CHAPTER-VII

THE AUXILIARY YOGAS: RĀJA - YOGA AND TANTRA - YOGA

1. THE EIGHT-FOLD PATH OF YOGA: RĀJA-YOGA:

The yoga which is commonly known as Aṣṭāṅga-yoga is also known as Rāja-yoga.

The sage Patanjali has composed the treatise on Rāja-yoga that has come down to us. The spiritual path described therein is so much systematic and infallible that it has prevailed, in one form or the other, over every single scripture of this land. The Bhāgavatam also owes a great deal of its methods of śādhanā to it.

The word ‘Rāja’ is derived from ‘raj’ (1.०.) meaning to be resplendent, to illuminate, to make radiant, etc.1746 It is also called a royal road to the Enlightenment; royal because it deals with mind which is the chief of the senses, and is unconquerable (dur-jayanām aham manah).1747

Mind-stuff (citta) is the main instrument of this yoga; body, the substitute. Mind exists of the impressions of karma; it extends through body. In order to draw citta towards yoga, the senses have to be disciplined. Only the disciplined and withdrawn citta can accomplish yoga. There is no enemy other than the uncontrolled mind; its control and establishment in equanimity is the greatest worship of God.1748 Therefore, this yoga is also known as Mano-yoga.

Patanjali defines yoga as the total cessation of the modes of the mind-stuff.1749 In the same vein, the Bhāgavatam defines yoga as the destruction of the seed of karma and thus calming the flow of mental modification.1750 If one can establish control over speech, mind, vital forces, senses and self, then there is no more involvement in samsāra.1751 If a sādhaka is desireless and completely dependent on God, then he is
not defeated in overcoming the obstacles and attains the joy of the self because desireless is deemed the greatest and most efficacious of all means to the final beatitude. The perfect yogis who conquer their breath, senses and self receive God’s grace and are never defeated.

In fact, Rāja-yoga is not to be taken merely as one of the paths to the realization of God; it is auxiliary to all other paths that strive for the realization, because perfect non-attachment in all respects is the goal of all yogas. It is an inseparable part of sādhana, because it thoroughly deals with the very microcosmic as well as the macrocosmic existence of the individual.

For the attainment of the Asamprajñāta, Nirbija or Nirvikalpa samādhi, that is, for accomplishment of yoga, eight limbs of yoga have been defined; therefore, the yoga is called Aṣṭāṅga-yoga too. The eight limbs are: Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dāhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi. The Bhāgavatam too accepts these fully, adds few disciplines to some of them and explains several aspects of Yoga in detail.

It is of utmost importance to note that unlike the Yogasūtras of Patanjali, which consider devotion to God as only one of the means, the Bhāgavatam puts total emphasis on the dedication of mind to God in the pursuit of yoga considering it as the substance of yoga. The Bhāgavatam says, “The Supreme Yoga consists of withdrawal of the mind from all things and concentrating on Paramātman.” Because citta that thinks of the objects becomes attached to those and citta that thinks of God is dissolved in him. The Supreme Soul should be contemplated on with the help of yogic practices to be accompanied by other two paths of right knowledge and worship of God’s form. In fact, the aim of sādhana, according to the Bhāgavatam, is to

1752 XI, 28, 44
1753 XI, 20, 35
1754 III, 15, 7
1755 III, 32, 27
1756 III, 26, 1-12; IV, 12, 17
1757 XI, 23, 61*
1758 XI, 20, 21; XI, 23, 46*; VII, 15, 30
1759 XI, 14, 27*
1760 XI, 20, 24
enjoy the bliss of Brahman. When citta becomes utterly pacific and free from all passions and modifications, it enjoys the bliss of Brahman (Brahma sukham), forever. 1761

i. & ii. Yama and Niyama:

The yoga enumerates five disciplines each under yama and niyama. The Bhāgavatam gives twelve internal disciplines, including the five enumerated by Patanjali, known as Yama: Non-violence (ahīṁsā), truth (satya), non-covetousness (asteya), solitude (asaṅga), modesty (ḥṛ), non-accumulation (asaṅcaya), faith in scriptures (āstikyam), celibacy (brahmacarya), silence (mauna), firmness (sthairyā), forgiveness (kṣamā), fearlessness (abhaya). 1762

The twelve external disciplines known as Niyama are: Purity of mind and body (sauca), repetition of God’s name (japa), austerity (tapa), offering oblations in fire (homa), faith (śraddhā), hospitality (ātithyam), worship of the Divine (Mad arcanam=My worship), pilgrimage (tirthātana), altruism (parārtha), contentment (tuṣṭi), service to guru (ācārya sevanam). 1763

The Bhāgavatam gives sublime definitions of many of these and other spiritual qualities:

Śama is firm settlement of intellect in God; dama is control of sense; titikṣā is to bear quietly the affliction; dhṛti is total control over the palate and the senses; the highest charity (dāna) is abandonment of the tendency to harm other beings; tapa consists of abstinence of desires; powerfulness (saurya) is the conquest of one’s basic nature; truthfulness (satya) is vision of oneness; purity (sauca) is non-attachment in actions; tyāga is sannyāsa – the renunciation of worldliness and worldly life; dharma is the desirable wealth; yajña, the sacrifice is God Himself; daksinā is spiritual enlightenment; strength (bala) is the control of vital energy; the greatest good fortune is sharing God’s majesties; the greatest gain is devotion to God; true path is that which directs the citta, the pitiable (kṛpapa) is one without control over senses; the master is

