

# **LIṄGAYŌGA**

**Linga Raju, M. D.**

**Published by  
Veerashaiva Samaja of North America  
2014**

## Liṅgayōga

According to Viraśaiva/Liṅgāyata philosophy, The Absolute (*Śūnya*), when activated by its own power, becomes 'The Liṅga' that is to be worshipped, and the 'Aṅga' that is the worshipper. After this apparent division, the Aṅga is still within the Liṅga and the Liṅga is as complete/infinite (*pūrṇa*) as before. Hence, everything is only one and there is no other; this is non-duality or oneness (advaitism). Liṅga is the highest Reality capable of being realized through devotional worship and meditation. Aṅga is a Jīva (soul) devoted to the worship of Liṅga. Any individual soul cannot be an Aṅga; only when Jīva becomes a worshipper of Liṅga, then it becomes an Aṅga. **It is said that, Liṅga puts the devotional activity, Bhakti, into Aṅga, so that Aṅga will have the ability to attain oneness with Liṅga (Liṅgāṅga sāmārasya).** Thus, Aṅga is the Individual Self, and Liṅga is the Universal Self. The main aim of the Liṅgāyatas/Viraśaivas is to attain oneness of the Individual Self and the Universal Self. The attainment where Aṅga and Liṅga become one is Liṅgāṅga-sāmārasya. It is also called Śūnya-sāmpādane, the attainment of the Absolute state. This monism philosophy is called Liṅga-advaita (**Liṅgādvaita**) philosophy of Liṅgāyatas.

**Bhakti** in general means devotion. Bhakti is not prayer. Feeling of devotion is always there in Aṅga. But the devotional feeling or mental attitude of devotion has to be associated with devotional activity either physical or mental. The activity, physical or mental, expressed by devotion is **worship**. Then it is said that Bhakti is not just feeling of devotion, it is the worship of devotion. Bhakti attempts to remove the veil that masks the true nature of Aṅga/Liṅga. Bhakti operates in a reverse order of creation, towards dissolution and unification.

Right at the outset, it should be noted that **Viraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas do not pray. They worship and completely surrender, and also, they meditate and contemplate on the inner Self.** Use of the English word 'prayer' should be avoided. The word 'prayer' means an earnest request for something as in the act of petitioning God to grant a favor; it is kind of begging God to sanction something. It indicates duality – that the individual and God are two separate and independent entities – two Realities. Therefore the Viraśaivas do not pray. Worship is not prayer; it means homage, reverence or religious deep respect. **Viraśaivas consider the worshipper and the worshipped to be one**

**and the same.** Namaḥ in 'Ōm namaḥ Śivāya' means obeisance. Obeisance is bowing down with deep respect, or submission. Furthermore, it should be noted that meditation is not prayer; meditation is to think, to consider, to ponder. After stabilization of the mind, and only after that, the mind is focused on the inner Self; this is meditation. Contemplation has a similar meaning as intense meditation.

Another point to be made right at the outset is that **Viraśaivas/Liṅgāyatas do not go to a temple to worship.** One of Prabhudēva's vaċanas makes this clear. When the body itself is the temple of God, why build a stone temple elsewhere? When the breath (Prāṇa) itself has become Liṅga, why ask for a Liṅga elsewhere? Furthermore, Viraśaivas do not worship idols; Iṣṭaliṅga which is the external Liṅga worn on the body and worshipped externally, is not considered as an idol; it is the Liṅga itself.

The practice of the religion is Yōga. *Yōga* means 'union with'. In its spiritual sense it means the method or process by which the individual spirit is merged in the Divine Spirit. In the case of the Viraśaivas who are monists, Yōga is the process for regaining the temporarily lost identity of Liṅga the Divine and the Aṅga the human soul. Yōga is both a science and an art. Yōga aims at stilling the mind, so that the soul behind it is seen or the soul's liberation is attained. The quietude or complete stillness of the mind effects the destruction of the veil (Māyā), and the soul becomes free from entanglements of matter and mind. Yōga is said to be an application of systematized knowledge of the unfolding of consciousness to the individual Self. Yōga is within reach of anyone and everyone. The Yōgic technique called **Ṣaṭsthala** is the **Liṅgayōga** of Liṅgāyatas. It leads to Liṅgāṅga-sāmarasya or the essential unification of Liṅga and Aṅga.

The Viraśaiva/Liṅgāyata concept of Ṣaṭsthala is the spiritual hierarchy of six stages through which the seeker rises stage by stage till the apparent duality vanishes and attainment of oneness occurs. This process of attaining oneness is called Śūnya Saṁpādane.

