The term 'Yoga' comes from the root 'yuj' i.e. 'To yoke or join'. Here Yoga is used to mean the union of the individual spirit (jīvātman) with the universal spirit (paramātman). The art of Yoga is defined as a system of culture for perfecting human efficiency.

It is said that the Yoga and the Sāmkhya system are regarded as the complementary aspects of one whole system. If Sāmkhya system signifies 'theory', the Yoga signifies 'practice'.

The Yoga system is also known as Patañjala Darśana after the name of its propounder Patañjali. But there is some controversy about the identity of Patañjali and his period. Some holds that he lived in the 4th century B.C. while others place him in the second century B.C.

The Yogasūtra of Patañjali from the earliest extant literature on the Yoga system. It has four parts known as Samādhi (concentration), Sādhanā (practice), Vibhūti (miraculous powers) and Kaivalya (emancipation). Here the first
one treats of the nature and aim of Samādhi, the second one explains the means of attaining this end, the third one indicates the supernatural power which can be attained through Yoga practices and last part gives an account about the nature of liberation.

Vyāsa’s commentary on the Yogasūtra is considered as the masterly commentary about the fourth century A.D.

In the Katha Upaniṣad, Svetāsvatara Upaniṣad, Taittirīyā Upaniṣad and the Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad, the Mahābhārata, the Jaina and the Buddhist literature, Yoga practices have been mentioned where from we can guess the antiquity of the Yoga system.

In addition to the Yogasūtra of Patañjali, we have some other works on Yoga. They are - an explanatory note on the Vyāsabhāṣya known as Tattvavāśaradī written by Vācaspati, the Vyāsabhāṣya is known as Chāya of Nāgēśabhaṭṭa other important works are the Rajamārtanda of Bhoja(eleventh century A.D.) and the Yogavārttika and the Yogasārasamgraha of Vijnānabhaṭkus (sixteenth century A.D.).

The mission of Yoga can be explained in this way that in order to attain perfection through strict control of the body and the mind a spiritual effort is needed which is nothing but the Yoga. This control had to be done by a special system of physical culture and spiritual discipline.
For the practice of Yoga it is necessary to lay stress on ethical preparation. It can be made possible by Yama and Niyama. We should practise some good qualities like Ahimsā, or non-violence, truthfulness, honesty etc. and should obtain from falsehood, theft, incontinence and avarice. All virtues are said to be rooted in Ahimsā. It's meaning is not only non-violence but also non-hatred.¹

Friendlyness, sympathy, cheerfulness etc. are good qualities of man and these can be cultivated by the practice of Yoga to have mental peace.

Nothing is said directly in the Yoga system about 'Dharma' but indirectly by purifying physically and mentally it helps to proceed the human being to the state of liberation.

The observances (Niyama) are purification, external and internal contentment, austerity, and devotion to God.

The perfections (siddhis) are attained through 'birth, drugs (asadhi), spells (Mantras), austerity (Tapas), or concentration (Samādhi)."

Besides this, Patañjali introduces God in the Yoga system and describes God as a special kind of Purusa who is always free from afflictions, actions, effects and impressions.²

Patañjali practically believes in God, but the later Yogins have taken also a theoretical interest in Him.

He is eternally free and is above the law of Karma. He is said to be the teachers of the Vedas and also of the Rsis. He is the purest knowledge.

'Aum' is His symbol. One of the surest means of obtaining concentration is to the devotion to the God. The Yoga system offers the following proofs for the existence of God.³ Those are:

(a) The veda tells us that God exists,

(b) The law of continuity tells us that there must be the highest limit of knowledge and perfection which is God.

(c) The association and dissociation of Prakṛti and Purusa are brought about by God. Hence, the existence of God is to be recognised.

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2. klesā karma - vipakasayah aparāmrsta puruṣavisesāh Isvarah Y.Su. 1.24

(d) Devotion to God is the surest way of obtaining concentration and there by liberation.

The God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. But according to the Yoga system God is not the creator, preserver or destroyer of this world.

Liberation cannot be granted by the God. He can only remove the obstacles in the upward progress of the devotees.

