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2. Ibid. 72.


5. Ibid. 32-36.

Reading for Krishna's Pleasure: Gauḍīya Vaishnava Meditation, Literary Interiority, and the Phenomenology of Repetition*

Tony K. Stewart

For a Gauḍīya Vaishnava—a follower of the Bengali religious figure Krishna Caitanya (1486—1533 CE)—the primary aim of yoga is to meditate, but to meditate does not mean to search for some formless ultimate reality with which to merge the self. Rather, it means to enter the cosmic drama, as David Haberman has put it, via a complex set of ritual practices that culminate in a yogic visualization. The content and form of these practices are, at least initially, heavily structured. The texts that allude to or directly dictate this meditation graphically describe the explicit content of this meditation, what the devotee does and in what order he does it (and the overwhelming majority of practitioners is male). The specific techniques of this meditation rely on the time-tested procedures established by Patañjali and others centuries before, while the adaptations preferred by the Gauḍīya Vaishnavas favor an acute visualization practice, the content of which revolves around the endlessly variable activities of Krishna and his descent to earth in the form of Krishna Caitanya.

These text-guides will predict the outcome of successful (and in some instances, unsuccessful) meditation: the glimpse and eventual entry of the devotee into the activities of Krishna or Caitanya in some heavenly realm through a practice called maṇiṣṭa sādhana. Those predictors likewise serve as a control mechanism, an internal check to the correctness of procedure, for they will describe in loving detail precisely what the meditator should

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"see" at various stages and then how he should interact with that vision. This, of course, differs little in its basic conception from any of the yogabased meditative systems so prominent in Indian religions, historical or contemporary. Like those other systems, the guiding texts are often deliberately Spartan in their instruction of the precise mechanics of meditation so that the unguided (or misguided) adventurer might not inadvertently stumble into an experience that might exceed his experience or his capacity and possibly prove detrimental to his spiritual development.

In contemporary western terminology, these pitfalls for the unwary are often equated with psychological traumas that can damage if not destroy the undisciplined, and which might at their most dangerous lead to some mental imbalance, however conceived, or, in social terms, to a correlative immorality. Successful contemplation promotes a kind of salutary mental and moral health that will ultimately result in an appropriately articulated "salvation," a positive resolution of this goal-oriented practice, specifically in the Gauḍīya Vaishnava case, permanent entry and habitation in Krishna’s or Caitanya’s realm (bhāma).

Interestingly, most scholarship on meditation has focused on the “techniques” of this meditation on the assumption that the “content” is ultimately formless, or is self-evident once the basic parameters are delimited. In the case of the Gauḍīya Vaishnavas the content is not formless at all; it is constituted by the stories of Radha and Krishna and the other gopis and cowherders in Vṛja, and the concomitant experience of Caitanya as the Radha-Krishna androgynous, each interacting with the various members of his entourage who inhabit his realm, bhāma. Little attention has been paid to the way those narratives are appropriated by the devotee, nor, of equal import, the nature of the experience when those visualizations come alive in ways not defined by the transmitted source texts—David Haberman’s comparison with method acting is one of the few exceptions, but not without acknowledged problems that ultimately limit its utility.

In an admittedly highly speculative fashion, I would like to propose that we can start to get a sense of this activity by looking at the act of reading and then extrapolate that basic act into the act of meditation muhājirī style. I start with reading because its features are at least initially obvious, because the content of the meditation is narrative, and because those narratives come to the devotee through texts, such as the Bhāgavata Purāṇa or Caitanya Caritāmṛta. Where the narratives originate, that is, their extra-textual provenance, is another issue that will be touched on below, but the source of these stories for the devotee who is learning to meditate is always the text, or indirectly from the mouths of those who have read or heard the texts. Reading is central, even if the practitioner is illiterate, and it is no accident that literacy has been a hallmark of the Gauḍīya tradition from its inception. I propose that thinking about how those narratives—as complex acts of signification—are grasped by the devotee in the act of reading might help us to imagine part of the experience of meditation, the basis for meditation. The point is not to argue that "it happens like this" (no “scientific” or even philosophical model here), but to explore something unfamiliar by looking at a seemingly familiar act, using analogy to conceptualize the problem of yogic visualization. But first we must consider why this is pressing.

Much ink has been spilled trying to describe the various goals of this and other popular forms of yogic meditation, and even more in laying out the philosophical systems that undergird these concepts of ultimate reality and concomitant practices for realizing that goal. On the whole, exceptional precision and fidelity mark this yogic meditative literature, which is much too vast even to begin to cite. But the scholastic literature with which I am familiar, and including that devoted to the Gauḍīya Vaishnava world of meditation, tends as a rule to resort to a vocabulary of contemporary (often popular) psychology, only to gloss over this all-important intellectual move as if that terminology and its imbedded ideological structures are value-free descriptions; yet the analyses are not often avowedly posed as psychological at all. With few exceptions the literature embraces this terminology, thereby assuming the existence and nature of some standard form of “consciousness,” which is asserted to be the operational fulcrum of meditation. As soon as the concept of consciousness is interjected, the terminology quickly—and usually unreflectively, although understandably—involves a set of related psychological terms that draw haphazardly from different models of the mind, but generally informed by western philosophical, but more often psychoanalytical, constructs, albeit vaguely or unsystematically (and anyone who has attempted to translate such Sanskrit terms as cīt or sat or manas knows exactly why this is so). Once consciousness is asserted as the focal point, its organs are delineated by simply reproducing those distinctions supplied by the underlying philosophical system; the terms are then “translated” into their “equivalents” in general psychological jargon.

It is generally in the act of translation that the reader is left with the sense that the author has somehow explained the activity of this undefined con-
sciousness in the way it relates to the individual’s immediate experience; but more often than not, translation really means finding analogues that are more or less approximate, if not simply convenient. While there are examples of careful, studied use—where the translated terms are close enough to be equivalent—this type of translation has the more common effect of lifting the terms from their context in the target language, even though they continue to invoke the theoretical perspective which created them in the first place. Taken seriously, these terms complicate at best, but more often than not truly confuse the issue, a problem not just here, but in translation of theological or philosophical technical terminology more generally.

Moreover, the alternate strategy by the author to gloss yoga’s technical terms—and then to leave them untranslated in a Sanskritic or vernacular transliteration—substitutes for the analysis of the experience itself. Reverting to technical terminology leaves the impression of precision because it is faithful to the original textual sources, literary or anthropological, and with that sense of precision, leaves an impression of insight. But to the uninitiated this move only shifts the inquiry away from the psychological model inherent in the translated terminology back to the self-validating philosophical system, which relies on its own internal analysis of the source of consciousness and its relationship to the practitioner’s individual version of it. In the end, the explanation of the meditator’s experience is lost as the analysis shifts back and forth between the psychological model(s), invoked deliberately or otherwise, and the philosophical systematization, which is a vital structural necessity for translating technical terms.

Not surprisingly, this erratic shifting provides an inadvertent smoke screen that makes it difficult to explore any of the substance of the experience itself. In many instances choosing to gloss the issue of experience is intellectually perfectly defensible because no explanation of it is required for most historical reconstructions. But an analysis of the experience itself is almost uniformly, if not assiduously, avoided in any of the literatures. While it may be deemed foolhardy because of the notoriously difficult problem of articulating the nature of a somatic or mental experience, I propose to look at a different kind of conceptual model that addresses this occasionally legislated, but generally inadvertent, sleight of hand to try to get at something of this “experience” of Gauḍīya Vaishnava meditation. The model is taken from literary phenomenology.

In choosing this model as an example, I favor a method of indirection—a model by analogy—precisely because the direct approaches that are available ultimately prove unreliable or unproductive, largely because of a mismatch between what scholars have articulated as the object of study in yoga (consciousness and its manipulation) and the analytical tools generally brought to bear on it.

It is to the seemingly familiar act of reading that my comparison will turn. The operations of reading, especially as articulated by the eminent Swiss literary phenomenologist, Georges Poulet, would appear to parallel in significant ways the act of yogic meditation as described by prominent Gauḍīya Vaishnava adepts. This choice is not haphazard, but based on certain important common features of experience—here significantly styled interiority—that are generally missed when the issue of meditation is cast in popular psychological terms, as it frequently is. This approach does not attempt to describe what meditation is, which would be an ontological assertion of das Ding an sich; rather it draws a significant parallel to the act of meditation that allows us to infer a possible structural similarity, concentrating on what the experience may be like. We can draw this inference by shifting our focus from an elusive notion of consciousness—consciousness per se really is not the issue of meditation for Gauḍīya Vaishnavas—to something more readily known, the apprehension of narrative, which provides the content of meditation, at least to any point that analytical thought will lead. Looking at the experience of interiority through reading-as-analogue to content-based meditation fuses the twin philosophical trajectories that have dominated the concept of interiority in western intellectual circles: the phenomenological through Husserl and the hermeneutic through Gadamer, the importance of which will soon be obvious.

