

Fourth Lecture

Tantra as Practice: Ritual and Yoga

The three introductory lectures have prepared us for the actual purpose for the last and may be most important topic of today: Tantra as practice. It may sound impossible to treat two vast subjects like ritual and *yoga* in a single lecture, but, as before, we have to be content to consider the basic principles of both, and to illustrate them with selected examples. At the outset it has to be stressed that ritual and yoga are closely related, if not inseparable. It would be to oversimplify matters to say that ritual is external activity (*kriyā*) and *yoga* internal, because there is no tantric ritual without meditation or visualization (*dhyāna*), without *mantra* and *japa*, and breath control (*prāṇayāma*). Besides, *yoga* or internalized spiritual practice is often a substitute for ritual by interiorisation, but ritual remains the paradigm. However, having said this, we do have to present the two subjects separately. In fact, the most important link is the whole domain of *mantra*.

I. Ritual:

You will find most correspondences between your Buddhist and Śaiva tantric ritual practice, because they have had a parallel development and mutual influences. It is therefore not so much the description, but the meaning of the ritual elements which concerns us here.¹ The two kinds of ritual on which we are concentrating are: initiation (*dīkṣā*) and regular a occasional *pūjā*.

First some common features:

Tantric ritual puts into practice all the elements of the tantric universe, as we have seen in the context of the *tattvas*. It can be called an actualization of the basic principles, which otherwise would remain abstract. What happens in tantric ritual is an operation of the divine energies – or energy – by channalising and, in a way,

¹ I refer to the excellent study by A. Sanderson, *Meaning in Tantric Ritual* (New Delhi, 2006).

manipulating them. Therefore the external action is only the tip of the iceberg, as it were, beneath which the play of energies is happening.

Every ritual performance involves the practitioner with body, mind and speech, or rather: *vāk-kāya-citta*. The three elements of the total human being are so closely related that, for instance, uttering a *mantra* goes along with a *mudrā* or gesture, and with a mental concentration or imagination. The external objects used in worship, an icon, a *maṇḍala*, a water pot, fire etc., are so to say an extension from the body to the cosmic elements which are all involved in the process. Every ritual, whether simple daily worship of the deity or an elaborate initiation, requires and effects a transformation of the agent or agents. Therefore the necessary process of purification of the body of the worshipper and its transformation into a divine “body of energy” (*śāktadeha*). Both, in the dualist Śaiva Siddhānta and in the non-dualist Trika, the dictum of the Āgamas is taken seriously: “without being a god one cannot worship god”, or “becoming Śiva one should worship Śiva”. This involves the ritual purification (*bhūta-śuddhi*) and re-construction of the divine body. It can also involve in different ritual situations states of possession (*āveśa*) by the deity or Śakti.

Another element linking ritual and *yoga* closely is precisely the tantric understanding of the body. I would dare to say that the basic misunderstanding of Tantra, mainly in the West, is due to different conceptions of the body. The tantric body is not only a microcosm containing and reflecting the macrocosm, it is a symbolic body, with its channels and energy centers (*nāḍī* and *cakra*). It is the locus of all the deities and the place for all sacred sites in the sacred geography. Thus the substratum for both, ritual and *yoga*, is not the physiological materiality, but the organism of energy. It is *prāṇa*, the life-energy which constitutes the link between physicality and spirituality, and hence its importance in all yogic and tantric practices.

The importance of sexual power, sexual symbolism and rituals, has to be seen in this light of the tantric vision of the body.

It is precisely this conception of the tantric-yogic body which underlies important ritual elements such as *mudrā* and *nyāsa* (imposition of *mantras* on parts of the body in order to transform it into the divine).

After these general remarks, which could be expounded, let me come to concrete examples.

Dīkṣā, initiation:

From the very elaborate ritual described in the manual *Somaśambhupaddhati*² of Śaiva Siddhānta we can consider some fundamental elements. Traditional exegesis again analyses the word in two syllables, thus defining *dīkṣā* as “that which bestows knowledge and destroys sins” (*dīyate jñānaṃ, kṣīyate pāpam*). In fact, *dīkṣā* is supposed to purify the disciple by removing all his accumulated *karma*. It effects an ontological transformation of the adept and opens the way to liberation: *nirvāṇa* or *mokṣa*. It does so by destroying the limited self identified with the body and ritually creating a new self. As any elaborate ritual it requires the creation of a sacred space, a *maṇḍapa* and preliminary rituals. Since the process of deification of the body is so important in all tantric rituals, not only *dīkṣā*, we may consider it in detail.

