

## **Advaya Taraka Upanishad**

(1) Presently we would like to expound the secret doctrine of the nondual Deliverer for the benefit of the ascetic (yati) who has subdued the senses and is filled with the six virtues, namely quiescence and the rest.

**Comments:** The six virtues praised in Vedântic circles are quiescence (shama), restraint (dama) of the senses, cessation (uparati) of desire or worldly activity, endurance (titikshâ), collectedness (samâdhâna), and faith (shraddhâ).

(2) Always realizing “I am of the nature of Consciousness (cit),” with eyes completely shut or else with eyes somewhat open, by looking inward above the eyebrows—he, beholding the Absolute, the Supreme, in the form of a multitude of fires of Being Consciousness Bliss, assumes the appearance of luminosity.

(3) This secret doctrine is known as Târaka Yoga because it enables the yogin to overcome (samtârayati) the great dread of the cycle of conception, birth, life, and death. Realizing the psyche (jîva) and the Lord (îshvara) to be illusory, and abandoning all differentiation as “not this, not that” (neti neti)—that which remains is the nondual Absolute.

(4) For the attainment of that nondual Absolute careful attention (anusamdhâna) should be paid to the Three Signs.

(5) In the middle of the body there exists the sushumnâ, the “channel of the Absolute,” of the form of the sun and of the luminosity of the full moon. Originating at the root prop (mûlâdhâra), she i.e., sushumnâ, the central channel extends to the “brahman fissure.” In the center of that sushumnâ is the famous kundalinî, with a radiance equal to myriads of lightning flashes and subtle membered like the thread of a lotus fiber. Having beheld it with the mind, a person is liberated because of the obliteration of all sin (pâpa). If he incessantly beholds the splendor (tejas) of the kundalinî by virtue of the flashing forth of Târaka Yoga in a specific area (mandala) on the forehead (lalâta), he is an adept. Then the sound phû is produced in his two ear holes, which should be blocked with the tips of his forefingers. Then beholding in an elevated state of mind that region in the form of a blue light located in the middle of the eyes, by looking inward, he attains unexcelled bliss. Thus does he perceive in his heart. Such is the perception of the Internal Sign to be practiced by the seekers after liberation.

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(6) Now follows the perception of the External Sign. If he perceives in front of the nose, at a distance of four, six, eight, ten, and twelve thumb breadths in succession the space (vyoman) that is doubly endowed with gleaming yellow color and again in the semblance of blood red color, which at times is like blue radiance or dark blueness, he is a yogin. There are rays of light at the outset in the vision of the person practicing this Târaka Yoga when he is glancing with fickle vision at the space. If he sees that, he is a yogin. When he sees rays of light resembling molten gold, either at the end of the outer corner of his sight or on the ground, that vision can be said to be settled. He who sees thus twelve thumb breadths beyond his head achieves immortality. If he who is steady in that vision next has the vision of the radiance of space in the head, wherever he may be, he surely is a yogin.

(7) Now follows the perception of the Intermediate Sign. The yogin sees phenomena that are like the entire solar wheel, glittering and so on with morning colors, or else like a conflagration of fire, or like the diffusely lit “mid region” (antarîksha) lacking such definable radiance. He abides in the form of their form. Through vision that abounds with these light phenomena, he becomes the space (âkâsha) devoid of qualities. Then he becomes the supreme space (parama âkâsha) like deep darkness ablaze with the radiant form of the Deliverer i.e., Being Consciousness. Then he becomes the great space (mahâ âkâsha) like the conflagration at the end of time. Then he becomes the space of Reality (tattva âkâsha) beaming with supreme luminosity superior to everything. Finally he becomes the solar space (sûrya âkâsha) resembling the radiant glory of a hundred thousand suns. Thus, the fivefold space, existing externally and internally, constitutes the Sign of the Deliverer. He who experiences this, released from the fruit of his actions, becomes like space resembling those described above. Hence he becomes the Deliverer, the Sign bestowing the fruit of the transmental (amanaska) Reality.

(8) That realization of the Deliverer is twofold: the former being the Deliverer and the latter the transmental Condition. On this there is a stanza: “That Târaka Yoga is to be known as twofold, consisting of a preceding and a succeeding form, whereby the preceding is to be known as the Deliverer and the transmental Reality as that which is succeeding.

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**(9)** In the pupils (târa), in the interior of the eyes, there is a replica of the sun and the moon. Through the pupils (târaka) comes about perception of the solar and the lunar discs, as it were, in the macrocosm, and there is a corresponding pair of solar and lunar discs in the space in the middle of the head as the microcosm. Having accepted this, those [internal solar and lunar orbs should be] perceived through the pupils. Here the yogin should also meditate, mind yoked, regarding the two as identical, because if there was no connection (yoga) between these two levels of reality, there would also be no room for sense activity. Hence the Deliverer should be attended to with introspection only.