1761 VII,15,35
1762 XI,19,33
1763 XI,19,34
non-attached to guṇas, his opposite is the slave.\textsuperscript{1764}

*Kapila* gives following disciplines for the attainment of liberation:\textsuperscript{1765*} The practice of inward concentration along with the control of mind and senses, faith, devotion to God, equal sympathy for all, abstinence from the exploitation of others, non-attachment, continence, silence, discharge of svadharma, contentment in what one gains legitimately, solitude, moderation in eating, calmness, kindness, self-control, reflection on the distinction between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, dedication of all works to God, seeking after knowledge, abstention from evil ways and company, service of holy men, practice of steady posture suitable for spiritual practice, contemplation on God and His deeds – these and other disciplines must be followed by *sādhaka*.

Along with these qualities and disciplines, *sādhaka* is to engage himself in *svādhyāya* and *sādhusaṅga*. *Svādhyāya* is the study of scriptures accompanied by contemplation of the purport of the scriptures as well as introspection. The one who thus regularly observes disciplines gradually becomes eligible for the *summum bonum*.\textsuperscript{1766}

**III. Āsana:**

Both, Patanjali and the *Bhāgavatam*, define posture (āsana) thus: ‘Posture is that which is firm and pleasant.’\textsuperscript{1767} The *Bhāgavatam* also says that āsana should be comfortable\textsuperscript{1768} and ‘steady’. If the impulse to mobilize the sense organs is contained, one can gradually divert the mind into spiritual contemplation.

While sitting for worship or meditation, one should select a clean, level and secluded place. One should sit upright with hands in lap and eyes concentrated between the eyebrows, or on the tip of the nose or the heart-lotus; one should try to meditate on God for a long time.\textsuperscript{1769} Perfection in posture is accomplished through constant practice and determination. It is noteworthy that the concept of āsana as found in the *Yogasūtras* and the *Bhāgavatam* has nothing to do with the popular concepts of...
āsana. Āsana s taken as physical exercise in order to enhance longevity is the concept of Hatha-yoga; the Bhāgavatam categorically asks sādhaka not to make the body strong in order to enhance longevity for, body is perishable and any attempt to make it immortal is futile.\textsuperscript{1770}

Patanjali says, 'Seat being conquered, the dualities do not obstruct.'\textsuperscript{1771}

iv. Prānāyāma:

Prānāyāma is restraining of vital energy. Prānāyāma has three limbs: puraka (inhaling), kumbhaka (retaining) and recaka (exhaling).\textsuperscript{1772} By prānāyāma, the obstacles arising from three humours (vāta, pitta, kapha) should be overcome.\textsuperscript{1772} Prānāyāma is performed in order to purify the internal being by controlling prāṇa – the vital energy of which the subtle manifestation is ‘thought’. An individual inhales and exhales, like breath, numerous thoughts and the impressions of objects outside. By āsana, one establishes control over external space; by prānāyāma, over internal space. Just as breath can flicker the flame, similarly the thought can flicker consciousness (mind-stuff). By controlling breath, one can control thought and purify the restless citta.\textsuperscript{1774}

When thoughts are monitored in tune with Yoga, sādhaka becomes free from fear of restlessness.

That, prānāyāma is not merely a physical exercise, is known by the fact that it should be accompanied by the repetition of Pranava (AUM). “Like a fine thread of lotus stalk and like a continuous peel of a bell, the mystic Sound (aumkāra) is extending from the Mulādhāra up. By regulation of prāṇa, this mystic Sound should be raised to the heart and made clearly manifest there.”\textsuperscript{1775}

Thus, we observe that prānāyāma has three aspects: Adhibhautika prānāyāma comprises of control of physical breath through puraka, kumbhaka and recaka. Adhidaivika prānāyāma is control of thoughts. Adhyātmika prānāyāma is constant

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1770} XI, 28, 41-43
  \item \textsuperscript{1771} RY, II, 48
  \item \textsuperscript{1772} III, 26, 9; VII, 15, 32; XI, 14, 33
  \item \textsuperscript{1773} III, 26, 11
  \item \textsuperscript{1774} III, 26, 10
  \item \textsuperscript{1775} XI, 14, 34 transl. S.T.
\end{itemize}
suggestion to consciousness (mind-stuff) with the Divine (aum) and subsequent upliftment of the consciousness (mind-stuff) from Muladhara to Anahat.

Patanjali says, “From that (prānāyāma) the covering to the light of the citta is attenuated. The mind becomes fit for dhāraṇā.”

v. Pratyāhāra:

The Bhāgavatam describes pratyāhāra as the state of total abandonment of attachments and conquest of senses accompanied by the fixing of mind on the form of God. Patanjali defines pratyāhāra as: The drawing in of the organs is by their giving up their own objects and taking the form of the mind-stuff, as it were.

