CHAPTER 11


ACCORDING TO SRI NIJAGUNA SHIVAYOGI

1. The Forms and Means of Mystical Experience:

Nijaguna’s conception of Mystical experience, unlike the conceptions of some modern philosophers of Mysticism, incorporates all the four forms of
(1) Theistic Mysticism, (2) Absolutistic Mysticism, (3) Introvertive Mysticism and (4) Extrovertive Mysticism. Although Nijaguna, being an Advaitin, is essentially in favour of Absolutistic or Identity Mysticism, he nevertheless does not totally reject Theistic Mysticism. He allows Theistic Mysticism for mandadhikāris (i.e. for the minimally fit) and madhyamādhikāris (i.e. for the moderately fit). For the optimally fit and the maximally fit Nijaguna prescribes only the Identity-Mysticism. For instance, Nijaguna, as we shall see later in this chapter, prescribes Theistic Mystical practices or Yógas like Mantra-yōga and Shiva-yōga for the mandadhikāris and madhyamādhikāris. While he prescribes Absolutistic mystical practices or Yogas like Nirguṇāstanga-yōga (as we shall see later in this Chapter) and (as we have already
seen in chapter 7-ii during our discussion of the Nididhyāsana according to Nījadūna) the Sūkṣmayaoga, Vinutayōga, Adhikayōga, Amālayōga and Nijayōga for the uttamadṛḍhikarins. As regards the Introvertive and the Extrovertive forms of mystical experience, Nījadūna, as we shall see later in this chapter, mentions and discusses both the 'Nētyātmaka' (which is Introvertive) and the 'Sarvatmaka' (which is the Extrovertive) forms of mystical experience. Actually the different means or the Yōgas prescribed by Nījadūna for the attainment of mystical experience or of different forms of mystical experience as well. Hence we cannot and should not distinguish between the forms and the means of mystical experience in the context of Nījadūna's exposition.

**The Six means or yoga leading to mystical experience according to Nījadūna:**

Nījadūna has prescribed Six yōgas in Yōgapratipa-dana Sthala of Kaivalya Paddhati, Paramārtha Geete and Paramānubhava bōdhe, which aim at restraining the mind-stuff from taking various forms and lead the mind towards mystical experience. The Six Yōgas are:

1. Mantrayōga,
2. Layayōga,
3. Ḫatyōga,
4. Raja-yōga,
5. Shivayōga, and
1. **Mantrayōga**: There are two forms of Mantrayōga
   (1) Japamantrayōga (2) Ajapamantrayōga. The Japamantrayōga consists in doing repeated Japa of Mantras like 'Om Namassivāya,' 'Hreem Hrām Hrūm Namassivaya' etc., addressed to different chosen deities and getting meditatively absorbed in those respective deities. The Ajapamantrayōga consists in methodically meditatively following through the 'Soham' mantra the natural course of our breathing which, according to Nījaguna, takes place 21,600 times a day. Nījaguna says that while taking breath inside the word 'अ,' and while leaving the breath the word 'ॐ' are emerging naturally, if we put it as 'ॐअ' it signifies Ātman and if we reverse its order it reads as and signifies नाम meaning That-Thou-Art.

If we remove 'ॐ' and 'अ' what remains is 'Om' (the Pranava mantra) which emerges in 'Bhru-madhya' (the Mind-brow). This is the modification of the 'ॐअ' mantra the metaphysical import of which is: if we leave the māyāpādhi Iswara (ॐ) and Avīdyāpādhi-Jiva (अ) what remains is pure-consciousness (i.e. Om).

Nījaguna says that by concentrating, reflecting and meditating on this Ajapamantra one can attain Samādhi.