**Comments:** This passage introduces a cornerstone of esoteric philosophy, namely the idea that macrocosm and microcosm are mirror images of one another. Here the yogin is asked to experience their identity directly through introspection, or inner vision (antar drishti). There also is a pun on the words târa (“pupil”) and târaka (“deliverer”).

**(10)** That Deliverer is twofold: the Deliverer with form and the Deliverer without form. That which “ends” with the senses is “with form. That which transcends the pair of eyebrows is “without form.” In every case, in determining the inner import [of a thing] the application of a controlled mind is desirable. Similarly, by means of Târaka Yoga, through vision of that which abides beyond the senses, with a yoked mind and through introspection (antar ikshana), the yogin discovers Being Consciousness Bliss, the Absolute in its innate form (sva rûpa). Hence at first the Absolute formed of white effulgence becomes manifest. That Absolute is known by the eye aided by the mind in introspection. Thus also the “formless” Deliverer is realized. Through a yoked mind, through the eye, the dahara and other light phenomena become known. Owing to the dependence of the process of perception, both outwardly and inwardly, on the mind and the eye, it is only through the junction of eye, mind, and Self that perception can take place. Hence mind yoked inner vision is instrumental to the manifestation of the Deliverer.

**Comments:** In ordinary contexts, the term dahara mentioned in the above passage refers to a mouse or muskrat. It is derived from the verbal root dabh meaning “to injure” or “to deceive.” However, in its esoteric application, a more likely derivation is from the root dah meaning “to burn.” It probably refers to the miniscule space at the heart, which from ancient times has been considered a locus of the effulgent transcendental Self. This dahara is also mentioned in the Kshurikâ Upanishad (10) translated below.

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(11) The sight should be fixed in the cavern at the spot between the pair of eyebrows. By this means the radiance abiding above becomes manifest—this is Târaka Yoga. Having well “conjoined” with careful effort and a yoked mind the Deliverer with the mind, the yogin should raise the pair of eyebrows a little upward. This is the former type of Târaka Yoga. The latter, however, is without form and is said to be transmental. There is a great light ray in the area above the root of the palate. That should be contemplated by the yogins. Thence comes the power of miniaturization (animan), and so on.

**Comments:** The power of “miniaturization” (animan), or of becoming as minute as an atom (anu), is one of the eight classical paranormal powers (siddhi) ascribed to adepts.

(12) When there is the vision of the External Sign and the Internal Sign, the eyes being destitute of the power of closing and opening—this is the real shâmbhavî mudrâ. Because of being a sojourn to knowers who have “mounted” this seal (mudrâ), the earth becomes purified. Through the vision of these adepts, all spheres (loka) become purified. He who is granted the possibility of paying homage to such great yogins is also delivered from the cycle of conditioned existence.

Comments: For a description of the shâmbhavî mudrâ see The Yoga Tradition, Chapter 18.

(13) The radiant luster of the Internal Sign is the innate form (sva rûpa) of the nondual Reality. Through instruction by a superior teacher the Internal Sign becomes the radiant light of the thousand petaled lotus at the crown of the head, or the light of Consciousness (cit), hidden in the cave of the buddhi, or the Fourth Consciousness abiding in the “sixteenth end (shodasha anta). The sight of that supreme Reality depends on a true teacher.

**Comments:** The buddhi is the higher mind, the seat of wisdom. The shodasha anta, or “sixteenth end,” is a psychic center, or space, that is sixteen digits above the crown of the head. This occult psychoenergetic locus also is referred to in some of the texts of Kashmiri Shaivism.

(14) A truly competent teacher is well versed in the Vedas, a devotee of Vishnu, free from jealousy, pure, a knower of Yoga, and intent on Yoga, always having the nature of Yoga.

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(15) He who is equipped with devotion to [his own] teacher, who is especially a knower of the Self—he who possesses these virtues is designated as a teacher (guru).

(16) The syllable gu [signifies] darkness. The syllable ru [signifies] the destroyer of that darkness. By reason of the ability to destroy darkness, he is called a guru.

(17) The teacher alone is the supreme Absolute. The teacher alone is the supreme way. The teacher alone is supreme knowledge. The teacher alone is the supreme resort.

(18) The teacher alone is the supreme limit. The teacher alone is supreme wealth. Because he is the teacher of that nondual Reality, he is the teacher greater than any other teacher.

(19) He who causes this scripture to be recited even once becomes released from the cycle of sorrowful existence. At that instant the sin committed in all births fades away. He obtains all desires. For such a yogin there is attainment of the ultimate goal of all humanity. He who knows thus, truly knows the secret doctrine.

**Om Shanti ! Shanti ! Shanti !**

*Here ends the Advaya Taaraka Upanishad, as contained in the Shukla Paksha Yajur-Veda.*

*Reference*

Georg Feuerstein. “Advaya Taraka Upanishad.”