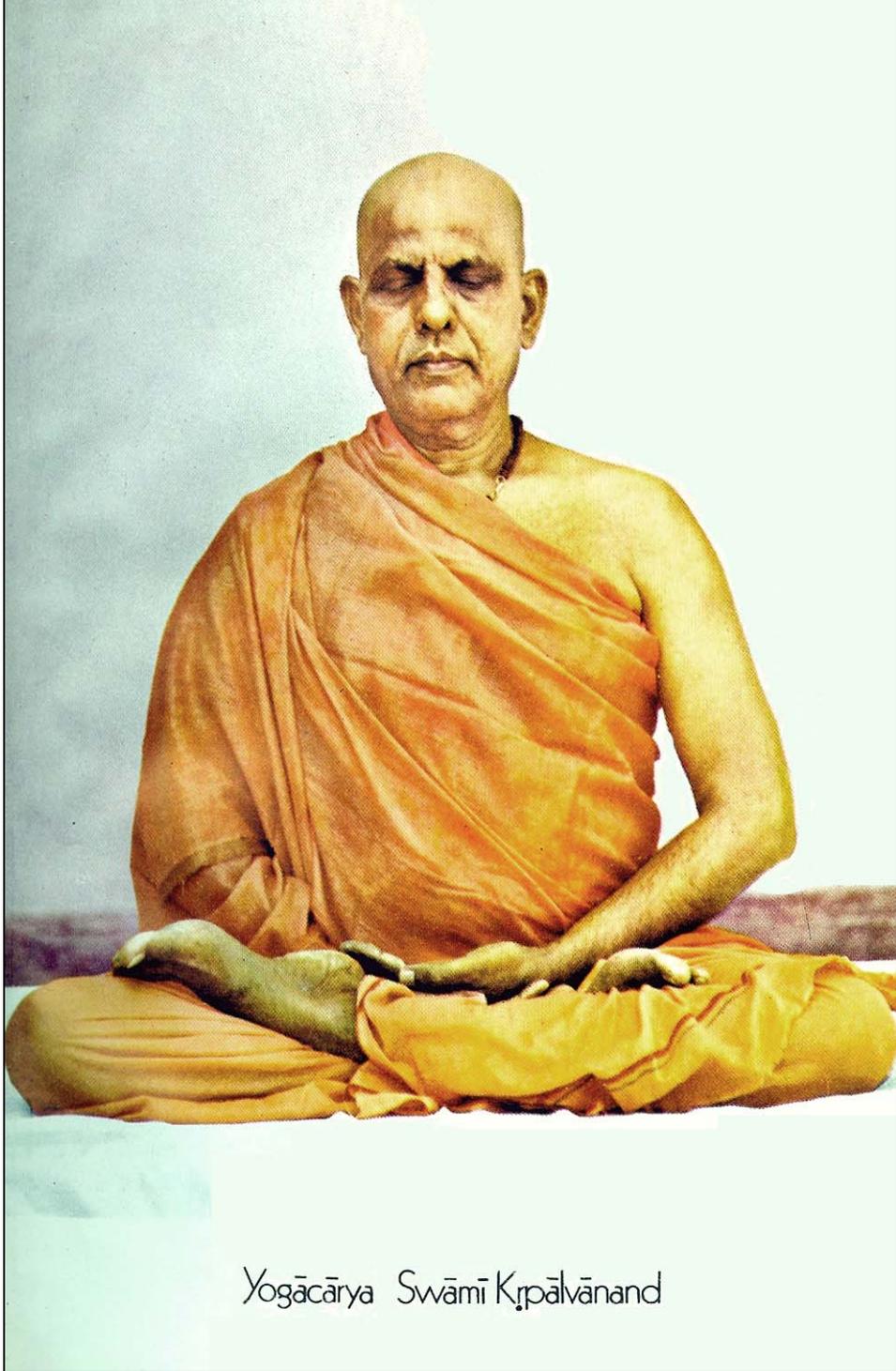


SCIENCE OF MEDITATION

By

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Yogācārya Swāmī Kṛpālvānand

LIFE SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

Swāmī Kripālvānanda has devoted his whole life to the determined quest for truth and liberation. Maintaining a rigorous discipline for the past twenty-eight years, he has spent ten hours a day in meditation while keeping silence for the last eighteen years. Having mastered all previous stages of *yoga*, he has finally reached the highest transcendental state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Through his progress in meditation, he has rediscovered the ancient eight-fold path of yoga.