Now he purifies his body with the weapon-mantra, visualizing its power as a fire sweeping up through his body and reducing it to ashes. He then dispels these ashes with the ‘wind’ of the armour mantra. The process of incineration is to be understood by the worshipper as the destruction of his public or physical individuality (*dehāhantā*) and the blowing away of the ashes as the eradication of the deep latent traces (*saṃskārāḥ*) of this binding identification. He is to see that all that remains of his identity is pure, undifferentiated consciousness as the impersonal ground of his cognition and action. So doing he opens the way for his identification with the deity through the mantras that follow: his ritual has removed the

² Cf. *Somaśambhupaddhati*, Troisième partie, ed. and transl. into French by Hélène Brunner, Pondichery, IFI, 1977.

personality which impedes this ‘possession’. This invocation of the Āgamic self into the place of his now absent individuality (*aṇutvam*) is accomplished in two stages. First he installs the mantra of somatization (*mūrtividyā*), identifying it with the primal urge towards the assumption of form that rises up from within the waveless (*nistarāṅgam*) void of his now de-individualized consciousness. The mantra’s verbal form is the worshipper’s assertion that this power is now his identity. As he utters it he becomes the deity-self in its internal, still undifferentiated potentiality as the seed of cosmic expansion. In the next stage he expands this foundation-self by infusing through touch into the parts of his ‘body’ the whole series of deities which he will later worship in the internal *maṇḍala* (*yājyadevatācakranyāsaḥ*, = *viśeṣanyāsaḥ*), seeing them as the cosmic extroversion of this innermost, “I”. This structure of deities in the form of mantras is mantrically translated through numerical equivalences into the thirty-six ontic levels that constitute the Śaiva totality, the tattvas from Śiva (36th) to earth (1st). His body thus divinized as the all-containing Absolute (*anuttaram*), he worships it with flowers, incense and the like.³

Obviously, the role of the Guru is central to initiation, and he too must be deified, if not by his spiritual power, then by the power of mantras. Thus the hand of the Guru is transformed into the “hand of Śiva”, with which he blesses the initiand, who then gets possessed by the god (*āveśa*).

There are different grades of initiation in Śaivism, the lowest being *samayadīkṣā* “initiation of the regular”, a kind of novice, who gains thus access to the tradition and to the study of its scriptures. The most important is the *nirvāṇadīkṣā*, “liberating initiation” which opens the way to final liberation (in the extreme case there is a *sadyonirvāna dīkṣā* which leads to the immediate death – it is given only in case of a seriously ill disciple). The initiate becomes a *putraka*, a

³ Summary of the ritual based on Tantrāloka, by A. Sanderson, *Maṇḍala and Āgamic Identity in the Trika of Kashmir*, p. 174-176.

“son of Śiva”. He is fully entitled to perform all the rituals and study the scriptures. Finally there is the initiation of a master, *ācārya dīkṣā*, the highest, which presupposes the *nirvāṇa dīkṣā*, and it is given mostly by the Guru to his chosen successor.

Now in Śaiva Siddhānta ritual is essential to purify the disciple and allow him access to liberation. In non-dualist Trika or Kashmir Śaivism elaborate ritual can be replaced by a spiritual act. Thus the Tantras mention the alternatives that the graceful look, touch, or word by an accomplished master is sufficient to achieve the same goal of transforming and purifying the disciple, and granting him or her access to the highest experience.

In this tradition there is another kind of yogic *dīkṣā* called "initiation by penetration" (*vedha dīkṣā*), which is operated by the transfer of the Guru's spiritual power in the breath of the disciple, effecting an intense union of Guru and disciple. It leads to an awakening of the *kuṇḍalinī* energy in the central vein of the disciple, making him ascend to the total fusion with the Absolute. The highest form of this is the *paravedha dīkṣā*, leading to divinisation of the initiate.

The difference between the dualistic and non-dualistic approach to ritual lies also in the former (Siddhānta) following the brahmanical distinction between pure and impure, which determines the entire life-style (*dvaitācārya*), whereas the Trika advocated the practice of non-dualism or *advaitācāra*. This means the conscious overcoming of the vedic distinction by involving contact with impure persons and substances in their ritual. This practice was meant to liberate consciousness from the contraction (*saṅkoca*) and inhibition which holds it in bondage,⁴ and by overcoming orthodoxy to lead to a state of transcendence. A. Sanderson sums it all up in the statement: "Transgression, then, is translated into transcendence." This, of course, implies the breaking of caste and gender barriers.⁵

⁴ Cf. A. Sanderson, *Meaning in Tantric Ritual*, p. 17, 78f.