I have no doubt that there are other theoretical musings that could be brought to bear to achieve a similar goal, but the choice was made deliberately to reverse the process of our comprehension, and in that reversal disrupt the mesmerizing complacency that accompanies these often dreary philosophical descriptions. Rather than comparing reading to meditation, I propose the opposite: anyone reading this sentence knows something of what it means to read, and from the platform of that subjective experience perhaps might gain some insight into what it means for a Gauḍīya Vaishnava to meditate. The point is to take something we know in order to more intelligently imagine something we do not know or know only remotely. To attempt to describe directly an experience we have not had, or that does not lend itself to precise analytical explication of what we might
have had, invariably frustrates the intellectually aware (and the same applies to other of our experiences we might attempt to convey); so we might well overcome this limitation by allowing the model to help us understand the experience without proposing that it directly represents that other reality itself (what explanation of experience has ever been directly, that is, empirically represented?). This comparison allows our imaginations to run, not freely, but shaped to a particular end, offering a new way of conceptualizing the issue of meditative experience. That the phenomenology of reading served as the foundation of the contemporary practice of the aesthetics of reception is especially germane given the Gaudīya Vaishnava adaptation of an aesthetic of emotion as the basis for devotional practice—the adaptation of Bhārata’s, Abhinavagupta’s, and Bhoja’s theories of rasa by Rūpa Gosvāmi.9

_Rasa_ theory is the classic Indic example of what today falls under the rubric of contemporary theories of aesthetic reception; and that aesthetic depends entirely on an acute analysis of the apprehension of narrative, apprehension including both the articulation, receipt, and processing of the narrative drama for desired response. This is not to translate _rasa_ into reception theory or more specifically reader-response criticism, but to highlight the parallels in their conception and stated goals, remembering that ultimately what is received by the reader/viewer is different in the two cases, though the processes seem to be uncannily parallel. But before plunging into the construction of that analogue, it might prove useful to outline the basis for some of this frustration that I obviously experience in talking about yoga in general, and I suspect plagues others as well. Bear in mind that proposing a model is neither prescriptive nor replicative of reality; rather it is a way of conceptualizing a complex problem.

**Models of Understanding vs. Models of Reality**

The impulse to avoid describing directly the nature of mental experience is certainly understandable for scholars of religion, in part because it is extremely difficult to describe experience of any sort, but largely because it is nearly impossible to establish and maintain any kind of intellectual framework that does not ultimately depend on validating itself subjectively. And while few labor under the dim prospect of a verifiable objectivity or even a viable empiricism (positivists, I suppose, are magically exempt), there are gradations of validation; but a self-validating subjective standard is soundly rejected by most academics, though there has been a noticeable recent shift as a small number of historians of religions have admitted their involvement with the religion of their study as they embrace a dialogical model of insider/outsider in an attempt to present a sympathetic perspective.

Unfortunately, while most of these revelations help correct perspective, they just as often fail to address the knotty epistemological and verification issues that accompany other closely related concerns, such as secrecy and initiation or the mixed allegiance of the author/subject, generating a host of epistemological conundrums and dead ends.10 Spilling into the realm of religious commitment—a practitioner’s perspective—automatically renders the intellectual activity suspect; and the academy, for all its protestations to the contrary, still prefers a more “scientifically acceptable” approach, that is, a thinly disguised objectification that hinges on a modified positivism. And therein lies the crux of the matter, for the ideology of science dominates nearly absolutely the privilege to describe the physical world, which here encompasses the somatic and the mental; it forbids any form of alleged “subjective” treatment. Ironically, thanks to this proscription, the historian of religions easily slips off the hook, happily bypassing the issue of experience to focus on those things that are more comfortably assessed in the realm of a more purely rational thought in Western terms (e.g., philosophy, theology, history, etc.), or that are demonstrably empirical (e.g., texts, rituals, etc.). Sharf has rightly defined the use of the category of “experience” as “. . . a mere placeholder that entails a substantive if indeterminate terminus for the relentless deferral of meaning.”11

It is partially for this reason that the secondary literature about yoga tends endlessly to reconstruct the philosophical and ritual systems, theoretical and applied, deferring talk of the crux of the experience qua experience. It is perhaps doubly ironic that when we scholars investigate this important form of religious practice, we favor the philosophical analysis and forfeit the experience of the meditator; but this forfeiture has been dictated by the discipline itself for accepting a standard of validity that is ultimately unsuited for the particular goal at hand. Generally, the structure of scientific knowledge is geared to explain the physical world, how it is composed, and how it works; science does not deal directly or easily with the nature of experience, even though our experience is mediated, one way or another, somatically and should, therefore be eligible for exploration. Nor does science address the compelling subsequent implications of the
meanings of experiences, which fall ultimately in the domain of the humanistic disciplines. The reasons for this quandary, though many, are historically documentable and in many respects quite innocent. Weaving through the mass of contributing factors, however, lie two especially relevant assumptions that depend on common metaphoric constructs that have shaped, and especially limited, the way we can conceive of the problem.

The early encyclopaedic catalogues of religious and cultural traditions, the phenomenologies of religion, tirelessly compiled in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by the likes of Frazer and van der Leeuw, and to a certain extent, its experience, perhaps best epitomized by the work of Levy Bruhl, but especially James, depend on the impulse to create comprehensive taxonomies that ultimately organize our knowledge of the empirical data of religion. But both of these early branches of the many within the disciplined study of religion—at one end of the spectrum the phenomenology and later morphology of religion, as advocated by Eliade, and at the other the psychology of religion—operated on the unstated assumption that this human experience was in some way sufficiently unified so that a viable comprehensive taxonomy could in fact be produced (and independently reproduced by other rational analyses, an all-important criterion for testing validity). From this initial assumption, these early taxonomists and their intellectual disciples moved to the equally concomitant, but unarticulated, assumption that religious experience and religious ritual had true analogues in the physical world.

This analogy was not based on an analysis of ontology, but of process. By making the metaphoric leap that religions and societies were organisms—the ubiquitous organic metaphor that had come to dominate so much of the disciplined inquiry at the turn of the twentieth century—scholars routinely understood religions to be subject to the same biological processes as organisms, processes such as growth cycles, reproduction, and genetic inheritance, collapsed willy-nilly with adaptive development over time, i.e., evolution. It was the model of evolution ultimately, albeit often indirectly, that seems to have driven much of the inquiry. The power of the evolutionary model to describe adaptive change inevitably led to the subsequent ascription of ontological qualities to the phenomena being analyzed, that is, the model went beyond an analogical description of process as a way of understanding religion to actually dictate retrospectively the features of religion (myth, ritual, symbol, social organization, and so forth) that "must be present" for the model to work; put another way, the model began to constitute religion itself. Of course these features were inevitably found, because the model represented a reality that, although controversial, proved in effect unassailable in the rational discourse of the nineteenth and early twentieth century academy. The similie imperceptibly gave way to assertions of identity, of essential nature. Religion (and society) was no longer like an organism in its function and development, it was an organism that temporally and spatially evolved, sharing the foundations of social Darwinism; and the empirical data were organized to corroborate the assumption (quite a different intellectual process than the inductive approach that led to the theory in the first place). Consequently, scholars assumed that the models of social and religious change described their subject directly and factually in positivistic terms, rather than analogically, hence their ability to be wielded in the guise of science without ever questioning the validity of the model itself.

While a reiteration of this history may seem on the surface unnecessary in our quest to suggest a useful model for conceptualizing the problem of Gauḍīya Vaishnava yogic meditation, it is worth remembering that to ask an analogical model to describe positivistically the data of religious phenomena is to misconstrue the object, which can only remain elusive, however well- (or some might argue poorly-) catalogued the empirical phenomena may be. For all this build-up, yoga is a perfect case in point. Descriptions of the philosophical bases of meditation (e.g., Sāṇkhya) do not explain how it works, nor do analyses of the steps and procedures (e.g., Patañjali's asaṅga yoga) explain the nature of the experience itself, nor its changes through time as the evolutionary model would demand.

Because consciousness has not yet submitted to the quantifiable measure of the physical sciences, historians of religions often feel comfortable in limiting themselves to describing the reports of what happens in meditation: "Meditators say they have seen or felt . . . ." They substitute and analyze reports of experience in lieu of more direct empirical experience, because the report is generally the only reproducible factual evidence or datum that exists. The limitations tend to unnerves in less the most-courageous, so analysis of the experience generally stops there. The strategy to compare what one meditator reports in the light of another more often than not quickly resolves back into an analysis of the goals of meditation or its procedures; and those in turn recall the elaborate logical systems of thought for which India is so famous and in which so many scholars seem to revel, idealized systems that seem to be valued completely independent-
ly of those who experienced the truths articulated therein. With this move we return to the self-validating origin.

Treating the report of experience as a fact does provide significant understanding and in many instances quite frankly there is little else to be done, especially when the reports are limited and what passes for evidence is centuries old. But yogic meditation offers a very different kind of opportunity precisely because so many of the writings are actually guides to (potential) experience. Many of the Indian authors, no matter their motivation, seek to convey not only the philosophical justifications for their positions, but to lead the reader or auditor into an experience, not just speculation about it; and in practice the philosophy pragmatically functions only to serve that end. This invites us, then, to explore more imaginatively a different mode of disciplined analysis that does not succumb to the temptation to treat the report of the experience as a factual datum that can be catalogued, but that allows the scholar to somehow approximate in the imagination the experience in a controlled way that will lead to a more direct, albeit unavoidably incomplete, apprehension that fleetingly escapes analytical evaporation before capitulating in the end.

