

Study Guide 5

DVD series vol. 5

Tantra: The Wheel of Divine Energy - Kashmir Shaivism

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The Wisdom of Yoga

Tantra & Kashmir Śaivism:

The Wheel of Divine Energy

1. Welcome to the Study of Yoga

Dear friend,

Welcome to volume 5 of The Wisdom of Yoga series.

It is our belief that yoga has a lot to offer to our lives and we are happy to present here the essence of the most important yoga traditions that India has produced throughout its rich history.

Enjoy!

Carlos Pomedá and the Yogakula team

2. How to use this study guide

The purpose of this study guide is to guide you through the study of yoga. Here you will find suggestions that may help you to draw the most out of your study. The DVDs are designed to break down each topic into smaller segments that can be more easily followed in one sitting, although their duration varies.

We advise that you read the study guide first and then apply the steps for each section in sequence. Or, if you want to zero in on only one or two topics, just go directly to those sections. Then watch the appropriate segments and complete any other assignments or recommended exercises.

3. About this DVD series

This series is designed to provide a complete course of study that covers the major systems of yoga in their chronological development.

The first volume includes an overview of the history of yoga, followed by an exploration of the upaniṣadic teachings and practices. The second volume delves into the Bhagavad Gītā and its innovations, followed by the tradition of Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of devotion. The third examines the yoga of Patañjali and his Yoga Sūtras, whereas number four looks at the system of Advaita Vedānta. Finally, volume five explores Tantra and the last one in the series, volume six, takes a look at Kuṇḍalinī Yoga and Haṭha Yoga, completing the historical perspective the series provides.

At the same time, each volume provides practices representative of the particular system of yoga examined in that volume. This design provides the opportunity of focusing on one specific school or exploring the entire spectrum. In either case, we recommend that

you take your time with each volume, considering not only the teachings of each, but particularly their application and practice over at least a period of a month for each system.

4. Invocation

Oṃ. Saha nāv avatu; saha nau bhunaktu; saha vīryaṃ karavāvahai.

Tejasvī nāv adhitam astu; mā vidviṣāvahai. Oṃ śāntiḥ, śāntiḥ, śāntiḥ

"Oṃ. May He protect us; may He help us; may we attain strength. May our study become luminous; let there be no enmity between us. Oṃ. Peace, peace, peace."

5. Introduction to Tantra

This first part provides background and context to the Tantric tradition. Your objectives for this segment are:

- Understand the historical development of Tantra, as well as its evolving character through time
- Get an overview of the various major subdivisions of Tantra
- Explore ways of defining or describing Tantra
- Review the various approaches to practice
- Understand the place of the transgressive rituals

Ask yourself:

- What is my current understanding of Tantra? What do I know about it?
- What is the popular understanding of Tantra?

Before you start, look at the notes for this section, below. When you are ready, please watch the segment titled, "Introduction to Tantra". Take your time to pause, write down thoughts, reflexions, questions and any items you may want to record. You may also want to refer to the notes and write down any Sanskrit terms that are not included below, as well as their meaning.

a) Introductory Notes

Various contexts: brahminical, Buddhist, Jaina

Various forms: Śaiva, Śākta, Vaiṣṇava, Saurya, Gāṇapatya

Tantra: *tan*, to expand, to weave

As process¹:

¹ Brown, Robert. "Introduction". *The Roots of Tantra*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002, p. 2

Processes	Accomplished by	Guided by	Goals
visualization	ritual (<i>kriya</i>) yoga	teacher/guru	enlightenment
verbalization	the body	deity	<i>mukti</i>
identification	<i>maṇḍala & yantra</i>		worldly power
internalization	<i>cakra</i>		<i>bhukti</i>
concretization	<i>mantra</i>		
transformation	<i>pūjā</i> , icon		

b) Some Doctrines

Types of seeker:

- paśu. "Beast"
- vīra. "Hero"
- divya. "Divine"

The five M's (pañcamakāra):

- Māmsa. Meat
- Matsya. Fish
- Madya. Wine
- Mudrā. Parched grain
- Maithunā. Sexual intercourse

6. Meditation: Purification

This is a quintessentially Tantric meditation, called "Bhūta-śuddhi" or "Purification of the elements". The first time you do it, you might prefer to watch the entire section and take notes as you wish. After that, you can view it again to try the practice, without worrying about the notes.

When you are ready, choose a quiet place where you can follow the meditation instructions from the DVD and also sit comfortably for meditation.