⁵ Kṣemarāja accuses the dualists of "being in the grip of the demon Caste"! (SvTVI.75)

What about the daily or occasional ritual of *pūjā*? The initiate is supposed to perform daily worship of the deity, apart from a number of other rituals.

It would lead too far to go into a description of the rituals, and I want to give only the basic elements and their spiritual meaning given by the Tantras of the left and their exegetes. Again and again it is stressed that the external ritual has to be internalized. As far as the worship of iconic forms, the Śivaliṅga or images is concerned, “it is the mantras rather than the iconic forms which may be associated with them that are the essential embodiments of the deities of Tantric worship. There are cults of aniconic mantras but not of icons which are not *mantras*”.⁶ Mantras are thus central to both, ritual and yogic practice.

The other elements of worship are *mudrā*, ritualized and powerful gestures, *nyāsa*, imposition of mantras with *mudrās*, on the worshipper’s body, and *maṇḍala*, the sacred diagram.

The Śaiva non-dualists face the problem, also with regard to *dīkṣā*, that ritual always implies a duality (between worshipper and object of worship, as well as action) which seems to contradict the fundamental non-duality. Abhinavagupta has a wonderful expression in his *Tantrāloka*. The ritual context is the *nyāsa* (imposition of mantras) on the *arghapātra*, the sacrificial jar, which is then worshipped with mantras (TĀ 15.146). Then he says:

Since all things (hence also the objects and elements of worship) are inseparable from Śiva, either as bestowing supernatural powers (*siddhi*, in the case of the worshipper seeking them), or in fullness (for the one seeking liberation), the same applies in worship to the factors of action.¹⁴⁷ All the elements of (ritual) action are clearly revealed to be inseparable from Śiva.

Since everything is in the paradigm (model) of worship, this applies even to daily activities like walking etc.¹⁴⁸

⁶ A. Sanderson, *Meaning in Tantric Ritual*, p. 21.

This means that the activities of the enlightened one are performed on the paradigm of worship, which pervades all ordinary actions as non-different from the Divine. Thus both, worship in all its actions is a contemplative exercise, and worldly activities are pervaded by the same worshipful attitude.

Right from the Tantras to their interpretation by the Śaiva authors we find numerous examples of substitution of ritual acts by contemplation or spiritual acts. This is often called the “true, not created” worship (*vāstava, akalpita*). Here worship is translated into purely cognitive terms. To give another example of a purely spiritual worship of the deity with its various actions.

Cleansed by joyfully immersing himself in this universe brimming with the <liquid>/<bliss> (*rasah*) of his awareness, (Libations): he should gratify the entire sequence of the cosmic hierarchies. (Ash-bath): The bath (which follows) is the immersion of his body and other (levels of contracted selfhood) in the ‘white ash’ which remains of the universe when he has incinerated it in the fire of his expansive awareness. (Visualization of the burning of the body, etc.): When he has performed the rites of ablution and gratified the infinite deities in this way he should ‘purify’ the levels of reality (*tattvam*) which have given rise to his body (and the rest). (Imposition of the ‘body’ and pantheon of mantras): True impurity is the idea that these (contracted entities) are other than Śiva, even though they are identical with him. True purification is the obliteration of this idea. So he comes to see that his ‘body’ contains nothing but consciousness, that it is free of duality: and so he rests omnipotent in the autonomy of pure awareness. (Self-worship): Whatever delights his mind in any of the fields of the senses is then ‘placed’ <in the light of the real which is Brahma>/<upon that place of nectar which is (the aperture of) Brahmā> For it is thus that it becomes a true offering (to the circle of the powers of consciousness). (Making offerings): As for the presentation of offering to the deities (*pūjā*), in its true form this is the reunion of the alienated totality

of phenomena with the autonomous, pure and infinite self which is the consciousness of Bhairava.