Upon meeting Swāmī Kripālvānanda, Beloved Bāpujī (Dear Father) as he is affectionately called, or studying his life, one is immediately struck by the truthfulness, fearlessness, and long-suffering compassion of a man who has overcome great obstacles. He is a sensitive devotee who has had to make great efforts at discipline and detachment. His story unfolds not from a comfortable pedestal, but from the battlefield of life's greatest struggle, the war of the soul to transcend all limitations. Bāpujī Kripālvānanda was born on January 13, 1913, in western India as Saraswatī Candra Maimundār. His parents were devout Brahmins who gave him a staunch religious training which helped awaken in him an intense desire to search for God. By the age of nineteen, his passionate quest had reached an impasse of despair and futility that took him four times to the edge of suicide. Finally, when he had made a firm inner resolve to take his life, destiny intervened in the form of Swāmī Prānavānandajī. Somehow, this mysterious swāmī knew all the details of his secret suicide plan as well as the deeper longing of his heart for God. This all-powerful and loving master, known as Dādajī (Beloved Grandfather), not only restored the young man's will to live, but ignited in his heart the spiritual flame that would one day transform him into a great master.

Over a fifteen-month period, Prānavānanda trained Bāpujī in the ancient secret practices of yoga. Despite the young man having temporary worldly ambitions, Dādajī bestowed on him the highest yogic initiations and teachings. Then the mysterious guru who seemed to come out of nowhere suddenly disappeared, leaving the fledgling disciple to fend for himself.

After ten years of a worldly life that ended in disillusionment as well as suffering due to the separation from his guru, Bāpujī took *sanyasta dīksā* - (initiation as a monastic renunciate) from Swāmī Srī Sāntānanda Mahārāja. Bāpujī was given the name Kripālvānanda (Blissful Giver of Grace). Fully living up to his name, his creativity blossomed. Burning with divine inspiration to seek truth and turn men's hearts to God, he became a brilliant writer, musician, and poet. For eight years as a roving sanyāsī (renunciate), he travelled through the western part of India where his eloquent scriptural discourses and inspiring devotional songs attracted many devotees. During this time, he also endeared himself to many by

establishing free public facilities, including temples, libraries, schools, and other service institutions for human upliftment.

Humanitarian projects and popular acclaim as a leader, however, could not satisfy Bāpujī's deeper longing for union with God and guru. Moving restlessly between temples and holy places, his inexorable search came to a critical point of culmination in the Himalayas. In 1947, his *guru* finally reappeared to him in his divine body form. Finding himself still unable to remain with his guru, he struggled in his practices to the limits of his strength to attain purity. Several years later, on a bright night in Rājpiplā, 1950, his feeling of inadequacy and anguish once again turned into a crisis which brought his *guru* back in a glowing body of light. Dādajī consoled Bāpujī and turned his tears to ecstasy as he told him to begin formally practising *yoga*. Soon after, Kripālvānanda began meditating regularly and progressing step by step. Through this regular practice, he eventually came to know his guru as a subtle inner presence. Then in 1955, Dādajī revealed his true identity to his disciple in Kāyāvarohana, the ancient centre of Indian civilisation. As Kripālvānanda sat before Brahāmeśwara's *Jyotirlingam* (holy statue), he saw Dādajī's true form as Lord Lakulīśa, the twenty-eighth incarnation of Lord Śiva. The figure of his divine *guru* was the very same image as that on the front of the statue.

Soon after in meditation, Bāpujī was finally able to master a difficult stage of *yoga*. This attainment was accompanied by divine visions of ancient Kāyāvarohana, along with visions of the great sage Viśvāmitra and his own guru, Dādajī. Then Lakulīśa and Viśvāmitra commanded him to revive the ancient city as a centre of yogic study and pilgrimage.

Acting as a humble instrument of Divine Will, Swāmī Kripālvānanda began the work of restoring Kāyāvarohana. By 1974, a temple constructed according to yogic principles was established there to preserve the *Jyotirlingam* and to serve as a place of pilgrimage for people of all beliefs. Kripālvānanda has said concerning Kāyāvarohana: "Here I beheld the supreme truth of the ages and through its inspiration alone became eager to serve it."

