūha mentions four Upavedas: Archery (Dhanurveda), associated with the Rigveda, Architecture (Sthapatyaveda), associated with the Yajurveda. Music and sacred dance (Gāndharvaveda), associated with the Samaveda, Medicine (Āyurveda), associated with the Atharvaveda.

"Fifth" and other Vedas:

Some post-Vedic texts, including the Mahabharata, the Natyasastra and certain Puranas, refer to themselves as the "fifth Veda" The earliest reference to such a

"fifth

Veda" is found in the Chandogya Upanishad in hymn 7.1.2. First chapter of Nāṭyaśāstra, Abhinaya Darpana - "Divya Prabandha", for example Tiruvaymoli, is a term for canonical Tamil texts considered as Vernacular Veda by some South Indian Hindus. Other texts such as the Bhagavad Gita or the Vedānta Sūtras are considered śruti or "Vedic" by some Hindu denominations but not universally within Hinduism. The Bhakti movement, and Gaudiya Vaishnavism in particular extended the term Veda to include the Sanskrit Epics and Vaishnavite devotional texts such as the Pancaratra.

Gods & mythological accounts: Despite the fact that the Rig-Veda deals with many gods, there are some who get a lot of attention. More than half the hymns invoke just three top-rated gods of the moment: Indra (250 hymns), Agni (200 hymns), and Soma (just over 100 hymns). Indra was the head of the ancient Hindu pantheon. Agni, the god of fire, is often referred to in Vedic literature as the most important god, and is considered to be the flame that lifts the sacrifice to heaven, a symbol of the fiery life and spirit of the world, the "vital spark", the principle of life in animate and inanimate nature. Another important deity is Varuna, who was initially associated with heaven. Varuna eventually developed into the most ethical and ideal deity of the Vedas, watching the world through his great eye, the sun, and was thought to know everything, to enforce justice and to preserve the world's smooth functioning. The Vedas also have a hymn to Purusha, a primordial deity who is sacrificed by the other gods: Purusha's mind became the Moon, his eyes the Sun, his head the Sky, and his feet the Earth. In this same passage we have one of the first indications of a caste system with its four major divisions: The Brahmins or priests, came

from Purusha's mouth, The Kshatriyas, or warrior rulers, from Purusha's arms, The Vaishyas, or the commoners (land-owner, merchants, etc.), from Purusha's thighs, The Shudras, or labourers and servants, from Purusha's feet.

Simplified Kundalini yoga: Yogiraj Shri Vethathiri Maharishi (1911–2006) was a spiritual leader and founder-trustee of the World Community Service Center in 1958 in Chennai. He had founded over 300 yoga centers around the world and wrote about 80 books, many of which became academic textbooks. He was declared the 19th Siddha by the Dravidian University. Vethathiri Maharishi claimed to synthesize a complete science of living for the betterment of humanity through: Simplified Kundalini Yoga meditation, Physical Exercises, Kaya Kalpa Yoga and Introspections. [Vethathiri's life time works are called Vethathiriyam], which literally translates as a roadmap to the mountain of knowledge. He claimed that a deep understanding of nature is essential for living in harmony with the law of nature, while balancing material well-being with spiritual progress.

Simplified Physical Exercise: To maintain health and prevent disease;
Kaya Kalpa Yoga: An ancient Siddha practice for enhancement of life energy;
Simplified Kundalini Yoga: A system of meditation clarity and strength of mind;
Introspection: A practical methodology for sublimating the negative emotions of greed, anger, vengeance, worries, etc.

Simplified physical exercise: Vethathiri Maharishi practiced them first then experimented the same on others. When he found positive effects then only he advocated these exercises to the world. All exercises except a few, need to be done by closing the eyes. Because, one has to take his mind to the part where his concentration should lie. Movements should be soft and

gentle. There won't be any sweating. It is another form of meditation. Exercise done once in the morning will keep the man active throughout the day.

Simplified kayakalp exercise: Disease, ageing and death are the three factors that everyone has to meet in his life. Kayakalpa exercise is rejuvenating the life-force particles. Kayakalpa is not a medicine: it is an exercise. The exercise provides healthy body and makes it fit and agile. Kayakalpa helps longevity.

Simplified Kundalini yoga: Simplified Kundalini Yoga is the practice to utilize the life-force for the object of meditation; merging the mind with the life-force takes one to the subtlest frequency, which enhances awareness and furthers intellectual sharpness and understanding. Process: Meditation, Introspection, Sublimation, Perfection. Development: Expansion of Mind, Understanding law of nature, Awareness of thought, word and deed. Benefit: Perspicacity, Receptivity, Adaptability, Magnanimity, Creativity. Result: Harmony, Satisfaction, Happiness, Wisdom, Peace.