Pratyāhāra is not only the withdrawal of organs from the objects but also of the very senses along with mind. Without the mastery over senses all spiritual disciplines like silence, vows, scholarship, austerity, study of scriptures, svadharma, preaching, solitude, Mantras and Samādhi-yoga are totally futile. God remains unattainable for those without the mastery over senses. The Gita explains pratyāhāra with a beautiful analogy of tortoise. Just as tortoise withdraws all its limbs within, a yogi should withdraw his organs and senses into mind. The Bhāgavatam reiterates the same idea when it says, ‘...by pratyāhāra of mind, its tendency to go after sense-objects should be mastered...’ For, there is always a danger of relapse into saṁsāra until the mind is withdrawn, as in the case of Saubhari Muni. The Bhāgavatam as well as the Gita say that by long practice of abstention, the organs turn away from the objects but not the tendencies to enjoy; they draw the mind in the objects by force, in spite of one’s strenuous efforts to hold it.

1776 RY, II,52-53
1777 II,1,23
1778 RY, II,54
1779 VII,9,46
1780 X,72,10
1781 B.G., II,58
1782 III,28,11* transl. S.T.
1783 IX,6,39-52
1784 VII,12,7; B.G., II,60
Sādhaka may be occasionally pestered by the memory of sāṁsāra in spite of his total
discrimination and renunciation but this may be considered only a temporary state as
a dream.1785 Sādhaka should, nonetheless, be vigilant if the mind while being made to
concentrate begins to stray; he should try to bring it back under control by conciliatory
method,1786 and through the knowledge of evolution and involution.1787 Once the
mind is controlled, it should never be allowed to move away through the yogic prac­
tices and reasoning reinforced with sattva.1788

vi. Dhāraṇā:
According to Patanjali, ‘Dhāraṇā (concentration) is holding the mind on to some par­
ticular object;’1789 to the Bhāgavatam, it is obviously the concentration on God. The
pure mind turns towards yoga. It can conceive of its aim. Dhāraṇā is conception of di­
vine thought or image. After conquering posture, vital breath, attachments and senses,
one should concentrate on the cosmic gross form of God that is the Virat.1790 By such
concentration (dhāraṇā), the sinful tendencies,1791 and the weaknesses of mind – to be
drawn out due to rajas, or to be dull due to tamas – should be overcome.1792

“Whenever the mind runs away under the stress of desires, a discriminating person
should draw it towards the heart again and again, and concentrate it there.

“The mind of an aspirant who practises like this without break, will soon subside in
calmness, as the fire that has consumed the fuel.”1793

Vacaspati Misra, in his explanation to Yogasūtra of Patanjali and Yoga-bhāṣya of
Veda-Vyāsa,\textsuperscript{1794} quotes the Viṣṇu P (VI,7,77-95) while defining dharana thereby expressing its method of concentration on the august form of Hari.\textsuperscript{1795}

One should concentrate on one part of the form of the Lord at a time passing from the Feet upwards until dhee (intellect) is purified and the part so concentrated upon becomes clearly manifest in the intellect.\textsuperscript{1796} Repeated practice of dharanā on God's form generates devotion in the mind of the yogin.\textsuperscript{1797} Through dharanā, the memory of the Original is regained.\textsuperscript{1798}

\textbf{vii. Dhyāna:}

Patanjali defines dhyāna as ‘an unbroken flow of knowledge in that object (i.e. the object of dharana).\textsuperscript{1799} Dhyāna or meditation is characterized by the knowledge of what was conceived in dharanā. Conception is an ideal state; meditation is the visualization of the idea. Mind here actually reflects the image of the Ideal. Mind, bereft of all tendencies to perform karmas, turns resplendent with sattva\textsuperscript{1800} so as to reflect the infinite as much as possible. The resplendent mind is often known as citta. "By practice of Dhyāna yogi soon overcomes the erroneous view of the absolute distinction between the seer, the seen and the act of seeing."\textsuperscript{1801} With the help of Dhyāna, man's doubts and non-godly qualities should be overcome.\textsuperscript{1802}

An aspirant may meditate on the very form of God that he conceived in dharanā. With this act of meditation, a yogi transcends the plain of matter and nears Brahman.
“When one has thus established his mind (and intellect) in Me, he visualizes Me in his own self and his self in Me, the Universal Soul, just as (an individual) light is merged with the elemental light”, says the Lord.\textsuperscript{1801}

The state of meditation is compared with the deep sleep wherein no experience of the material existence prevails. \textit{Sadhaka} should not be tempted either by the \textit{siddhis} that accrue in this state\textsuperscript{1804} or by the joy that emanates from the knowledge of the Divine. Only when he rises above those attractions, he reaches the Final Beatitude, where Death would not mock at him.\textsuperscript{1805} He should constantly strive to transcend that state also, because that is not the final state. The final beatitude for yogi is \textit{Samādhi}, that is the realization of \textit{Brahman} or \textit{Bhagavān}.

It may be noted that in tune with the \textit{Gītā}, the \textit{Bhāgavatam} goes as far as saying that meditation determines the next birth.\textsuperscript{1806} The existential meaning of the idea can be summed up thus: the object of our meditation determines the state of our mind in the time just succeeding the meditation, which may be considered as the next birth. Thus, there are series of ‘lives’ in a single lifetime of man.

