

*The Yogatattvabindu*



योगतत्त्वबिन्दु

# Yogatattvabindu

Critical Edition  
with annotated Translation  
and a Comparative Analysis of the  
Complex Early Modern Yoga Yaxonomies

Von  
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# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction**



## I.I General remarks

**T**HE *Yogatattvabindu* is a early modern Sanskrit yoga text on Rājayoga that was written in the first half of the seventeenth century<sup>1</sup> in northern India.<sup>2</sup> The most salient feature of the work that makes it historically significant is its highly differentiated taxonomy of types of yoga.<sup>3</sup> In the *Yogatattvabindu*'s introduction, most manuscripts name fifteen types of yoga, presented as methods of Rājayoga. These are 1. Kriyāyoga, 2. Jñānayoga, 3. Caryāyoga, 4. Haṭhayoga, 5. Karmayoga, 6. Layayoga, 7. Dhyānayoga, 8. Mantrayoga, 9. Laksyayoga, 10. Vāsanāyoga, 11. Śivayoga, 12. Brahmayoga, 13. Advaitayoga, 14. Siddhayoga, and 15. Rājayoga itself. The text is a yogic compendium written in a mix of mainly prose and 41 verses in textbook-style, where its 59 topics are introduced in sections most of the time launched by recognizable phrases. The sections deal with the methods of Rājayoga and their effects, but others also cover topics like yogic physiology, the importance of the guru, an innovative concept of the Avadhūta, cosmogony and a *yogarahasya*.

The *Yogatattvabindu* has basically not been discussed or considered in the secondary literature on yoga. The only exception is Birch (2014: 415–416) who briefly described its list of fifteen yogas in the context of the “fifteen medieval yogas” and noted that a similar taxonomy occurs in Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (17th century), a commentary on the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* that integrates fifteen medieval yogas within its *aṣṭāṅga* format. An incomplete account of the fifteen yogas is found within the Sanskrit yoga text *Yogasvarodaya*, which is known only through quotations in the *Prāṇatosinī*, *Yogakarṇikā* and *Śabdakalpadruma*.<sup>4</sup> The *Yogasvarodaya* provides a total of fifteen yogas but names only eight of them in its introductory *ślokas*. A complete account of the text is yet to be found and might be lost forever. The *Yogasvarodaya* is the primary source and template for the compilation of the *Yogatattvabindu*. Besides several authorial passages, Rāmacandra, in many instances, follows its content and structure by rewriting the *Yogasvarodaya*'s *ślokas* into prose

<sup>1</sup>The dating of the text is discussed on p.5.

<sup>2</sup>The detailed discussion of the place of origin is found on p.??.

<sup>3</sup>This is a remarkable increase in the number of proclaimed yogas compared to the standard medieval tetrad of Mantrayoga, Layayoga, Hathayoga and Rājayoga.

<sup>4</sup>Manuscripts under the name of *Yogasvarodaya* seem to be lost. I was not able to allocate the manuscripts of the text in any manuscript catalogue at hand.

or quoting them directly without attribution. Due to the incomplete transmission of the *Yogasvarodaya*, Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu* is a natural and valuable starting point for an unprecedented in-depth study of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies, a phenomenon that can be narrowed down very precisely in terms of time and as I will show regarding its localisation. The other source text that Rāmacandra used is the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* whose content he draws on, particularly in the last third of his composition. Another text that includes a similar taxonomy of twelve yogas divided into three tetrads is Sundardās's *Brājbhāṣa* yoga text named *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* which not just shares most of the types of yogas but also provides a different and valuable perspective on the addressed yoga categories.<sup>5</sup>

These complex taxonomies that emerged during the 17th century crossed sectarian divides and were adapted to the specific needs of different authors and traditions. The *Yogatattvabindu* thus encapsulates a large proportion of the diversity of yoga types and teachings after the *Hathapradīpikā* (15th century) that were adopted and practiced by a broad spectrum of religious traditions and strata of Indian society. In the particular case of the *Yogatattvabindu*, there are various statements throughout the text that reveal a strategy to radically detach yoga from its renunciate connotations and to enforce the supremacy and universality of Rājayoga as a practice that can yield the highest benefits even for practitioners who enjoy worldly pleasures and an extravagant lifestyle. Textual evidence suggests the possibility that *Yogatattvabindu* may be a unique example of a Rājayoga text that was composed for warrior aristocracy and members of a royal court.

One printed edition of the *Yogatattvabindu* was published in 1905 with a Hindi translation and based on an unknown manuscript(s).<sup>6</sup> This publication has the title “*Binduyoga*” confirmed by the printed text’s colophon. However, as I discuss in the course of the introduction, the text was likely known as *Yogatattvabindu*. The consulted manuscripts contain significant discrepancies, structural differences and variant readings between them and the printed edition. Furthermore, the manuscripts are scattered over the northern Indian subcontinent and Nepal, which suggests that it was widely transmitted at some

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<sup>5</sup>For a comparative table of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies see table 2 on p. 44.

<sup>6</sup>Beleg???

point. Lengthy passages of the *Yogatattvabindu* are quoted without attribution in a text called *Yogasamgraha* and Sundaradeva's *Hathasaṅketacandrikā*. A critical edition will undoubtedly improve on the published edition and shed further light on the transmission of this important work.

This dissertation contains an introduction, critical edition and annotated translation of the *Yogatattvabindu*. Besides an overview of the manuscript evidence and the editorial policies underlying the edition, the introduction discusses provenance, authorship and the audience of the *Yogatattvabindu*. Furthermore, an unprecedented systematic and comprehensive comparative analysis of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies based on the new critical edition of the *Yogatattvabindu* and a novel and up-to-date examination of the texts mentioned above with similarly complex yoga taxonomies will determine their position within the broader history of yoga and improve our knowledge of the development of yoga traditions in the early modern period.

## 1.2 *Dating the Yogatattvabindu and the Yogasvarodaya*

**T**HE oldest dated manuscript of the *Yogatattvabindu* N<sub>1</sub><sup>7</sup> was written in Nepal *samvat* 837, which is 1716 CE. Since the text of this manuscript is missing a significant and lengthy passage (ca. 25% of the entire text) and contains various corruptions, one can assume that some time had passed from the original composition for the transmission to deteriorate to this extent. Therefore, it is likely that the work was composed at least a few decades before the creation of this Nepalese manuscript, sometime in the 17th century. The discovery that Sundaradeva's *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* quotes a lengthy passage of the *Yogatattvabindu* without attribution confirms this suspicion. The passages quoted from the *Yogatattvabindu* include the teachings on the sixteen *ādhāras*<sup>8</sup> and the teachings on Laksyayoga and its subtypes.<sup>9</sup> The dating of the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* just recently had to be revised due to the discovery that some first-hand notes surrounding the main text of the Ujjain *Yogacintāmaṇi* were in all likelihood borrowed from Sundaradeva's *Hathasaṅketacandrikā*.<sup>10</sup> Birch (2018) dated the

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<sup>7</sup>For a description of the manuscript see p.??.

<sup>8</sup>*Hathasaṅketacandrikā* (MMPP 2244, f. 95r l. 3 - f. 96r l. 4).

<sup>9</sup>*Hathasaṅketacandrikā* (MMPP 2244, f. 124r l. 7 - f. 125r l. 3).

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Birch, 2024: 52-54.

Ujjain *Yogacintāmaṇi* to 1659 CE.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* is 1659 CE which automatically makes it also the *terminus ante quem* for the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya*, due to the fact that Sundaradeva quoted from the *Yogatattvabindu* and Rāmacandra quoted from and rewrote the contents of the *Yogasvarodaya*. Thus, we can safely assume that the *Yogatattvabindu* was written in the course of the first half of the 17th century or earlier. Because of that Rāmācandra's main source text *Yogasvarodaya* must have been written even earlier.

### 1.3 Synopsis of the *Yogatattvabindu*'s contents

**R**ĀMACANDRA'S *Yogatattvabindu* can be divided into 59 sections. Many of these sections are brief, consisting of only a few sentences or lists of specific contents or concepts the author wishes to convey. However, some sections are significantly longer. Almost every section is introduced with clearly identifiable section markers. In these cases, a section begins with *atha*, *idānīm*, *idam*, or *tad anantaram*. Sometimes, the author, or a perhaps even a scribe in an early stage of the text's transmission forgot the section markers. Nevertheless, the thematic shifts were so significant that I, as the editor, felt obliged to mark these passages as separate sections.<sup>12</sup> The wording of the text remains entirely unchanged.

By far, the largest part of the text deals with explaining various yogas. Of the fifteen yogas, presented as methods of Rājayoga<sup>13</sup> mentioned in the introduction, Rāmacandra explains only eight in the course of the text. These are Rājayoga, Kriyāyoga, Siddhayoga, Mantrayoga, Lakṣyayoga, Haṭhayoga, and Jñānayoga. Surprisingly, there are also three additional yogas not listed among the fifteen initially mentioned: Aṣṭāṅgayoga, Satyayoga, and Sahayoga. The individual yogas, both those explicitly described and those merely mentioned in the taxonomy, are thoroughly discussed in the chapter "Comparative analysis of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies".<sup>14</sup> This chapter analyses and compares them with the three other texts containing complex

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<sup>11</sup>Cf. Birch, 2018: 50, n. III.

<sup>12</sup>This specifically pertains to sections VI, VII, XIV, XVII, and XLI.

<sup>13</sup>See p. ??.

<sup>14</sup>See p. 43.

yoga taxonomies, particularly to conclude the significance of the complex yoga taxonomies in the history of yoga.

Beyond the discussion of the fifteen yogas, there are further contents. The other major subject is the yogic body. In sections XXV-XXVI, Rāmacandra names, describes and explains the functions of the ten physical channels (*nāḍis*) and the ten vital winds (*vāyus*). In sections XXXII-XLI, he postulates the identity of the universe (*brahmāṇḍa*) and the body (*pīṭha*). Following this, Rāmacandra lists numerous macrocosmic elements within the body: the worlds (*lokas*), rulers of the worlds (*lokasvāmins*), seven islands (*dvīpas*), seven oceans (*samudras*), nine regions (*khaṇḍas*), eight major mountains (*parvatas*), nine rivers (*nāḍis*), twenty-seven constellations (*nakṣatras*), and so on. Structurally, Rāmacandra simply names the macrocosmic element and then locates it in the body. Finally, in sections LV-LVII, Rāmacandra lists the digits (*kalās*) of the moon (*candra*), sun (*sūrya*), and fire (*agni*). Another significant component of the *Yogatattvabindu* is a variant of a set of teachings that can be traced back to an ancient Śaiva paradigm.<sup>15</sup> This set consists of teachings on *cakras*,<sup>16</sup> *ādhāras*,<sup>17</sup> *lakṣyas*,<sup>18</sup> and *vyomas* or *ākāśas*.<sup>19</sup>

Other topics include a description of the tamed Avadhūta,<sup>20</sup> and a description of the division of the heart lotus (*hrdayakamala*), whose reception can be traced back to the teachings of the Śaiva exegetes of Kashmir.<sup>21</sup> Other sections discuss a pentadic cosmogony<sup>22</sup>, or the importance of the Guru for yoga practice.<sup>23</sup> The work concludes with a lengthy section titled the "Secret teaching of the scriptures of yoga" (*yogaśāstrarahasya*), which primarily concerns the

<sup>15</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* XXVIII.1: *navacakraṁ kalādhāraṁ trilakṣyaṁ vyomapamcakam | svadehe yo na jānāti sa yogi nāmadhārakah* || Variants of this verse are found in numerous yoga texts with a Śaiva orientation and older Śaiva Tantras. I discuss this ancient Śaiva paradigm on p. 126, n. 256.

<sup>16</sup> A total of nine *cakras*, along with meditation instructions on these, are described in detail in sections IV-XII. In section XXIX, nine *cakras* are listed again, but only with names and locations.

<sup>17</sup> The sixteen containers (*ādhāras*) are described in section XXX. These include specific locations suitable for meditation and *bandha* techniques.

<sup>18</sup> The *Yogatattvabindu* includes five meditative foci (*lakṣyas*), which are collectively referred to as the Rajayoga method Lakṣayoga. The chapters of the sub-variants are found in sections XIII-XV and XXIII-XXIV.

<sup>19</sup> These are five meditative spaces that the Yogi can traverse, described in section XXVIII.

<sup>20</sup> The original archetype of the antinomian ascetic is tamed in XLIV.

<sup>21</sup> See sections XLV-XLVII.

<sup>22</sup> See sections XLVIII-LIV.

