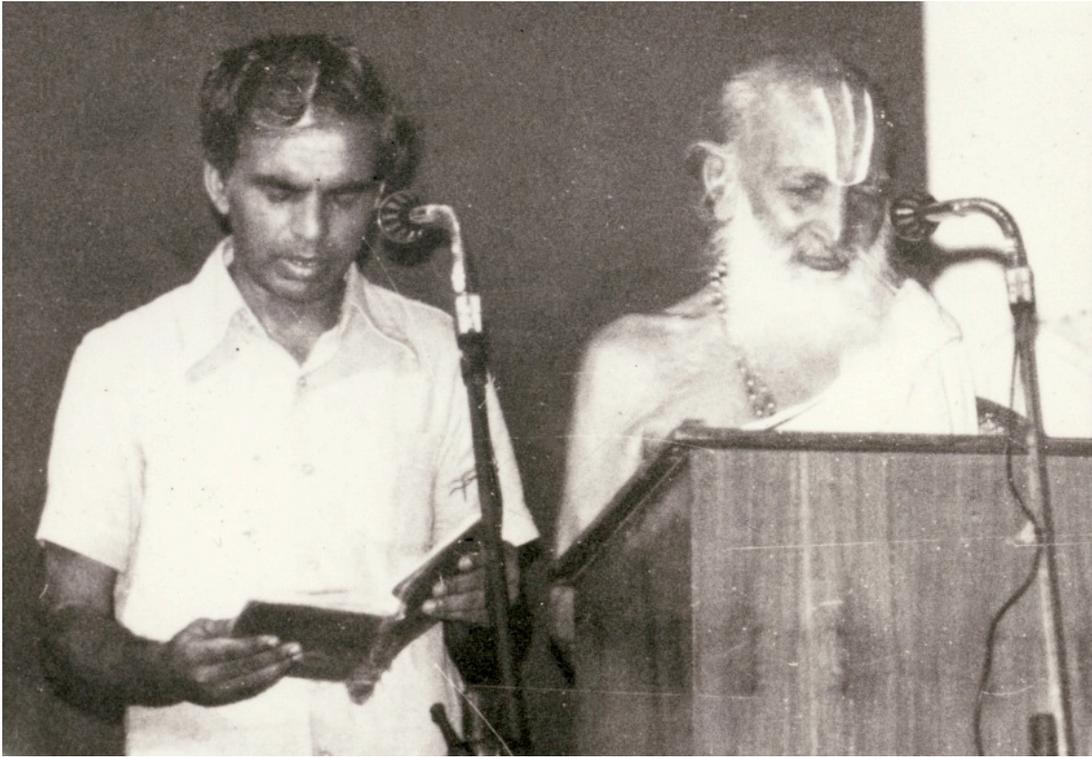


One example of this depth is Krishnamacharya's lesser known work in the teaching of Mantra...



Even these days, the influence of Krishnamacharya's teachings around Yoga are primarily known through his exacting teaching of [Āsana](#). This has also been mainly experienced in the West with the developmental work of his early students, such as through the choreographical artistry in the work of [Pattabhi Jois](#) or through the geometrical precision in the work of [BKS Iyengar](#).

However this area of [Āsana](#) teaching, though itself multifaceted and hugely influential, if disproportionately predominant within Yoga today, only reveals one aspect of the many dimensions of practice expressed within his teaching. This teaching evolved and refined over 70 years, from his return from his long stay around the borders of Nepal and Tibet in 1919, to his death in 1989.

A more all-inclusive insight into the many aspects of these other facets can be ascertained through exploring the multifarious approaches and priorities emphasised within the teaching work of other of Krishnamacharya's students, such as [TKV Desikachar](#), or [S Ramaswami](#), or [AG Mohan](#).

From exploring the teaching priorities of all these first generation students of Krishnamacharya, a more all-embracing perspective can arise encompassing both the breadth and depth of his mastery of both the teachings of Yoga and their context, place and application within the Indian perspectives on such as soteriology, philosophy and theology.

One example of this depth is Krishnamacharya's lesser known work in the teaching of [Mantra](#) within the development of a personalised [Sādhana](#) for individual students. I know from anecdotal stories related to me by Desikachar that, in this area he would be even more circumspect around the process of offering practices until he was confident in a student's sincerity and endeavour.

As my own personal studies with Desikachar developed and deepened over the decades I was taught a number of [Mantra Dhyānam Sādhana](#) and, even though these were a far cry from the practice of [Āsana](#), the same qualities of artistry and precision were inherent and apparent within the teaching and learning process.

शिक्षां व्याख्यास्यामः ।

For example with regard to the initiation into various [Mantra Japam](#) practices, they would be initially be taught orally in order to verify the students efforts to realise qualities such as [Varna](#) or correct pronunciation, [Svara](#) or appropriate intonation and especially [Mātrā](#) or timing.

Then this process, once in place at a gross level, would be transferred in stages to the more subtle, and also more slippery in terms of the wandering and wondering mental processes, inner dimensions of the psyche.

For example the length of time it would take to orally pronounce the [Mantra](#) would be known from the grammar and chanting rules underpinning [Samskrta](#). So the time it would take to pronounce the [Mantra](#) say, 36, 54 or 108 times could be easily established.

From this outer proficiency the same principles would also be applied at developmentally more subtle levels, with the progression towards the next aspect of the integration of a personal [Mantra](#), that of using it labially or the practice of muttering the [Mantra](#).

This process, seen as the developmental interface between the inner and outer, needs to be learnt with the same care and attention as oral pronunciation, before finally working mentally within the inner dimensions of [Mantra Sādhana](#).

Even here my teacher would check the length of time it would take to mentally pronounce a [Mantra](#) the prescribed number of times when observing that particular aspect of my personal practice and compare this with the time it should take. From this we soon learn that if the mind can wander in such as [Āsana](#) it can wander even more easily within the inner realms of mental recitation.

From this we soon learn that the grosser processes of maintaining a sense of engagement and involvement through the use of externalised and more obvious foci, such as within [Āsana](#), are only a beginners step towards the more subtle processes of maintaining a sense of engagement and involvement through the use of internalised and less obvious foci, such as those of [Japam](#) within meditation or [Dhyānam](#).

Hence the teachings of [Patañjali](#) around the process of [Dhāranā](#), or concentration being a conditional prerequisite to the potential flowering of [Dhyānam](#), become relevant within a more profound experiential and developmental context in the journey of Yoga from the outer of the outer to the inner of the inner and not just from the outer of the outer to the inner of the outer.