In its original impulse, one can imagine that the phenomenology of religion might have moved in this direction before it collapsed under the weight of its own endless (and generally questionable) catalogues of forms. Its failure to follow through on the grand project of providing a foundation for a scientific study of religion is of course well known to contemporary scholars (although certain related fields such as the sociology of religion have yielded more academically useful results, i.e., quantifiable measures that are in some sense more analytically rigorous). But psychology—the other half of our initially observed pair of “scientific” cornerstones to the study of the experience of religion—continues to explore that experience in productive, albeit not universally acceptable, ways. The frequent though now less-used oxymoronic designation of psychology as a “soft science” effectively epitomizes the problem: the primary object of interest, the psychic world, continues to evade the precision and quantification of the so-called hard sciences, even though its methods and assumptions are grounded in scientific empiricism.

Psychology is still very much more wissenschaftlich in the sense of a learned or disciplined inquiry as opposed to a science. The point is neither to defend nor criticize the scientific claims of psychology; the position it holds within the academy and society more generally points up the ambivalence. What is important here is that the terminology used by psychology has gained a certain currency, and with that a legitimacy that is the basis for serious intellectual recognition or at least tacit acknowledgement, which is another way of saying that even though it may not yet fully articulate the nature of the psyche (whatever that is) or the nature of the self (ego, or some equivalent) and unpack the mechanisms of human behavior, the disciplines of psychology rigorously attempt to do so in terms that are scientific, or at least in terms reminiscent of science. This attitude is especially germane to the immediate point because the territorial claims of psychology and now the broader disciplines of the cognitive sciences, shored by their expanding technical terminologies, provide the historian of religions with the opportunity once again to defer the direct questioning of the experience of anything that can be understood as psychic, such as the existence and operations of consciousness or other cognitive processes.

Until very recently, to use any of the prevailing terminologies of the cognitive sciences, save the most rudimentary expressions, automatically translated the issue of experience from the source language into the target English (or European language), and with translation the psychological system at hand would inevitably take over in lieu of explanation proper.19 But this act of translation reinforces the air of scientific explanation because so much of the terminology of psychology itself has inherent within it the evolutionary schemas sought initially by Freud20 and subsequently by the industry; it should be noted that “development” here is often confused and conflated with “evolution,” especially when the insights of psychology are applied to other disciplines by those who are not practitioners of psychology.

Recent theorists, starting perhaps most notably with Lacan, have much more successfully focused on “the linguistic nature of these constructed realities.”21 I say more successfully and constructively because this linguistic move has begun to address directly the fundamental conceptual structure of the ego as an elusive, if not illusory, construct that is not stable and that organizes itself from the unconscious, which serves in this system as the ground of being. The self, then, is little more than a chain of signifiers in the sense of de Saussure’s structural linguistics, constantly shifting and indeterminate, constantly being written or rewritten, and without a center—but it is that quality of being manipulated to reflect the unconscious that should serve as an entry point for the transformations wrought by yogic meditation, and especially the Gauḍīya Vaishnava style, which is narrative-dependent. As will become apparent below, the Gauḍīya Vaishnava
meditation is simultaneously a discovery of the self as well as a reshaping of the self—and a Lacanian perspective could prove especially useful in conceptualizing this activity (though the ontology of the self assumed in the classical articulations of yogic meditation run counter to the Lacanian model, and would have to be separately handled from the tracking of the cognitive processes). Unfortunately no one has, to my knowledge, attempted a Lacanian reading of yoga and its mental activity. Newer cognitive approaches to religious experience by metaphor and language theorists such as Johnson, Lakoff, and Turner, and to some extent by cognitive anthropologists such as Boyer, Atran, and Shore, suggest further entries to the linguistic construction of experience that emphasize the role of linguistic narrative, the construction of categories, and bravely the intellectual heritage of evolution through its physical, empirical, even somatic dimensions. The debate, however, continues to double-back on the question of whether there is any way to talk of consciousness in scientific terms at all.

This convergence of theoretical perspectives places phenomenology of reading and reader-response criticism at the heart of the issue of experience, potentially serving as a conceptual bridge—again bringing together the twin trajectories of Husserl's and Gadamer's sense of interiority. Reader-response critics examine the myriad ways a text is initially apprehended and the ongoing reappropriation of narrative that can only derive thorough mastery of the text through multiple readings and interpretations. The constant redefining or writing of a coherent self through linguistic acts in Lacanian psychologies seems to be uncannily reminiscent—but in its inverse or negative image—of appropriations of external narratives as understood by the reader response critics (recall the structuralists' axiom that an idea or act and its opposite are both still addressing the same issue). And here is the obvious parallel with Gauḍīya Vaishnava meditation. The yogic adept discovers his or her eternal, true identity in relation to Krishna through scripted narratives that form the basis for the most advanced forms of meditation—and it is that opening that invites the comparison between reading and meditation.

But the comparison breaks down in the final stages because the Gauḍīya Vaishnava is not just reading, but using the activity as a mechanism to enter a transcendent world. The Gauḍīya Vaishnava deploys the scripted narratives of Krishna's (or Caitanya's) activities that are first heard or read, then reread, then rehearsed, visualized, and eventually activated in a way that allows the devotee to construct (or discover) a transcendent self to enter the visualization, which of course is no longer just a visualization (though the reading analogy would maintain it is). Still, this manipulation of consciousness, or perhaps more accurately, the identification of the locus of consciousness and action of it—the subjective sense of self articulated as interiority—makes the activities of hearing or reading and visualization cohere so closely.

Reading, Narrative, and Ritual Injunction

During the early sixteenth century, Krishna Caitanya was said to have enjoined upon all individuals a number of ritual acts designed to inculcate devotion to Krishna. By the middle of that century, the gosvāmi theologians in Vṛndāvana had formalized these injunctions for the Gauḍīya community into sixty-four vaidhi or ritual acts, the authority for which was derived from nearly exhaustive Vaishnava scriptural bases in the purāṇas, tantras and āgamas, and assorted other śāstras. These injunctions structured routine Vaishnava practice on daily, monthly, annual, and life-long ritual calendars, and were designed to incubate and nurture devotion to Krishna; any action that conflicted with this primary concern was proscribed. Among these sixty-four injunctions, five were declared most efficacious, and by that evaluation understood to subsume hierarchically the other fifty-nine. They are: [1] chanting the name (nāma) of Krishna in kīrtana; [2] remembering (smaraṇa) and savoring the narratives of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa which reveal Krishna's exploits; [3] reverently and lovingly serving the image of Krishna in the temple; [4] living in the company of holy men or sādhus; [5] and living in the realm or mandala of Mathurā.

The first two—chanting the name and recalling the stories of Krishna—go hand-in-hand. In Bangla, the explicit chanting of the name, nāma japa, often spills into the singing of the name and from that the celebration of the exploits of Krishna and Caitanya. Both of these forms are often lumped together in the single act of kīrtana, literally a "celebration" of Krishna or Caitanya. The relishing of the tales of Krishna and, by extension, of Caitanya overlaps with the Bangla kīrtana, but more directly includes retelling of stories and readings or recitations of the various episodes in the vast cycle of līlās. This is the remembering or smaraṇa of Krishna's and Caitanya's activities and "listening," śravaṇa, is the corollary to reading or reciting the līlās.

The causal chain incited by this act of reciting the name—and most the-
ologists seem to agree that one single repetition is sufficient to initiate the process—can be understood to transform the experience of the devotee from one of worldly ignorance into spiritual realization. Recitation envelops the individual in the aural dimension of Krishna that is manifest in the physical universe. That act produces two palpable results: the individual is impelled toward a consciousness that increases his knowledge of Krishna as the ultimate reality, and that, in turn, compels him to orient his actions to accord with this salvific knowledge; anything else is unimaginable. To know is not just an intellectual act of recognition, rather it is a primary cognition that changes the very makeup of the individual. The axial and oft-quoted revelation that is used to explain, if not justify, the efficacy of this act is found in a late text, the Bhādarāvaka Purāṇa (38.126):

There is only the name of Hari, the name of Hari; the name of Hari; there is no other way, no other way, no other way in the Kali Age.²⁹

The name alone effects salvation; the apposite repetition in both verses of the sūkta functions collectively and distributively to indicate the complete exclusion of alternatives, with no possible exceptions. The way, of course, is the path to Krishna through kirtana. The greater the knowledge of Krishna, the greater the impetus to live in a world structured to increase that knowledge—and that process of knowing is tantamount to the act of devotion, for to know Krishna is to love Krishna. The name holds the key to salvation—its object and its means—and operates with a spiraling efficacy to transport the individual from this world to heaven.

While the formulation may on the surface appear to be trite and far too literal and truncated for more sophisticated practitioners, the implications are neither. The priority given to mantra as inciter of devotion refers not only to its hierarchical station within the sixty-four acts, but to the fact that it is temporally prior, that is, all else depends on this initial act. The name—Krishna's sonic dimension—resonates in the physical universe as a source of creative power, and its recitation begins the process of individual discovery and transformation. The other ritual injunctions bring it into play and give it shape in an otherwise inchoate environment. Consequently, the singing of the name begins a process that orients the devotee toward Krishna, while the other injunctions supplement that action, creating a context or environment in which that initial impulse can be augmented, dramatically reordering the devotee's world toward Krishna.