<sup>23</sup> See sections XLIII-LVIII.

ultimate sovereign (*cakravartin*) among all Rājayugas, namely Sahajayoga. This yoga enables the person to enjoy all the benefits of yoga without the need to practice it. The following table provides an overview of all contents, arranged by sections:

Table I: Topics of the *Yogatattvabindu*'s 59 sections

Sec-tion	Topic in Sanskrit	Topic in IAST
I	<i>rājayogaprakāra</i>	Method of Rājayoga
II	<i>kriyāyogasya lakṣaṇam</i>	Characteristic of Kriyāyoga
III	<i>siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga mantrayogaḥ</i>	Siddhakuṇḍaliniyoga [and] Mantrayoga
IV	<i>mūlacakram</i>	Cakra of the root
V	<i>svādhiṣṭhānacakram</i>	Svādhiṣṭānacakra
VI	<i>nābhishthāne padmam</i>	Lotus within the place of the navel
VII	<i>hrdayamadhye kamalam</i>	Lotus within the heart
VIII	<i>kanthasthāne kamalam</i>	Lotus within the location of the throat
IX	<i>ājñācakram</i>	Ājñācakra
X	<i>cakram tālumadhye</i>	Cakra within the palate
XI	<i>aṣṭamacakram brahmārandhrasthāne</i>	Eighth cakra at the aperture of brahman
XII	<i>mahāśūnyacakram</i>	Cakra of the great void
XIII	<i>lakṣayogaḥ</i>	Lakṣayoga
XIV	<i>ūrdhvälakṣyam</i>	The upper focus
XV	<i>adholakṣyāḥ</i>	The lower focus
XVI	<i>rājayogayuktasya puruṣasya yac charīracih-nam</i>	The physical sign of a person who is engaged in Rājayoga
XVII	<i>anyad rājayogasya cihnam</i>	Another sign of Rājayoga
XVIII	<i>caryāyogaḥ</i>	Caryāyoga
XIX	<i>haṭhayogaḥ</i>	Haṭhayoga
XX	<i>haṭhayogasya dvitiyo bhedāḥ</i>	Second type of Haṭhayoga
XXI	<i>jñānayogasya lakṣaṇam</i>	The characteristic of Jñānayoga
XXII	<i>svabhāvabhedam</i>	Distinction of the nature
XXIII	<i>bāhyalakṣyam</i>	The outer focus
XXIV	<i>antaralakṣyam</i>	The inner focus
XXV	<i>nāḍināṁ bhedāḥ</i>	Division of the channels
XXVI	<i>śariramadhye vāyavo</i>	The vital winds within the body
XXVII	<i>madhyalakṣyam</i>	Central focus
XXVIII	<i>ākāśabhedāḥ</i>	Divisions of space
XXIX	<i>cakrānām anukramāḥ</i>	Sequence of cakras
XXX	<i>ādhāracakrasya bhedāḥ</i>	Divisions of the wheels of support
XXXI	<i>aṣṭāṅgayogasya vicāraḥ</i>	Procedure of Aṣṭāṅgayoga
XXXII	<i>piṇḍabrahmāṇḍayor aikyam</i>	Identity of the universe and the body

Table I: Topics of the *Yogatattvabindu*'s 59 sections (continued)

Section	Topic in Sanskrit	Topic in IAST
XXXIII	<i>piṇḍamadhye lokatrayam</i>	Triad of worlds
XXXIV	<i>uparitanam lokacatuṣkam</i>	Tetrad of the upper worlds
XXXV	<i>catvāro lokasvāminah</i>	Lords of the world
XXXVI	<i>saptadvipāni piṇḍamadhye</i>	Seven continents within the body
XXXVII	<i>piṇḍamadhye saptasamudrāḥ</i>	Seven oceans within the body
XXXVIII	<i>navadvāramadhye navakhaṇḍāni</i>	Nine regions within the nine Doors
XXXIX	<i>piṇḍamadhye ṣṭakulaparvatāḥ</i>	Eight major mountains within the body
XL	<i>śarire navanāḍyāḥ</i>	Nine rivers within the body
XLI	<i>saptavīṁśatinakṣatrāṇī...</i>	Twenty-seven constellations ...
XLII	<i>rājayogaś charire cihnāni</i>	Signs in the body as a result of Rājayoga
XLIII	<i>gurubhakteḥ phalam</i>	Result of devotion towards the teacher
XLIV	<i>avadhūtapuruṣasya lakṣaṇam</i>	Characteristic of an Avadhūta person
XLV	<i>kamalānām saṃketam adbhetam</i>	Mysterious convention of the lotus flower
XLVI	<i>ādhārakalam</i>	Lotus of support
XLVII	<i>hṛdayakamalasya bhedah</i>	Division of the heart Lotus
XLVIII	<i>yogaśiddhar anantaram jñānam</i>	Knowledge through the accomplishment of yoga
XLIX	<i>piṇḍotpattiḥ</i>	Generation of the [cosmic] body
L	<i>śariramadhye pañca mahābhūtāni</i>	Five great elements within the body
LI	<i>pañcaprakārā antaḥkaraṇasya</i>	Five modes of the internal organ
LII	<i>kulapañcakasya bhedāḥ</i>	Divisions of the pentad of the kula
LIII	<i>etādrśam ekam jñānam</i>	Such unique knowledge
LIV	<i>karma kāmaḥ candraḥ sūryaḥ agnih</i>	Karma, kāma, moon, sun and fire
LV	<i>candrasya ṣoḍaśakalāḥ</i>	Sixteen digits of the moon
LVI	<i>sūryasya dvādaśakalāḥ</i>	Twelve digits of the sun
LVII	<i>agnisam̄bandhinyoḥ daśakalāḥ</i>	Ten digits related to fire
LVIII	<i>yogaśya māhātmyam</i>	Majesty of yoga
LIX	<i>yogaśāstrarahasyam</i>	Secret teaching of the scriptures of yoga

## I.4 Rāmacandra's audience

## 1.5 Editorial matters

**T**HE section “Editorial Matters” covers essential text-critical formalities. Following a description of the consulted and yet-to-be-consulted manuscripts, there is an initial discussion of the title. That is particularly relevant in the case of Rāmacandra’s text, where an unusual scenario arises: the text is known by more than six different titles according to colophons, title pages, library cards, the printed edition, and citations. That phenomenon requires further discussion. Subsequently, the source texts, testimonies and analogia are briefly described and contextualized. Next, I will present a stemmatic analysis, a presentation of the text’s stylistic peculiarities, and an outline of the conventions used in the critical edition.

### 1.5.1 Description of the consulted manuscripts

**Siglum:** N<sub>I</sub>

**Catalogue:** National Archives Kathmandu; microfilmed by the Nepalese German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) and catalogued by the Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NPMCP).

**Title:** *Tattvayogabindu*

**Ms. No.:** B 38/31

**Acc No.:** NAK 5/2724

**Dimensions:** 26.5 x 8.5 cm x 13 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Pracalita (Nepalākṣara)

**Date:** Nepal saṃvat 837 = 1716 CE

**Condition:** Incomplete (4 folios are missing)

**Remarks:** For now, this is the oldest dated surviving textual witness and often provides the best readings. After section XXXIV, there is a *lacuna* until section XLVIII, approximately 23.50% of the entire text is missing.

**Opening:** *śrīgaṇeśāya namah* || *śrī gurave namah* || *atha rājayogaprakāro likhyate* ||

**Final Colophon:** *iti śrī paramarahasyāṁ śrīrāmacamdraviracitāyāṁ tatvayo-*  
*gabimdu samāptah* ||

**Comments after Final Colophon:** || *śrī svasti* || || *samvat 837* || *vinā guru na sid-*  
*dhati* || [Second hand adds adds in a mix of Nepālī and Newārī:] *eka*  
*vacana sosyā sālikasem caudha bhuvana kā mola* || *kahane soka hadiyā avakyā*  
*vajāye me ḫola* || I || *popoṣṭakamā* 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 *ja(m)mā* 4 *patra aghaḍi*ī  
*ṭatāye.. ho*

**Siglum:** N<sub>2</sub>

**Collection:** National Archives Kathmandu; microfilmed by the Nepalese German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) and catalogued by the Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NPMCP).

**Title:** *Tattvayogabindu* (The title folio reads: *sri rājayogabinduprārambhāḥ*. The library card reads *Rājayogatattvabindu.*)

**Ms. No.:** B 38/35

**Acc No.:** NAK 3/750

**Dimensions:** 33 x 16 cm x 11 folios

**Material:** Paper    **Language:** Sanskrit    **Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** not dated

**Condition:** Incomplete

**Remarks:** Manuscript N<sub>2</sub> has a *lacuna* after section XXXIV up until section XLVIII. Approximately 23,50% of the entire text is missing. The *lacuna* is indicated on f.8 recto l.1. It stops at the same place where manuscript N<sub>1</sub> has missing folios. Thus, we have to assume that manuscript N<sub>2</sub> is a direct copy of manuscript N<sub>1</sub>. I decided to collate N<sub>2</sub> since it sometimes includes several different and sometimes better readings, which must be emendations and conjectures by the scribe. NGMCP catalogues another scan of the same manuscript under Ms. No. A 1327-14. However, the scan is poor.

**Opening:** *śrīgaṇeśāya namāḥ || atha rājayogaprakāro likhyate ||*

**Final Colophon:** *iti śrī paramarahasye śrīrāmacaṇdraviracitāyāṁ tatvayogabindu samāptam ||*

**Comments after Final Colophon:** *|| śubham || yad akṣarapadabhraṣṭam mātrāhī-  
nam cayad bhavet || tat sarvam ksamya tām eva prasīdapatameśvara || I || sūrye  
turaṅge navacandraghasre jyeṣṭhākhyakṛṣṇe bhrguvārayuktam || tattvaprayogaḥ  
sadaharsasamjñām likhitam suhetoh bhavatiḥ dehi || bhūyat ||*

**Siglum:** D

**Collection:** Indhira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadhama S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 104-105).

**Title:** *Tattvayogabindu*

**Ms. No.:** 30019

**Dimensions:** 21 x 10,3 cm x 16 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** Vikram samvat 1841 = 1784 CE

**Condition:** Incomplete

**Remarks:** Folios 15 & 16 are missing. The *lacuna* of D streches from verse XLIV.9 up to section L. The scan indicates that folio 19 is missing, too. However, the text is complete on folio 18.

**Opening:** śrīgaṇeśāya namah || śrī sarasvatyai namah || śrī nirañjanāya namah || atha rājayogaprakāro likhyate ||

**Final Colophon:** iti paramahaṁsyāḥ śrī rāmacaṁdraviracitāyāḥ tatvayogabiṁdu samāptah ||

**Comments after Final Colophon:** śubham astu | samvat 1841 || bhādau śudha 15  
lī O ve sarva śake rā rāma rāma cha

**Siglum:** U<sub>I</sub>

**Collection:** Scindia Oriental Research Institute (SORI) Vikram University (Ujjain), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadhama S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 104-105, 246-247).

**Title:** *Tattvayogabindu* (The title folio reads: *atha yogataprārambhah.*)

**Ms. No.:** 1574

**Dimensions:** 20 x 13 cm x 45 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** not dated

**Condition:** Incomplete

**Remarks:** Manuscript U<sub>I</sub> contains a *lacuna* within section LVII. This comparatively large and important section is almost entirely absent in this manuscript. Especially during the great *lacuna* in N<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>, the readings of this manuscript became important for the constitution of the text.

**Opening:** śrīgaṇeśāya namaḥ || *atha rājayoga likhyate* ||

**Final Colophon:** iti śrī pāramahāṃsyāḥ śrī rāmacandraraviracitāyāḥ tatvayo-gaviduh samāptah

**Comments after Final Colophon:** śubham bhūyāt ||

Siglum: U<sub>2</sub>

**Collection:** Scindia Oriental Research Institute (SORI) Vikram University (Ujjain), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadharma S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 394–395), here catalogued under the title *Rājayoga*.

**Title:** *Tattvabinduyoga*. (The title folio reads: *atha śrī rājayogaprārambhah || śrīrāmavaracitena ||*)

**Ms. No.:** 6082

**Dimensions:** 21 x 11 cm x 37 folios

**Material:** Paper    **Language:** Sanskrit    **Script:** Devanāgarī

**Scribe:** Bābājī Rājadherakara

**Date:** Śaka 1805, Vikram samvat 1940 = 1883 CE

**Condition:** Complete

**Remarks:** This manuscript contains additional information on the ninefold *cakra* system in the sections IV-XII.

**Opening:** *śrīgaṇeśaya namah || śrī gurave namah || atha rājayogaprakāro likhyate ||*

**Final Colophon:** *iti śrī rāmacandraparamahāṁsaviracitas tatvabimduyogasamāptah ||*

**Comments after Final Colophon:** *śrī śubham bhavatu || śrīśitārāmārpāṇam astuh  
|| idam pustakam || śake 1805 || vikramārka sammat || 1940 || jayanām asaṁvatsare  
|| udagayane || griṣmartau? || vaiśākhē māse || kṛṣṇapakṣe || tithau 23 || bhānuvāsare  
|| prathamayāmye || śrīkṣetra avamti kāyām || śrī mahārudramahākālasaṁnidhāne  
na saṁpūrṇam || lekhanam ānamt? sutā? bābājī rājadherakareṇa likhyate ||  
yādrśam pustakam dr̄ṣtvā tādṛṣam likhitam mayā || yadi śuddham aśuddho vā  
mama doṣo na diyate || i || śrīrāma || cha ||*

**Siglum:** B

**Collection:** Oxford Bodleian Library (OBL), Sanskrit Manuscripts of Candra Shum Shere (CSS), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadhama S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 102-103).

**Title:** The title folio reads: *tatvabimduyogaḥ*.

**Ms. No.:** d. 458 (7)

**Dimensions:** 15 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** not dated

**Condition:** Incomplete

**Remarks:** First and last folio missing. Evidence of B starts at section IX. This is one of the manuscripts donated by Shum Shere, Chandra Mahārāja Chandra Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana in 1909.

**Opening:** not available

**Final Colophon:** not available

**Comments after Final Colophon:** not available

**Siglum:** L

**Collection:** Lalchand Research Library Ancient Indian Manuscript Collection; *Lal Chand Research Indological Research Center Manuscript Catalog - DAV College Chandigarh* (2017: 251) = Hoshiarpur Vishveshvarananda Vedic Research Institute's (HVVRI) Ms. No. 5876 “*Tattvabindūyogaḥ* by Rāmacandra”, cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadharma S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 102-103). All Manuscripts of HVVRI have been transferred to Chandigarh.

**Title:** *Tattvabinduyoga*

**Ms. No.:** 5876

**Dimensions:** ?? x ?? cm x 43 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** not dated

**Condition:** Complete

**Remarks:** The manuscript is digitized and available online under <https://dav.splrarebooks.com/collection/view/tattvabinduyogah>

**Opening:** śrīgaṇeśāya namah | atha tattvabimduyogaprārambhah

**Final Colophon:** iti rājamacāndraparahaṁsa viracites tatvabimduyogasamāptam ||  
śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇam astu || cha ||

**Comments after Final Colophon:** not available

**Siglum:** P

**Collection:** Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadhamma S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 394–395), here catalogued under the title *Rājayoga*.

**Title:** *Tattvabinduyoga*. The library card reads *Rājayoga* (*Tattvabinduyoga*).

**Ms. No.:** 644

**Dimensions:** 25 x 11,2 cm x 29 folios

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** Vikram samvat 1867 = 1810 CE

**Condition:** Complete

**Remarks:**

**Opening:** śrīne ya mah | atha rājayoga liṣyate

**Final Colophon:** iti śrīrāmacaṇḍraparamahaṇsa viracitas tatvabinduyogasamāptah

**Comments after Final Colophon:** samvat 1867 pauṣakṛṣṇah 12 ravau śubham bhuyāt || cha ||

**Siglum:** E

**Title:** *Binduyogaḥ with Bhāṣatikā*

**Collection:** Kaivalyadham Library

**No.:** 6387

**Editors:** Jvālāprasāda Miśra, son of the revered scholar Sukhānanda Miśra

**Material:** Paper

**Language:** Sanskrit and Hindi

**Script:** Devanāgarī

**Date:** 1905 CE

**Condition:** Contains *lacuna*, Large section is transposed. Problematic passages of the unknown exemplar were emended or conjectured by the Pandit.