The practice of Liṅgayōga (Ṣaṭsthala) is not to proceed through any set of formal image-worship, and not to perform sacrificial ceremonies; and it is not a prescribed form of chanting Mantras. It is by sincere devotion, aspiration, and surrender that the goal is to be achieved. Complete change, down to the physical, is to be sought for the purification of the total being. It is said that the more the lower nature is purified the easier is the descent of the higher nature (the Divinity). The purification of the lower nature and the manifestation of the higher nature progress side by side. Yōga is a technique or a process

of getting into consciousness where one is aware of one's own soul, one's own inner being, and the truth of existence of the total being. In the Yōgic consciousness, one is not only aware of things, but also aware of the forces. One becomes aware of all this, not only in oneself, but also in the universe. There is a force, the power of the Divine, in the human microcosm. This power of the Divine is waiting there to be awakened/activated during Yōgic meditation. It is through Yōga that one becomes conscious of the great complexity of one's own nature.

It is said that Liṅgāyatas start with Liṅga and end with Liṅga, and therefore, they are Liṅgāyatas, not merely because they wear Iṣṭaliṅga on their bodies. A Liṅgāyata is one who practices Aṣṭāvaraṇa, Pañcācāra and Ṣaṣṭhala. Ṣaṣṭhala is all-comprehensive and includes in it everything that the religious practice expresses; the Pañcācāra and Aṣṭāvaraṇa are subsidiaries and auxiliaries to the Ṣaṣṭhala. This is the very life and soul of the Liṅgāyat spiritual discipline and religious practice.

**Aṣṭāvaraṇa:** Religious practice is said to require these eight-fold external coverings or shields. **Guru** is necessary for conferring initiation (Dikṣā) on the disciple, and to show the path that leads to Liṅgāṅga-sāmarasya. **Liṅga:** Viraśaivism/Liṅgāyatism asserts the value of the body, life and mind for spiritual realization. It considers that the Liṅga has taken triple form in these - Iṣṭaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Bhāvaliṅga respectively. It is through the realization of the three Liṅgas that one has to advance and attain to the Absolute. Bhāvaliṅga, Prāṇaliṅga and Iṣṭaliṅga are said to have their six-fold subdivisions - Ācāraliṅga, Guruliṅga, Śivaliṅga, Jaṅgaliṅga, Prasādaliṅga and Mahāliṅga. **Jaṅgama** is considered as the 'wandering divinity', and is unique in this respect. Jaṅgama is a *Jīvanmukta*, the one who has attained oneness with the Liṅga in this life and is still living in a body. **Pādōdaka** is the holy water that has washed the feet of Guru and Jaṅgama, and that has washed the Iṣṭaliṅga. **Prasāda** is everything that has been consecrated by Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama. **Bhasma** is the sacred ash. **Rudrākṣa** are the beads obtained from the Rudrākṣa tree (rosary beads). **Mantra** considered here is the six-syllable (*Ṣaḍakṣara*) mantra 'Om̐ na maḥ Śi vā ya'. This six-syllable mantra represents the six Liṅgas (mentioned above under Liṅga) and the six sthalas of Ṣaṣṭhala.

According to Viraśaivas, the above eight-fold external protective coverings have counterparts in the inner being. These are – awareness (*Arivu*), right knowledge (*Sujñāna*), self-experience (*Svānubhāva*), nectar of compassion (*Karuṇāmṛtā*), gift of grace (*Kṛpāprasāda*), self-conscious splendor (*Bhasita*), self-conscious light (*Ātkānte*), and self-conscious bliss (*Ādānaṇḍa*). Attainment of the inner counterparts of the external aspects of Aṣṭāvaraṇa is more important for the Viraśaivas.

**Pañcācāra** is the practice of the five codes of conduct. **Liṅgācāra** is the worship of Liṅga, starting with the worship of external Iṣṭaliṅga and then concentrating on the internal Liṅga, and synthesis of Iṣṭa-Prāṇa-Bhāva-Liṅga and unification of the six Liṅgas stationed in the body of Aṅga, and such. **Sadācāra** is to lead a simple and virtuous life – it consists in the rendering of respectful service to Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama with what is earned only through righteous means. Kāyaka and Dāsōha come here (see below). **Śivācāra** consists in the firm conviction that there is no other refuge apart from Śiva the Parabrahman, and is to realize that the Divine Śiva is in everyone, irrespective of gender, wealth, caste or creed, and to treat everyone equally and respectfully. **Bhṛtyācāra** is of the nature of humility that one is the servant of all the devotees of Śiva; it is to show humility, modesty and respect for others. And **Gaṇācāra** consists in the stubbornness in non-reacting to the condemnation of Śiva, Śivācāra, and/or Śivabhaktas under all circumstances; it is to strive for improvement and development of the community as a whole.