That the initial act is aural is not insignificant, for the experience of sound is qualitatively different than that afforded by the visual or the other senses. Mantra is routinely assigned generative and often cosmogonic roles in Hindu culture; but the uttered name of Krishna seems to function in this context in a different way. Following Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Walter Ong has observed that sound functions in other contexts as a unifying sense; it envelops, centralizes, harmonizes and consolidates the individual's interiority—that subjective sense of self that is identified as somehow “inside” the body. Ong concurs with Merleau-Ponty that sound places the hearer at the center of the auditory universe and with that centrality reveals the interiority experienced directly by hearer as constitutive of human consciousness.³⁰

While Ong and Merleau-Ponty are talking about the extreme case of non-literate cultures where orality is primary—and both are guilty of a gross essentializing of the structural characteristics of sound vis-à-vis sight and the other senses—their insight is certainly suggestive of the priority given to sound as the spur toward an acute sense of interiority. This builds on Ong's earlier bolder assertion where he explicitly identifies "sound as the special sensory key to interiority."³¹ In a Vaishnava context, the sense of self, sparked by the uttered name of Krishna—initially a "new" self that will turn out to be the discovery the "real self"—starts a process whereby the devotee finds himself subjectively, finds out who he is in relation to Krishna and then builds on that. His world is gradually defined, brought into order, and then systematically maintained to guarantee a growing and continuing access to Krishna. For the most adept devotee, this process will culminate, of course, in the meditative exercise that allows entry to the eternal ātman of Krishna.

The ideal transformation that takes place in the devotee who starts down this path is well documented, though perhaps its processes less well explored: the individual devotee who is incited toward devotion by utterance of the name of Krishna is enjoined to perform five, then nine, then eventually, sixty-four ritual acts, mechanical in nature in the sense that the devotee must consciously choose to perform them, even when not understood. These vādhi injunctions, when performed even haphazardly, transform the life of the devotee, reorienting him toward Krishna; when followed assiduously they transform even more dramatically. The vādhi acts become second nature to the practitioner who seeks to envelop himself in an environment that leaves little room for anything other than the focus on Krishna
and his world. The process is one of discovery wherein the devotee gradually uncovers his real emotional identity, one that is always in relation to Krishna.

The nature of this generalized identity, this orientation toward Krishna, is not immediately self-evident, however, and must be encouraged to emerge by the protective and nurturing environment afforded through the vaidhī injunction. To say the practitioner actively seeks this is perhaps misleading, for the texts and practitioners in the tradition make clear that the vaidhī injunctions are designed to lead to this discovery intentionally or not—and one suspects that for the overwhelming majority of practitioners the process is hardly systematic, and certainly not analytic, and not always completely conclusive. The vaidhī injunctions are the foundation for formal yoga in the Gauḍiya Vaishnava tradition, analogous in many respects to the classical formulations of yama and niyama, the moral and mental discipline that grounds the generic yoga of Patañjali. At the lowest levels, the practitioner discovers who he is through the inculation of basic emotions following his own inclinations or proclivities, that is, his own temperament. These proclivities are generalized as bhāvas, the fundamental emotions that form the basis of devotional love.

In the earliest hagiographical literature devoted to Caitanya, most eloquently in Vṛndāvana Dāsa’s Caitanya Bhāgavata, and about the same time they were formalized by Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmī eight hundred miles away in Vṛja, each of the bhāvas was understood generally to well up from within the depths of the individual, usually provoked in the context of practicing the vaidhī rituals, most commonly kirtana of the name of Krishna and Caitanya. The kirtana in turn spurred the memory or smarana of Krishna’s and, less commonly until later, Caitanya’s, activities or ilās, an experience that inevitably occurred in the company of dedicated devotees. This discovery established the emotional bond to Krishna (or Caitanya)—the attitude of dāsa or service, sakhiya or companionship, vāstra or parental love, or śrīgāra or erotic love. From that emotional bond, one could begin the process of placing oneself in, that is, living in Krishna’s realm of Mathūra or Vṛja. Living in Mathūra is initially metaphorical, if one cannot literally live there, but becomes the ultimate goal for the adept; that ultimate meditative goal of entering Vṛja, however, is the eternal or nitya, otherworldly or alavākha, Vṛja. This context constitutes the work of four of the five preferred vaidhī injunctions in Rūpa’s system; worshipping the images of Krishna no doubt frequently occurs in the same context, but these images do not,

at least on the lowest levels, seem to yield to the interiorizing process in the same way as the others—although, as we shall see below, ultimately they, too, do.

Once the devotee starts down this path by following his passion, rāga-nuṣṭāṇa, the mechanical rituals that were initially deliberately performed gradually cease to be purely mechanical. The devotee appropriates those acts as a way of life and with each performance naturalizes them. The cultivation becomes less self-consciously directed until, in Bourdieu’s terms, it crosses the line from being conscious and deliberate to the operational level of habitus, that is, it dictates ways of acting, thinking, and making sense of the world that are coercive and controlling, but invisible to the practitioner because of their obvious rightness which ceases to be questioned. Somewhere during this process—and precisely where is not possible to pinpoint, nor does it matter—the devotee completely succumbs or surrenders to the passion of love and begins to manifest involuntarily certain physical responses, evidence of real love’s presence.

Identified in the earliest texts of the Gauḍiya community, these are the sāttvika bhāvas weeping, speaking with a choked voice, fainting, rippling with gooseflesh, yelling, showing hyperactivity with enormous kinetic energy and strength, and its opposite, a numbing stupor. When these sāttvika bhāvas are validated as genuine by others, either by guru or by devotees who have experienced the same, the manifestations signal entry into an élite community of devotees. As described in the earliest text, it is at this point the devotee becomes a candidate for a more advanced form of devotion: the directed meditation that relies on the narratives describing the endless activities of Krishna (and Caitanya).

The devotee who enters this élite circle never ceases to perform the vaidhī injunctions; completely internalized and habituated, they provide the ongoing support or platform for meditative practice. The practice of meditation, however, shifts the emphasis to the highly disciplined form of remembrance, ilās-smarana, a recollection of the stories of Krishna. This shift does not replace the priority given to mantra and the centrality of kirtana, but it does amplify the word into speech, into narrative. The simultaneity and synthesizing sense of mantra yields to the syntagmatic or diachronic unraveling of narrative, a discursive reality. The sources of these narratives, at least initially, are the stories told in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa or Ādi-dāsa’s Śrīkṛṣṇa-kirtana and similar texts. The stories are told and retold, read and pondered at length by devotees; they provide the content of the medita-
tion. But how they act on the consciousness of the meditator is only vaguely suggested, and here is where the analogy with reading might prove especially useful.

In a wonderfully provocative article titled "Criticism and the Experience of Interiority," George Poulet speculates on the mystery of reading fiction and the role of language in creating a new interior reality. Most physical objects fail to yield to appropriation in the same way that books do with their ideas; other things remain objects in a world external to the individual. But, says Poulet, books are different because once they are opened and read they cease to be mere physical objects, but lose themselves in your consciousness as mental images; they depend on you for sustenance. "... in this interior world where, like fish in an aquarium, words, images, and ideas disport themselves, these mental entities, in order to exist, need the shelter which I provide; they are dependent on my consciousness."39

It is the nature of the mental object to exist in the consciousness of the thinker or reader through language, not some other medium. Poulet continues, "Moreover—and of all the benefits I find this most appealing—this interior universe constituted by language does not seem radically opposed to the me who thinks it. Doubtless what I glimpse through the words are mental forms not divorced of an appearance of objectivity. But they do not seem to be of another nature than my mind which thinks them. They are objects, but subjectified objects. In short, since everything has become part of my mind thanks to the intervention of language, the opposition between the subject and its objects has been considerably attenuated."40 But there is a remarkable transformation that takes place, Poulet argues, because every human being has thoughts of his own; yet when he reads he allows another's thoughts to become his own, to displace his own, that is, he thinks another's thoughts as if they were his own. "Because of the strange invasion of my person by the thoughts of another, I am a self who is granted the experience of thinking thoughts foreign to him. I am the subject of thoughts other than my own. My consciousness behaves as though it were the consciousness of another."41 The reader of narrative thinks thoughts that manifestly belong to another world; it is another I who has replaced the reader's own sense of self or controlling consciousness.42

At this point one can see the possibility for understanding the power of the narratives of Krishna's activities to transform the devotee, for having oriented himself to the world of Krishna through injunctions, it is the story of Krishna that thinks the thoughts of the reader, and on a more complex level, the meditator. We will return momentarily to the important shift that takes place between reading or hearing the lilas of Krishna or Caitanya and subsequently meditating on them from memorized scripts; what is important first is to explore Poulet's observations regarding the apparent takeover of consciousness that reading requires and that seems to address the surrender of the devotee to Krishna: reading is "a way of giving away not only to a host of alien words, images, ideas, but also to the very alien principle which utters them and shelters them."43 In the following quotation, we can better see some of the complexity of this takeover that vexes Poulet, but which speaks directly to the mechanism by which the narratives of Krishna are understood to trigger a devotee's reorientation:

The phenomenon is indeed hard to explain, even to conceive, and yet, once admitted, it explains to me what might otherwise seem inexplicable. For how could I explain, without such a take-over of my innermost subjective being, the astonishing facility with which I not only understand but even feel what I read. When I read as I ought—that is without mental reservation, without any desire to preserve my independence of judgment, and with the total commitment required of any reader—my comprehension becomes intuitive and any feeling proposed to me is immediately assumed by me. In other words, the kind of comprehension in question here is not a movement from the unknown to the known, from the strange to the familiar, from outside to inside. It might rather be called a phenomenon by which mental objects rise up from the depths of consciousness into the light of recognition. On the other hand—and without contradiction—reading implies something resembling the apperception I have of myself, the action by which I grasp straightforwardly what I think as being thought by a subject (who, in this case, is not I). Whatever sort of alienation I may endure, reading does not interrupt my activity as subject.