\textbf{a. Phenomenon of ‘HEART’ in meditation:}

The reference to ‘Heart’ as the locus of meditation finds place in all yogas – be it \textit{Rāja-yoga}, \textit{Tantra}, \textit{Jñāna-yoga} or \textit{Bhakti-yoga}. According to \textit{Jñāna-yoga}, it is connotative of the centre of consciousness. The \textit{Tantra} refers to it as \textit{anāhat cakra} where the divinity is experienced in the form of Sound. It is, as if, an entrance to the higher plains of consciousness for the \textit{Kundalini Śakti} that travels from the lower lotuses to the upper ones through the heart-lotus, bringing about a significant change in the spiritual state of a yogi. All yogas refer to the Heart as Lotus – \textit{Hṛtakamal} – whereupon one’s chosen deity (\textit{īṣṭa}) is to be meditated.\textsuperscript{1807} Some followers of the \textit{jñāna-mārga} meditate upon the thumb-sized \textit{Ātman} (\textit{ānugṛtha-pramāṇa}) within the cavity of one’s...
A bhakta meditates and worships his Lord God as seated upon the lotus of his heart. Though the lotus of Heart is said to be located in the bosom, it is not referred to as the physical heart.

The Bhāgavatam also at numerous places, refers to the heart. For instance, the Lord is said to be present in the hearts of all. When Brahmā could not find out his origin outside, he meditated within and realized the truth of the Lord as the Indwelling Spirit within his Heart. Further, it is mentioned that a devotee’s Heart melts in the love for God. Heart is also called cave (gruhā).

b. How to meditate:

One should be seated on a seat not too elevated nor too low, not too soft nor too hard, with body straight, hands in lap, eyes half-closed and gazing at the tip of nose. The place of meditation should be congenial to peace, clean, without noise. Yoga should not be practised where there are many anthills or wild animals or danger or many wicked persons and where four streets meet. Place of meditation may be well hidden, peaceful, beautiful and preferably enclosed. One should not practise yoga while ill, sorrowful, or lazy. One should begin the meditation by first saluting all the ancient yogis, one’s guru and God. One can meditate on the tip of nose, or between eyebrows, or on the heart, or on the temple of the head.

The aspirant is directed to meditate on the Lotus of the Heart blooming upward with eight petals and a pericarp in which the sun, moon and fire are arranged one over the other, and the form of God in the middle of the fire. The total form of God along with all paraphernalia should be conceived. The withdrawn mind, directed by its controller, the buddhi, should be made to hold on to His complete form. Having attained perfection in this concentration, a resolute aspirant should, then, concentrate exclu-
sively on one limb or a part of God, preferably on the face illumined by a smile, he should meditate on the heart-bewitching exploits of God in His various incarnations. Śādhanaka, having attained perfect concentration on the gross form of God, should establish his intellect on the subtle or the formless Brahman. The one who concentrates his pure Citta on Nirguṇa Brahma attains the Supreme Bliss.

viii. Samādhi:

The Bhāgavatam describes Samādhi also as Kaivalya, Nirvāṇa, Apavarga, Ekāntitvam, etc.

a. Definition:

Patanjali defines Samādhi as a state wherein citta (the mind-stuff) gets the modification 'taking in all sorts of objects, and concentrating upon one object, these two powers being destroyed and manifested respectively...

The Bhāgavatam defines Samādhi as 'subjugation of mind' and considers it as the highest yoga. By practising austerity accompanied by various disciplines, a śādhanaka attenuates his samskāras and desires; consequently, the mind becomes completely purified. It is obvious that when the Bhāgavatam discusses Samādhi as the ultimate goal, the sole object of concentration is the Divine; because concentration on anything other than the Divine causes desires and, subsequently, miseries. Patanjali says, 'Among various cittas, that which is attained by Samādhi is desireless'. Just as water that is free from impurities, the citta in its pristine state is pure, unmodified and peaceful. Only when one is freed from all desires of mind, one becomes fit for the realization of God. When citta is subject to this state, it can ceaselessly concent-
trate on one object, then, it can dwell on that object (God) without any other thought. This concentration is like flow of oil (taila-dhāra) devoid of bubbles. Ultimately, the distinction of meditator and the object of meditation are overcome. Such Samādhi is the highest yoga. God resides in the yogi who attains to this state of equanimity.

b. Nature:

The state of Kaivalya, Nirvāṇa, Apavarga and Nihşreyə correspond to the state of Samādhi. In passage of time, these names were adopted by different schools, as a result of which their connotation changed by a little. Nevertheless, fundamentally, all of them denote the same destination, viz., dis-identification of mind from matter, and the liberation from karmas and their effects. Hence, the Bhāgavatam use any of these words to mean the state of Final Beatitude.

When Citta transcends these three states of consciousness, viz., waking, dream and deep sleep, then, a person realizes Ātman and attains to the actionlessness. This state is without any name and description; hence, the only name it must be given is the Fourth (Turiyā), and the only description, the blissful state.