Some of the salient features of the Vīraśaiva's daily life are **Kāyaka** and **Dāsōha**.

The term **kāyaka**, derived from kāya meaning the body, ordinarily means something related to the body. In the Vīraśaiva system of life, it means dedicated manual labor; the labor may extend to the mental or intellectual field. First, in the name of service, one should never beg; such a beggar moves away from, rather than towards, realization. Second, while engaged in kāyaka, one should not mind anybody, even if it is Guru, Liṅga or Jaṅgama; they are all working with the One, as they are not exempt from kāyaka. Third, the labor of a Vīraśaiva should never fetch more than what it is worth; may get less, but never more. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon the Vīraśaiva to do kāyaka with a pure heart and mind, and always to put one's best into the work. This is how one tries to express the Divine in oneself through one's work. Such work should never be motivated by greed or egoistic self. It is always dedicated to the Divine.

Dāsōham means 'I am Thy servant'. **Dāsōha**, the service, is closely associated with kāyaka. The work and all the earnings from work must first be offered to God. Since God is formless, the offerings are directed through the godly – Guru, Jaṅgama and the community of Vīraśaivas. The Vīraśaiva's activities are driven by this profound sense of service – Dāsōha.

**Ṣaṭsthala** has devised the method of a gradual spiritual rise and development of Aṅga step by step. In Ṣaṭsthala, the term sthala is used to mean a stage, a temporary resting place for a progressing soul on its spiritual journey to Śūnya. At each sthala the aspirant gets more spiritual experience sufficient enough to advance/ascend to the next higher sthala. The Ṣaṭsthalas are Bhaktasthala, Māhēśvarasthala, Prasādisthala, Prāṇaliṅgasthala, Śaraṇasthala and Aikyasthala. It is to be noted here that the concept of duality progresses to the concept of non-duality (oneness) from the Bhaktasthala to the Prasādisthala; and from Prāṇaliṅgasthala onwards, it is all oneness philosophy. Ṣaṭsthala stages are divided into two sections - Bhakta, Māhēśvara, and Prasādi sthalas forming the first division, and Prāṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa, and Aikya sthalas forming the second division. In the first worship-oriented division action element is predominant, and in the meditation-oriented second division knowledge element is predominant. Action and knowledge go hand in hand and ultimately belief prevails that action and knowledge are one and the same. Action and knowledge become indistinguishable from one another and their essential identity becomes established along with the oneness of Aṅga and Liṅga.

The Ṣaṭsthala technique furnishes the scientific apparatus and procedure, which if followed carefully step by step, will enable the Aṅga to attain its objective. To the devotee, the details of the physical acts of worship are necessary only to strengthen the will. First, the worship of Liṅga is in its gross form, the worship of Iṣṭaliṅga. Next is the worship of Liṅga, both with form and without form. This is Prāṇaliṅga and is an intermediate stage. Then there is worship of formless internal Liṅga that is the internal worship of Mahāliṅga. Bhakti is the root of worship whether the worship is external or internal. Without this feeling of devotion, the spiritual advancement is not possible.

***Piṇḍasthala:*** Śūnya Sampādane begins with Piṇḍasthala. It is one of the preliminary steps prior to Bhaktasthala. The literal meaning of 'piṇḍa' is 'lump' or 'round mass', and refers to the body of a person. In Piṇḍasthala, piṇḍa means a purified individual-self Aṅga aspiring to be united with the Universal-Self Liṅga. Divine immanence can be recognized only by one who is aspiring to achieve the goal. The characteristic of this step is that the aspiring soul Aṅga visualizes the existence of Liṅga in one's own body.

***Piṇḍa-jñāna-sthala:*** In Piṇḍa-jñāna-sthala one grasps the discriminative knowledge that the individual-self Jīva (soul) is totally different from the body, senses and intellect.

***Samsārahēyasthala:*** In Samsārahēyasthala one develops disgust for the worldly life of cycle of births and deaths, and detaches from the transient worldly pleasures by virtue

of refined impressions. Saṁsāra is the cosmic process where one passes through a succession of births and deaths without any progress in breaking the cycle of births and deaths. The main point of teaching of this sthala is that one has to break this cycle and attain immortality. The teaching is as follows.