Reading, then, is the act in which the subjective principle which I call I, is modified in such a way I no longer have the right, strictly speaking, to consider it as my I. I am on loan to another, and this other thinks, feels, suffers, and acts within me. The phenomenon appears in its most obvious and even na"est form in the sort of spell brought about by certain cheap kinds of readings, such as thrillers, of which I say, "It gripped me." Now it is important to note that this possession of myself by another takes place not only on the level of objective thought, that is with regard to images, sensations, ideas which reading affords me, but also on the level of my very subjectivity.

When I am absorbed in reading, a second self takes over, a self which thinks and feels for me... 44
Poulet is then led to ask: Just who is this I that takes over my consciousness? He flirts with the prospect that it is the author of the text, but fairly quickly dismisses that as suggestive, but ultimately little more, given the decoupling of the written word from authorial intent, anticipating what has become generally accepted in literary critical circles. The text may shed light on its author (not the other way around), but in the end, it is the text itself that possesses. Poulet concludes that it is the text that creates its own reality.45

At this point, we might surmise that the devotee will wonder whether he should part ways with Poulet. It would seem intuitive that the I that inhabits the reader or meditator cannot simply be the text; it can only be Krishna. But upon reflection perhaps it might well be understood as Krishna-as-narrated or Krishna's world-as-narrated, for eventually the drama experienced in meditation will be understood to be a revelation of Krishna's world and all the activities therein. Bracketing that for the moment, since our model devotee has not yet reached that stage, the passage yields some startling parallels.

When Poulet speaks of the "phenomenon by which mental objects rise up from the depths of consciousness into the light of recognition" the parallel to the emergence of the practitioner's basic emotional condition, bhāva, immediately presents itself. For those emotions, which emerge to provide the platform for one's relationship to Krishna, as we previously noted, are understood to well up from the depths of the devotee's emotional landscape. The narratives, read or remembered, will trigger this emergence, allowing the devotee to discover his disposition in relation to Krishna—and one need only think of one's own experience of being moved by a story, feeling outrage or pleasure or sympathy for a character or a particularly poignant dramatic scene to see how this might be so. In Vaishnava terms, the experience of this emotion would, at least in ideal, controlled circumstances, produce rasa, that aesthetic experience of "tasting" the emotion, though Poulet does not follow through with that part of the aesthetics of reception, something that will be left for others who follow.46

As Poulet notes in the next sentence of the quotation, the individual who endures this experience never loses his own sense of self, his own subjectivity within the process though it is modified and he is aware of that modification—what emerges is not something totally alien to the Vaishnava reader or meditator, but somehow natural and innate, mysteriously aligning the individual to his optimal relationship with Krishna. When Poulet speaks of the narrative "gripping" him, one is reminded of bhāva's correlative concept, "possession" or āvēla. Early in the Gauḍīya tradition, āvēla was frequently conflated with bhāva and used to describe the onset of highest devotion, what Vṛndāvana Dāsa called bhāvāveśa or vaśgāvāveśa.47 These possessions or eruptions resulted in displays of the sātvika bhāvas and often the involuntary reenactment of events described in the sāstras, such as Caitanya's assumption of the form of Varāha, the Boar avatāra of Vishnu, described by Murāri Gupta and Vṛndāvana Dāsa,48 but also more mundane responses to kīrtana. Poulet, like Vṛndāvana Dāsa, is vague about the direction of these two experiences. Both etymologically and in the way they are ultimately articulated within the hagiographical tradition, bhāva is understood to well up from within the very ground of one's being, while āvēla grips from without. But either way, and certainly consistent with Vṛndāvana Dāsa's conflation of the two types of actions, Poulet's description of the act of reading seems to conjure an experience strongly parallel to that felt by devotees.49 In that, we get a strong hint of what this kind of meditation must be. For the reader, and for the devotee who practices smarana and who meditates, the narrative becomes crucial, yet, while doing so, the devotee or reader never loses his sense of self in relation to the narrative, but appropriates the narrative as if it were his own, eventually making it his own. This process of identification presages the climactic transformation that will take place when the devotee enters his own drama at the height of meditation. When properly oriented toward Krishna, the narratives of Krishna will take over one's very consciousness, one's sense of self. Meditation will formalize and amplify this process.

Visualization, Memory, and Repetition

The appropriation of Krishna's narratives through reading is not a quick process; it stretches over time, for the devotee must read and listen to and discuss these stories, gradually incorporating every detail in his memory. Smarana is the act of recalling these stories—it literally means "recollecting"—but perhaps more precisely in the vaidhi context it is better understood as the act of appropriating them, for smarana, which begins by recalling the name of Krishna, signals the process by which the stories of Krishna are iterated and reiterated until they become wholly possessed of the devotee. From Poulet's perspective, this would have to be a dual process, for the narrative will possess the devotee as well, and the structure of the vaidhi rit-
uals suggests that this was certainly what their authors had in mind. In keeping with our reading analogy, the act of smanya would initially be reminiscent of Gadamer's hermeneutic circle and the fusion of reader's and text's horizons. The reader or listener encounters the narratives of Krishna's exploits repeatedly and with each repetition, learns more of their detail, understands more completely the narrative trajectory, anticipates the emotional content in ever-increasing terms until every aspect is fully comprehended. Repetition is the key to total mastery. Repetition fixes the details. This "phenomenology of repetition," as Calinescu calls it in the literary context, eventually frees the practitioner from the physical, written version of the text. This fixity, however, would seem to be fundamentally different from the kind of memorization that drives the Vedic ritual—though many Vaishnavas are able to recite entire passages of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa from memory. Unlike the Vedic brahmanas whose internalized text need not be understood to be effective, whose words themselves carry that magical weight capable of upholding the very structures of the universe, the Vaishnava must intellectually and emotionally comprehend the meaning of the text to reach the highest levels of meditation, and that can only come from sustained repetition.

Under most circumstances the set of signifiers within a narrative text come to the reader in a sequence that creates a momentary temporality, but once read, the reader grasps the whole, so that in subsequent readings or hearings the sequence is apprehended with an ever-spiraling foreknowledge. For the adept, repetition of the lilās of Krishna produces a very interesting effect: the total appropriation of the narrative through multiple iterations over time gives the meditator the ability to shift comprehension from the temporally-dependent discursive mode back to a synchronic or atemporal realization, though most of the disciplined acts of meditation will discourage that impulse and continue to explore the temporal narrative, except perhaps at its climax (possibly equivalent to Patañjali's final formless meditation, as Habermann suggests). With total mastery, all the parts are known in their entirety, the narrative has been completely appropriated, and that means that all parts are simultaneously understood, simultaneously present. The shift that took place from the all-encompassing mantra to the discursive narrative can, indeed, must, in the end, be reversed. The process is not immediately appreciated, but must be practiced to its final apprehension, at which point the devotee does not simply know the text, but in a way analogous to Poulter's, is completely identified with the text, indeed, is

the text. The necessity of fully embodying the text is seldom discussed as a necessary condition for this kind of yoga; this requirement is so obvious that it remains nearly invisible within the tradition, but it harks back to the traditional impulse to grant speech primacy in matters ontological. Appropriating and embodying the text for Gauḍiya Vaishnavas, however, requires that the practitioner and his relation to the narrative action be clearly identified, otherwise the perspective on the text will change; there can be no simple observer, for such an observer would have to be invisibly omnipresent in the narrative. Enter the figure that most closely approaches that ubiquity: the mañjari, that special helpmate of Radha.

The first companions of Caitanya experimented with a variety of devotional forms, but by the mid-sixteenth century, the preferred form of meditation on the highest levels of Gauḍiya Vaishnava praxis was called mañjari sādhana. The developers of this practice were the scholars who had gathered around Caitanya in his later years in Nālācala, about half of whom eventually settled in Vraja. Guided initially by Svātīpa Dāmodara and perhaps to a lesser extent by Rāmānanda Rāya, the practice presumed a sophisticated grasp of the aesthetics of rasa and its production through drama, whose scripts provide a much more comprehensive key to setting, mood, location of action, and so forth. In its formal structures, drama provides the mechanism for controlling and disciplining the narrative to its optimal devotional advantage. It is no coincidence then that the most adept practitioners composed formal poems, kātyas, and dramas, nālakas, that today continue to serve as primers for other practitioners.

Among the several alternative practices, mañjari sādhana is certainly the best documented and most formally executed, and so provides us with the best opportunity to draw the analogy between reading and meditation more poignantly. In summary, the logic of the practice works something like this. As a devotee finds his natural emotional relationship to Krishna, that emotion will dictate a proper persona and that persona will—at least for those who advance to the highest levels—be one of a young just-pubescent girl. While the practice is predicated on the commitment to giving Krishna the highest pleasure in this asymmetrical emotional exchange, one might imagine the devotee attempting, indeed desiring, somehow to enter the ranks of the gopīs who play with Krishna. But the adept, who loves with all humility, will recognize that there is only one figure among the gopīs who can truly pleasure Krishna, and that figure is Radha. It would be the height of arrogance and self-centeredness for the devotee to propose her-
self (now that the persona of the female is assumed) as the direct object of Krishna's affections and attentions. As a consequence, the devotee will choose to serve those who give Krishna the highest pleasure, which ultimately means serving Radha or serving those who serve her.