Through this Simplified Kundalini Yoga meditation, the mental frequency can be streamlined. During the meditation, the mental frequency will be reduced to the extent of depth of the mind. If the meditation is practised, the thought, deed, the experience and enjoyment activated through emotional stage become indulgence crossing limit. Vethathirian nine types of Meditation by concentrating the mind on the life force and conclude it by focusing on the eternal state which is the origin of life force.

Conclusion:

During Vedic times, it was widely believed that rituals were critical to maintain the order of the cosmos and that sacred

ceremonies helped the universe to keep working smoothly. In a sense, ceremonies were seen as part of a deal between humans and the gods: Humans performed sacrifices and rituals, and the gods would return their favor under the form of protection and prosperity. During the later Vedic period (from c. 800 to c. 500 BCE), the priestly class was seriously questioned. The rituals, the sacrifices, the detailed rulebooks on ceremonies and sacrifices, all of these religious elements were being gradually rejected. Some of those who were against the traditional Vedic order decided to engage in the pursuit of spiritual progress, living as ascetic hermits, rejecting ordinary material concerns and giving up family life. Some of their speculations and philosophy were compiled into texts called The Upanishads. A number of practices were linked to this new spiritual approach: meditation, celibacy, and fasting, among others.

Simplified Kundalini Yoga or SKY is a physical, mental and spiritual discipline packaged by Yogiraj Vethathiri Maharishi for developing strength, awareness, character, and consciousness. The practice of Pranayamam, Acupressure, Asanas and Thavam in Simplified Kundalini Yoga raises the body awareness to prepare the body, nervous system, and mind to handle the Life energy better. The system of physical exercises developed by Shri Vethathiri Maharishi after years of intense research, fulfils the need of maintaining the proper circulation of blood, heat, air, energy and bio-magnetism, ensuring maintenance of health and prevention of disease in a gentle way. Simplified kundalini yoga is a form of meditation to merge the mind with the subtle life force. Kayakalpa is a specialized field of practice revered within the Ayurveda and Siddha medical systems of India as the ideal treatment for health, vitality, longevity and higher consciousness.

References:

1. Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli; and Moore, Charles A. A Source Book in Indian Philosophy. Princeton University Press, 1957; Princeton paperback 12th edition, (1989) pp.72.
2. Yoga for Human Excellence Book of M.A/MSc.,Degree,(Tamil) Yogiraj Vethathiri Maharishi (2009)180,Gandhiji Road,Erode, India,Vethathiri Publications Paper-I ,pp.20,25,37,45,50 &105.
3. Flood, Gavin (2003), The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism, *Malden, MA: Blackwell*, ISBN 1-4051-3251-5, pp.07-341.
4. Griswold, Hervey De Witt (1971), The Religion of the R̥igveda, *Motilal Banarsidass Publ.*, ISBN 978-81-208-0745-7, pp.01-48.
5. Olivelle, Patrick (1998), Upanishads, *Oxford University Press*, ISBN 978-0-19-283576-5, pp.01-446.
6. Samuel, Geoffrey (2010), *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra. Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century*, *Cambridge University Press*, pp.63.
7. Sen, S. N. (1999), Ancient Indian History and Civilization, *New Age International*, ISBN 978-81-224-1198-0, pp.40.
8. Singh, Upinder (2008), A History of Ancient and Early Mediaeval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century, *Pearson Education India*, ISBN 978-81-317-1120-0, pp.12.
9. Staal, Frits (2008), Discovering the Vedas: Origins, Mantras, Rituals, Insights, *Penguin Books India*, ISBN 978-0-14-309986-4, pp.07-419.
10. Winternitz, Moriz; Sarma, Vuppala Srinivasa (1981), A history of Indian literature: Introduction, Veda, epics, purānas and tantras, *Motilal Banarsidass Publ.*, ISBN 978-81-208-0264-3, pp.45-559.
11. Witzel, Michael (1989), "Tracing the Vedic dialects", *Dialectes dans les litteratures Indo-Aryennes ed. Caillat, Paris*, pp.97–265.
12. Witzel, Michael (1995), "Early Sanskritization. Origins and Development of the Kuru State." (PDF), *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies (EJVS) 1-4 (1995) pp.(1–26)*