As you follow the instructions, be ready to either pause your DVD player or stop it at the end of those instructions. Otherwise, the DVD will return to the main menu and the background music may distract you.

Meditate as long as you wish (anywhere between 20 minutes and 1 hour is a good duration) and allow yourself plenty of time to come out of meditation gently.

Then, take a few moments to reflect on your meditation process and experience, and take a few notes reflecting what worked, what was challenging, what you learned, what you experienced, what insights you had, etc.

7. Mantra in Tantra

This third segment of the DVD discusses another important methodology of Tantric practice, that of mantra. As you prepare to explore it, your objectives for this segment are:

- Understand the origins of mantra as a practice
- Understand the concept of levels of speech in Tantra
- Understand the application of those levels to mantra practice

Ask yourself:

- How would I define mantra? What do I know about it?
- What would be the best way to use the mantra in meditation for optimal results?
- How does it work?

When you are ready, please watch the segment titled, "Mantra in Tantra". As you watch, take your time to pause, write down thoughts, reflexions, questions and any items you may want to record. You may also want to write down the Sanskrit terms that appear on the screen, or you may prefer to use the list below.

a) Four levels of speech:

- Parā. Supreme
- Paśyantī. "Seeing"
- Madhyamā. Middle
- Vaikhari. Articulated speech

8. Mantra Meditation

Choose a quiet place where you can follow the meditation instructions from the DVD and also sit comfortably for meditation.

As you follow the instructions, be ready to either pause your DVD player or stop it at the end of those instructions. Otherwise, the DVD will return to the main menu and the background music may distract you.

Meditate as long as you wish (anywhere between 20 minutes and 1 hour is a good duration) and allow yourself plenty of time to come out of meditation gently.

Then, take a few moments to reflect on your meditation process and experience, and take a few notes reflecting what worked, what was challenging, what you learned, what you experienced, what insights you had, etc.

9. Kashmir Shaivism

For this segment, which is an introduction to Kashmir Śaivism, your objectives are:

- Understand the historical development of Kashmir Śaivism, as well as its place within the larger Tantric tradition
- Familiarize yourself with the names of the main teachers and works of the system
- Begin to form an idea of the relevance of the system

Ask yourself:

- Given what you have learned about Tantra so far, what would a Tantric system need in order to make it relevant to a large audience?
- How would a system differ if it were taught by ascetics or by householders?

Before you start, take a moment to look at the notes for this section, below. When you are ready, please watch the segment titled, "Kashmir Shaivism". Take your time to pause, write down thoughts, reflexions, questions and any items you may want to record. You may also want to refer to the notes and write down any Sanskrit terms that are not included below, as well as their meaning.

a) Background

Late 9th c., revelation to Vasugupta (875-925): Śiva Sūtras, 77 non-dual sūtras

Other foundational texts: Mālinīvijaya, Svachanda, Netra, Vijñānabhairava, Mṛgendra, Rudrayāmala

Vasugupta and Spanda Kārikā

Somānanda (900-950) and Śivadṛṣṭi

Utpaladeva (925-975) and Īśvara-pratyabhijñā

Abhinavagupta (975-1025) and Tantrāloka

Kṣemarāja (1000-1050) and Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam

b) Schools:

- Kula, Krama, Trika, Pratyabhijñā, Spanda

10. Kashmir Shaivism: The Teachings

This is the main segment in terms of teachings and information about the system. Therefore, your objectives are:

- Identify the main teachings and features of the system
- Gain a clear understanding of those teachings so that you can explain them in simple terms

- Try to internalize the teachings on cosmology (view of the universe), so that you can apply them to practice

Ask yourself:

- If everything, including myself, is one single reality or principle, how can we explain duality and multiplicity?
- In what way can the individual and the supreme be identified as one? In what ways, if any, are they different?
- What is the source of those differences, if any?
- How does Māyā in Tantrism differ from that in Advaita Vedānta

At this point, you might want to take a look at the notes below, before you watch this segment. This will acquaint you with some of the main terms discussed in it. When you are ready, please watch the segment titled, "Kashmir Shaivism: Teachings". As you watch, take your time to pause, write down thoughts, reflexions, questions and any items you may want to record. You may also want to write down the Sanskrit terms that appear on the screen, as well as their meaning.

a) Main Teachings

(1) *The Supreme*

Paramaśiva, beyond conception

Both viśvottīrṇa and viśvamaya (Tantra: *tan*, to expand, to weave)