Tantrāloka 4.115-22 (transl. by Sanderson, Meaning, p. 50-51)

What all this shows is that external forms to be worshipped are secondary to internal understanding of the meaning of the ritual actions. Besides, the *mantras* are more important than the object under worship.⁷

The *Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra* gives at the end a spiritualised meaning of the ritual actions: *homa*, *yāga*, *snāna*, *pūjā* etc. For example:

Worship (*pūjā*) does not consist in offering flowers and other substances. The real worship consists rather in setting one's mind firmly on the supreme Void of thought-free consciousness. This worship is an absorption with great fervour and respect. 147

Real oblation (*homa*) consists in offering all the elements, the senses and sense-objects along with the mind into the fire of the Great Abode of the Void, using awareness as the sacrificial ladle. 149

Real sacred bath (*snāna*) is called absorption into the essential nature of one's own Self. This Self is the universal essence of freedom, bliss and consciousness. 152

II. Yoga

We have seen that the spiritualization of ritual, or the internalized ritual is already a form of Yoga or contemplation. If we speak of Yoga in the context of tantric Śaivism, it means spiritual practice in general, as the title of the section of any Āgama implies. What we will consider in this very condensed presentation of a vast topic is, on the one side, the relation of this form of yoga to the well-known Yoga of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra*, on the other side the classification of the *upāyas* as spiritual ways, as based on the *Mālinīvijayottara Tantra* and developed by

⁷ "The identity of a Tantric deity rests principally in its mantra and only secondarily and dispensably in its icon". A. Sanderson, *The Visualization of the deities of the Trika*, p. 78.

Abhinavagupta. At last I will illustrate the wide range of spiritual practice as it is revealed in the unique *Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra*, the source of mystical experience for the entire tradition.

First of all the yoga of the Āgamas has six limbs which differ from the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* of Patañjali (*yama-niyama-āsana-prāṇāyāma-dhāraṇā-dhyāna-samādhi*). Even when the same terms are used, they are given a different meaning. The list differs in the different Tantras, but *yama*, *niyama* and *āsana* are not included (not that they are not practised, but just as preliminaries). To give an example of such re-interpretation from the *Netra Tantra* which mentions the eight limbs of Patañjali, but with different meaning (NT 8.9-29).

Āsana: Taking refuge in the central Breath, in the middle of the paths of exhalation and inhalation (*prāṇāpāna*), and being supported by the energy of knowledge (*jñānaśakti*), one attains the seat. 8.11

This sounds like *prāṇāyāma*, but it is the starting-point, hence *āsana*. The actual description of *prāṇāyāma* follows:

Leaving the gross form of breath like exhalation etc., one should enter the subtle path, and transcending the subtle (*prāṇa*) one attains the supreme vibration. This is called *prāṇāyāma*, from which (state) one does not fall again. 8.12-13a

Dhyāna is described as follows:

Transcending the properties of the intellect, meditating on the imperishable all-pervading Lord who is not meditable (*nirdhyeya*, not an object of meditation), that is known as meditation by the wise which is to be meditated upon as self-consciousness (*dhyeyam svasaṃvedyam*). 8.15

Samādhi receives a special interpretation as the awareness of equality in all living beings (*samāna-dhī*), “all else is deceiving the people”! (8.17-18). Besides, “the supreme *samādhi* is the awareness “I am Śiva, without a second” (18).

The specific tantric yoga is *kuṇḍalinī yoga*, which belongs also to the tradition of *Haṭhayoga*. This brings us back to the centrality of Śakti, the cosmic-

divine Power lying dormant in the body of every conscious being, and which can be awakened by introspection and spiritual practice. The entire system of ‘imagining’ the yogic body with its channels (*nāḍī*) and nerve-centres (*cakra* or *granthi*) is underlying this practice and experience. By rising through the *cakras*, which implies a piercing them, from the lowest to the highest (*brahmarandhra*) and even beyond the body to the *dvādaśānta* (end of the twelve) above, the *yogī* is united with the Supreme Śakti and attains a state of universal pervasion (*vyāpti*). See for instance two verses of the early *Vijñāna Bhairava*:

Meditate on the Śakti rising from the *mūladhāra* (*cakra*) which is luminous like the rays of the sun and which gets subtler and subtler until it dissolves in *dvādaśānta*. Then the awakening to Bhairava will occur. V. 28

(Meditate on) the rising Śakti like lighting, as it moves upward from one *cakra* to the other until it reaches *dvādaśānta*. At the end is the great awakening. 29