**Remarks:** Printed Edition written in Mumbai together with Hindi Translation and *Bhāṣatikā* commentary.

**Opening:** śrīgaṇeśāya namah | rājayogāntargataḥ || binduyogaḥ

**Final Colophon:** iti rājayoge candraparamahāṁsaparipūrṇapīṭhamāhātmyaprakāśakah binduyogaḥ samāptaḥ || śubham astu ||

**Comments after Final Colophon:** iti śrīsarvaguṇasampannapamṛditasukhā-nandamiśrasūrisūnupāṇḍitajvālāprasādamiśrakṛtabhāṣatikāsahito rājayoge binduyogaḥ samāptaḥ || śubham astu || śrīr astu ||

### 1.5.2 Manuscripts not consulted

The official commencement of this dissertation project on 15 March 2021 coincided with the numerous lockdowns and travel restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, during the phase of the dissertation when additional manuscripts could have been collected, I was confined to my desk at home. The brief windows of opportunity for travel were further obstructed by pandemic-related familial complications. Although I have identified the following manuscripts in catalogues, I have regrettably been unable to consult them for this work thus far.

Update: Only a few weeks before the submission of this dissertation, I was able to locate additional manuscripts of this text in catalogues, listed under the title *Rājayogaprakāra* in the NCC, which is why I had previously overlooked them. According to current knowledge, a total of seven manuscripts from the listed ones should be obtainable, and their consultation would be desirable. One of the seven is particularly promising, as it must belong to the  $\alpha$ -group, while four of them, judging by their title, belong to the  $\beta$ -group. Two of the manuscripts bear the title *Rājayogaprakāra* and are yet to be classified. Another manuscript titled *Rājayogaprakāra* is reported in the catalogue to be extremely damaged, incomplete (only two folios remain), and quite recent. The whereabouts of two other catalogued manuscripts cannot be precisely determined at present. I will endeavour to consult these manuscripts and, if necessary, incorporate them into the final printed version of this work.

#### 1.5.2.1 Important

- Kolkata (former Calcutta) Sanskrit Library. NCC: CS. III. 65. = *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts of The Calcutta Sanskrit College*, Vol. 3, 1900: 37. Title: *Tattvayogabinduḥ*. Author: Paramahāṃsa Rāmacandra. Material: Countrymade white paper. Dimensions 9x 3 inches x 22 folios. Date: Vikram Samvat 1847 (1790 CE). Condition: old, slightly worm-eaten, generally correct and complete. This manuscript is the most important among the unconsulted ones. The title indicates that it belongs to the  $\alpha$ -group.
- Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (RASB). Kolkata. Hall (1859: 14) reports a manuscript XXV in his catalogue called “Tattva-bindu-yoga”. The en-

try says, “Defining the divisions of Yoga. By Ramachandra Paramahansa. Leaves 18, *slokas* 440. F.E.H.”. The amount of *slokas* must approximate the amount of text and not the actual number of verses since the text mixes prose and verse but is mainly written in prose. The abbreviation “F. E. H.” indicates that this manuscript personally belonged to Fitzedward Hall. The New Catalogus Catalogorum (NCC) (Vol. 8: 54) revealed: “*Tattvabindu(yoga)* - by Rāmacandra Paramahamsa. Ben. 66. IM. 5441 (inc.). Hall p. 14.”. The abbreviation “IM” indicates that the manuscript of Hall should be deposited at the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (RASB). NCC (Vol. 23: 259) lists two manuscripts at the RASB: VIII. B. 6605. 6606. One of them should be the Hall manuscript. The title of the manuscript indicates that it should belong to the  $\beta$ -group.

- Sanskrit Vidyāpeetham near Yamuna Kinare, Etawah (U.P). Title: *Tattvabindūyogah*. Author: Rāmacandraḥ. Script: Devanāgarī. Condition: incomplete. Ms. No: ESV 7 (P20), cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* of the Kaivalyadhama S.M.Y.M. Samiti (2005: 102-103). The title of the manuscript indicates that it should belong to the  $\beta$ -group.
- Nagpur University Library (NUL). *Catalogue Of Sanskrit Manuscripts In The Nagpur University Library*, 1957: Ms. No. 6769. Title: *Tattvabindūyogah*. Author: Rāmacandra Paramahamsa. Material: Paper. Script: Devanāgarī. Judging by the title, this manuscript belongs to the  $\beta$ -group.
- Ānandāśrama Pune. Title: *Rājayogaprakāra*. Ms. No.: 2872. Website: <https://www.aanandashram-sanstha.org/>
- Baroda Oriental Institute. NCC (Vol. 23: 259) reports a manuscript in “Baroda II. 10558”. This is *An Alphabetical List of Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute Baroda*, Vol. II (1950: 1238) reports it under the title *Rājayogaprakārah*.

### 1.5.2.2 Damaged

- Lucknow Sanskrit Parishad. *A Catalogue Of Manuscripts In Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad*, 2021: 224. Title: *Rājayoga Prakārah?*. Author: Rāmacandra. Serial No.: 74. Accession No.: 1266. Condition: Incomplete. Only two folios. Condition and Age: Recent.

### 1.5.2.3 Probably unobtainable

- NCC: Darbhanga Raj 2146 (inc.). Probably: Descriptive Catalogue of Raj Manuscripts Preserved in Kameshwar Singh Sanskrit University, Darbhanga. Title= *Rājayogaprakāra*. <https://lnmu.ac.in>. Unfortunately, I have no access to the catalogue.
- CPB. (Ms. No.: 4579-80. *Catalogue of Sanskrit and Prakrit Manuscripts in the Central Provinces and Berar*, 1926: 408 (1926: 408). Title “Rājayoga”. Author: Rāmacandra Paramahāmsa. Subject: Yoga. Owner. (4579) Nārāyāṇī Purāṇī of Hardā (Hoshangābād district). (4580) Viśvambharnāth of Ratanpur (Bilāspur district). Comment: According to what I heard from my colleagues, these manuscripts might be hard to track down. Possibly, one of them ended up in the above-mentioned collection of the Nagpur University Library (NUL).

### 1.5.3 Discussion of the text’s original title

It is striking that there is disagreement among the witnesses of Rāmacandra’s text regarding the title. The relevant variants are: *Tattvabinduyoga*, *Yogatattvabindu*, *Rājayogatattvabindu*, *Binduyoga*, *Rājayoga* and *Rājayogaprakāra*. Four of the manuscripts of the  $\beta$ -group<sup>24</sup> consulted in this critical edition—B, L, P, U<sub>2</sub>, and three additional yet unexamined manuscripts likely belonging to the  $\beta$ -group—bear the title *Tattvabinduyoga* according to their colophons or cover pages. The printed edition E is titled *Binduyogah*. From a stemmatological perspective, the printed edition E must descend from a  $\beta$ -group manuscript.

It is challenging to derive a convincing meaning from the title *Tattvabinduyoga* and even *Binduyoga*, especially considering the actual content of the work. The term *bindu* does not appear even once in the entire text. Exploring various possible interpretations and translations of this compound, such as “Yoga of the points [of reality],” none seem satisfactory. If an interpretation of such a title were correct, one would expect an explanation of *bindu* in the text. Although various yoga practices involving concentration on specific bodily points are mentioned frequently, these are never referred to as *bindus*.

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<sup>24</sup> See p. 40 for the stemmatic analysis of the manuscripts.

It is not apparent why Jvālāprasāda Miśra, the editor of the 1905 printed edition, made the editorial decision to discard the title of his exemplar and rename the text to *Binduyoga* as it does not enhance the title's relevance to the work. The term *binduyoga*, for example appearing in the *Amṛtasiddhi* (7.14), where *binduyoga* designates its core yoga practice<sup>25</sup> is not applicable here, as Rāmacandra neither teaches *mudrās* nor practices involving sexual fluids.<sup>26</sup> Nor does *bindu* function as an ultimate *tattva* within the 36-*tattva* systems of Śaivism, since such a *bindu* is not mentioned by Rāmacandra.<sup>27</sup> On the contrary, Rāmacandra's text teaches a tenfold *tattva* system,<sup>28</sup> The only plausible, simple, and natural explanation is that Jvālāprasāda Miśra must have understood *Binduyoga* as "Yoga of the points [for concentration]," given that larger chunks of the text teach *cakras*, *laksyas*, and *ādhāras* for meditation. For these reasons, and notably because the term *bindu* does not appear in the work, it is highly unlikely that Rāmacandra's text was originally titled *Tattvabinduyoga*.

Instead, the title of the  $\beta$ -group manuscripts likely originated from those of the  $\alpha$ -group manuscripts, specifically D, N<sub>1</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>, U<sub>1</sub>, and an as-yet unexamined manuscript, all of which bear the title *Tattvayogabindu* in their colophons. Given that the  $\alpha$ -group not only contains the oldest dated manuscript of the text but also frequently offers superior readings, it can be asserted with high confidence that the  $\beta$ -group title resulted from a metathesis of the two compound elements *bindu* and *yoga*.

Considering the aforementioned issues with the term *bindu*, which appears only in the title and not within the text, this title makes a bit more sense. The term  $^{\circ}$ *bindu* is a common suffix in titles of various Sanskrit texts.<sup>29</sup> The usage of the term  $^{\circ}$ *bindu* in the titles of these texts emphasises the idea of

<sup>25</sup> *Amṛtasiddhi* 7.14: *binduyogam parityajya yo mohād anyam icchati | sa śākhoṭakavṛkṣeṣu mūḍho jāgarti niśphalam* ||

<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, Rāmacandra discredits the practice of *mudrās* in section LVIII.

<sup>27</sup> See Gengnagel, 1996: 177 for the 36 *tattvas* of Śaivasiddhānta. Additionally, see Goodall, 2016: 77 et seqq. for a discussion on the genesis of the Śaiva *tattva* systems.

<sup>28</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* XXII 1.4 mentions Earth (*prthvi*), Water (*āpa*), Fire (*tejas*), Wind (*vāyu*), Space (*ākāśa*), Mind (*manas*), Intellect (*buddhi*), Illusion (*māyā*), Transformations (*vikāra*), and Form (*rūpa*).

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, *Siddhāntatattvabindu* NGMPP, Ms. No. MA 905-3 and NGMPP, Ms. No. E 1189-13 ("Drops of the [supreme] reality of Siddhānta"); *Nyāyabindu* ("Drops of reasoning"), cf. NCC Vol 10. (2007: 252); *Nirṇayabindu* ("Drops of verdict"), NCC Vol 10. (2007: 146); *Bhaktibindu* ("Drops of devotion"), NCC Vol 15. (2007: 148); *Dharmabindu* ("Drops of law"), NCC Vol. 9 (2007: 257), etc.

presenting crucial, fundamental points in a concise way to make complex topics more accessible and easier to understand. It suggests that each work aims to distil the essence of its subject into core teachings or principles. In the case of Rāmacandra's text, "*bindu* understood in this way makes perfect sense.

However, this title still leaves some doubts. Although the first part of the compound now makes sense, the remaining parts do not fit well. *Tattvayogabindu* could be interpreted as "Drops of the yoga of reality" or "Drops of the yoga of principles," but this again does not align with the text's content. Evidence suggesting that other recipients did not accept the titles of the  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -groups appears in Sundaradeva's *Haṭhasaṅketacandrikā*, which cites extensively from Rāmacandra's text<sup>30</sup> but does so without citation, which is unusual since he typically references his sources. Another testimony, titled *Yogasamgraha*, cites approximately 20% of Rāmacandra's entire text.<sup>31</sup> Here, the author renames the text entirely to *Tattvajñānapradipikā*. Other titles also circulate, found both on manuscript cover pages and in manuscript catalogues. These titles, like *Rājayoga* or *Rājayogaprakāra*, attempt to capture the work's content better and may have been lent because the title available to them in the colophons appeared misleading.

How can this be explained? Is it possible that even the title of the  $\alpha$ -group has succumbed to textual corruption? Could it be that the title of the  $\alpha$ -group is also a result of metathesis and that the three components of the title were confused by scribes early in the transmission? The following observation supports the possibility that no surviving manuscript preserves the title in its original form. Rāmacandra's text reads in section LVIII ll. 1-8:

*idānīṁ yogasya māhātmyam kathyate | guroranugrahāt | sāstrasya  
paṭhanāt | ācārakaraṇāt | vedāntarahasya śravaṇāt | dhyānakaraṇāt  
| layasādhanāt | upavāsakaraṇāt | caturaśītyāsanasādhanāt | vairā-  
gyasyotpatteḥ | vairāgyakaraṇāt | haṭhayogasya karaṇāt | idāpiṅgalayoh  
pavanadhāraṇāt | mahāmudrādidaśamudrāsādhanāt | maunakaraṇāt  
| vanavāsāt | bahutarakleśakaraṇāt | bahutarakālam yantramāntrādis-  
ādhanāt | tapahkaraṇāt | bahutarārthādānāt | tīrthasevākaraṇāt |*

<sup>30</sup>For references see p.93.

<sup>31</sup>For references see p.35.

āśramācārapālanāt | saṃnyāsagrahaṇāt | ṣaddarśanagrahaṇāt | siro-  
maṇḍanāt | anyopāyakaraṇāt | **yogatattvam** na prāpyate | sa tu yogo  
gurusevayā prāpyate |

Now, the majesty of yoga is taught.

As a result of grace of the teacher, studying the teaching, execution of good conduct, hearing the secret of Vedānta, meditation, dissolution, fasting, practising 84 postures, generation of equanimity, executing equanimity, doing Haṭhayoga, holding the breath of the Idā- and Piṅgalā-channels, practicing the ten seals [like] the great-seal etc., [the observation of] silence, dwelling in the forest, causing excessive distress, Mantra and Yantra, etc. for a long time, austerities, giving up a lot of possession, frequenting places of pilgrimage, protection of the habit of the stages of life, undertaking renunciation, grasping the six philosophies, shaving the head, the execution of other means, the reality of yoga is not attained. The **reality of yoga** is truly attained by frequenting the teacher.

The negation of these practices, associated with yoga and even those previously taught by Rāmacandra himself, clearly illustrates that this passage forms the climax of the entire text. The word combination *tattvayoga* is never found throughout the text, whereas *yogatattva* appears only in this singular location. Given the centrality of this passage and the previously noted inconsistencies in the titles from the  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -groups, it seems most likely that the work's original title was *Yogatattvabindu*.

Considering the overall content of the text, the title *Yogatattvabindu*, which can be translated as “Drops of the [supreme] reality of yoga,” is convincing. Taking the *bindu* as a plural even captures the great variety of yogas presented in the initial yoga taxonomy. Another argument for this emendation is the frequency of this word combination in common e-text collections. In 6569 searched texts, many within the yoga and Tantra genres, the combination *tattvayoga* yields only 19 hits. None of these hits can be meaningfully applied to our text. In contrast, the combination *yogatattva* appears 109 times with congruent mean-

ings and is also frequently found in the titles of yoga works.<sup>32</sup> In favour, we note that manuscript N<sub>2</sub>'s library card reads *Rājayogatattvabindu* and the title page of manuscript U<sub>1</sub> introduces the text with *atha yogata[ttva?]prārambhah*.