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1. Yōgapratipādana Sthala of Kaivalya Paddhati, 5.
2. **Layāyoga**: The Layāyoga consists in the total dissolution of mind, along with the 'Prāṇavāyu' (the life breath), either in the 'Anāhatanāda' - i.e. the Uninterrupted and continuous Inner Sound within one's ears or in the 'Bindu' (the Focal Point) of Inner Light within one's eyes. Graphically describing the Modus Operandi of the Layā-Yoga Nijaguna says: Having a quiescent mind one should perform Japa of Mantra and should see different kinds of Light like the Garland of Lightening, the Sparkles of Gold, the Constellation of Shining Stars, the Glowing Halo of the Sun, the Moon and the Fire etc., in one's own Mid-brow; then one should listen to the different 'Anāhatanādās' (Uninterrupted sounds), like the Constant-Drumming-Sound of the Ocean, the Thundering Sound of the clashing Clouds, the Divine Sound of Conchs and Bells etc., and then one should dissolve one's Self totally in the Nitya-Nirmala-Sat-Cit-Ānanda-Shambhulinga who alone remains after the vilaya or dissolution of all Lights, Darkness, Sounds, the Sun-Moon and the Stars and the entire universe of name and form.

3. **Haṭāyoga**: The Haṭāyoga, according to Nijaguna, consists in the conquest of Breath and Mind through the Astangayōga of Yama, Niyama, Asava, Prānāyām, __________

1. Ibid., 6.
Pratyāhara, Dhārāṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi and through the six 'Karaṇas' of Basthi, Dhouthi, Nēti, Thrāṭaka, Nouli and Kapalabhati and through the 'Mudrās' of Khechari, Bhūchari, Shāmbhavi, Sanmukhi etc., and through the Kumbhakāṃ.

4. **Rājayōga:** The Rājayōga consists in the firm and stable concentration of one's mind by realizing the true nature of the Self through the three lakṣyās (or the Focal-objectives) of (1) the Inner-lakṣyā, (2) the middle-lakṣyā and (3) the outer-lakṣyā of the mind.

5. **Shiva-yoqā:** The Shiva-Yoga consists in the Five Steps of (1) the Worship of Shiva who is of the nature of Guru, (2) the meditation of the identity of one's Self with Shiva, (3) the Unparalleled Loving-Devotion to Shiva, (4) realization of the true nature of Shiva and (5) the observance of Sacred Shiva-Vṛitas (Shiva-Rites).

6. **Nirgunāstānga-Yoga:** Nijaguna has adapted the Pātanjala Astāngayōga to the Advaitic-Mystical practice (which is his unique contribution both to the Yōga and

1. Ibid., 4.3.
2. Ibid., 4.4 and for details see Ibid. 18.
3. for details please see, Ibid., 4-5.
to the Advaitic-Mysticism) which he has called Nirgunāstānga-yoga which consists of the following steps: (i) Yama, says Nijaguna, consists in getting vaïrāgya about one's own body, senses and mind etc., as they are all anātmas, (ii) Niyama consists in making the above Vairāgya stand firmly in one's mind, (iii) Asana is that State of mind which is Udasina of (indifferent to) both rāga (attachment) and virāga (detachment). (iv) Prānāyāma is the total stoppage of the Adhyasika relationship with the body, the senses etcetera. (v) Pratyāhāra consists in the total withdrawal of the mind from the objective world and in the directing of it towards Atman within. (vi) Dhārana consists in the fixing of the mind, that has thus turned within, firmly on Pure-Cit. (vii) Dhyāna consists in the meditation of the mind that is thus firmly fixed on Pure-Cit, on its nature as Pure-Cit. (viii) Samādhi is the state where the above meditative-Self (the dhyānakāravritti) totally submerges itself in Pure-Cit and becomes its Pure essential form (Swarūpākāravritti). This State is called Turiya. This Turiya state emerges out of the Nirgunāstangayoga. It is of the form of Swarūpākāravritti or Atmākāravritti and hence is not the Ultimate State. The ultimate or final state is the next state which is Turiyātita in
which all the vrittis, including the Swarūpākāra-vrītti, are dissolved and the intrinsic universal Pure-Cit shines in itself. This state is also called by Nījagūna as the State of Nirāvarana Samādhi. According to Nījagūna the Turiya state of Sam ādhi can be attained through the Sarvātma (Extovertive) Method. The Yōgi who attains this Samādhi is called by Nījagūna as 'Vaiyakarani' who out of his pure love for his fellow beings engages himself in teaching and uplifting his fellow beings. The last Turiyātita State of Samādhi can, according to Nījagūna, be attained through the Nētyātma (Introvertive) method. In this state the Yōgi is called 'Mouni' for he is always silently in his Samādhi and never descents to Vyttana.