According to the Śaiva Tantras, there are three stages of *kuṇḍalinī*: *prāṇa kuṇḍalinī*, connected with the breath and hence an energy which can be ‘felt’ in the body; *cit kuṇḍalinī*, which is experienced by awareness on any center, and *parā kuṇḍalinī* which is not different from the cosmic and divine Energy. It cannot be an object of experience. But the awakening of *kuṇḍalinī* is attributed to an intense ‘descent of power’ (*śaktipāta*) or grace, which is not the result of any practice. The rise of *kuṇḍalinī* is also associated with the practice of *mantra* (*uccāra*). The ascending energy of the *mantra*, mainly a *bīja mantra* like OM, HUM, HRĪM, SAUḤ, along with the energy of *prāṇa*, passes through twelve stages, reaching to the supreme level of *unmanā*, “beyond the mind”.

The most important spiritual centres are the central vein (*madhyānāḍī* or *suṣumnā*), in which the two forms of breath (*prāṇa-apāna*) have to enter in order to take the path of ascent, and the Heart, again not the physical organ but the heart *cakra*. Both are often called *madhya* without specification.

Abhinavagupta describes in his *Tantrāloka* the ascent of *uccāra* and the different states of bliss experienced along the way. In the short version of the *Tantrasāra*:

Before ‘uttering’ the *prāṇa* (making it ascend) one rests in the void of the heart, then, by the rising of the breath, outside. When (the *yogī*) turned outside sees the universal nature of all things by the full moon of inhaling he becomes free from all desires for other (experiences). Then, by the rising of the equalized breath (*samāna*) he experiences the repose by the union (of all opposites) Then, by the rising of the fire of the ascending breath (*udāna*) he overcomes the conception of the difference between subject and object (and all opposites). When this fire of absorption has ceased, at the rise of the pervasive breath (*vyāna*) he shines, being freed from all limitations.

These forms of repose (*viśrānti*), starting from the void to the all-pervasion are taught as the six stages of bliss: *nijānanda*, *nirānanda*, *parānanda*, *brahmānanda*, *mahānanda* and *cidānanda*. When the one supreme reality which is free from arising and setting finds its repose within, the bliss is called *jagadānanda* (universal bliss), which is an awareness of all the others. When the *yogī* rests in any one of these stages of ascent (*uccāra*), in two or in all, then he attains the true reality of repose, free from body, breath etc. Then, by an awareness directed to the secret practice of the rising of the seed of creation and dissolution he purifies his thought (*vikalpa*).

In each of these states of repose he experiences five states in order of ascent. First there is the experience of bliss when he has touched a portion of the fullness, then follows an elevation (*udbhava*), when for a moment a state free from the body is experienced, next follows a trembling (*kampa*), when the identification with the body becomes loosened by experiencing an overwhelming by one’s own power, next a kind of sleep (*nidrā*), when

the extroverted tendency disappears. Thus, when (the wrong idea) of considering the self as the non-self has been dissolved, and due to an all-inclusive nature the non-self has been dissolved in the self, then (he experiences) an intoxicating ecstasy (*ghūrṇi*), due to the rise of the great pervasion (*mahāvvyāpti*).

Tantrasāra 5, pp.38-40

This process shows a very high level of mystical experience attained through the stages of ascent of *mantra* and *prāṇa* (*uccāra*), ultimately reaching a dissolution of all external reality and experiencing the supreme vibration. This highest state is called “The heart of the *yoginī*” (*yoginīhṛdayam*). The entire process is described as “the signs of the path” (*pathalakṣanāni*). However, this practice or experience belongs to the lowest of the four *upāyas* or ways of liberation: *āṇavopāya*, the individual way.

The Tantras contain such a wealth of spiritual practices that it was the genius of Abhinavagupta to arrange them in a systematic order of the *upāyas*. He bases it on the *Mālinīvijayottara Tantra* (2.21-23) which speaks of three ways of “penetration” (*āveśa*). Abhinavagupta has added a fourth and started the description from the top in descent. The fourth one is precisely *anupāya*, the pathless path or the way without any means. This corresponds to the highest place assigned in this system to sudden enlightenment, over and against the means using the body, the senses, the mind and intellect, which are gradual (*krama*). Thus every form of *yoga* as practice belongs to the lowest, the individual means. This is followed (in ascending order) by the way of Energy, *śāktopāya*, which is predominantly a way of knowledge (*jñāna*). The divine way or *śāmbhava* lies beyond that and comes close to the non-way, it is based on the Energy of will (*icchā*). Practically all spiritual methods and experiences are contained within this scheme and are organized according to the level of consciousness of the practitioner. You can see from the scheme that these four ways have their

correspondences in different areas of the system present in the Āgamas (see *Tantrāloka*, esp. chapters 1-5).