The existence of so many variants of the title in the colophons, cover pages of manuscripts, and catalogue entries can ultimately only be attributed to an early scribal error in the text's transmission—a metathesis of entire words, which early on transformed the compound of the work's title from *yogatattva*<sup>o</sup> into *tattvayoga*<sup>o</sup>. Subsequent scribes or editors either caused another metathesis, attempted to correct the inappropriate title, replaced it entirely, or omitted it altogether.

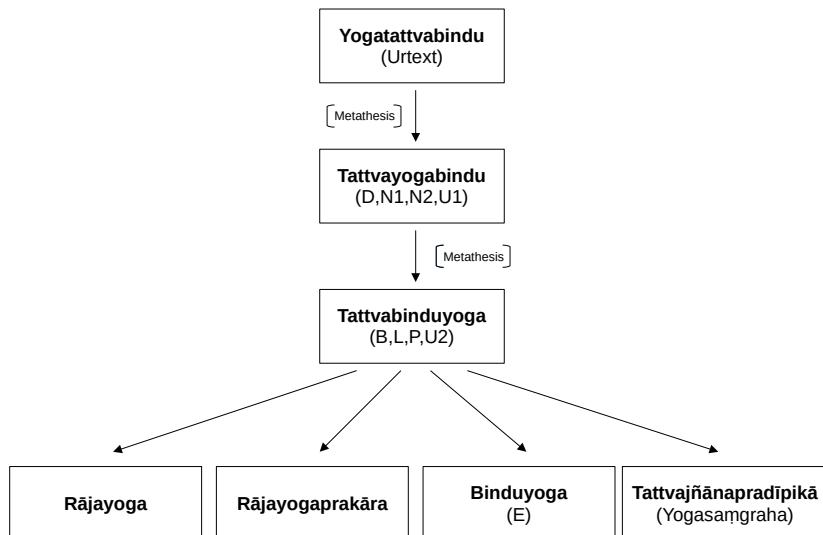


Figure 1: The hypothesis of the genesis of the transmission of the text's title.

<sup>32</sup> For example, *Yogatattva*, cf. NCC Vol. 22 (2007: 70); *Yogatattvasamāsasūtra*, cf. NCC Vol. 22 (2007: 70); *Yogatattvapanisad*, cf. *Yogatattvopaniṣad* (Ed. p. 363–388); *Yogatattvadīpikā*, cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* (2005: 232); *Yogatattvopaniṣaddīpikā*, cf. *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* (2005: 232), etc. Furthermore, the position of “*tattva*” is also supported by its use in the title *Hṛ̥thatattvakaumudi* by Sundaradeva.

### I.5.4 Description of the sources

In the critical edition of the *Yogatattvabindu*, the author's sources are indicated in the first layer of the critical apparatus, corresponding to the respective passage. Overall, two texts form the basis of Rāmacandra's work: the *Yugasvarodaya* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. However, Rāmacandra does not provide references for these sources in any instance. On the one hand, there are some direct quotations, often in the form of verses. On the other hand, which constitutes the majority, Rāmacandra used his sources as a textual basis, either transforming them into prose, paraphrasing and editorially altering them or blending the contents of both sources. Nevertheless, the passages can be identified, as the contents of these sources are highly similar. It is so similar that glancing at the source texts helped make the correct editorial decisions or appropriately correct corrupt passages.

#### I.5.4.1 *Yugasvarodaya*

The *Yugasvarodaya* (YSv) is the main source text, and Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*. Rāmacandra derives most of his content from this text and even follows its structure to a great extent. The majority of sections in the *Yogatattvabindu* result from Rāmacandra rewriting the *ślokas* of the *Yugasvarodaya* into prose, incorporating specific editorial changes to align with his agenda. Thus, this text is of utmost importance for the reconstruction of the *Yogatattvabindu*'s doubtful passages. The text will be described in detail in the chapter "Comparative analysis of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies".<sup>33</sup> Hence, another treatment would be redundant. So far, the *Yugasvarodaya* is a text known solely through quotations found in the *Prānatosinī* and *Yogakanikā*, which will be described below. Manuscripts have yet to be found and remain a desideratum for the time being.

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<sup>33</sup>See p. 50.

### 1.5.4.2 Prāṇatoṣīṇī

The *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* (PT) by Rāmatoṣāṇa<sup>34</sup> is a Tantra compendium (*nibandha*) from the 19th century, compiled by the author in Bengal.<sup>35</sup> This extensive compendium addresses creation, the four *puruṣārthas*, and devotion. The *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* is divided into six major *kāṇḍas* (“sections”): 1. *sargakāṇḍa* (subject: the creation of the universe and cosmogony), 2. *dharmaṅkāṇḍa* (subject: rituals and Dharma of the twice-born), 3. *arthakāṇḍa* (subject: daily routine, deity worship, purification practices, rites, offerings, etc.), 4. *kāmyakāṇḍa* (subject: wish-fulfilment practices, protective mantras, etc.), 5. *bhaktikāṇḍa* (subject: performance of devotional deity worship), and 6. *jñānakāṇḍa* (subject: Mokṣa, yoga, etc.). The author draws from a multitude of texts circulating in this region during the 19th century.

Additional topics of the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* range from *mantras*, *yantras*, and their meanings<sup>36</sup> to meditations, religious stories, legends, and deity worship,<sup>37</sup> the six acts of magic, tantric rituals including sexual rites, and various areas of tantric philosophy.<sup>38</sup>

The *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* incorporates a total of 304 verses from the *Yogasvarodaya* in its *jñānakāṇḍa*.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, it is currently the most extensive source of the *Yogasvarodaya*. All its verses are cited with the reference *yogasvarodaye*. These verses are quoted in a largely coherent sequence, giving the reader the impression of having the complete transmission of the text. However, this is not the case. Many additional verses of the *Yogasvarodaya* can be found in the *Yogakarṇikā* described below. There are numerous overlaps between the quotations. The main difference lies in the fact that, unlike the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*, the

<sup>34</sup>Although the printed editions identify Rāmatoṣāṇa as the author of this work, sometimes bearing the titles Vidyālambkāra or Bhaṭṭacārya, Shāstri (1905: 2) mentions another name: “Babu Prāṇakṛṣṇa Visvās of Kharhadaha, within ten miles of Calcutta, collected in the beginning of the nineteenth century a large number of Tantra, Purāṇa and Smṛti MSS., for the purpose of compiling Prāṇatoṣīṇī, Prāṇakṛṣṇā Kriyāmbudhi and other encyclopaedic works on Hindu ritual and worship.”

Since the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* is frequently cited in recent secondary literature on tantric studies but lacks detailed studies, critical editions, or complete translations into Western languages, this discrepancy remains unresolved.

<sup>35</sup>amatosana.

<sup>36</sup>See Slouber, 2010: 69–70.

<sup>37</sup>See Kinsley, 1997: 149–150.

<sup>38</sup>See Urban, 2010: 100.

<sup>39</sup>*Prāṇatoṣīṇī*, 1898: 831–848.

*Yogakarṇikā* primarily includes practical instructions from the *Yogasvarodaya*, such as instructions for *prāṇāyāma-*, *kumbhaka-*, or *mudrā* techniques.

#### I.5.4.3 Yogakarṇikā

The *Yogakarṇikā* (YK) of Nāth Aghorānanda is another significant source of the *Yogasvarodaya*.<sup>40</sup> The *Yogakarṇikā* is an extensive anthology on yoga, comprising 1552 verses divided into 15 *pādas*. The text derives its verses from a wide array of sources, often, though not always, citing them with references. Besides various Purāṇas (*Mārkandeyapurāṇa*, *Narasimhapurāṇa*, etc.) and Tantras (*Kūbjikamatatantra*, *Grahayāmala*, *Rudrayāmala*, etc.), Nāth Aghorānanda also cites texts from the Haṭha and Rājayoga genres (*Yogasvarodaya*, *Haṭhapradīpikā*, *Dattatreyayogaśāstra*, *Gheraṇḍasamhitā*, *Yogayājñavalkya*, various works attributed to Gorakṣa, etc.). Based on the established dating of the *Yogasvarodaya*, which must have been written before 1659 CE,<sup>41</sup> and Mallinson's dating of the *Gheraṇḍasamhitā* to circa 1700 CE,<sup>42</sup> we can confidently assume that the *Yogakarṇikā* was written no earlier than the 18th century. The fifteen *pādas* are thematically structured as follows:

1. *dinacārya* ("daily routine"); 280 verses
2. *lakṣādiyogaḥ* ("Yoga of foci, etc."); 123 verses
3. *prāṇāyāmaḥ* ("Breath control"); 108 verses
4. *yogasaṅketaḥ* ("Preliminaries"); 80 verses
5. *sādhanasaṅketa* ("Consensus of methods"); 36 verses
6. *pratyāhāraḥ* ("withdrawal of the senses"); 34 verses
7. *kumbhakavidhiḥ* ("precepts for breath-retention"); 78 verses
8. *mudrāsādhanam* ("discipline of [haṭhayogic] seals"); 214 verses
9. *dhāraṇā* ("concentration"); 31 verses
10. *dhyānam* ("meditation"); 50 verses

<sup>40</sup>Narendra Nath Sharma, ed. *Yogakarṇikā. Yogakarṇikā (An Ancient Treatise on Yoga)*. Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 2004.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. p.5.

<sup>42</sup>Mallinson, 2004: xiv.

11. *samādhiḥ* (“meditative absorption”); 34 verses
12. *layayogah* (“Yoga of absorption”); 26 verses
13. *āsanāni* (“postures”); 57 verses
14. *ghaṭaśodhanam* (“purification of the pot [the body]”); 56 verses
15. *tyājyagrāhyavidhānam* (“injunctions and prohibitions”); 36 verses<sup>43</sup>

The *Yogakarnikā* cites a total of 134 verses with reference (*yogasvarodaye* or *svarodaye*) and at least four if not eight or more additional verses without reference:<sup>44</sup>

- 1.210-213 [probably 1.209-216]: Kriyāyoga; 4-8 or more verses quoted without reference
- 1.244-280: main *nāḍis* and nine *cakras*; 36 ślokas quoted with reference
- 2.1-41: five *lakṣyas*, sixteen *ādhāras*, five *ākāśas*; 41 ślokas quoted with reference
- 4.40-49: *satkarmas*; 9 verses quoted with reference
- 4.53-54: *trāṭaka*; 2 verses quoted with reference
- 4.67-80: various *kumbhakas* (*vyutkrama*, *bhāstrika*, *bhrāmari*, *kapālabhāti*, *antarhauti*, *vārisāra*, *nāḍikṣālanam*, *mūlaśodhanam*; 13 verses quoted with reference
- 5.29-33: Aṣṭāṅgayoga; 4 verses quoted with reference
- 6.23-34: *pratyāhara*; 2 verses quoted with reference
- 7.2-10: various *kumbhakas* (*śitkāra*, *sūryabheda*, *ujjāyi*, *śitali*, *bhāstrika*, *bhrāmari*, *mūrcchā*, *kevala*); 8 verses quoted with reference
- 7.23-28: *sūryabheda*; 6 verses quoted with reference
- 7.68-72: *sanmukhikaraṇa*, also called *dantodara*; 4 verses quoted with reference
- 8.136-141: *khecarīmudrā*; 5 verses quoted with reference
- 12.2: a general statement to *laya*; 1 verse quoted with reference

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<sup>43</sup>There are two additional introductory verses and eight final verses that are not counted into the chapters.

<sup>44</sup>See p.50 n.18.

- 12.23-25: Haṭhayoga practice involving colour visualisation; 3 verses quoted with reference

It is noteworthy that many practical instructions on *saṅkarmas*, *kumbhakas*, and *mudrās* from the *Yogasvarodaya* were not incorporated by Rāmacandra into his *Yogatattvabindu*.

A particularly distinctive feature of the *Yogakarṇikā* is its first chapter, which is also by far the most extensive.<sup>45</sup> No other yoga text known to me describes the routine of a yogin in such detail regarding daily ritual ablutions, mantra recitation, as well as other ritual acts such as dressing, applying sectarian markings (*tilaka*), including tying the hair into a knot, offerings, and the devotional performance of prostrations before one's own *iṣṭadevatā*, etc.<sup>46</sup>

#### 1.5.4.4 Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati

The *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* (SSP), one of the authoritative Sanskrit sources of the modern Nātha Sampradāya, often attributed to Gorakṣanātha, is another crucial source of the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>47</sup> Overall, the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* are very similar in content and structure. The degree of similarity is so high that mutual influence appears plausible and possible. However, it should be noted that these similarities could also be explained by a third, previously unknown source, or the same pool of orally transmitted teachings. Nevertheless, or perhaps precisely because of this closeness, Rāmacandra decided to use the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* as the two main sources for his *Yogatattvabindu*.

In secondary literature, at least three attempts have been made to date the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. While White (2003: 224) accepts the historical Gorakṣanātha as the author of the text, placing its origin in the 12th century,

<sup>45</sup> It is also the only chapter in which almost no sources are given. Either all these verses are from Nāth Aghorānanda himself, or, and this is the more likely scenario, in my opinion, the sources are missing from the printed copy. I suspect further verses were taken from the *Yogasvarodaya*.

<sup>46</sup> Further details on the first chapter of the *Yogakarṇikā* can be found within the comparative analysis of Caryāyoga on p.86.

<sup>47</sup> All quotations from the SSP are from the following edition: Dr. M. L. Gharote and Dr. G. K. Pai, eds. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati. Siddhasiddhāntapaddhatih: A treatise on the Nātha philosophy by Gorakṣanātha*. Lonavla: The Lonavla Yoga Institute (India), 2016.

Bouy (1994: 19) dates the text much later, to the period between 1600–1650 CE. This period is based on Bouy's dating of the *Goraksasiddhāntasamgraha* to the first half of the seventeenth century, and the fact that this text quotes the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. Mallinson<sup>48</sup> estimates the age of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* to be around 1700 CE. His estimation is based on the period when the Nātha Sampradāya was institutionalized. Mallinson hypothesizes that this text was composed to meet the need for a systematic religious scripture, which would serve as the authoritative textual foundation for the newly official institutionalized Nātha Sampradāya. Thanks to the present examination of the *Yogatattvabindu*, the period of origin can now be further narrowed.