The soul not knowing its true nature plunges into Māyā (delusion) and identifies with the body; as a consequence the individual becomes fond of pleasures and passions associated with the body, and thus the individual is not in a position to realize the Divine presence. All beings are subject to happiness and misery of worldly existence. A common person believes that the birth is the beginning and the death is the end and that that is all there is to life. The human beings with perishable bodies harbor instinctive cravings (*vāsanās*); and those who are caught in the cravings cannot realize the Divine. The Jīva (soul) is driven by a compelling passion for worldly pleasures. This thirst is not satisfied by enjoyment. The more one tries to appease the sense organs and the senses, the more dissatisfied one becomes. This causes distress and misery. Such an individual, fond of the body and pleasures associated with it, is not in a position to realize the Divine presence. The individual has to understand that the body and the soul are not identical. One has to get rid of all the desires and passions such as lust, anger/aggression, greed, infatuation/delusion, boasting/ego and jealousy/envy. There is no room for hatred or violence of any kind. One who has purged all desires and passions, attained contentment, and has realized the difference between the body and the soul, advances further in one's path towards the absolute.

***Māyāvilāsaviḍāmbana-sthala:*** In Māyāvilāsaviḍāmbana-sthala the individual-self Jīva recognizes its identity to be one and the same as that of the Universal-Self. Jīva has to rid itself of Māyā by recognizing that the Self is different from Māyā and that the play of Māyā is working against the realization of the Self. One who is caught up in the web of Māyā, continues to be ignorant without self-knowledge. One has to free oneself from the self-inflicted ignorance and acquire the right knowledge. In order to achieve this, one has to have a pure mind which is devoid of any restless activity, and has to have a clear consciousness. Stabilization of the mind is of prime importance so that one can then proceed on to contemplation and meditation in one's spiritual progress.

The term 'monkey-mind' is used to explain the restlessness of the mind. Just as a monkey jumps from branch to branch to pluck the fruit and eat it, the restless human mind leaps from one sense-organ to another to grasp at and enjoy the sense-objects. The restlessness of the mind is a great hindrance in the way of discipline. Life, mind and intellect remain impure, if the stillness of the soul is not attained. Restless activities of

the mind are to be brought to a stable status, not through force or suppression, but through persuasion, and by directing the expression towards a more socially or culturally acceptable way of life. Disciplining of the mind and the thought process is an important part for spiritual advancement; without that discipline, one cannot proceed to meditation.

One must not venture into any bad thoughts or thinking of harming other beings; at the verge of such, those thoughts are to be diverted into good thoughts or thoughts of helping others. Sometimes it may be necessary to avert such bad thoughts by chanting as many times as necessary, either silently or aloud, 'Ōṃ Namaḥ Śivāya' or simply 'Ōṃ'. Once the restlessness of the mind disappears, the mind itself merges with the Self.

Mind is a matrix with innumerable instincts, impulses and emotions, both good and bad. If the bad takes the upper hand, the aspiration of spiritual advancement is as good as dead, and is far removed from the Divine. When one perceives the difference between good and bad which depict the nature of conscious Self and the non-self, the path the seeker should take to experience the joy of Self will be illuminated.

***Liṅgadhāraṇasthala:*** Liṅgadhāraṇasthala is the last of the preliminary sthalas given in Śūnya Saṃpādane. It is said to be an essential step in the preparation for the ensuing Bhaktasthala.

First is the aspect of the Guru. Guru is a master of spiritual knowledge who has realized the state of identity with Liṅga. Guru instills spiritual knowledge into the disciple. An aspirant who yearns for self-realization is impelled to seek a competent Guru; it is the awareness of Gurubhāva in the disciple. The seeking and striving of the disciple goes on until the aspirant reaches the spiritual that takes the form of Liṅga. To such a seeker whose mind is peaceful and controlled, the learned Guru imparts the knowledge of Brahman in its very essence, the knowledge by which one knows the true imperishable Being.

Second is the type of initiation. The mental-type process of initiation is meant only for the ones who are at a higher plane of consciousness and are well advanced in their spiritual attainment. The other type of initiation, involving the physical process, is said to be for the ordinary aspirants who are in a lower plane of consciousness. This physical process is carried out by the Guru. It involves rites and rituals such as besmearing the

body with sacred ash, placing the palm on the disciple's head, whispering the mantra into the disciple's ear, and investing the Iṣṭaliṅga on the seeker's palm.