Coming back to the theme of sudden enlightenment I want to give some examples of both, practices and experiences, taken from the already quoted *Vijñāna Bhairava*. As far as practice is concerned, they mostly belong to what is called *bhāvanā*, sometimes translated as “creative contemplation”, a very vast field of meditative practices well-known in Buddhism. There is a clear difference between *dhyāna* and *bhāvanā*. An example for the first:

One should meditate on the body as only enclosed by the skin as with a wall, with nothing inside. Meditating in this way, one attains the One who cannot be meditated upon (*adhyeya*). 48

An example for the second:

If one contemplates (*paribhāvayet*) simultaneously that one’s entire body and the universe consists of nothing but Consciousness, then the mind becomes free from thoughts and the supreme Awakening occurs. 63

An example for a spontaneous experience (which could also be a practice):

By standing above a deep well or any abyss and fixing one’s eyes (on the bottom), one becomes completely free from thoughts, and immediately the mind will certainly be dissolved. 115

The *Vijñāna Bhairava* shows precisely that any of life situation can become an occasion for spiritual practice or experience, for which many examples are given. These practices (called *dhāranā*) can again be placed in the scheme of the four *upāyas*.

Within the space of a lecture it is not possible to go deeper into any of these practices, and to describe the goal achieved by the practice of Tantra. At the end I want to add at least a brief mention about the philosophy of Tantra (obviously without being able to do justice to this important topic). There is a wide spread

opinion, even among scholars, that Tantra is only a practice without a philosophy.⁸ The contrary is true. The reason why the philosophy has not been given its due recognition is, on the one hand, that it does not fit into the scheme of the six orthodox Darśanas, being considered outside the Veda. Interestingly, when Buddhism is called *vedabāhya* by the school of Mīmāṃsā (Kumārila), the Śaivas have been called *vedabāhyatara*, even more removed from the Veda! The other reason may be that this system, as the entire tantric literature of Kashmir, has been discovered only in the last decades of the 20th century, and hence has found its entry into histories of Indian philosophy only very recently.⁹ In fact, Kashmir, which has been the cradle of many important traditions, texts and disciplines, “the privileged land of Indian culture”¹⁰, has brought forth the system of Pratyabhijñā, “Recognition”, which has come to “provide the theoretical bases for all Hindu Tantrism” (ibid.), irrespective of “sectarian” identities, like Vaishnava, Śaiva, etc. This is a philosophy of Consciousness which, in its non-dualism, goes beyond the Advaita Vedānta. Its basic insight is the self-recognition of the true essential nature (*svarūpa*). It has been developed in close dialogue with the Buddhist logical-epistemological school (Dharmakīrti etc.). Spiritually the act of recognition corresponds to the highest *upāya*, and to sudden enlightenment. However, being a system of “supreme non-dualism” (*paramādvaita*), it does not exclude any practice or theory, at their respective level.

This fact had at least to be mentioned, without elaborating it. A dialogue between Pratyabhijñā or Kashmir Śaivism and Buddhism, as it was led from the 9th to the 13th centuries, would even today be very fruitful both spiritually and philosophically. Maybe this is a humble beginning.

⁸ Cf. the misleading remark by George Feuerstein: “Tantrism’s contribution to philosophy is negligible. Its unicity lies wholly within the practical sphere, the *sādhanā*...” The Essence of Yoga, p. 176-177.

⁹ For an excellent and brief redressal of this onesidedness, cf. R. Torella, The Philosophical Traditions of India, Varanasi (Indica) 2011.

¹⁰ Op.cit. p. 117.

But let me end with a description of the state reached by this supreme yoga:¹¹

1. When the *yogī*, his mind and breath merged in the inner goal,
directs his gaze outward, without blinking,
himself seeing, yet as it not seeing,
by your grace, Master, this is the divine *mudrā*.
This reality indeed is the state of Śiva,
beyond both void and non-void.
3. Each word from his mouth is a supernatural *mantra*
the posture of his body, cause of joy and suffering,
is itself the mystic *mudrā*. The spontaneous flow
of his breath is truly the wonderful *yoga*.
When I realize the supreme light-filled domain
of Divine Energy, what does not shine?

¹¹ Anubhavanivedana by Abhinavagupta.