All synonyms of the transcendental state manifestly point at the persistence of one substance in that state; albeit the words ‘Apavarga’ as well as ‘Nirvāṇa’ do not explicitly take this stance, thereby, leaving ample scope for various interpretations. Apavarga is the ‘Final Beatitude’. Similarly, Nirvāṇa is also understood as ‘the freedom’; it is obviously the freedom from karmas and their effects. Various schools have analyzed

1825 XI, 14, 44
1826 IV, 12, 17
1827 IV, 20, 16
1828 III, 27, 28; IV, 20, 10; XI, 20, 34, etc.
1829 III, 25, 29-29; VII, 7, 37; IX, 7, 27, etc.
1830 XI, 20, 33, etc.
1831 XI, 20, 35
1832 'Kaivalya', by definition, means the state of perfect isolation, or that of perfect unity. 'Nirvāṇa' is the state of absolute extinction of individuality. ‘Apavarga’ is the state of completion and absolution. ‘Nihşreyə’ is the state of Supreme Blessedness. All the four states are quite in correspondence with each other, as, the meaning they convey is the ‘Final Beatitude’.
1833 XII, 7, 21
this state as the Nihil or Void (Śunya). Nevertheless, the Bhāgavatam rejects this mis-
concept. It states that this state is so subtle that it escapes the vision of certain phi-
losophers, and is conceived erroneously as nihil (sukṣmam āsunyam śunya kalpitam). 
Brahman, who is also described as 'the one like void' (Śunyatulam), alone can be the existence in the Final Beatitude because, Brahman, who is that which remains after all negation (Niṣedhasesa), alone is the Final. Therefore, the Bhāgavatam as well as the Gitā very pertinently uses the phrase 'Brahma nirvāna' for this state and also describes the nature of this state as blissful (Brahmanirvāpasuk-
ham). Undoubtedly, if the sectarian ideas are husked apart, all the concepts as no-
ticed above aim at one single state of emancipation.

2. TANTRA-YOGA IN THE BHĀGAVATAM:
The Bhāgavatam shows various ways of meditation of which we have observed the ways of meditation in Jñāna-yoga and Bhaktī-yoga.

There is a third way of meditation implicit in the Bhāgavatam – it is meditation ac-
cording to Tantra-yoga. The meditation on various plexuses, the transcendence of those plexuses by the yogi in order to leave the body, and the geographical reflections as discussed in the Bhāgavatam establish a cogent relation between the Bhāgavatam and Tantra-yoga.

Tantra must have been derived from the root 'tan' (8 U.) meaning ‘to spread, to stretch, to extend’, etc. To it, the suffix 'tra' which means ‘to save’ is added. Thus, Tantra is that scripture of which knowledge that saves is spreaded. To quote the same source, “Kāmika Āgama of the Śaiva Siddhānta (Tantrāntara Paṭaḷa) says: ‘Tanoti vipulān arthān tattvamantra-samanvitān traṇaṇa kurte yasmāt tantram ity-
abhidhiyate’ (It is called Tantra because it promulgates great knowledge concerning
There is yet another implication of ‘Tantra’ to which the Bhāgavatam also lends supports. ‘Tan’ is that which is extended. Brahman is self-existent and exists in itself. It is not referred to as the extended reality. What extends is Māyā, Śrī, or Devī, the power (śakti) of Brahman. Tan is a derivative of ‘tra’ (1.A) meaning ‘to protect, to rescue from’ etc. Hence, ‘Tantra’ is also connotative of the knowledge, which protects from that which is extended (i.e. Māyā or Prakṛti). Tantra is a branch of knowledge, which seeks to transcend the extended reality through matter itself. It shows the means to get over the matter with the help of material instruments of which body is the foremost. The Bhāgavatam also supports this method of sādhana. Just as gold-smelters extract gold from the ore so does a sādhaka, through spiritual communion, extract Brahman from the ore of the body (कष्ट्रे देहेऽ). i. The Lotuses or Plexuses: The lotuses or plexuses as mentioned in the Tantra are Mulādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Manipuraka, Anāhat, Viśuddha, Ājñā and Sahasrāra. Though these centres are said to be located at a particular place in the human body, their existence may not be taken as anatomical. They are the stages of consciousness which can be revealed exactly only to a sincere sādhaka. This is a mysterious aspect of the Tantra, which relates the levels of consciousness to body.

The Bhāgavatam, while describing various methods of meditation, allude to the doctrine of plexuses and considers the meditation on the Sahasrāra as the highest attainment reaching which there is no fall for the yogi.

Another allusion to the plexuses is found in the detailed description of the process of leaving body as undertaken by the yogi. Therein we find the reference to the

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1841 ibid., p.55
1842 VI,19,13
1844 VII,7,21*
1845 X,87,18
1846 infra p. 227
The \textit{Auxiuaw Yogas} of \textit{Kundalim-yogp}. It also concludes with the process of piercing of consciousness through the temple of head (\textit{Brahmarandhra}) thereby realizing oneness with the Supreme Being.\footnote{1847}

However, although the \textit{Bhagavatam} refers to \textit{suṣumnā (nāḍī)},\footnote{1848} it does not refer to the name ‘\textit{Kundalinī Śakti’}.