Due to the newly established date for the *Hathasariketacandrikā*<sup>49</sup> which quotes from the *Yogatattvabindu* and because Rāmacandra extensively quotes from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, the new *terminus ante quem* for dating the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* must be set to 1659 CE. Thus, the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* was likely composed during the first half of the 17th century or earlier. Furthermore, the strong parallels between the *Amaraughaśāsana*, whose oldest manuscript is dated to 1525 CE, and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, according to Mallinson (2011: 16), suggest the possibility of the latter borrowing from the former.<sup>50</sup> If we accept the possibility that the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* borrowed content from the *Amaraughaśāsana*,<sup>51</sup> then 1525 CE could be considered as a possible *terminus a quo*. For the reasons mentioned, the initial composition of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* likely occurred between 1525–1659 CE, a span of 134 years. Considering Mallinson's arguments, the first half of the 17th

<sup>48</sup>Cf. James Mallinson, ed. *Yogic Identities: Tradition and Transformation*. 2013. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20240116124707/https://asia-archive.si.edu/essays/yogic-identities/>.

<sup>49</sup>See p.5.

<sup>50</sup>I noticed the following five clear parallels: 1. *Amaraughaśāsana* 12 ≈ SSP 1.37; 2. *Amaraughaśāsana* 13 ≈ SSP 1.38; 3. *Amaraughaśāsana* 14 ≈ SSP 1.39; 4. *Amaraughaśāsana* 15 ≈ SSP 1.40; and 5. *Amaraughaśāsana* 16 ≈ SSP 1.41. I consider it highly likely that more parallels exist between the *Amaraughaśāsana* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. Unfortunately, I have not yet had the opportunity to invest more time in a thorough examination of this matter.

<sup>51</sup>Further supporting this is the fact that the only manuscript found of the *Amaraughaśāsana*, a Śāradā from Kashmir, mentions the following nine rivers in *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 3.11–12: Piṇasā, Yamunā, Gaṅgā, Candrabhāgā, Sarasvatī, Vipāsā, Śatarudrā, Śrīrātri, and Narmadā. Some river names might be corrupted here, but the point is that some of them are specifically linked to the Kashmir region of India. I discuss the role of these rivers in the *Yogasvarodaya*, *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, and *Yogasvarodaya* on p. ??, n. ??.

century appears more probable as the period of composition than the second half of the 16th century.

The *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* is an exceptionally systematic exposition of the philosophical teachings associated with the Nātha Sampradāya. Similar to the *Yogatattvabindu*, this text is a blend of prose and verse, presenting complex teachings in relatively simple Sanskrit, aside from some *termini technici*. The text comprises six *upadeśas*: 1. *piṇḍotpatti* (“genesis of the body”), 2. *piṇḍavicāra* (“discussion of the body”), 3. *piṇḍasamṛvitti* (“insight into the body”), 4. *piṇḍādhāraḥ* (“substratum of the body”), 5. *piṇḍapadayoḥ samarasakaraṇam* (“effecting a uniform taste of the [supreme] place and the body<sup>52</sup>), 6. *avadhūtayogilakṣaṇam* (“characteristics of an avadhūtayogin”).<sup>53</sup>

Rāmacandra made extensive use of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. While the first half of the *Yogatattvabindu* (I-XXVII) can be primarily traced back to the *Yogaśvarodaya*, with Rāmacandra occasionally referring to specific formulations or concepts from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, the influence of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* begins to increase significantly from section XXIX onwards. This influence is characterized less by literal quotations and more by specific formulations, the adoption of concepts, rephrasings, or paraphrasings, which are sometimes more, sometimes less skillfully integrated with the content of the closely related *Yogaśvarodaya* into his text.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, there are many direct quotations, exclusively of verses, which are incorporated into his text without reference. Apart from a single verse, Rāmacandra does not adopt these verses verbatim but always tries to editorially modify them to varying extents.<sup>5455</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>A summary of the chapter contents can be found in Gharote and Pai, 2016: xvii-xxiii.

<sup>53</sup>Rāmacandra used *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 1.4, 1.17-20, 1.22-26, 1.30-34, 1.37-67, 2.1-26, 2.28-34, 2.36, 2.38, 2.45, 3.1-14, 4.9, 5.55-60, 5.60, 5.79, 6.10-11, 6.32, 6.60, 6.64-67.

<sup>54</sup>I identified a total of fifteen such verses: YTB 28.1 ≈ SSP 2.31; YTB 41.1 ≈ SSP 5.79; YTB 44.1 ≈ SSP 6.10; YTB 44.2 ≈ SSP 6.11; YTB 44.5 ≈ SSP 6.32; YTB 44.7 ≈ SSP 6.64; YTB 44.8 ≈ SSP 6.65; YTB 44.9 ≈ SSP 6.66; YTB 44.10 ≈ SSP 6.67; YTB 48.1 = SSP 1.4; YTB 58.1 ≈ SSP 5.60-61ab; YTB 58.2 ≈ SSP 5.61cd-62ab; YTB 58.3 ≈ SSP 5.64; YTB 58.4 ≈ SSP 5.64cd-5.65ab and YTB 58.4 ≈ SSP 5.65cd-5.66cd.

<sup>55</sup>For a discussion of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* in relation to the *Śivayogapradipikā*, see Powell, 20: 147-152.

### 1.5.4.5 Amanaska

The *Amanaska* is another source text for Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*. According to Birch's research, the *Amanaska* is one of the most significant and influential texts on Rājayoga. It has profoundly impacted numerous subsequent yoga texts, including the *Hathapradīpikā*, *Amaraughaprabodha*, *Śivayogapradipikā*, and *Yogatārāvalī*, as well as modern works like Yugaladāsa's *Yogamārgaprakāśikā* and Brahmananda's *Jyotsnā*. Additionally, the *Amanaska* is frequently cited in compendiums such as *Yogacintāmaṇi*, *Hathatattvakaumudī*, and *Gorakṣasiddhāntasaṅgraha*. It also influenced the twelfth chapter of Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra* and was incorporated into two late Yoga Upaniṣads.<sup>56</sup> Birch dates the first chapter of the *Amanaska* to between the 15th and 16th centuries CE, while the second chapter is dated to the 11th or 12th centuries CE. This second chapter contains some of the earliest teachings on Rājayoga. The text is structured as a dialogue between the supreme god (*iśvara*) and the sage Vāmadeva. Vāmadeva initiates the discussion by asking how one attains liberation in life (*jivanmukti*). *Iśvara*'s response is the practice of *amanaska* (the no-mind state), synonymous with *samādhi* and Rājayoga. In order to achieve the *amanaska* state, the dissolution of mind and breath is required, primarily through the practice of *śāmbhavimudrā*. This yoga practice leads to the perception of the non-dual state (*advaitapada*), the highest reality (*paratattva*). According to Birch, the second chapter reveals Śaiva origins but avoids specific tantric sect affiliations. *Amanaska* 2.3-4 describes Rājayoga as both the king (*rāja*) of all yogas and a means for the yogin to attain the supreme Self, who is the illustrious king.

A significant aspect of the *Amanaska* is its rejection of most Hathayoga techniques. Instead, it advocates an effortless path to liberation through the practice of *amanaska*. Birch notes that the text eschews complex metaphysics and philosophical elaborations.

The *Yogatattvabindu* shares two and a half verses with the *Amanaska* in *Yogatattvabindu* LIX: YTB 59.2cd ≈ *Amanaska* 1.12ab, YTB 59.6 ≈ *amanaskaed* 2.36, YTB 59.7 ≈ *amanaskaed* 2.37. Although editorially modified variants of these verses are also present in the *Yogasvarodaya*, Rāmacandra's formulations

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<sup>56</sup>All information presented here is derived from Birch's dissertation, *Amanaska* (2013). This summary provides only a brief overview of the work. For a comprehensive introduction to the text, see Birch (2013: 1-16).

Amanaska, suggesting that he had access to this text.

### 1.5.5 Description of the testimonia

To date, I have been able to identify two testimonies of the *Yogatattvabindu*, namely the *Yogasamgraha* and the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā*. Although these testimonies are not as diverse as those of a *Hathapradipikā*, both texts adopt conspicuously long passages from the source text. These sections serve as crucial additional evidence for reconstructing the *Yogatattvabindu*. They are included in the second layer of the critical apparatus when available for the respective passage of the text.

#### 1.5.5.1 Yogasamgraha

The *Yogasamgraha* is a compendium of excerpts from various Yoga texts, currently known solely from a single manuscript.<sup>57</sup> Although written in Devanāgarī script, the manuscript is exceedingly difficult to read. The scribe's handwriting is often imprecise and is not carefully executed. The manuscript consists of only eight folios in total. Folio 1 and folio 2 recto are missing. The text commences on folio 2 verso amidst the extensive testimonia of the *Yogatattvabindu*. It is precisely above the first line of folio 2 recto where a second hand inscribed the title *Yogasamgraha* over the first line of folio 2 verso.

The *Yogasamgraha* cites the *Yogatattvabindu*'s sections II-XII in sequence,<sup>58</sup> initially giving the impression that this manuscript is another, albeit incomplete, textual witness of the *Yogatattvabindu*. However, closer examination reveals various slight editorial alterations to the citations. The citation of the *Yogatattvabindu* in the *Yogasamgraha* concludes after section XII with “cha | tad uktam tattvajñānapradipikāyām ||.” Beyond this point, there are no further citations of the *Yogatattvabindu* in the *Yogasamgraha*. Subsequently, the manuscript contains what appears to be an unsystematic collection of various yogic topics and practices. The manuscript lacks a colophon. This absence and the nature

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<sup>57</sup>ytbd2; Ms. No.: 30019; Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA). The paper manuscript is incomplete and in very poor condition overall.

<sup>58</sup>*Yogasamgraha* IGNCA 30020 f. 2v. l. 1 - f. 4r. l. 4 ≈ *Yogatattvabindu* II-XII.

of the handwriting likely explain the title assigned to this manuscript by the IGNCA. I propose that the *Yogasamgraha* represents a compilation made by a Yoga practitioner, likely a householder, who recorded personally relevant content.

Besides the *Yogatattvabindu*, I have so far only been able to identify the *uttaragitai926x* as another source. Additional topics covered in this manuscript include the *nādīs*, *prāṇāyāma*, *kundalini*, the *hamsamantra*, and various descriptions of *mudrās*, such as *khecarimudrā*, *hamsamudrā*, *bhūcarimudrā*, and, towards the end of the manuscript, *unmanimudrā*.

### 1.5.5.2 *Hathasaṅketacandrikā*

The *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* is an unpublished Sanskrit yoga text from the 17th century,<sup>59</sup> authored by Sundaradeva.

Sundaradeva, a Brahmin of the Kāśyapa Gotra, was the son of Govindadeva and the grandson of Viśvanāthadeva. He resided in Benares during the 17th century, where he was likely active not only as an author but also as a physician (*vaidya*). Sundaradeva did not originate from Benares but, like many scholars of his time, probably moved there from the southern regions of India, facilitated by the “Pax Mughalia.”<sup>60</sup> Sundaradeva authored not only the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* but also another extensive yoga text, the *Hathatattvakaumudi*,<sup>62</sup> as well as various works on Ayurveda.<sup>63</sup>

The *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* is an exceedingly comprehensive compendium<sup>64</sup> on yoga, written in a mixture of verse and prose. Its topics and sources are

<sup>59</sup>The dating of the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* has recently been revised due to the discovery that some first-hand notes surrounding the main text of the Ujjain *Yogacintāmaṇi* were likely borrowed from Sundaradeva's *Hathasaṅketacandrikā*.<sup>60</sup> Birch (2018) dated the Ujjain *Yogacintāmaṇi* to 1659 CE.

<sup>61</sup>The ancestry, location, and profession of Sundaradeva are derived from the colophon of the Jodhpur manuscript of the *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* (MMPP 2244 f. 145v). See Birch, 2018: 123.

<sup>62</sup>Birch (2013: 162–165) discusses the *Hathatattvakaumudi* in relation to the *Amanaska*. For an edition of the *hathatattvakaumudi* see M.L. Gharote, P. Devnath, and V.J. Jha, eds. *Hathatattvakaumudi: A Treatise on Hathayoga by Sundaradeva*. Lonavla: The Lonavla Yoga Institute, 2007.

<sup>63</sup>These include *Bhūpālavallabha* (or *Bhūpacaryā*), the *Cikitsāsundara*, the *Lilāvatī*, and the *Yogktivivekacandra* and *Yogoktyupadeśāmrta*. See birch2018ayur (2018: 58–62) for references and a discussion on the entanglement of yoga and Ayurveda in Sundaradeva's works.

<sup>64</sup>In terms of *śloka*, the text likely exceeds 3000 verses.

remarkably diverse and have yet to undergo a systematic academic examination. A critical edition of the *Hathasāṅketacandrikā* remains a desideratum. The text comprises a compilation of various teachings of Haṭha and Rājayoga,<sup>65</sup> which are interconnected with diverse teachings from the Upaniṣads, the epics, Pātañjalayoga, various Tantras, the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, and various Purāṇas. Birch (2018: 123 et seqq.) also discovered fascinating parallels to the *Bahr al-Hayāt*, such as breathing techniques (*prāṇāyāmas*) in non-seated positions.<sup>66</sup> The eclectic mix and sheer number of yoga techniques taught in this text surpass those found in most other Sanskrit yoga texts.

Some of the descriptions of these techniques in the *Hathasāṅketacandrikā* were taken without reference from the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>67</sup>

The passages quoted include the teachings on the sixteen *ādhāras*<sup>68</sup> and the teachings on Laksyayoga and its subtypes.<sup>69</sup> These passages are predominantly adopted verbatim by Sundaradeva, though some may have undergone slight editorial changes. One passage, in particular, stands out. Within the descriptions of the *adholakṣya*, there is a passage teaching two additional techniques absent from the manuscript tradition of the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>70</sup> The first technique describes a specific form of gazing. After positioning the eyes in a particular manner and staring at a lamp for a set period, the yogin can subsequently see in the dark, perceive the luminous form of God, experience a sense of bliss, and lose bodily awareness. The second technique involves rubbing the eyes in specific spots to induce further light phenomena. The origin of these techniques is uncertain. Most likely, these additions originate from Sundaradeva himself. However, it is not entirely impossible that these tech-

<sup>65</sup>The text includes, for instance, an extended description of *āsanas*, some of which are not found in other yoga texts; cf. *Hathasāṅketacandrikā* MMPP 224.4 f. 16r l. 4 - f. 22v l. 6.

<sup>66</sup>See ernst2013 (2013: 59–69) for a translation of the fourth chapter of the *Bahr al-Hayāt*. Additionally, see ernst2003.