The role of the mañjari is helpmate, companion, confidante, go-between, and servant. This role has an advantage enjoyed by no other figure in the lilas of Krishna: immediate and continuous access to Radha's and Krishna's play. The devotee-as-mañjari becomes the supreme participant-observer, present and contributing, but not the direct object of Krishna's attentions. The mañjari alone has the privilege of witnessing this sublime love; the mañjari alone can observe the full sweep of emotions. The mañjari is in the best position to convey to the rest of the community what she has seen and knows of this extraordinary love. No one is better placed to know vicariously what this love really means, and that placement has a curious effect: mañjari sadhana provides the community with the possibility of on-going revelation, valorizing the experiences of each generation by allowing immediate and direct access to the primary activities of Krishna, not second-hand or vicarious experience.

What the meditator sees and experiences can be, and has routinely been, conveyed to others through the medium of poetry, but perhaps best of all through drama. In some respects, the pada or lyric literature of the Bengali devotees of the sixteenth and later centuries can be understood to represent that immediate experience, for the bhanita or signature line indicates the presence or intrusion of the author into the Krishna- or Caitanya-lila described, often in the persona of the helpmate, evidence of their portrayal of direct witness. But these padavali are as a rule extremely short and often tightly circumscribed in their exploration of the emotional world—and quite frankly, not every author is gifted. They do, however, provide some indirect evidence of the results of the devotional process, though for many the formality of the meditation would be much less developed than those who follow the mañjari sadhana.

But Rupa's Sanskrit dramas, the Vedaghamadhaiva nitaka and Lalitamadhaiva nitaka, do not simply demonstrate the cultivation of these rarified emotions—though that they do serve that function for the diligent student. These dramas, and others like them, including their Bengali translations, can better be understood as first-hand reports of the lilas these practitioners witnessed in their own meditations. Importantly, the analytical precision and skill with which the emotions are cultivated according to the standards of rasa aesthetics in these dramas allows them to function nearly as field guides to proper visualization. In the meditator's persona as aide to Radha, the mañjari would work meticulously to arrange the proper mood, to set the tone for assignations by careful attention to the details of the preparation of perfumes, the cooking of special foods, or tending the comforts of the trysting place. That knowledge comes gradually through the cultivation of rasa, and these poems and dramas are the result of a distinctly chirographic culture designed for study and visualization, and the subsequent reiteration of the experiences. With the tales of the Bhagavata Purana and the guidance of these other texts, the advanced student will prepare himself to visualize those narratives as an entree to Krishna's and Radha's permanent company. Haberman has outlined the steps of initiation into these advanced stages, and the reader should be familiar with that process that need not be recapitulated here. But linking the action of reading, listening, and remembering reveals a major unexplored shift in the nature of this praxis.

The move from mantra as the inciter of devotion and the foundation of vaidhi rituals to the diachronic narrative of Krishna's exploits requires yet another adjustment in order to be completely interiorized in the meditator. As the story is repeated, the narrative is appropriated not only in its aural dimension, but in its visual. This shift to the visual is again lightly glossed within the textual tradition, but represents a move of considerable difficulty and import. Though the texts are rife with details of action, descriptions of emotions, the setting is often only lightly addressed, even though visualization depends on an acute spatial sense and the ability to conjure detail from memory. As Bachelard has noted, memory often functions best when connected to spaces. "Here space is everything, for time ceases to quicken memory. Memory—what a strange thing it is!—does not record concrete duration, in the Bergsonian sense of the word. We are unable to relive duration that has been destroyed. We can only think of it, in the line of an abstract time that is deprived of all thickness."

Space gives the narratives their shape through time; space connects with emotional worlds. Visualization in the disciplined way assumed, but seldom actually described, in the literatures regarding mañjari sadhana, hinges on the ability of the practitioner to reproduce first a spatial environment, the geography of Vraja, as the prelude to emotional involvement with Krishna. Here is where the dramas, with their elaborate sets, stage directions, and coordination of action and speech, become central to the process of learn-
ing how to stage visually these smarana-based narratives. The vision-based mental construct structures time and space together—but also become visual clues for what is ultimately a salvific emotion. After learning to construct the physical landscape of Vraja appropriate to the līlā that forms the source of meditation, the practitioner begins to people the landscape. No small task in itself, the activity is still rather rudimentary and mechanistic: Krishna’s līlās are played out on this mental stage according to the scripts, each episode staged to produce a particular emotion. The plays are especially fruitful for this initial staging. In much the same way that Poulet argues that the reader will fill in and complete the picture, producing a mental image of the narratives of fiction, the devotee will learn to fill in other appropriate elements of the scene to generate the appropriate emotional experience. This is the work of the imagination—but it is not an undisciplined imagination, but a very tightly directed one.

Eventually the practitioner will have exhausted the rote narratives and, as a result of the phenomenology of repetition that the vaidhī injunctions will have inculcated in the practitioner, he will stage and restage them until the long-running performance becomes habit. By this time the guru will have helped the devotee to identify clearly his meditative body, his siddhārṇa or siddhādeha, the perfected body. Like everything else in this practice, the habituation of this meditative body requires that the devotee grow into it, first as observer, then as participant. In much the same way that a reader first simply observes the action of narrative before committing emotionally, the meditator will function as the initially passive audience of his own vision. Eventually, as he grows accustomed to the staging, he anticipates and begins to participate emotionally; this of course is the first step in the tasting of the rasa, the distilled emotional experience. At some magical, undefined moment, the imagination, tightly focused on the story at hand, will slip its narrative constraints—how precisely remains a mystery, though anyone lost in associated thoughts during the reading of a novel can understand this possibility.

In the midst of this highly disciplined practice, the meditator is surprised to visualize a previously unscripted event. Again though little discussed, this unscripted activity is described, or at least hinted, in such works as the Prākrama of Narottama Dāsa, among other texts of his generation: the devotee gradually becomes accustomed to these variations and departures from script, noting them, sometimes recording them after meditation. Then, for the adept, who has become fully comfortable in his perfected body, the long-awaited moment occurs when he will find himself in the midst of the action he was visualizing. When that happens, the meditator becomes an actor in the narrative, and the visualization is no longer a visualization, but a direct, unmediated experience. If properly controlled, the devotee will enter into Krishna’s dhāma, his eternal Vraja—and there he will find her (no longer his) eternal place as a maṇḍirī. The function of the līlā-smarana that led to the visualization is now reversed, for the devotee has witnessed previously unseen, unrecorded līlās; the scholar among these devotees will come back and share them as the revelations they are. Though finite in the physical record of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa and other texts, the numbers of these līlās are infinite; furthermore they are timeless for they are eternal, all present all the time in eternal Vraja. The devotee’s eye-witness record of any one of these līlās must involve a kind of back-engineering in order to tease it into a diachronic narrative text, unraveling what is condensed and known by the practitioner in its totality and simultaneity. To my knowledge, this back and forth activity is simply never analyzed, or even commented upon, but is essential to the ongoing revelations within this tradition.

The practitioner will take up routine entry to eternal Vraja through the siddhārṇa or siddhādeha of the by-now familiar maṇḍirī identity, that will be the identity in which the devotee will eventually assume permanent residence. The texts that outline this practice are precise in their accounts, routinely identifying the names, ages, tasks, dress, parentage, and so forth, for each of these practitioners, and just as often identifying historical personages inhabiting these bodies. For example, in the undated but probably late seventeenth-century Śikṣatattva dīpikā, Krishnadāsa Kavirāja is declared to be a girl named Kasuri Maṇḍirī. She is twelve years, two-months old. Her father is Bhadrasena, her mother Menā, her husband Prthuka, her mother-in-law Keraṅgi, and she makes her home in Saṅketa. Her body is of a golden hue and the dominant form of her service to Rādhā is the provision of sandal and sandalwood paste. The manuscript provides similar details for Krishnadāsa’s teachers, Rūpa Gosvāmi, Saṅitā Gosvāmi, Gopāla Bhāṭa, Raghunāthā Dāsa; and for students of the next generation as well, such as Śrīvīvāsa Ācārya, Rāmacandra Kavirāja, Govindadāsa Ācārya, and Narottama Ṭhākura. Other texts will confirm or slightly alter these details, for instance in the Mānasī Sura, Lavaṅga Maṇḍirī is Saṅitā Gosvāmi, while in the previously cited text, it is Raghunāthā Dāsa who goes by that name. Though the details are inconsistent, the approach is conceptually coherent.
The mental activity of mañjari śādhanā is not at all limited to the episodic nature of the textual traditions, but goes a step further by structuring the devotee’s activities through the course of the day. The day’s activities are divided into eight parts and in each one of those segments, the devotee has certain responsibilities with respect to Rādā and Krishna. This aṣṭakāḥya-līlā, as it is called, was described by Rūpa in his Aṣṭakāḥya-līlāmangalatraya,⁶⁷ and provides the basis for Krishnadāsa Kavirāja’s study text, the kāya titled Gvindalāmuktā.⁶⁸

Later texts, such as the Mañjariśvaraparipāṇīsana of Kunjivahāri Dāsa⁶⁹ provide much more detailed guides to the pragmatics of these practices. These outlines of daily activities connect the meditative ritual to the tending of the image to structure the experience of everyday life in parallel to that of the meditative life. These devotional acts of lovingly tending the images of Rādā and Krishna (and analogously, Caitanya and his companions)—waking, bathing, dressing, feeding, and so forth—finally consolidate the complete set of practices that begin the vaidhi injunctions. What started with the simplest kīrtana of the names of God has led the devotee to take up the way of passion, culminating in the formal yogic visualization of the eternal līlā of Rādā and Krishna. Importantly, it is only in this final consolidation of vaidhi injunction and meditation that the interiority realized by the devotee in the word and narrative is made possible for the interaction with physical icon. It is at this point, in the final stages of full integration of prakṣa, that Haberman’s suggested model of method acting finally bears fruit. The replication of līlās on this earth is made possible by the repetitive practices initiated by reading and listening, by rereading and retelling, by smarana and śravaṇa—and with this realization of the devotee’s world to mirror Krishna’s eternal Vraja, the devotee has learned the way into Krishna’s heaven, an indeterminate reality precisely because of its infinite abundance.