Actually, the God of Yoga keeps Him away from the bondage and liberation of the innumerable Purusas and Prakrti. The free soul binds up in Samsara by the ignorance and the knowledge of discrimination between Prakrti and Purusa liberates the soul from bondage.

God does not seem to be an integral part of the Yoga. The end of Human life is not the union with God but only the separation of Purusa and Prakrti.

So such a conception of God is surely an unsatisfactory conception.

The Yoga system of Patanjali is considered as a great system of spiritual discipline and shows as a practical way of purification and self control.

Except carvaka, all schools of Indian Philosophy favour with the Yoga system.
There is no discussion on Artha and Kama in the Yoga system.

Yoga View on Mokṣa

In the Yoga system the liberation of freedom from bondage is known as Kaivalya or absolute independence.

Like the Śamkhya Philosophy, Yoga philosophy also believes in bondage which is due to ignorance. Here also Purusa wrongly identifies itself with the products of Prakṛti. So the bondage and subsequent release of self or Purusa reflected in Buddhi. And the self which realises its distinction from its reflection is said to be free.

The self or Purusa attains absolute freedom or isolation or Kaivalya after the total discrimination of Purusa and Prakṛti and when Purusa returns to its Pure nature. Kaivalya does not mean the attainment of any supernormal powers nor does it consist in any upward movement of the self. It is the state of dissolution of all afflictions.

According to Patañjali, Yoga is defined as the cessation of the modification of Chitta. The modifications of the

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4. yogah chittavṛttinirodhah. YS. 1.2.
Chitta are of five kinds: (1) Right cognition (Pramana) i.e. perception, inference and verbal testimony; (2) Wrong cognition (viparyaya) like that of a rope-snake; (3) Imagination or Vikalpa i.e. it is more verbal cognition like that of a hare's horn. (4) Nidra or absence of cognition i.e. after sound sleep a person used to say that he knew nothing. So there must be some mental modification. (5) Smrti is the recollection of past experience through the impression left behind.

This cessation of the modification of the Chitta through meditation or concentration is also called Yoga. And Chitta means three internal organs of Sāṁkhya - buddhi or intellect, ahaṅkāra or ego and manas or mind. Chitta is predominantly Sattva. When Buddhi, which is by nature Sattva, is dominated by Rajas and Tamas, it turns into Aham-kaśāra and the mind.

Avidyā or ignorance, Asmitā or egoism, Rāga or attachment, Dveṣa or aversion and Abhinivesā or instinctive fear of death are the five kinds of sufferings and also the cause of bondage. So, in this system, bondage of the self or Purusa is due to its wrong identification with the mental

5. yogah chittavṛttinirodhah. YS. 1.2
6. avidyāsmiṭārāgadveṣābhinivesāḥ klesāḥ. Ibid, 2.3.
modifications. And liberation means the end of this wrong identification and proper discrimination between Puruṣa and Prakṛti and complete cessation of all mental modifications. When Citta attains to its real nature of Sattva, then the self realise distinct knowledge about Sattva (sattva-puruṣanyatākhyāti). When the self has the discriminative knowledge about Sattva by suppressing the egoism, mind and the senses he is said to have in the stage of conscious concentration or samprajñāta samādhi. When this discriminative knowledge is also destroyed, then the self has the super-conscious concentration or Asamprajñāta Samādhi. When all the mental modifications are disappeared and the self becomes free from the influence of Prakṛti then the Puruṣa or self is said to be pure and isolated (Kevala) and shines forth (Svarupamātrajyoti) as transcendental consciousness. Though Citta has no dissolution yet this last state is known as the dissolution of Citta where there is no binding of self and this stage is known as absolute independence (Kaivalya or Mokṣa) of the self. When the three Gunas are finished serving Purusa in its enjoyment, they along with their products (disposition) lost in the mind, which again losses in egoism, egoism in Buddhi and Buddhi in indeterminate Prakṛti. This is an interesting process and is known as pratiprasava, otherwise known as Kaivalya. 7

7. purusārthasaṁyānam guṇaṁ partiprasavah kaivalyam
svarupapratisthā vā citisaktiriti. Ibid. 3.34.