<sup>67</sup>In an entry by Theodor Aufrecht in the *Catalogus Catalogorum* for the title *Tattvayogabindu*, currently listed in *New Catalogus Catalogorum: An Alphabetical Register of Sanskrit and Allied Works and Authors*, 2007: 60 (Vol. 8), it states: “Q. by Sundaradeva in his C. *Hathasāṅketacandrikā*.” This not only attests to Theodor Aufrecht’s incredible erudition in Sanskrit literature but also indicates that he read the texts he catalogued with remarkable attention, as the *Yogatattvabindu* is cited without reference in approximately the second third of the *Hathasāṅketacandrikā*.

<sup>68</sup>*Hathasāṅketacandrikā* (MMPP 224.4, f. 95r l. 3 - f. 96r l. 4).

<sup>69</sup>*Hathasāṅketacandrikā* (MMPP 224.4, f. 124r l. 7 - f. 125r l. 3).

<sup>70</sup>*Hathasāṅketacandrikā* I based on ORI B 220 (f.239 r l.8 - f. 240r l.13), GOML R 3239 (f. 258 l.14 - f. 259 l.10) and MMPP 224.4 (f. 124r ll. 5-9 - f. 125r ll. 1-2).

niques were originally from the *Yogatattvabindu*, with the manuscript tradition failing to preserve them. That is because the quotations from the *Yogatattvabindu* in the original *Hathasaṅketacandrikā* must be significantly older than any surviving manuscript or, perhaps because the manuscript tradition of the *Yogatattvabindu* is prone to haplographies and eye skips due to the frequent structural similarities and identical beginnings of certain sentences.<sup>71</sup>

### 1.5.6 Notes on the analogia

In the third layer of the critical apparatus, I list all relevant parallel passages from other texts that do not fall under the source texts or the testimonies but should still be included in the critical apparatus due to their significance for editorial decisions or their high informational value. I call this layer “Analogia.” The term Analogia is derived from Latin, meaning “proportion” or “correspondence.” In English, the term is “analogy.” An analogy is a comparison between two things that are alike in some way, often used to explain or clarify an idea by showing how it is similar to something else. In the present critical apparatus, the analogia are used to draw parallels and make inferences based on the resemblance of relationships between different texts. There are specific analogia occurring in the critical edition that are worth mentioning:

- In the context of the eight *cakra* of *Yogatattvabindu* XI, manuscript U<sub>2</sub> presents some additional material. The text includes a widely known verse that describes the mechanism of the so-called *haṁsamantra*, also known as *ajapāgāyatri*.<sup>72</sup> To elucidate this verse, it was useful to refer to various analogia. These include: ≈*Vivekamārtanda* 29, ≈*Yogabija* 106, ≈*yogacintamanilahore* (PULL, f. 6r), ≈*Hathatattvakaumudi* 22.27, and ≈*Yogaśikhopaniṣad* 1.130cd-131ab (Ed. p. 416).
- *Yogatattvabindu* XXVIII.1 presents a variant of a widely circulated verse, whose origins can be traced back to the *Netratantra*. Rāmacandra adopts this variant from the *Yugasvarodaya*. Further investigations into the variants of this verse revealed insights into an extensive and centuries-spanning

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<sup>71</sup>I have edited the additional material on p. 129.

<sup>72</sup>*Yogatattvabindu* XI.1: *sakāreṇa bahir yāti hakāreṇa viśet punah | haṁsaḥ so'haṁ tato mantrāṇi jivo japeti sarvadā ||*

intertextual network. This verse provides an intriguing starting point for further studies on the genesis of the Hatha- and Rājayoga text corpus from the 11th century CE, precisely at the intersection where ascetic and tantric traditions converge and produce new literature. This verse also appears later in the *Hathapradipikā*, where it forms the first verse of a tetrad, which, for reasons yet to be clarified, is attributed to Saubhadra.<sup>73</sup> I have identified the following analogia to YTB XXVIII.1: ≈*netratantra* 7.1cd-2, ≈*tantraloka* 19.15, ≈*urmikaula* 2.184, ≈*Vivekāmartanda* 6.3, ≈*Yogataraṅginī* quoted with reference *Nityanāthapaddhati* (Ed. p. 72), ≈*fausta* 1976 13, ≈*Hathapradipikā* 4.58, ≈*yogacudamani* 3cd-4ab, ≈*mandalabrah* 3.4.5, ≈*Hathatattvakau-mudī* 24.1, ≈*Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.31 (Ed. p. 43), ≈*Prāṇatosinī* (Ed. p. 172).

- In YTB L, Rāmacandra presents the five great elements within the body (*śariramadhye pañca mahābhūtāni*). Rāmacandra evidently drew these descriptions from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* and the *Yogasvarodaya*. It is noteworthy that this description can be found in almost identical form in *Amaraughaśāsana* II-16. I noticed the following parallels: YTB L l. 1-5 ≈*Amaraughaśāsana* II-16 ≈SSP 1.37-41 ≈YSv (PT p. 846). Although this contributes little to the constitution of the edited text, this insight is nevertheless relevant from the perspective of yoga research, as the sources of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* have not yet been systematically explored. My observations suggest that both the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Amaraughaśāsana* are important candidates in this category.
- In *Yogatattvabindu* section XLI.1, the β-group of witnesses (currently B, E, L, P, and U<sub>2</sub>) quoted a verse which is a variant of *Amarakośa* I.I.165 - I.I.166.

## I.6 Stemmatic analysis

<sup>73</sup> Before *Hathapradipikā* verse 4.58, it is stated: *tathā hi saubhadram nāma ślokacatuṣṭayam |*

<sup>74</sup> Paolo Trovato and others explain the very high rate of lost archetypes and two-branched stemmata by “the high (90%) rate of extinction of individual copies” (Paolo Trovato. *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Lachmann’s Method*. Limena: libreriauniversitaria.it, 2017, 86).

## 1.7 Stylistic Particularities

## 1.8 Conventions for the critical edition

### 1.8.1 Guide to the apparatus

### 1.8.2 Conventions and Abbreviations

Ed. = Edition

Ibid. = Ibidem

em. = emendation

conj. = conjecture

unm. = unmetrical

f. = folio

ff. = folios

r = recto

v = verso

l. = line

ll. = lines

YTB = *Yogatattvabindu*

YSv = *Yugasvarodaya*

SSP = *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*

YK = *Yogakarṇikā*

IGNCA =

ORI =

GOML =

MMPP = Maharaja Man Singh Pustak Prakash Research Centre

PULL = Panjab University Library Lahore

### 1.8.3 Sigla in the Critical Apparatus

- E : Printed Edition
- P : Pune BORI 664

- L : Lalchand Research Library LRL5876
- B : Bodleian Oxford D 4587 ,
- N<sub>1</sub>: NGMPP B 38-31
- N<sub>2</sub>: NGMPP B 38-35 / A 1327-14
- D<sub>1</sub>: IGNCA 30019
- U<sub>1</sub>: SORI 1574
- U<sub>2</sub>: SORI 6082
- YK : *Yogakarṇikā*
- YSv : *Yugasvarodaya*
- PT : *Prāṇatosiṇī*



## **Chapter 2**

# **Comparative analysis of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies**

**T**HE similarities between the yoga taxonomies of Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*, his source text, the *Yogasvarodaya* as well as the taxonomies laid out by Nārāyaṇatīrtha in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* and Sundardās' *Sarvāṅgagadipikā* which all emerged within the 17th century have been initially observed and discussed briefly by Birch (2014).<sup>1</sup> I would like to call this specific literary phenomenon the “complex early modern yoga taxonomies of the medieval yogas” or simply “complex yoga taxonomies”.

No.	<i>Yogatattvabindu</i>	<i>Yogasvarodaya</i>	<i>Yogasiddhāntacandrikā</i>	<i>Sarvāṅgagadipikā</i>
1.	<i>kriyāyoga</i>	<i>kriyāyoga</i>	<i>kriyāyoga</i>	<b><i>bhaktiyoga</i></b>
2.	<i>jñānayoga</i>	<i>jñānayoga</i>	<i>caryāyoga</i>	<i>mantrayoga</i>
3.	<i>caryāyoga</i>	<i>karmayoga</i>	<i>karmayoga</i>	<i>layayoga</i>
4.	<i>haṭhayoga</i>	<i>haṭhayoga</i>	<i>haṭhayoga</i>	<i>carcāyoga</i>
5.	<i>karmayoga</i>	<i>dhyānayoga</i>	<i>mantrayoga</i>	<b><i>haṭhayoga</i></b>
6.	<i>layayoga</i>	<i>mantrayoga</i>	<i>jñānayoga</i>	<i>rājayoga</i>
7.	<i>dhyānayoga</i>	<i>urayoga</i>	<i>advaitayoga</i>	<i>lakṣayoga</i>
8.	<i>mantrayoga</i>	<i>vāsanāyoga</i>	<i>lakṣayoga</i>	<i>aśtāṅgayoga</i>
9.	<i>lakṣayoga</i>	-	<i>brahmayoga</i>	<b><i>sāṅkhyayoga</i></b>
10.	<i>vāsanāyoga</i>	-	<i>śivayoga</i>	<i>jñānayoga</i>
11.	<i>śivayoga</i>	-	<i>siddhiyoga</i>	<i>brahmayoga</i>
12.	<i>brahmayoga</i>	-	<i>vāsanāyoga</i>	<i>advaitayoga</i>
13.	<i>advaitayoga</i>	-	<i>layayoga</i>	-
14.	<i>siddhayoga</i>	-	<i>dhyānayoga</i>	-
15.	<i>rājayoga</i>	- [ <i>rājayoga</i> ]	<i>premabhaktiyoga</i> [ <i>rājayoga</i> ]	-
16.	-	-	[ <i>rājayoga</i> ]	-

Table 2: Comparative table of the four complex yoga taxonomies 17th century

The phenomenon of complex yoga taxonomies raises various questions.

1. How are the individual yoga categories used and classified in the four texts?
2. Do the four texts use and understand the single yogas in the same way, or are there differences?

<sup>1</sup>See Birch, 2014: 415-416.

3. Furthermore, what conclusions can be drawn from answering the previous question in terms of the individual yoga category and in the context of each text?
4. Is there a direct historical connection between all the texts with complex yoga taxonomies, or did they all arise independently?
5. How can the phenomenon of “complex early modern yoga taxonomies of the medieval yogas” be situated within the broader context of the history of yoga?
6. Is it possible to explain why they did emerge?

To answer or at least approach these questions, the complex yoga taxonomies and their single categories of yoga are examined within a comparative analysis. The results will be linked with the recent findings of yoga research.

This chapter will conduct an empirical comparative grounded in the hermeneutics of difference.<sup>2</sup> It first historicizes the objects of comparison—the early modern yoga texts *Yogatattvabindu*, *Yogasvarodaya*, *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, and *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*—by placing them in their specific historical and religious contexts. It then instrumentalizes the empirically derived concept of “complex early modern yoga taxonomies of the medieval yogas”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>The term “hermeneutics of difference” should be understood in the context of the German concept “Differenzhermeneutik” as employed by the culturally oriented Heidelberg School of Religious Studies. Here, Differenzhermeneutik refers to an interpretative method, particularly in the comparative study of religions, that seeks to understand and analyze the diversity and distinctiveness of religious expressions. This approach emphasizes the context, cultural background, and the differences that shape a religious phenomenon. Instead of searching for universal principles, the focus is on the differences between various religious traditions and practices. Religious phenomena are examined within their specific cultural, historical, and social contexts, thus revealing the particular conditions and circumstances, as well as the internal logic and significance in their emic context, as viewed from an etic perspective. This etic perspective is critically reflected upon, so that the biases and assumptions of the researcher are taken into account. Researchers are encouraged to become aware of their own cultural and religious perspectives and to reflect on their impact on the understanding process.

<sup>3</sup>The metalinguistic capturing of this phenomenon, which appears in the mentioned texts, serves to delineate a specific religious-historical phenomenon observed in the 17th century on the Indian subcontinent in certain yoga texts written in Sanskrit and Brājbhāṣa from different traditions. In this comparative study, it serves as the *tertium comparationis*. “Complex” refers to a double-digit number of different yoga categories in an early modern yoga text, compared to the more widespread, less complex medieval yoga taxonomies that describe a single-digit number of yogas.

for the intended comparison. This aims to capture the structural and functional similarities and differences between the complex yoga taxonomies and the individual yoga taxa, considering the specific signatures of the texts. The results derived from this will be applied to the questions mentioned above.

The comparison will broaden and clarify our understanding of the respective spectrum of meanings of the individual yoga categories in the discursive field of the authors of the texts containing the taxonomies. Furthermore, the comparison results in the documentation of the discursive web<sup>4</sup> of word usage of various yoga categories in the 17th century. Additionally, contrasting the single yoga categories used across traditions will sharpen our understanding of the categories themselves, as multiperspectivity will naturally reveal new aspects previously hidden to the eye. Individual yoga categories that do not appear in the list of the *Yogatattvabindu* but are listed in the other texts with complex taxonomies will also be covered and outlined. In addition, yoga categories that do not appear in any of the analysed lists but are nevertheless mentioned in the texts will also be covered. Thus, this comparative study will display the overall picture of all yoga categories used during the period under consideration in an encyclopedic fashion and will serve scholars as a comprehensive reference. However, it is essential to emphasise that the comparison of yoga categories is limited to those texts that contain the complex yoga taxonomies. Although the analysis and comparison of the yoga categories can be extended to other yoga texts, locations, and periods if necessary or valuable, for example, to provide the required context, the restriction on the complex yoga taxonomies is generally maintained to prevent this complex endeavour from going *ad absurdum*.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, the comparative analysis of

<sup>4</sup>Spoiler alert: There are astonishing differences!

<sup>5</sup>The historical tracing and analysis of developments in the reception history of the yoga categories presented in the complex taxonomies can be used to generate valuable insights, as I have demonstrated by the example of the development of the early modern forms of Kriyayoga into the modern forms of Kriyāyoga, beginning with the lineage of the world-famous Paramahansa Yogānanda due to personal interest. See the chapter *Excursus: Popularisation of a new Kriyāyoga in a global context* on p.64 et seqq. Unfortunately, this example made me realise that it is beyond this work's scope to extend this analysis to the history of the reception of each yoga category and term throughout the entire history of yoga, particularly the transition from the early modern to the modern period. Fortunately, other scholars have already done great work in the last decade. A groundbreaking example of the history of Rājayoga is Birch (2014), "Rājayoga: Reincarnations of the King of All Yogas". Even single yogic techniques can be extremely complex. For an outstanding

the texts, the authors and their multiple yoga categories will help to formulate a new concise hypothesis as to why and under what circumstances the complex yoga taxonomies emerged across traditions and largely independently of each other.