Third is the process of initiation performed by the Guru. It is said to accomplish the following. The disciple is purified of the three malas (impurities or taints) by the grace of the Guru. *Āṇavamala* is the impurity that subsists in the soul; it keeps the soul separated from the Divine. *Māyāmala* is associated with Māyā and it keeps the soul ignorant of its own nature. *Kārmikamala* is the taint associated with the individual souls which enjoy or suffer according to their deeds. These three malas are wiped out by the grace of the Guru.

Next there is Divine descent into the mind, life and matter in the form of Liṅga. The abstract form of Liṅga is the formulated grace of the Guru. It descends from above into the disciple. It forces its way from the mental (Bhāva) to the vital (Prāṇa) and from the vital to the physical. In its passage it purifies the mind and makes it into Bhāvaliṅga, purifies the life/prāṇa into Prāṇaliṅga, and purifies the body and appears on the palm of the disciple as the symbol of the Divine, the Iṣṭaliṅga. With this Divine descent, the person is passion-free. Love, knowledge, power, bliss and peace are the radiant expressions of the Divine.

This mere sight of the Divine is not enough to be united with the Divine. The seeker must then ascend in six stages (Ṣaṣṭhala) to attain oneness.

***Bhaktasthala:*** In Bhaktasthala the disciple understands that the light of knowledge shines by means of Bhakti/devotion. The seeker develops intense devotion to attain this knowledge. Devotee's daily life includes worship of Liṅga in the morning, performing dedicated work, serving the community and treating everyone with respect and humility. Worship of Liṅga, unconditional service to Guru and self-dedication to Jaṅgama are the principal features of this stage. Bhaktasthala teaches one to incorporate austerity, restraint and dedicated work in one's daily life.

***Māhēśvarasthala:*** In Māhēśvarasthala, the devotee understands that one who wavers and entertains the desire for another god or gods is neither brave nor resolute, and thus, the devotee develops steadfastness of faith in Liṅga. Mahēśvara clears the eight-fold taints of earth, water, fire, air, sky, moon, sun, and ego, and intensifies the worship of Liṅga (These eight-fold impurities are purged with the help of the spiritual nature of

Aṣṭāvaraṇa – Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Prasāda, Pādōdaka, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣi and Mantra). Removal of doubt and misgivings, and development of full confidence in Liṅga worship, enhances the depth of devotion. As devotion becomes intense, rites and rituals are dispensed with, and only the internal worship is developed. The silent contemplation of the Divine remains the only yearning.

***Prasādīsthala:*** In Prasādīsthala, the devotee dedicates oneself as the offering to the Divine. One, who, by offering the body, mind and will, to Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama, has achieved purity of the body (śuddha), clarity of the mind (siddha) and perfection of the will (prasiddha), that one is the partaker of the grace of the Divine that is Prasāda. Everything is offered with a sense of self-dedication and self-surrender. The offerings are to be free from any taint; if attachment or craving persists, the transformation to Prasāda will not be effected. When ignorance and the sense of ego are completely eliminated, and the offering is made with sincerity and humility, Prasāda ensues, and poise and peace are attained by the devotee. Serenity is a characteristic of the Prasādi. Thus, when it is offered properly, the fire of knowledge burns the illusion of desire into an illumination of joy.

***Prāṇaliṅgīsthala:*** Self-experience is the main characteristic of Prāṇaliṅgīsthala. The seeker's vision tends inwards and gets clarified. The body is a temple that enshrines the Divine. The vital-breath which courses through the body, worships the Liṅga with the flower of right aspiration. The breath, when regulated, emits fragrance which serves as a wreath of flowers for the Liṅga enshrined in the body.

The breath regulation, Prāṇāyāma, is practiced only in its elementary form by the Viraśaivas. It is performed while the person is seated comfortably in a cross-legged position. Prāṇāyāma is not deep breathing which may lead to complications. Every aspect of breath-control is to be performed in a relaxed manner, and there should not be any jerky/sudden movement. There are three aspects – inhalation, retention and exhalation. Inhalation is accomplished by taking in a large breath of air smoothly. Retention of the breath is a natural breath-hold, and it should not be forced. If stability of the breath-hold is lost, the breath has to be released. Duration of retention of the breath is what is comfortable for that person. Exhalation of the breath is gradual and smooth. During this process of breath regulation, one feels a gradual expansion of the chest, and feels the air reaching all parts of the lungs. This allows full utilization of the life-breath.