\textbf{ii. The Plexeses and the philosophy of the Logos or Sound:}

\textit{Kṛṣṇa} himself in the \textit{Bhagavatam} explicitly presents the doctrine of lotuses.

“This is that perceptible Supreme Lord who infuses life in all and who manifests himself within the nerve-centres or plexuses (\textit{cakras}) known as \textit{Mulādhāra} and other (existing in the internal parts of human body). With the \textit{Prāṇa} impregnated with \textit{Nāda} (called \textit{Parā} speech), he enters the ‘cave’ (known as \textit{āḍhāra cakra}, located near the anal orifice). He proceeds (ahead) assuming the subtle mental form (known as \textit{Paśyanti}, and \textit{Madhyama} forms of speech) in the spiritual plexuses called \textit{Maṇipura} and \textit{Viśuddha} located at the navel and at the throat, respectively. He reveals Himself in the mouth in the form of short and long notes, accents (such as \textit{udātta}, \textit{anudātta} and palatals, dentals etc.). This is the grossest speech-form (called \textit{Vaikhan}) of the \textit{Vedas} and its branches.”\footnote{1849}

As we have observed, God first manifests within the space of the heart of the Yogi in the form of \textit{Sphoṭa} (also called \textit{Parā} aspect of sound) – the inarticulate sound,\footnote{1850} which is also known as the \textit{Śabda Brahma}, changeless and limitless in power, proceeding from \textit{Para Brahma}.\footnote{1851} \textit{Sphoṭa} further manifests as \textit{Nāda} or \textit{Ghosa} (also called \textit{Paśyanti} aspect of sound) – the articulate sound.\footnote{1852} \textit{Nāda} is also often out of the conceptual periphery of the \textit{sādhaka}. So, the articulate sound further extended as the \textit{Prapava ‘AUM} (also called \textit{Madhyama} aspect of sound which is conceivable, but

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{1847}{I,2,21; IV,4,25; IV,23,14-15}
\footnote{1848}{I,2,24}
\footnote{1849}{XI,12,17 transl. Tagare}
\footnote{1850}{X,85,9; XII,6,37}
\footnote{1851}{XI,21,37}
\footnote{1852}{X,85,9}
\end{footnotes}
not perceptible through senses). The sādhaka can meditate on it as manifesting in the heart (anāhat) in the form of the sound of AUM in order to know the Supreme Truth. Having practised prāṇāyāma, sādhaka should, further, follow the sound that is as continuous as the ringing of a bell (ghaṭānādam). The Antah-Prāṇava develops into the Bāhyā-Prāṇava (vaikhari aspect of the sound), which can be heard and uttered. As the sound is associated with all levels of consciousness – from Mulādhāra to Sahāsrāra, AUM – the symbol that signifies the sound is verily considered as indicative of Brahman, Param Ātman, Bhagavān. Hence, it is called Brahmāksaram or Brahma bijam.

AUM is only one of the names or symbols of God. God revealed Himself unto Brahma, who had withdrawn after the intense search for his origin, as the sound ‘TAPA’. Thus, the Bhāgavatam concept of the Sound can accommodate any form Logos that is indicative of the Supreme Reality. It can be AUM, TAPA, or the Biblical ‘I am I’.

iii. Tantra and the Geographical Reflections of the Bhāgavatam:
We have traced the allegory in the geographical description that is found in the Bhāgavatam. We, here, relate the geographical reflections of the Bhāgavatam with the concept of plexuses of the Tantra. This co-relation helps the sādhaka to understand an aspect of the Bhāgavatam which is conducive to the meditation.

For the description of cakras, we have resorted to Sir John Woodroffe’s (alias Arthur Avalon) translation of ‘Śat-cakra-Nirūpāṇa’ which is a part of his book ‘The Serpent Power’. Given below are the points of comparison between a cakra as described in the Tantra and the corresponding continent on the earth, as described in the geographical reflections in the Bhāgavatam.

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1853 X,12,39; XII,6,39; X,85,9
1854 X,14,34
1855 XII,6,39
1856 II,1,17
1857 I,9,6
1858 Madras, Ganesh & Co., 1981
## I. MULĀDHĀRA CAKRA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JAMBUDWEEPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Merudanda, the Backbone, starts from here. It is the centre line of body which passes through the plexuses.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru mountain is located at the centre of this dweepa. It is also the centre of the earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. There is a square on this lotus with Merudanda as its centre.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a square with Meru at centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. The square is surrounded by eight shining spears (which are often compared to mountains).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru has eight mountains around it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Muladhara is yellow in colour.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru shines like gold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Bija of Dharā (lam), which is located within the center of the pericarp has in its lap four-faced creator Child.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the center upon the Meru, there is a golden city of Brahma who is the four-faced creator Child of the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Within the square in the pericarp, upon the triangle, there resides Svayambhu in His linga form.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Ilavṛta Varṣa that immediately surrounds the Meru, there resides Paramesvara the Lord of Bhavāni.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. The above-mentioned square is the location of the Bija of Dharā (the Earth).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Uttarkuru, bordering the Jambu dweepa, the Varāha form of Lord is worshipped. Varāhavitāra has the earth as</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1859 V,16,7  
1860 V,16,27  
1861 V,16,7  
1862 V,16,28  
1863 V,17,15  
1864 V,18,34
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.</th>
<th>The above-mentioned triangle at the mouth of Nāḍī, is called Kāmarūpa inside which are kāma-vāyu and kāma-bijā (Klim).</th>
<th>His consort. ¹⁸⁶⁴</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the Ketumala Varṣa of the dweepa, the Lord is worshipped in the form of Kāma-Deva. ¹⁸⁶⁵</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kūṇḍalini produces the Sound.</td>
<td>The Lord in the form of Hayagrīva, who symbolizes the Vedas, is worshipped. ¹⁸⁶⁶ The Vedas are also known as Śabdā Brahma.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### II. SVĀDHISTHĀNA CAKRA