In striving to avoid the issues highlighted by Jonathan Z. Smith in his revolutionary essay for the theoretical development of comparative religious studies titled *In Comparison a Magic Dwells* (1982),<sup>6</sup> this work fundamentally follows the approach and methodology of Barbara A. Holdrege. Her comparative model, presented in her essay *Comparative Religion with a Difference* (1994), effectively addresses all the problems of comparative work criticized by Smith.<sup>7</sup> This work adheres to her method, undergoing modifications tailored to this study in its three phases of analysis.<sup>8</sup> These phases are:

1. Historical-religious<sup>9</sup> contextualization and content characterization. Holdrege's first step, the "Historical Interpretation," is adjusted to suit the present topic. In this first step, the comparative objects, i.e., the individual texts, are embedded in their historical and religious contexts, providing an overview of the significant contents. The primary focus is on the individual taxa of the yoga taxonomies in the four texts. The necessary concepts and complexes of ideas for an adequate description and an immanent understanding of the yoga category in each text are considered here. That will be achieved by analysing each individual yoga of each individual text separately.
2. The comparative analysis. Here, the differences and similarities of the "complex early modern yoga taxonomies of the medieval yogas" for each taxon will be highlighted. Within this framework, the constitutive

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article on the history of the hathayogic *vajrolimudrā* see for example Mallinson (2018), "Yoga and Sex: What is the Purpose of Vajrolimudrā?"

<sup>6</sup>Smith, 1982.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Holdrege, 1994: 804-805.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. ibid. 1994: 806-812.

<sup>9</sup>The originally termed historical-cultural contextualization and content characterization is adapted here to historical-religious contextualization and content characterization, as this study deals with texts from the same culture but belonging to different religious streams within that culture. The specific tradition from which each text emerges is highly relevant to this comparative study.

concepts of each text and their tradition, which form the basis for each complex yoga taxonomy, are contrasted.

3. The interpretation of the results. In this final step, the results are applied to the questions posed in the introduction. The significance of the differences and similarities is examined and reflected upon in the context of the introductory questions. That is initially done at the level of individual yogas and finally at the overarching level, considering the results of the comparative analysis phase of all individual yogas.

In summary, this means the following: After describing and contextualising the four texts, the three analysis phases will be conducted for each yoga category mentioned in these texts. The comparative analysis will follow the structure of the individual yogas (the taxa) outlined in the *Yogatattvabindu*. Each yoga will initially be analysed in its context. The order is based on the order of the list in the *Yogatattvabindu*. That is phase one. The results of the descriptions of each yoga will be compared with each other. Some yogas only appear in the taxonomies of *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya* but are not explicitly dealt with in the text. At these points, reference is made to this fact, and the analysis is continued based on the explanations of the other taxonomies that describe these yogas. Some yogas only occur in one<sup>10</sup> or two texts. They will be described, too, and compared if more than one text contains them. The third analysis phase is conducted for each yoga category, which has more than one occurrence in the four texts. This part of the comparison will allow us to answer the questions 1-3 mentioned above. In a concluding step, an overarching third phase of analysis (the conclusion), the overall results of the analysis of the individual yoga categories are summarised, interpreted, and applied to this comparative study's remaining significant questions (4-6 mentioned above).

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<sup>10</sup>In this case, a comparison is impossible. However, they are nonetheless described for an encyclopedic overview.

## 2.1 Contextualising the four texts with complex yoga taxonomies

This section describes the four texts that contain the four known complex yoga taxonomies. The focus will be on characterizing the historical and religious background of the texts and their authors. Additionally, an overview of the contents will be presented, along with other relevant facts for this comparison. Finally, the role of the complex yoga taxonomies within each respective text will be highlighted. The analysis of the individual yogas in each text, which follows this section, is always conducted within the specific religious, historical, and social context of the respective text.

### 2.1.1 *Yogatattvabindu*

The *Yogatattvabindu* has already been extensively contextualized and in the introduction of this dissertation und critically edited for the first time.<sup>11</sup> It has been established that the *Yogatattvabindu* was composed before 1659<sup>12</sup> and that it was most likely written somewhere in northern India. Much about the author remains unknown. Rāmacandra Paramahamsa, the author of the *Yogatattvabindu*, held the title *paramahamsa*, suggesting his initiation as a Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsi. Despite the Śaiva roots of his *sampradāya*, he propagated a religious universalism as an Advaita Vedāntin. As outlined in the chapter *Rāmacandra's audience*,<sup>13</sup> the *Yogatattvabindu* was certainly aimed at affluent segments of the population. Due to numerous text-immanent statements, it is even plausible that this *yogaśāstra* was composed at an unknown royal court to educate young princes. If this is true, we must assume that Rāmacandra was employed as a yoga teacher at the royal court. At the very beginning of the text, a complete list of fifteen yogas, presented as methods of Rājayoga, is provided.<sup>14</sup> Rāmacandra places Rājayoga at the top of the taxonomy to highlight its overarching position, presenting Rājayoga as a universal category encompassing all other yoga methods. Rāmacandra presents the following

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<sup>11</sup>For a more detailed discussion of the *Yogatattvabindu*, see p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>The dating of the *Yogatattvabindu* is discussed on p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>See p. 9 et. seqq.

<sup>14</sup>See p. ?? and especially Table 2 on p. 44 for an overview.

taxonomy: 1. Kriyāyoga, 2. Jñānayoga, 3. Caryāyoga, 4. Haṭhayoga, 5. Karmayoga, 6. Layayoga, 7. Dhyānayoga, 8. Mantrayoga, 9. Lakṣayoga, 10. Vāsanāyoga, 11. Śivayoga, 12. Brahmayoga, 13. Advaitayoga, 14. Siddhayoga, and 15. Rājayoga itself.

### 2.1.2 *Yogasvarodaya*

The *Yogasvarodaya* is a Sanskrit yoga text of the Rājayoga genre with a distinct Śaiva orientation, which was possibly written in central or south India.<sup>15</sup> As the *Yogasvarodaya* was the primary source for the compilation of Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*, the *terminus ante quem* for this work can also be set at 1659 CE.<sup>16</sup> Manuscripts of this text have yet to be discovered. We know of its existence only from quotations in other texts. These include primarily the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*, which cites 304 verses and a half verse from the *Yogasvarodaya* with reference (*yogasvarodaye*)<sup>17</sup>. The *Yogakarnikā* cites a total of 134 verses with reference (*yogasvarodaye*) and at least four additional verses without reference.<sup>18</sup> The *Śabdakalpadruma* (Ed. p. 501) quotes seven verses of the *Yogasvarodaya* with reference (*itiyogasvarodayah*), which form its entry for the term *haṭhayoga*. There are numerous correspondences between the verses from the *Yogasvarodaya* quoted in the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* and the *Yogakarnikā*. It is, however, very noticeable that many verses attributed to the *Yogasvarodaya* in the *Yogakarnikā* containing practical instructions for *kumbhakas* or purification techniques (*karmas*) are not found in the quotations of the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*. These same verses are also

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<sup>15</sup>The *Yogasvarodaya* mentions the rivers Godāvarī and Kāverī. I discuss the role of the rivers of the *Yogasvarodaya*, *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* and *Yogasvarodaya* on p. ??, n. ??.

<sup>16</sup>The dating of the *Yogatattvabindu* is discussed on p.5.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* Ed. pp. 831-848.

<sup>18</sup>The four verses without reference are found in *Yogakarnikā* 1.210-213 (these overlap with the quotations of the *Yogasvarodaya* in the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*). However, it appears to me that at least 1.209-216 must belong to the *Yogasvarodaya*. In this chapter, many verses are not attributed to any text. That is noteworthy since the author Nath Aghorānanda consistently attributes his chosen verses in all other chapters. Additional verses from the *Yogasvarodaya* might precede 1.209.

absent in the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>19</sup> The texts that quote the *Yogasvarodaya* are good indicators that the *Yogasvarodaya* circulated in India's north-east.<sup>20</sup>

The *Yogasvarodaya* was probably addressing non-celebate householders.<sup>21</sup> However, some quotations of the *Yogasvarodaya*, particularly one in the *Yogakarṇikā*, suggests that the *Yogasvarodaya* might have had enthusiastic ascetics among its readers.<sup>22</sup>

Large parts of the content and the content's structure are similar to those of the *Yogatattvabindu*, except for the few passages where Rāmacandra exclusively relies on the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, only the quotations in the *Yogakarṇikā* attest that the *Yogasvarodaya* also taught various physical practices not present in the quotations of the *Prāṇatosinī*: detailed description of the *śaṭkarmas* (4.40-49, 4.67-80), *kevalakumbhaka* and *pratyāhāra* (6.23-34), instruc-

<sup>19</sup>This suggests the existence of different recensions of the *Yogasvarodaya* - one shorter version without practical instructions for physical techniques and another including them. If this is the case, Rāmacandra used the former as the template for the *Yogatattvabindu*.

<sup>20</sup>The *Prāṇatosinī*, written near Calcutta, cf. Shāstri (1905). The origin of the *Yogakarṇikā* is unknown. The only available printed edition of the *Yogakarṇikā* by Nath Sharma (2004) is based on a manuscript presumably from Benares, cf. Nath Sharma 2004: vi. Radhakanta Deva (1784-1867) compiled the *Śabdakalpadruma* in Calcutta. Thus, it can be inferred that northeastern India was a significant area for the circulation of the *Yogasvarodaya*.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Mallinson, 2018: 201.

<sup>22</sup>Based on an understanding of *śaktinādī* as a "powerful channel" or "mighty intestine", the inclusion of the practice described here may have been way too extreme for householders and could only be aimed at an enthusiastic ascetic audience. That technique is called *nāḍikṣālanam* and described in the *Yogakarṇikā* with reference to *yogasvarodaye*. *Yogakarṇikā* 4.73-77 (Ed. pp. 58-59; ≈*Gherandasamhitā* 1.21-24; ≈*Hathayogasamhitā* 2.11-15) reads: *nāḍikṣālanam | kākimudrām sādhayitvā pūrayed udaram marut (marutodaram Hathayogasamhitā 2.11) | dhārayed ardham yāmāntam cālayed ardhavartmanā || 73 || nābhilagnajale sthitvā śaktinādīm visarjayed | karābhyaṁ kṣālayen nādīm yāvan malavisaranam || 74 || tāvat prakṣalya nādīm ca udare veṣayet punaḥ || 75 || idam prakṣālanam gopyam devānām api durlabham || 76 || kevalam dhautimātreṇa devadeho bhaved dhruvam | yāmārdham dhāraṇāśaktim yāvan no dhārayen naraḥ | bahiskr̥tam mahādhautam tāvan naiva ca kārayet || 77 ||* "(73) Having cultivated the crow-seal, fill the stomach with air, hold it for an hour and a half, then move by the midway [path]. (74) Standing in water up to the navel, draw out the mighty intestine *śaktinādī*. Wash out the intestine with both hands until all dirt is gone. (75) Having thoroughly washed the intestine, return it to the stomach. (76) This cleansing is so secret that even gods find it difficult to obtain. (77) By this cleansing alone, one certainly achieves the divine body. As long as a man is not able to hold the breath for an hour and a half, he is not capable of performing the externalised great wash (*mahādhauta*)."  
Further research revealed that this interpretation of *śaktinādī* is common among Indian scholars, as it is also found in Rodriguez and Ram (1992: 46-47) and additionally in Sahai (1972: 123). This is reinforced by a reading in *Hathayogasamhitā* 2.11, which reads *gudavartmanā* instead of *ardhvartmanā* in the context of the preliminary practice called Kākimudrā.

<sup>23</sup>In particular, this concerns *Yogatattvabindu* XLIII on the topic of *avadhūtapuruṣa*, as well as individual passages of cosmogony, such as sections XLVIII, LIII, LIV, LV, LVI, and LVII.

tions for *kumbhaka* (7.1-10, 7.23-28, 7.67-72), and instruction on *khecarimudrā* (8.136-141). Thus, we can assume that these descriptions were much more numerous in the original *Yogasvarodaya*.

The *Yogasvarodaya* presents the five yogas immediately at the beginning of its text. The fifteen yogas are understood, just like in the *Yogatattvabindu*, as equivalent methods of Rājayoga. Of the total fifteen announced yogas, only eight methods of Rājayoga are named in this introduction according to the quotation from the *Prāṇatosiṇī*. *Prāṇatosiṇī* (Ed. p. 831) reads:

atha rājayogaḥ || yogasvarodaye |  
 īśvara uvāca |  
 rājayogaṁ pravakṣyāmi śṛṇu sarvatra siddhidam |  
 guhyād guhyatarām devi nānādharmam parāt param ||  
 rājayogena deveśi nrpapūjyo bhaven narah |  
 rājayogī cirāyuś ca aṣṭaiśvaryamayo bhavet ||  
 pañcadaśaprakāro'yaṁ rājayogaḥ ||  
 kriyāyogo jñānayogaḥ karmayogo haṭhas tathā |  
 dhyānayoga mantrayoga urayogaś ca vāsanā |  
 rājaty etad brahmavaśīva ebhiś ca pañcadaśadhā |

Now Rājayoga. [As described] in the *Yogasvarodaya*. God said: “I will teach Rājayoga, listen! In every case, it bestows completion. [It is] more secret than secret, oh Goddess, [its] nature is manifold, [and it is] higher than the highest. By means of Rājayoga, oh Goddess, the person is to be praised like a king. The Rājayogin may have a long life, and he may be equipped with the eight [supernatural] powers. This Rājayoga has fifteen varieties: Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Karmayoga, Haṭha[yoga], Dhyānayoga, Mantrayoga, Urayoga and Vāsanā[yoga]. By[means of] these fifteen [yogas], this [person] who is resting in Brahman shines [like a king].”

Not all of the eight yogas mentioned in the introduction are explained in the course of the text. The yogas treated in the text are: Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Lakṣayoga, which was not mentioned in the introductory verses, Rājayoga, Haṭhayoga, another form of Jñānayoga, and Aṣṭāṅgayoga, which was also not

mentioned in the introduction. Since there is still no complete transmission of the *Yogasvarodaya*, it remains uncertain whether the text ever contained a more comprehensive description of the yogas.