The Six Forms of Samādhi:

Nījagūna, the great mystic that he is, describes six different forms of Samādhi - apparently from his own mystical experience. Of these six forms four belong to the Savikalpa-Samādhi (which according to Nījagūna refers to the Turiyā State) and two to the Nirvikalpa Samādhi (which according to Nījagūna refers to the Turiyātita State). The Six forms of Samādhi

2. Ibid., 6.11.10.
3. Anubhava Sara, 6.4 and Viveka Chintamani, pp. 52-53.
are as follows:

1. **Antar-Drisyānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi:**

   Mental vrittis like Kāmākāra-vrittis, Krōdhākāra-vrittis etc., are the internal (Antar) vrittis which are witnessed by Śāksi and if one contemplates that he is only the Śāksi who transcends all those internal vrittis and who is identical with Brahman and gets Samādhi, one is said to have attained Antar-Drisyānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi.

2. **Antar-Nirvikalpa-Samādhi:**

   After listening from the Guru the Tat Tvam Asi and other Mahāvākyās, if one annihilates the Upādhis of both Iswara and Jīva and realizes the identity of Brahman and Atman, contemplates on it and gets Samādhi, one is said to have attained Antar-Sabdānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi.

3. **Antar-Nirvikalpa-Samādhi:**

   The Bliss that emerges from the above two (No. 1 and 2) Samādhis is the Bliss of the pratibimba. The Bliss of the Bimba, however, cannot be experienced because it is of the nature of the Experiencer. Hence it can only be inferred from the Bliss of the Pratibimba. Therefore what, after transcending the above two
Samādhis, 'remains like a lamp which is kept where there is absolutely no movement of air' is called Antar-Nirvikalpa-Samādhi.

4. **Bāhya-Drisyānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi**

When one dissociates the name and form from external objects in to which one's Vrittis enter and contemplates only on Asti, Bhati and Priya of those objects (which are Brahmāmsās) and attains Samādhi one is said to have attained Bāhya-Drisyānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi. In this Samādhi one sees only the Brahman and not the world of external objects.

5. **Bāhya-Sabdānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi**

After listening from the Guru about the Brahman as being of the nature of Sat, Cit and Ananda if one contemplates on that nature of Brahman one's vrittis become the Brahmākaravrittis and this State is called Bāhya-Sabdānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi.

6. **Bāhya-Nirvikalpa-Samādhi**

By rising above the Bāhya-Drisyānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi and Bāhya-Sabdānuvēda-Savikalpa-Samādhi if one transcends the subject-object-distinction and submerges one Self into the Integral-one-ness and remains peacefully like the Waveless Ocean one is said to have
attained the Bāhyā-Nirvikalpa-Samādhi.

By the practice of the above six Samādhis the Sādhaka will get himself submerged in the Absolute Reality and sees everywhere only the Shambhulinga. This, according to Nijaguna, is the Advaitic Mystic path which leads one to Infinity or Mōkṣa.

ii. The Stages and the Characteristics of Mystical Experience:

Nijaguna Shivayogi has adopted a unique method or technique or art of union with Reality through the arousal of "Samādhi" or Mystical Trance which is a super sensuous experience. It is practical-mysticism. It involves "Saptabhūmikas" or seven stages. These Saptabhūmikas are the seven successive steps in the pilgrim's progress to reach the attainment of the highest ecstatic state (the Samādhi) in which the distinction between the subject and the object gets submerged into an integral oneness of the transcendental consciousness. The importance of "Saptabhūmikas" in the process of attaining mystical trance or Samādhi was recognized by the Upanisads also¹. The Saptabhūmikas or the Seven successive stages are as follows:

1. For instance see Mahopanisat, 5.27-35.
1. **Subhēccha**: This first step is called both Subhēccha and Sukhēccha. In this step one will develop a desire for knowing or realizing one's own true nature i.e. Atman by cleansing one's heart and by the practice of Sadhana-Catustaya\(^1\).