This process of breath regulation moves life-energy throughout the body. All this occurs during the phases of inhalation and retention. During the phase of exhalation, the energy courses back in the reverse order. Breath-control directly affects the ascending and descending currents of life-force. In an ordinary individual, the currents exist in a haphazard manner, and pose as obstacles for a free flow of vital-energy. The yōgic meditative practice of self-purification places these currents in a proper order of alignment. When breath regulation becomes effortless, the person is totally absorbed in its fineness.

When breath is regulated it emits fragrance which serves as the wreath of flowers in the worship of Liṅga enshrined in the body. Breath-control performed by the seeker activates the vital-force that permeates the whole body. The seeker experiences vivid impressions of light, sound and taste. When the Divine-energy gets activated and moves through the central nervous system, the external world is kept at abeyance and a peerless peace wells out. The Prāṇaliṅgi gets convinced beyond doubt that the Absolute is the subtlest of the subtle, is the Imperishable and the Unchanging. Prāṇaliṅgi sees one's own-Self permeating the whole universe.

***Śaraṇasthala:*** Experiencing of pure delight by the seeker as a result of deep and continued meditation, is the main feature of this sthala. Experiences of Prāṇaliṅgisthala in the form of intermittent flashes and streams of sensations are replaced in Śaraṇasthala by the Self seeing its own form shining in Divine splendor. Remembrance of work-a-day world is gone, illusion of will is burnt, awareness of the body is forgotten, and all external phenomena have crumbled, and all this is replaced by a serene mood. There is no motion of any kind, the mind is stilled, and individual consciousness is overcome. Where the conditioned or unconditioned mind stops, there the stillness reigns; where consciousness of being oneself reaches an end, there ecstasy/ānanda dwells, and one beholds the light of the Liṅga as a resplendent blaze.

There is an important concept; it states that there is a head above another head, and that the head above swallows the head below. These two heads refer to two kinds of knowledge – a higher supra-mental knowledge and a lower empirical knowledge. The empirical knowledge resolves into supra-mental knowledge, and the sense of duality is replaced by the knowledge of significance of the Union. It also means that the lower individual consciousness is taken over by the upper Supra-Conscious state. The seeker experiences Ānanda/bliss.

***Aikyasthala:*** Aikyasthala is characterized by a state of only one consciousness where there is no volition, no motion, no word or speech, and where all consciousness of time and space is suspended. There is no separate consciousness of the individual. In this Supra-Conscious state, the one has reached true Reality – It is indescribable, and the great white light is everywhere. Here the Self is absorbed in the intense and focused meditation on the transcendent passing over the limits of mind and entering into the ecstatic state. Prabhudēva advocates *Nirvikalpa Samādhī* where the super-consciousness state is completely devoid of any psychic residue or mental deposits. This Supreme state is not conscious of anything. To attain it, one has to focus on nothing but the contemplation on the Self which is Śūnya. Somewhat of a lower type is the *Savikalpa Samādhī* where there is some retention of the self-volition when absorbed into the super-conscious state.

Having gone through the spiritual hierarchy of Ṣaṭsthala, the seeker has attained oneness. This attainment while still alive is the liberation in life called Jīvanmukti.

***Jaṅgamasthala:*** Śūnya Saṁpādane describes Jaṅgamasthala as the ultimate sthala. The one who has attained the Jīvanmukti is a Jīvanmukta who is the Jaṅgama.

Having attained the Absolute through Ṣaṭsthala, the one has become a Jaṅgama. Jaṅgama is a Jīvanmukta, the one liberated in life. Although liberated from the cycle of births and deaths, Jaṅgama still has the body. Wearing the body as garment, Jaṅgama continues to serve humanity. The Jaṅgama is described as the one with leg-less walk, hand-less touch, and mouth-less taste, and as having the feeling as a bowl in order to request earnestly for the Supreme alms, not ordinary alms but the unreserved surrender to the Supreme. Jaṅgama moves for the redemption of mankind, and blesses the aspirants by mere will. With illumined knowledge and enlightened action, the great one acts as a source of Divine Grace.

**It is to be noted that the attainment of oneness is a lifelong process.** It does not happen overnight or in a few years. The Liṅgāyatas/Vīraśaivas consider every day to be a pious day, as well as an auspicious and celebrating day. **Practice of Liṅgayōga/Vīraśaivayōga is not just worship, acquiring right knowledge and meditation; it includes all aspects of one's daily life.**