At the end of his reveries on reading, Poulet presciently observes: “There is in the work a mental activity profoundly engaged in objective forms; and there is, at another level, forsaking all forms, a subject which reveals itself to itself (and to me) in its transcendence relative to all which is reflected in it. At this point, no object can any longer express it; no structure can any longer define it; it is exposed in its ineffability and in its fundamental indeterminacy.”⁷⁰

In summary, based on Poulet’s perspective, we can see that Gauḍīya Vaishnava practitioners have created in their yogic śādhanā a mental space to allow for the free play of “other consciousness,” allowing the narratives to structure their thoughts. Through a series of very tightly orchestrated ritual actions, the devotee interiorizes the story of Krishna. The significations of the texts envelope the consciousness of the individual to the point that they are no longer mechanical reproductions. Meditation extends the appropriation of the text to dramatize it in a four-dimensional way, producing a stage, furnishing it, peopling with actors, and then playing out its drama. At the critical moment of total familiarity, where the individual’s consciousness is relieved of its burden of impelling the action as it has been heard, the drama is so interiorized that it takes a life of its own.

The drama is then activated and proceeds without direction. This shift from the imitation of specific dramatic episodes in a mechanical reproduction to the spontaneous production of unpredictable and new dramatic events is interpreted as a revelation; in Sharf’s terms, it is perfectly apposite to what he calls the indeterminacy of experience. These tales are endless in their variation, and exist simultaneously for all eternity. The sādhaka “taps in” to this streaming revelation, for Rādā’s and Krishna’s love is the fundamental truth of the universe. The realization of this revelation, of course, is the point where the devotee departs from Poulet’s more limited sense of interiority, for at this juncture the sādhaka learns what is key to salvation and the ritually disciplined act of interiority, the rāgatrī śādhanā bhaṅkī, becomes the tool by which the individual escapes the limiting confines of this worldly existence, transcends the narrow and bounded human cognition, and enters into a world of eternal verities.

The reports of these revelations constitute the “stuff” of poetry and drama in the Gauḍīya Vaishnava tradition—and these dramatic forms are, then, treated as “new revelation” rather than dramatic or poetic productions. The next step, of course, is for the sādhaka to enter into the drama proper, to take a role that is based on the realization of his own truer identity than is known in this world, a celestial form through which he will participate in this eternal līlā. At this point, the sādhaka not only allows the play of Poulet’s “other consciousness” to occupy his own, but engages it directly, his own consciousness interacting with and participating in that of the occupier. Cosmic divinity ruptures the insularity of the profane and human world, and the two are conjoined. Eventually, the sādhaka will shake off this human body and its constraints, and slip imperceptibly into the revelatory realm of his inner-constituted consciousness, analogous to that experienced by any yogic master. The mysterious mechanism by which Poulet
envisions the modern reader nurturing and indeed communing with an
other consciousness, becomes for the Gauḍya Vaishnava sādhaka the very
mechanism for salvation.

Endnotes

1. David Haberman, Acting as a Way of Salvation: A Study of Rāgāmugā Bhakti Sādhana
   Drama."

2. Ibid., esp. ch. 8, pp. 145-55.

3. Bhāgavata Purāṇa, edited with Bengali translation by Rāmānārāyaṇa Vidyāratna,
   with the Bhāvavṛttapādiṭṭha tīkā of Śrīdhara Svāmī, Kramasandarbha of Jīva Gosvāmin,
   and Śrīvīsaṅgāsātikā tīkā of Viśvanātha Cakrārvita, 5 vols. (Murshidabad: Rādhāra-
   maṇa Press of Baharampur, 1300-1305 BS).

4. Krishnādāsa Kavirāja, Caitanya Caritāmṛta, with the commentary Niśākutāryākolalini tīkā
   by Rādhāsvinda Nātha, 6 vols. (Calcutta: Sādhanā Prakāśā, 1573 BS); for a translation of
   this edition, see Edward C. Dimock, Jr., trans., Caitanya Caritāmṛta of Krishnādāsa Kavirāja: A
   Translation and Commentary, with an introduction by Edward C. Dimock, Jr., and Tony K. Stewart,

5. Robert Sharf has explored some of these issues, not without controversy, in his
   lively essay on religious experience; see Robert H. Sharf, "Experience," Critical Terms
   for Religious Studies, edited by Mark C. Taylor (Chicago and London: University of

6. This is slightly different from Daniel Dennett’s use of the concept of quais (pl. quaids)
   as noted by Sharf, "Experience," p. 110.

7. Edmund Husserl, Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology, translated by W. R.
   Boyce Gibson (1931: New York: Collier Books, 1962); and the shorter The Idea of

   this tradition perhaps better than any dealing with issues of memory and hermeneutics.

9. Rāpī Gosvāmi, Bhaktiśāmśāntasindhu, edited with Bengali translation by Hari-
   dāsa Dāsa, with the commentaries Durgāsaṃgaṃaṭṭhāni of Jīva Gosvāmi, Arthasa-
   nāḍapādiṭṭha of Mukundādāsa Gosvāmi, and Bhākṣīsāmāṇḍarāṣṭīśi of Viśvanātha
   Cakrārvita, 3d ed. (Mathūra: Haribolā Kuṭīra from Śrī Kṛṣṇaśāramsthāna, 495 GA);
   for a bilingual edition of the text, see David L. Haberman, ed. and trans., The Bhak-
   tisāmśāntasindhu of Rāpī Gosvāmin (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for
   the Arts, and Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2003). In addition, the
   companion volume, is Rāpī Gosvāmi, Ujjvalanilamanī, edited with Bengali translation
   by Haridāsa Dāsa, with the commentary Śvātma-pramodini-tīkā of Viśhnudāsa
   (Navadvipa: by the editor at Haribolā Kuṭīra, 469 GA). For the connection between
   earlier theorists of rasa and the Gauḍya school, see Neal C. Delmonico, "Sacred
   Rapture: A Study of the Religious Aesthetic of Rāpī Gosvāmin" (PhD Dissertation
   University of Chicago, 1990); see also Haberman’s introduction to the Bhaktiśā-
   mśāntasindhu.

10. I have explored some of these issues in a still-unpublished, but widely circulated
    essay titled "Sex, Secrecy, and the Politics of Sahajāyā Scholarship: Caveats from a
    Faint-hearted Student of Tantra" (typescript): Hugh Urban has picked up many of
    these political and epistemological issues in several essays and in his The Economics


13. Gerardus van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, trans. by E. J.
    Turner, with appendices incorporating the changes from the 2d German edition,

14. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Primitive Mentality, trans. by Lillian A. Clare (London:
    George, Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1923).

15. William James, Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature,

16. See, for example, Mircea Eliade, History of Religious Ideas, trans. by Willard R.
    Trask (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); there are of course a myriad of
    additional titles. Eliade’s determination to distance himself from phenomenology
    of all sorts was legendary among those of us who were his students.

17. The result is a form of petitio principii. The steps in this process were, of course,
    multiple and stretched over the better part of a century. As has been frequently doc-
    umented, Darwin’s theory allowed for explanations of relationships that had previ-
    ously remained mysterious, hence part of its power. But the intellectual move that
    seems to have had the most bearing on religious studies and the study of "foreign"
    cultures was the "discovery" by Sir William Jones, Franz Bopp, Max Muller, et al.,
    that languages (and then myths, rituals, etc.) were organized into families (not just
    that they could be understood in that model, but that they "really" were families, with
    ensuing cousins, offspring, and so forth). The documentation for these "discoveries"
    is intimately bound with the literature of the Orientalist critique.

18. Sharf addresses relevant issues regarding representations of experience; see

19. Translation itself can be understood as an exercise in the construction of
    complex metaphors, that is, expressing one thing in terms of another (the ideas of
    one language in the terms of another language, which is inevitably semantically
    approximate, never exact). Unless carefully controlled, metaphor, then, leaves
    the impression of understanding and precision, but ultimately defers meaning.
For more on the nature of translation theory that deals expressly with metaphor and discourse theory, see the later chapters of Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); for how it plays out in polysystem theory, see Pramod Talgeri and S. B. Verma, *Literature in Translation: From Cultural Transference to Metonymic Displacement* (Delhi: Sangam, 1988).