2. **Suvicārana**: In this second step the aspirant approaches the 'Guru' (the Spiritual Teacher) and discusses with him about the nature of Atman, Iswara, World, Brahman etc., and through such discussions comes to understand the true meanings of "Mahāvākyas". Such an understanding removes all his doubts about Atman or Brahman and he thus gets himself fully convinced about the ontological unity of Atman and Brahman or of the Microcosm and the Macrocosm\(^2\). (This step consists of Sravana and Manana).

3. **Janumānase or Asanga**: In this third step the Sādhaka's mind goes inward by destroying the anātmā-kāravrittis and there assumes the Atmā-kāravritti. This step is also called by Nijaguna as "Asanga", for the Atman is Asangi and here the mind gets absorbed in such an Atman and assumes only the Atmā-kāravrittis. There are two forms of Asanga according to Nijaguna which are: (1) Sāmānya-Asanga: This is the

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1. Paramārtha Geete, 7.11.
2. Ibid., 8.5.
form of Asanga in which there is an unbroken meditation on Atman who is Asangi i.e. who is untouched by ahankāra and its effects. (ii) Visēsa Asanga: This is the form of Asanga in which there is the constant meditation on the Brahman who is untouched (Asangi) by Māyā and its effects. (This step consists of Nididhyāsana). (This step represents Savikalpa Samādhi).

The above three steps are treated by Nījaguṇa as Jāgrut-States of a Śādhaka, for the Śādhaka sees Vyavaharika Satta in these steps. These steps are the Śādhanās for the Mystical Trance which follows in the next steps.

4. Sattvapatti: This is the fourth step. By the time the Śādhaka has reached this stage all his Vāsanās would have disappeared and his mind is now fixed firmly on Brahman or Shambhulinga. Here there emerges the Absolute Bliss of his own Swarūpa as Ātman or Brahman. This step is like a dream state, for the Śādhaka, who by now has become a Yogi, treats the world of appearance here as a dream. The Yogi

1. Ibid., 9.3-7.
2. There are four kinds of Vāsanās they are: Lōka-vasana, Shāstravasana, Dehavāsana and Mental Vāsana.
stage is called Brahmaidwari Satta". He will not descend from Samādhi state to Vyutthāna State either by himself or by others at any time. Hence Nījaguna says that Samādhi or Mystical Trance in its Ultimate Sense is not transient as some modern western philosophers of mysticism have thought. This Brahma- vidwarishtha is also called, by Nījaguna as "Aroodha" and "Avadhuta" 1.

Some Other Characteristics of Mystical Experience:

As the reader would be aware, we have already, while discussing the Seven stages of mystical experience, considered the different characteristics, characterising the mystical experiences in those successive stages. However there are some other characteristics of mystical experience which we have not covered while discussing those seven stages and they are as follows:

1. Characteristics of a Karmi (of a Doer):

A mystic in the savikalpa state of Samādhi is called a Karmi when he is engaged in good karmas like uplifting of the suffering people, the teaching of the Shastras (the Spiritual lores) etcetera.

1. Paramānubhava bōdhe, 6.8.3-6 and Jnānapratipādana Sthala.
2. **Characteristics of a Bhōgi (Enjoier):**

   A Mystic in the Savikalpa State is called a Bhōgi if he indulges in sensory-pleasures without however being attached to them like Krishna.

3. **Characteristics of a Mūdha (Idiot):**

   A Mystic in the Savikalpa State is called a Mūdha when he, like an idiot, behaves in an unintelligent and unknowledgable way empirically.

4. **Characteristics of a Bālaka (Boy):**

   A Mystic is called a Bālaka (because he displays certain characteristics of a Bālaka) when he is in the Nirvikalpa-Samādhi State and is beyond rāga, dveṣa etcetera. In this State he is like a boy not troubled by the do's and don't's (the Vidhi niṣedhas) of the social ethos.

5. **Characteristics of an Unmatta (an Intoxicated One):**

   A Mystic is called an Unmatta when he, in the Nirvikalpa state, is drunk with the Brahman experience and behaves like an intoxicated person.

6. **Characteristics of a Pishāchi (Demon):**

   A Mystic in the Nirvikalpa State is called a
Pishachi because neither does he like to mix with people nor do people like to mix with him. In this State he would be wondering in his Swarupasthiti alone like a Pishachi¹.

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1. Paramāṇubhava bōdhe, 6.11.1-6.