Cidānandaghana: compact mass of consciousness-bliss

Two aspects: prakāśa and vimarśa (svātantrya)

Five śaktis: cit, ānanda, icchā, jñāna, kriyā

Or: svātantrya, jñāna and kriyā

(2) *The Tattvas*

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Śiva. Pūrṇo'ham. Nityatva | The five kañcukas: |
| 2. Śakti. Svātantrya. Vyāpakatva | 7. Kalā. Reducing sarvakartṛtva |
| 3. Sadāśiva or Sadākhyā. Ahamidam. Pūrṇatva | 8. Vidyā. Limited knowledge |
| 4. Īśvara. Idamaham. Sarvajñātva | 9. Rāga. Passion |
| 5. Śuddhavidyā or Sadvidyā. Idam ca aham ca. Sarvakartṛtva | 10. Kāla. Time |
| 6. Māyā. A power of Śiva, "cinmaya eva" | 11. Niyati. Cause and space |
| | Subjectivity: |
| | 12. Puruṣa |

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 13. Prakṛti | 25. Upastha. Procreation |
| 14. Buddhi | 26. Pāyu. Excreting |
| 15. Ahaṃkāra | Elements (tanmātras and mahābhūtas): |
| 16. Manas | 27. Śabda. Sound |
| Senses: | 28. Sparśa. Touch |
| 17. Śravaṇa. Hearing | 29. Rūpa. Form, sight |
| 18. Sparśa. Touching | 30. Rasa. Taste |
| 19. Cakṣus. Seeing | 31. Gandha. Smell |
| 20. Rasa. Tasting | 32. Ākāśa. Ether |
| 21. Ghrāṇa. Smelling | 33. Vāyu. Air |
| 22. Vāc. Speech | 34. Agni (tejas). Fire |
| 23. Hasta. Handling | 35. Āpas. Water |
| 24. Pāda. Moving | 36. Pṛthivī. Earth |

(3) The Human Being

The 3 Śaktis:

- Svātantrya
- Jñāna
- Kriyā

The 3 malas:

- āṇava
- māyīya
- kārma

(4) Sādhana

The 3 upāyas (plus anupāya, "no means"):

- śāmbhava
- śākta
- āṇava

11. Kashmir Shaivism: Practices (a & b)

This submenu contains two different meditation practices. Choose a quiet place where you can follow the meditation instructions from the DVD and also sit comfortably for meditation.

As you follow the instructions, be ready to either pause your DVD player or stop it at the end of those instructions. Otherwise, the DVD will return to the main menu and the background music may distract you.

Meditate as long as you wish (anywhere between 20 minutes and 1 hour is a good duration) and allow yourself plenty of time to come out of meditation gently.

Then, take a few moments to reflect on your meditation process and experience, and take a few notes reflecting what worked, what was challenging, what you learned, what you experienced, what insights you had, etc.

12. Session Recap

Watch the final recap segment and contemplate the following:

- What do I take from this session?
- How can I describe Tantra?
- How can I describe some of the meditative practices of Tantra?
- What can I say about the origin of Kashmir Śaivism?
- How can I summarize some of the teachings and practices of Kashmir Śaivism?

For further study and practice, you may want to continue with the study suggestions given below.

13. Q&A

Take look at the Q&A submenu and explore any or all themes you may be interested in, for additional information.

14. Study Suggestions

Reading Assignment: Read Feuerstein, Georg. *Tantra, The Path of Ecstasy*. Boston: Shambhala, 1998. (Chapter 4, "The Secret of Embodiment: As Above, So Below;" chapter 5, "The Divine Play of Shiva and Shakti;" chapter 12, "Mantra: The Potency of Sound;" chapter 14, "The Transmutation of Desire")

Items for reflection:

- How does the tantric view of the universe compare with other views explored previously, particularly those of classical yoga and vedānta?
- In what way can we say that the universe (which is made of hard matter) is consciousness?
- In what way are you divine?
- How is it possible for worldly enjoyment and the pursuit of enlightenment to coexist without bring the yogi down?

Practices:

- Take one major teaching from the seminar for each week of the month and put it in practice during your day. Note down the results, challenges, questions, insights, etc. that arise from your practice.
- Choose a mantra and practice repeating it (japa) as frequently as possible during your day. Notice the effect of this practice on your meditation.
- Choose a form of meditation and practice it regularly throughout the month. Notice its effect on your outlook during the day