26. It is inverse or negative only because the appropriation of a text by a reader begins with an external stimulus (the text) that is apprehended in stages and differently with each reading, whereas the Lacanian construction of the fictive self originates in the unconscious of the individual. In other respects the processes are quite parallel.

27. The nature of hierarchies or progressive series in Gaudiyā Vaishnava thought operates on the principle that whatever stands hierarchically higher automatically subsumes all of the qualities of those items in the series below it, which is to say that as one moves up the hierarchy, each step represents a more complete entity within the series; steps or levels within hierarchies are not, then, discrete, but downwardly or backwardly comprehensive.


29. This verse, which is expounded in every biography of Caitanya, is the cornerstone of his devotional instruction. In the first biography, the Sanskrit *Kṛṣṇacaitanya-acarāntamāram* of Murāri Gupta, edited by Mrīpalakanti Ghos, with Bengali translation by Haridāsa Dāsa, 4th ed. (Calcutta: by the editor, 459 GA); the author has Caitanya recite the verse (2.2.28):

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ahārnāma hah ārnāma nahārnāma va kevalā /
kalau naśceva naśceva naśceva gatiyannathā //
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after which he notes:

30. The "na" is the Primordial Man (purusā), who has a material form in the Kali age. You must know that one whose true nature (svātā) is the Name (nāma); he is complete (kevalam). 30. The name of Hari is given three times to make the meaning for all living beings. And the word "eva" stands for the destructions of the sins of living beings (jīva). 31. "Kevāla" means the manifesting of all tattvas, while the word "kevala" is mentioned by propounders of advaita as the extinguishment of the karma which affects the present (prārabdhakarma). 32. "Kevala" is "kaivalya," meaning knowledge; it is filled with compassion and it establishes the taste of the nectar of Krishna's love. 33. His true form (svātā) is the name of Hari. Should there be a man who would say otherwise—that it is not so—he has no refuge.

The injunction to perform kirtana as the primary ritual activity of the Kali age acts as a refrain to punctuate nearly every religious discourse in the biographical tradition, being mentioned quite literally several thousand times.


38. Georges Poulet, "Criticism and the Experience of Interiority" in Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism, edited by Jane P. Tompkins (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 41-49. All emphases are in the original. This essay is abridged version of the original French (which includes numerous literary examples to explore the mechanics of interiority), and is reprinted from an important series of essays titled The Structuralist Controversy: The Language of Criticism and the Sciences of Man, edited by Richard A. Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 56-72. Poulet was the leading figure of the Geneva School of phenomenological criticism and has among his many works devoted considerable energy to delineating the experience of consciousness.


40. Ibid.; the emphasis on language is especially important here.

41. Ibid., p. 44.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p. 45.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., p. 45ff.

46. A number of reader-response critics, such as Jiau, Iser, Rabinowitz, and Rosenblatt explicitly address the aesthetics of reception, but do not elevate that aesthetic to a transcendent or religious experience, as is the case in Yona theory applied to bhakti, although Calinescu cites Proust's essay on Rusk in this connection: "... reading, while not yet a spiritual act (as Rusk in thought), could be at once a form of self understanding and a preparation or training for the spiritual" (Matei Calinescu, Rewriting [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993], xvi). It should be further noted that one of the critiques of Poulet by reader-response critics is that he falls into the substantialist trap, assuming that the content of this consciousness is somehow substantive; ironically, it is this alleged fallacy that makes Poulet so remarkably compatible with the Vaishnava theologians. For more on reader-response, see especially: Hans Robert Jauss, Toward an Aesthetic of Reception, translated from the German by Timothy Bahti, with an introduction by Paul De Man, Theory and History of Literature, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982); Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Peter J. Rabinowitz, Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987); and Louise...

47. There are numerous examples of this kind of expression: for a few rare examples see Vṛmādānā Dāsa, *Caitanya Bhāgavata*, 3.2.438; 3.3.207.


50. This is perhaps better complicated by Paul Ricoeur's use of Bergson's paired mémoire-habitude (memory-as-habit) and mémoire-souvenir or (memory as distinct recollection) as the beginning point of his phenomenology of memory, rather than opposing endpoints. See Chapter One, "Memory and Imagination," in *Memory, History, and Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 5-55, especially "A Phenomenological Sketch of Memory," pp. 21-44.


53. Haberman has noted that some practitioners argue that the assumption of this identity is natural or inherent within the individual and only uncovered; others argue it is assigned by the guru; see Haberman, *Acting as a Way of Salvation*, pp. 116-23. But it is the guru's job to know the student's real identity, so the issue is, in many respects, moot.

54. The largest compilation of these lyrics, numbering about six thousand, is *Paḍakātpatara* compiled by Vaishnava Dāsa, edited with an introduction by Sātisācāra Rāya, 5 vols., Sāhiya Pārisād Granthāvali, no. 50 (Calcutta: Rāmakāmāla Sīrīna for the Baṅgiya Sāhiya Pārisād, 1922-38 BS). The largest collection devoted exclusively to Caitanya, many of which are contained in the previously cited work, is *Gaṇapadatarāraṅgī* compiled by Jagadbandhu Bhadra, edited by Mṛṇālakānti Ghoṣa, 2d ed., Sāhiya Pārisād Granthāvali, no. 10 (Calcutta: Baṅgiya Sāhiya Pārisād, 1941 BS).


61. I was reminded of Proust's recovery of lost memory through the taste of tea and a small confection he used to share with his aunt, a physical experience that quickly reproduced the space that structured the associated emotion in its totality; see Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin (London: Penguin Books, 1989), pp. 48-50. In the Gadarman tradition, Paul Ricoeur does perform a masterful hermeneutic on this passage: see *Time and Narrative*, translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984-88).


The better to impress the story of the Passion in your mind and to memorize each action of it more easily, it is helpful and necessary to fix the places and people in your mind; a city, for example, which will be the city of Jerusalem—taking for this purpose
a city that is well known to you. In this city find the principal places in which all the episodes of the Passion would have taken place. . . . And then too you must shape in your mind some people, people well known to you, to represent for you the people involved in the Passion. . . .

When you have done all this, putting all your imagination into it, then go into your chamber. Alone and solitary, excluding every external thought from your mind, start thinking of the beginning of the Passion, starting with how Jesus entered Jerusalem on the ass. Moving slowly from episode to episode, meditate on each one, dwelling on each single stage and step of the story. . . .

64. Narottama Dāsa o Tāhāra Rasamānalī, compiled by Nirmalprāśāda Nātha (Calcutta: Calcutta University, 1975); includes full texts of Prārthana, Rādhākrṣṇalīlāvīṣayaka, Gaura Nityānanda o Navadojna Lalitāvīṣayaka, Premabhaktiāmārāṅkā, Śādhu-prema-āmārāṅkā, Śādhanacandra, Bhaktiśuddhipana, Premabhaktiācintāmāni, Gurusahayācintāmāni, Nāmaacintāmāni, Gurusahayācintāmāni, Upāsadattatrasāra, Smaranaṅgagala, Vaiṣṇavānīr, Rāgavānīr, and Kuṣāvanānīr.

65. Anonymous, Śikṣāloka dīpikā, MS 3746, pt. 2 (Bengali Manuscript Collection, Asiatic Society, Kolkata, n.d.), folio 5-4.

66. Anonymous, Manasi Sevā, MS B-1041, acc. no. 6161 (Bengali Manuscript Collection, Vrindaban Research Institute, n.d.), folio 2.

67. A translation of the full text can be found in Haberman, Acting as a Way of Salvation, appendix B, pp. 161-63. A generic chart of the āṣṭākāya activities can be found on p. 127.


**Premā Yoga in the Rāsa Līlā: The Vraja Gopākās as the Masters of Yoga**

Graham M. Schweig

Introduction: Yoga in Bhakti Texts

The prominent position of yoga in relation to bhakti can be easily understood by observing the mere presence and pervasiveness of the word yoga, along with related words from the same verbal root, throughout bhakti texts. In foundational bhakti works such as the Bhagavata Gītā (BG) and the Bhagavata Purāṇa (BhP), the words yoga, yogi, yuktā, and other words derivative of the verbal root "yuj" appear repeatedly. For example, in the Bhagavata Gītā's some 700 verses, the word "yoga" appears in fifteen of its eighteen chapters, with a total of 78 incidences. The word "yogi" appears 28 times, and the word "yuktā" 37 times. Similarly, these words are pervasively distributed within the Bhagavata text, in numbers proportionate to its much greater volume.

The word yoga possesses a complex set of meanings due to its many applications, and this can be observed most readily in the text of the Gītā. In the most general sense, yoga denotes the soul's union or way of uniting with the divine. More specifically, the term indicates a variety of means, paths, or practices for attaining any one of several levels of perfection. These levels are expressed by prefixed words modifying the term yoga, as observed in the following compound phrases: "the yoga of action," or Karma-yoga (BG 3.9); "the yoga of knowledge," or Jñāna-yoga (BG 3.5); and "the yoga of discernment," or Buddha-yoga (BG 2.49). Yoga itself is also considered a level of achievement or state of perfection, as expressed in such terms as jñāna-sāmsārīdhi (BG 6.37). Perhaps most specifically, yoga is one of the six schools