The second phase of the Kāyāvarohana project includes the formation of a complete university program that will encompass the science of *yoga*, Sanskrit, music, dance, sculpture, along with research and technical branches that will train people in professional skills. The service organisation at Kāyāvarohana provides many social services, such as free food and facilities for pilgrims and students. All these institutional projects reflect the wisdom of a man who understands the best social and cultural forms to promote spiritual growth.

Swāmī Kripālvānanda's whole life is surrendered to God. He is an outstanding example of grace and love that has learned discipline and detachment.

Most recently, Kripālvānanda has made great breakthroughs in the science of

meditation. He has put forth theories that point the way to a knowledge revolution uniting science and religion. He has shown the similarity of experiences among all spiritual seekers. His book, *Āsana and Mudrā*, promises to be the encyclopedia of *yoga*, while *Science of Meditation* thoroughly describes the exact stages and processes of meditation. Indeed, it is his own experience that has enabled him to rediscover the truth of the ancient scriptures. The test of this truth can only be validated through careful self-study and personal experience. All the various approaches to reality, whether scientific, philosophical or religious, must eventually seek recourse in the evolutionary energy process of *yoga*. Devotion, action and knowledge are all integral to this path which Swāmī Kripālvānanda has realised as one universal teaching for the regeneration of the individual and society.

The ultimate test of a great *yogī's* teaching can be confirmed only by his own attainment of an immortal body, purified by *yoga* fire. As Kripālvānanda stands on the verge of realising a body free from death, old age and disease, he humbly tells his followers: "If I do not attain a divine body, consider me an ordinary *sādhaka* (spiritual seeker)."

With or without the final confirmation of a divine body, Kripālvānanda's teachings are certain to have a great impact on the modern world. Here we must consider what he has already mastered and made known in the way of realisation. For the first time in centuries, the hidden experiential path of the mystics has been clearly mapped out for today's seekers to examine and test. In the final analysis, however, each individual must look within to truly comprehend the real value of Bāpujī's teachings. Thus his words and life may serve not only as a bridge between East and West, science and spirituality, but they will join us with an inner bridge that unites the self with its own divinity.

Swāmī Kripālvānanda says:

"We should not think of propagating Truth at present. First we must realise Truth within ourselves. After that we must do only what Truth guides us to do. Only Truth will be our religion, our God, and our *Guru*. At that time we will not be 'we'-- we shall be Truth itself. We will not have to pray to Truth, it will consider us its own and give commands to us. If Truth favours us, even the impossible will become possible."

PREFACE

Science is characterised as an intellectual attitude. It is simply sincere critical thought which admits conclusions only when they are based on evidence. Not only is this, but the value of any science measured by the degree to which it is capable of transforming not only a way of life but also the human personality. Moreover, a science is greatly needed today which can transform the individual as well as the whole of society, a nation, and all of humanity. In the current century, man has opened his mind to physical sciences in order to master matter, and in that endeavour, he himself has become trapped and mechanised. He now needs a science which can enable him to descend into his own inner being and master consciousness, which is the source of all knowledge and power. Such a science was discovered by the ancient Sages of India, who called it *yoga* or meditation. It is only through this precious spiritual science that mankind may be able to explore the horizons of real knowledge, perfect harmony and the serene beauty of life.

This book, *Science of Meditation*, will meet this urgent need of mankind by providing him with a methodical technique and clear comprehension of the spiritual science of *yoga*. An experienced master of this secret science, Swāmī Kripālvānanda has provided in this book the whole scientific process of *yoga*. The book is an outcome of a very rich personal experience in *yoga*, covering a span of nearly twenty-five years. Swāmī Kripālu's clear insight into the subject, supported by actual experience, greatly enriches the contents of the book. Its real value can be gauged only by those who are themselves inquisitive aspirants or genuine seekers on the mystical path of *yoga*. A genuine seeker--a genuine scientist is a person who not only seeks facts, but also the truth. No amount of environmental influence should make him deviate from the path of truth.

Science of Meditation was originally published as a collection of articles written by Swāmī Kripālu in his native tongue, Gujarati. This first English language edition is a reorganisation of the original material found in the Gujarati publication. Of course, those portions which were not directly relevant to the science and process of meditation have been omitted. The task of careful translation and systematic editing has been carried out by Respected Śrī Rājarsi Muni, one of Swāmī Kripālu's chief disciples and himself an advanced seeker on the path of *yoga*.