| 1. | Though the lotus is of vermilion hue, it has within it the white circle of Varuṇa. | The Plākṣa tree has white flowers. |
| 2. | One who meditates upon this lotus, in him rises the sun of knowledge. | Mahāvisṇu as the Sun is worshipped in this dweepa. ¹⁸⁶⁷ |

### III. MANIPURĀKA CAKRA

| 1. | Fire is the adhiṣṭhāta devatā (presiding deity) of this lotus. | Fire is the lord of Kuśa dweepa. ¹⁸⁶⁸ |
| 2. | Vaiśvānara, the Fire, is called ‘Vedabhuti’ – the four-armed one or with the Vedas as arms. | The Lord in the form of Veda and Soma is worshipped in Śalmaḷa dweepa. ¹⁸⁶⁹ |

¹⁸⁶⁴ V.18,15 ¹⁸⁶⁵ V.18,1 ¹⁸⁶⁶ V.20,4 ¹⁸⁶⁷ V.20,16 ¹⁸⁶⁸ V.20,n ²²⁵
### IV. ANAHAT CAKRA  
**KRAUŃCA DWEEPA**

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<table>
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</table>

### V. VIŚUDDHA CAKRA  
**ŚĀKADWEEPA**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ether is the element in this lotus.</td>
<td>The Supreme Being as Vāyu is meditated upon in this dweepa.¹⁸⁷¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. On the arrival of Kundalini in this plexus, purity is bestowed upon Jīva.</td>
<td>Residents of this dweepa attain purity through Prāṇāyāma.¹⁸⁷²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Meditating on this lotus, a Yogi becomes the Ātma-jñāni.</td>
<td>The residents are endowed with samādhi with which they worship the Lord.¹⁸⁷³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VI. ĀJNĀ CAKRA  
**PUŚKARA DWEEPA**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It has two petals.</td>
<td>The dweepa is divided into two varṣas.¹⁸⁷⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is the seat of mind.</td>
<td>Manasottara is the only mountain on it. It symbolizes mind.¹⁸⁷⁵</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Here, the yogi realizes non-dualism of Brahman.</td>
<td>The residents worship the Lord in order to attain to non-dual (advayam) form of Brahman (Brahmalihgam).¹⁸⁷⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In the centre of the Ājnā-cakra is the ‘Itaralihga’ which is lightening-like. This is the Lord Śiva, the non-dual Brahman.</td>
<td>Brahman, the non-dual Supreme, is identified as ‘Brahmalihgam.’¹⁸⁷⁷</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁸⁷⁰ V,20,18-23  
¹⁸⁷¹ V,20,27  
¹⁸⁷² V,20,27  
¹⁸⁷³ V,20,27  
¹⁸⁷⁴ V,20,30  
¹⁸⁷⁵ V,20,30  
¹⁸⁷⁶ V,20,32-33  
¹⁸⁷⁷ V,20,32-33
5. The *Devi* of this lotus has a book in one of her six hands (*vidyā mudrā* or *Pustaka mudrā*). She creates. **Brahma**, the creator is said to have his seat in the lotus of this *dweepa* (from which the *dweepa* derives its name).\(^{1878}\)

### VII. SAHASRĀRA AND BEYOND THE LOKĀLOKA MOUNTAIN:

When the *Kundalini* arrives at the *Brahma-randhra* having pierced through the six plexuses, the lotus of *Sahasrāra* in the *Brahma-randhra* blooms. This is the state of *samādhi*. The *Kundalini Sakti* imbues the nectar that drops from the *Sahasrāra*. This state cannot be described fully. It is beyond the ken of senses.

The geographical region beyond the *Lokāloka* mountain resembles this state, ‘...Beyond that is another region, golden and shining like a mirror. Nothing put in it can return, as it will get dissolved.’\(^{1879}\) ‘...Great men say that this is the holy region of the Masters of Yoga’.\(^{1880}\)

Neither the light of the sun nor any luminary up to *Dhruva* can go beyond this mountain.\(^{1881}\)

Tagare draws our attention that Patanjali (2nd cent. A.D.) mentions this concentric division of the earth in seven island-continents, which is also common to the *Viṣṇu P* (2.4), the *Mārkandeya P* (54.6), and with a variation in the *Matsya P* (121,122) and the *Agni P* (108.1.3). Nundo Lai De in *The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India* (Luzac and Co., London, 1927) p. 179, presents a geographical identification of the seven seas. However, Baladeva Upadhyaya in *Purāṇa Vimarṣa*, pp. 317-331 and D.C. Sircar in Studies in GAM, pp.17-25 differ from De.\(^{1882}\)

### 3. HOW A YOGI ABANDONS THE BODY:

The process of leaving body as described in the *Bhāgavatam*, also bears its links with the *Tantra*. The yogi who attains to finality does not require continuing his life in this

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1878 V,20,29  
1879 V,20,35 transl. S.T.  
1880 V,20,42 transl. S.T.  
1881 V,20,37  
1882 AITM, FN,V,1,32-33  
227
world. Otherwise, the horses of senses may lend a man in the midst of the robbers of sense-objects. Moreover, the yogi, who attains samādhi, has no other purpose to fulfill by continuing in the body. He may continue to live embodied until the prārabdha karmas get completely exhausted. In certain cases, the yogi lives on for the general benefit of the world. However, there is a process by which he can leave the body as and whenever he wishes to. When a yogi desires to leave his body, he should give up all thoughts about time and space; then, regulating his vital energy, sitting in a firm and convenient posture he should establish control over all senses. By the process of ‘neti neti’ (‘not this, not this’), he should overcome the identification with body embracing the Lord’s feet in the heart.

Pressing the anal region with the heel, a yogi should raise up the prāṇa gradual from Mulādhāra to the upper plexuses and ultimately to the Brahma-randhra, in the temple of the head. Utterly detached, he should dissolve his five prāṇas into the universal Prāṇa. He should, then, dissolve the physical elements in their respective universal counterparts, e.g. the space in the universal space, and air, fire, water and earth in the same manner. Further, he should dissolve the element into its causal element, i.e., earth in water, water in fire, fire in air and air in ether. Then, he should dissolve the gross elements into their causal subtle elements which should be dissolved in turn in ego. Likewise, the senses and the mind along with the presiding deities should be dissolved into ego. Ego should be dissolved in intellect, which in turn should be dissolved along with Prakṛti into the individual Self, the jīva, which is a projection of the Lord’s power of Māyā. Abiding on this matrix, viz., the Supreme Spirit, the limitations of jīvahood should also be cast off thereby establishing unity with Brahman. Then the body would fall like a dried leaf. We also find reference to this process of

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1883 VII, 15, 45
1884 VII, 15, 46
1885 I, 6, 29; III, 28, 37
1886 IV, 23, 14-18; II, 2, 15-21; XI, 15, 24; I, 13, 53-56
1887 I, 9, 29
1888 II, 2, 15
1889 II, 2, 18
leaving body in the narrative of Sati Devi, and many other yogis and devotees. The brähmapa lady as well as the Vraja-Gopīs who were prevented from going to Kṛṣṇa also left their body in constant remembrance of Kṛṣṇa with their Karma-force having been exhausted due to such remembrance.

4. Summary:

Rāja-yoga of Patanjali has put such an indelible mark on the methods of sādhanā of all of Indian traditions that it has been woven into every one of them. The eight-fold path as envisaged by the Rāja-yoga has been unanimously accepted as the path that is beneficial for every kind of spiritual endeavour. Starting from the external and physical part of sādhaka’s life, it gradually goes on to purify and uplift the inner chambers of his life. It aims to thoroughly discipline body and mind with help eight modes; hence, the path is also known as the astāṅga-yoga. However, yoga does not encourage the practice of yogic disciplines for enhancing the body-strength as well as longevity, and for the attainment of psychic powers. The summum bonum according to Rāja-yoga is nirvikalpa samādhi, which is total cessation of all mental waves. The original yoga as taught by Patanjali, although theistic, does not stress the role of personal approach to Godhood. In sharp contrast to it, the version as put forward by the Bhāgavatam is not only theistic but emphasizes the indispensability of devotion to God. Thus, while the Rāja-yoga of Patanjali considers the devotion to God as only one of the means to attain samādhi, according to the Bhāgavatam, it is the foremost means to attain the goal with the rest being complimentary to it.

We would like to underscore the fact that we have been able to identify certain Tantric facets which hide from view of the reader. The esoteric Tantra-yoga does find its due place in the Bhāgavata sādhanā, although it is not highlighted as a prominent yoga on par with Jñāna-yoga, Karma-yoga and Rāja-yoga. The aspects of Tantra that are found relevant to the other forms of sādhanā are woven into those with a finesse so as neither to miss the advantages of those aspects nor to deviate from the core ideas of the Bhāgavata sādhanā, which may have certain marked difference with
those of the *Tantra*. A very important Tantric notion of *sat-cakra-bhedā* is allegorically expressed in the geographical description of the earth. The continents and the oceans around each of them actually refer to the seven stages of human consciousness. In addition, the philosophy of Sound as is popular with the Tantric literature also finds explicit reference in the *Bhāgavatam*.

The ultimate aim of *Tantra*, like that of *Rāja-yoga*, is also the total cessation of mental waves and the experience of the undivided consciousness.