The contents of this book are quite comprehensive and lucid. Presentation of the science of meditation runs flawlessly through twelve chapters.

The author begins the first chapter by declaring that the terms ‘Yoga’ and ‘meditation’ are synonymous. He goes on to explain that, although there are many *yogic* paths, all of which lead to Truth and God, the underlying scientific process of all *yoga* is one. He presents the idea that different paths are created because of diversity of individuals, and he explains how these different paths merge into the eight-fold path of the ancient science of *yoga*: *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyama*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāranā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*. He also explains the initial aspects of *yoga* in this chapter.

In the next chapter, Swāmī Kripālu convincingly explains the purpose, concept, and applicability of meditation, the keys to meditation, and its various types. He also provides a thorough theoretical orientation to the conceptual, psychological, and methodical aspects of meditation. The next chapter discusses prior preparation, time, place, and proper surroundings for practising meditation. He also prescribes in meticulous detail the highly systematic technique of meditation and imparts very useful instructions to those who adopt this technique.

In the fourth chapter, the author discusses the initiation of a seeker through *śaktipāta*, or the process of the transmission of spiritual energy by an able *guru*. This initiation process as described in various Indian scriptures is also explained in detail. Swāmī Kripālu comments on the fitness and the different types of seekers receiving *śaktipāta*, and describes the different types of *gurus*. Also covered are the effects of *śaktipāta* initiation and importance of the release of the *prāna* or vital energy.

In the succeeding chapter, individuals who received *śaktipāta* initiation from Swāmī Kripālu speak of their initial experiences. These experiences are grouped into four main categories, and, following each group, the author explains the underlying causes of each type of spiritual experience.

The sixth chapter explains various states of mind in meditation, discussing *yogic* drowsiness, *yogic* sleep and *yogic* swoon. The author has very clearly pointed out the distinction between *yogic* swoon and *sāmadhi*. This is followed by a chapter on *pratyāhāra* or the withdrawal of the mind from the senses. The author explains the relationship of *prāṇa* or the vital energy with the mind and the soul, then discusses how, with the help of the released *prāṇa* one can attain *pratyāhāra*, the fifth stage of the eight-fold path of *yoga*.

The eighth chapter discusses the sixth stage of *yoga*, called *dhāranā*, or the focusing of the mind. It details the concept of *dhāranā*, its types, different stages of its occurrence, and the results of mastering it. It also gives in detail the obstacles and illusions that may arise in the stage of *dhāranā*.

In the ninth chapter, the process of physical and mental purification, as well as the process of mental constraint in *dhyāna* or meditation, is discussed. Here the author has very explicitly explained *karma* or action and *akarma* or inaction and

how the bondage of action is removed through meditation. *Sāmadhi*, the highest stage of *yoga*, and its two levels are discussed in the next chapter. The four stages of *samāpatti* or meditation are also thoroughly explained. The dissolution of the mind during the final stage of *sāmadhi* is depicted, followed in the next chapter by a detailed description of the major fruits derived from *sāmadhi*.

In the concluding chapter, the author reiterates the idea that all *yoga* is one, though the paths may be different. He makes the discussion very convincing by citing numerous illustrations from the *Bhagavad Gītā* and other Indian scriptures. This lends a befitting conclusion to Swāmī Kripālu's meticulous work on the science of meditation.

The entire volume, from cover to cover, has been beautifully written in a clear and easy style. The author's twenty-five years of invaluable experience in *yoga* pervades the whole work; his personal experience and deep thinking are everywhere evident. Books explaining meditation or *yoga* scientifically are rare at present. Under the circumstances, I have no doubt that *Science of Meditation* will prove of immense value and great aid to all spiritual aspirants everywhere.

I acknowledge the indebtedness of Śrī Kāyāvarohana Tirtha Sevā Samāja to the team consisting of Harisarana (Harry Zandler), Tapasvinī (Elizabeth M. Harrison), Indra (Jack Robert Wexler), and Durgā (Betty B. Hurst), who helped the translator and editor Respected Śrī Rājarsī Muni in the critical examination of the book, the perfection of the translation, the preparation of the glossary of Sanskrit terms and transliteration scheme, and the final drafts for printing.

Finally, I hope this book will be of assistance to friends in the West in their spiritual endeavours, by providing them with a scientific understanding of the Truth.

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