### 2.1.3 *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

The *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is an important commentary on Patañjali's *Yogaśūtra*. Nārāyaṇatīrtha was a Telugu Brahmin who was born in Kaza in the Guntur district,<sup>24</sup> a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, a *samnyāsa*, a renowned intellectual<sup>25</sup> and a prolific author.<sup>26</sup> Studies suggest that Nārāyaṇatīrtha flourished between 1600 and 1699.<sup>27</sup> Nārāyaṇatīrtha spent a considerable amount of time in Benares, though the exact period of his stay is unclear.<sup>28</sup>

As Birch (2014: 414) noted, in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Nārāyaṇatīrtha is likely the first author to integrate the teachings of Haṭhayoga with Pātañjalayoga.<sup>29</sup> At the beginning of his commentary (I.1), he even enumerates fifteen different yogas, which he locates throughout his commentary, particularly in the first two chapters of the *Yogaśūtra*. These yogas are as follows: Kriyāyoga, Caryāyoga, Karmayoga, Haṭhayoga, Mantrayoga, Jñānayoga, Advaitayoga, Lakṣayoga, Brahmayoga, Śivayoga, Siddhiyoga, Vāsanāyoga, Layayoga, Dhyānayoga, and Premabhaktiyoga. Nārāyaṇatīrtha conceptualizes all fifteen yogas as valid methods for achieving the overarching goal of Pātañjalayoga, namely *asamprajñātasamādhi*, which he equates with Rājayoga in his commentary on I.20.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Ko, 1993: 43.

<sup>25</sup>Later authors like Brahmānanda considered Nārāyaṇatīrtha an authority in the field of yoga, as evidenced by his citation in the *Hathapradipikājyotsnā* (Ed. p. 6).

<sup>26</sup>Nārāyaṇatīrtha composed several commentaries on the *Yogaśūtra* and other works in different literary genres. See Penna, 2004: 20–21.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Ko, 1993: 56.

<sup>28</sup>See especially Penna, 2004: 24. A comprehensive study on the life and works of Nārāyaṇatīrtha can be found in Endo Ko's "The Works and Flourishing Period of Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the Author of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*" (1993). All excerpts of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* used in this dissertation are based on the following edition: Karnāṭak Vimalā, ed. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series, No 108. Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series Office, 2000.

<sup>29</sup>The *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is also the first text in the commentary tradition of Pātañjalayoga to document a proliferation of āsanas. In his commentary on *Yogaśūtra* 2.46, Nārāyaṇatīrtha lists and describes a total of 38 āsanas. A detailed discussion of Haṭhayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* can be found on p. 93 et. seqq.

<sup>30</sup>See p. 182 for the passages and a detailed discussion of Rājayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

### 2.1.4 *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

Sant Sundardās (1596–1689) was a prominent 17th-century poet and scholar who, as a follower of the Dādūpanth, a religious group named after its founder Dādū, was deeply rooted in the Vaiṣṇava bhakti tradition.<sup>31</sup> Born in the Būsar line of the Khandelval merchant caste (*Vaiśya*), Sundardās met Dādū at a young age, probably shortly before 1600, and became his disciple.<sup>32</sup>

Together with other Dādūpanthīs, he studied from the age of eleven in Benares under the initial guidance of Jagivandās, a Brahmin disciple of Dādū, who maintained an ashram near Sundardās' birthplace in Dausa. During this time, he mastered Sanskrit, poetry (*kāvya*) and the prevailing knowledge systems of his time. Sundardās is recognised as the best educated Dādūpanthī of his time.

After completing his education, Sundardās moved to Fatehpur in Rajasthan. He was known as a Sant poet and wrote numerous works<sup>33</sup>, and his scholarly activities extended to various disciplines.

Sundardās commissioned most of his works and transcribed them into a single manuscript in 1685 A.D., just a few years before he died in 1689. This manuscript, known as the *Granthāvalī*, comprises three volumes, with the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* in the second volume. This collection contains 38 texts of varying lengths dealing with topics such as *jñāna*, *yoga*, and the *Guru*.<sup>34</sup>

The *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* or “Light on the yoga of all Limbs”, written in *Brahmāṣṭā*, is a seminal historical document that systematically categorises twelve different yogas. Sundardās' text aims to present yoga as a cohesive, progressive system and reflects his comprehensive understanding of the discipline, which has undoubtedly influenced many contemporary Sants.

The yoga system in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* is divided into three main categories comprising twelve different yogas. Each tetrad consists of four yogas, including the main category which Sundardās presents as an individual yoga

<sup>31</sup>For a comprehensive account of Dādū and the Dādūpanth (1544–1603), see Horstmann and Rajpurohit, 2023: 71–77.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. Horstmann and Rajpurohit, 2023: 86.

<sup>33</sup>A selection of Sundardās' works has been translated by Horstmann and Rajpurohit in the book *In the Shrine of the Heart: Sants of Rajasthan from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 2023: 151–182.

<sup>34</sup>Cf. Burger, 2014: 685.

itself. The first main category is Bhaktiyoga (2.1-51), including Bhaktiyoga (2.1-15), Mantrayoga (2.16-27), Layayoga (2.28-39), and Carcāyoga (2.40-51). The second category is Haṭhayoga (3.1-52), consisting of Haṭhayoga (3.1-12), Rājayoga (3.13-24), Lakṣayoga (3.25-36), and Aṣṭāṅgayoga (3.37-52). The last category is Sāṃkhyayoga (4.1-50), which includes Sāṃkhyayoga (4.1-12), Jñānayoga (4.13-24), Brahmayoga (4.25-30) and Advaitayoga (4.31-50). Each yoga is assigned approximately the same number of verses, with each main category receiving about fifty stanzas.

Sundardās' system emphasises the interconnectedness and complementarity of these yogas, which all converge towards his ultimate goal of Advaitayoga, his system's final limb (*aṅga*).

Sundardās also describes practices that he rejects (1.12-49). He emphasises his disdain for the six philosophical schools (1.11). In other verses, he shows a strong anti-ritualistic attitude and mocks ritual practices, ascetic performances, Jain rites and quacks. He criticises groups such as the *kāpālikās*, *paśupatas* and other ascetics and denounces their extreme behaviour.<sup>35</sup> He never explains the practices of the latter groups as yogas but as doctrines (*matas*).

Sundardās recognises and distances himself from what he considers heretical and glorifies the teachings of his master, Dādū. His adoration for the Guru is evident in his writings, which are imbued with personal devotion.

## 2.2 Comparison of the individual yoga categories in the four texts of the compley yoga taxonomies

We have observed that although the complex yoga taxonomies are situated in very different texts and religious contexts, they show remarkable similarities. As previously announced, the individual yoga categories of the four yoga taxonomies will be compared in the following section. This comparison

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<sup>35</sup>For example, Sundardās writes in *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 1.34 Sundardās writes: *kecit kamda mūla khani khāhiṁ, ekāeka rahaiṁ bana māhiṁ kecit kāsāyadika pahiraiṁ, japaḥiṁ jāpa paithahiṁ jala gaharaiṁ* || “Some dig up roots and bulbs and eat them, and live alone in the forest. Others wear saffron robes, recite mantras and sit in deep water.” Similarly, in *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 1.40, he remarks: *kecit meghādambara baithaiṁ, śīta kāla jalasāi paithaiṁ | kecit dhūma pāna kari bhūlaiṁ, aumdhē hoi bṛccha saum jhūlaiṁ* || “Some sit on mountain peaks like clouds, in the cold season they lie in the water. Some breath smoke [and] digress, [some are] hanging upside down from trees.”

will elucidate the spectrum of meanings of the individual yoga categories, expanding our understanding of the discursive web of negotiations surrounding these yogas in the 17th century. The contrast of the individual yoga categories across traditions will sharpen our understanding of the categories themselves.

## 2.3 Kriyāyoga

Kriyāyoga, “the yoga of action”, is the first method of Rājayoga within the list of fifteen yogas presented by Rāmacandra and his source text *Yogasvarodaya*. Remarkably, Nārāyaṇatīrtha also positions Kriyāyoga at the first position within the list of fifteen yogas in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. Sundardās, on the other hand, omits Kriyāyoga altogether.

### 2.3.1 Kriyāyoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

Since Rāmacandra refers to all fifteen yogas as variants of Rājayoga in his initial definition of yoga, and no explicit hierarchy is recognisable from his formulations in the text, all variants of Rājayoga appear to have been regarded by him as equally effective. All yogas aim towards the same goal: long-term durability of the body (*bahutarakālam śarirasthitih*). The positioning of Kriyāyoga does not initially provide any information about the efficiency or the assignment of differently talented practitioners to a particular type of yoga, as was the case in i.e. the widespread fourfold taxonomies.<sup>36</sup> Implicit hierarchical aspects are nevertheless present - although all yoga types are a type of Rājayoga, Rāmacandra nonetheless places Rājayoga in the final and topmost position of his taxonomy. The only apparent reason why Rāmacandra specifies Kriyāyoga as the first yoga seems to be that his primary source text, whose content structure he largely follows, specifies this type of yoga as the first.

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<sup>36</sup>According to *Amaraughaprabodha* 18-24, Mantrayoga is best suited for the weak, Layayoga for the average, Haṭhayoga for the talented and Rājayoga for the exceptionally talented practitioner. In *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* 14, one finds the statement that the lowest practitioner should perform Mantrayoga, which is then also referred to as the lowest yoga. *Śivasan̄hīta* 12-28 expands this fourfold scheme of yogas and practitioners with a temporal dimension. The weak practitioner needs twelve years to succeed with Mantrayoga, the average practitioner needs eight years with Laya, the able practitioner six years with Haṭha and the exceptional practitioner three years with Rājayoga.

The passage on Kriyāyoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* is relatively short. The four verses presented by Rāmacandra are quoted without attribution from the *Yogasvarodaya*. A prose section repeats the content of the verses. By definition, Kriyāyoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* is “liberation through [mental] action” (*kriyā-muktir ayam yogah*). In contrast to Rāmacandra’s worldly definition of Rājayoga and its subcategories, here, liberation (*mukti*) overrides this initial goal. In addition, the practitioner achieves “success in one’s own body” (*svapin̄de sidhīdāyakah*). The method of Kriyāyoga involves restraining any [mental] wave before an action. This restraint consists of reducing negative [mind-]waves and cultivating positive ones. Noticeably, the number of negative waves significantly exceeds the number of positive waves.

Mental waves to be cultivated	Mental waves to be reduced
Patience ( <i>kṣama</i> )	Envy ( <i>matsārya</i> )
Discrimination ( <i>viveka</i> )	Selfishness ( <i>mamatā</i> )
Equanimity ( <i>vairāgya</i> )	Cheating ( <i>māyā</i> )
Peace ( <i>sānti</i> )	Violence ( <i>hiṃsā</i> )
Modesty ( <i>santosa</i> )	Intoxication ( <i>mada</i> )
Desirelessness ( <i>niṣprha</i> )	Pride ( <i>garvata</i> )
	Lust ( <i>kāma</i> )
	Anger ( <i>krodha</i> )
	Fear ( <i>bhaya</i> )
	Laziness ( <i>lajjā</i> )
	Greed ( <i>lobha</i> )
	Error ( <i>moha</i> )
	Impurity ( <i>asúci</i> )
	Attachment and aversion ( <i>rāgad-veśau</i> )
	Disgust and laziness ( <i>ghṛṇālasya</i> )
	error ( <i>bhrānti</i> )
	Deceit ( <i>dañbhā</i> )
	Envy (repeatedly) ( <i>akṣama</i> )
	Confusion ( <i>bhrama</i> )

Table 3: Mental waves to be cultivated and reduced in Rāmacandra’s Kriyāyoga

The one who cultivates positive [mind-]waves and reduces the negative is called a *kriyāyogi*. In the prose passage of the section, the term *bahukriyāyogi* is used. The term is unprecedented in the rest of yoga literature and presumably intends to express the great amount of reduced and cultivated [mind-]waves.<sup>37</sup>

### 2.3.2 Kriyāyoga in the *Yogasvarodaya*

A closer examination of the Kriyāyoga section in the *Yogasvarodaya* reveals Rāmāncandra's reductionism since he excludes significant aspects of the original concept of the *Yogasvarodaya*'s Kriyāyoga.

*dhyānapūjādānayajñajapahomādikāḥ kriyāḥ |  
kriyāmuktimayo yogahsvapin̄de siddhidāyakah || 1 ||*

- (1) Actions are meditation, ritual veneration, donation, recitation, fire sacrifice, etc. The yoga made of liberation through action[s] bestows success in one's own body.

*yat karomīti saṅkalpam kāryārambhe manah sadā |  
tat sāṅgacaraṇam kurvan kriyāyogarato bhavet || 2 ||*

- (2) When the mind, when starting an activity, performs the definite intention "I am acting" together with its auxiliaries, then one is devoted to Kriyāyoga.

*kṣamāvivekavairāgyaśāntisantosanisprhāḥ |  
etad yuktiyuto yo 'sau kriyāyogo nigadyate || 3 ||*

- (3) Patience, discrimination, equanimity, peace, modesty, desirelessness: The one endowed with these means is said to be a Kriyāyogi.

*mātsaryam mamaṭā māyā hiṁsā ca madagarvitā |  
kāmaḥ krodho bhayaṁ lajja lobho mohas tathā 'suciḥ || 4 ||*

- (4) Envy, selfishness, cheating, violence, intoxication and pride, lust, anger, fear, laziness, greed, error, and impurity.

<sup>2</sup> svapin̄de siddhidāyakah YTB] sapiṇḍisiddhidāyakah PT sapiṇḍisiddhidāyakah YK

<sup>37</sup>Cf. section II of the *Yogatattvabindu* for its text on the subject Kriyāyoga.

*rāgadveṣau ghṛṇālaśyaśrāntidambhakṣamābhramāḥ |  
yasyaitāni na vidyante kriyāyogī sa ucyate || 5 ||*

(5) Attachment and aversion, disgust and laziness, error, deceit, envy [and] confusion: Whoever does not experience these is called a Kriyāyogī.

*sa eva muktah sa jñāni caṇḍināśena iśvarah |  
kriyāmuktikaro yo'sau rājayogah sa muktidah || 6 ||* (om. YK)

(6) He alone, the wise one, the lord, through the destruction of impetuous [behaviour] who performs the liberation through action[s] is liberated. This Rājayoga is the bestower of liberation.

*yāvan mano layaṁ yāti krṣṇe svātmāni cinmaye |  
bhaved iṣṭamanā mantrī japahomau samabhyaset || 7 ||*<sup>38</sup> (om. YSv)

(7) Until the mind enters absorption into Kṛṣṇa, in one's own self, into consciousness, the mantra practitioner (*mantrin*) should practise recitation and fire sacrifice with an aspiring mind.

*vidite paratattve tu samastair niyamair alam |  
tālavṛntena kiṁ kāryaṁ lavdhe malayamārute || 8 ||*<sup>39</sup> (om. YSv)

(8) When the highest principle has been realised through all the *niyamas*, as is proper, why should one wave the palm frond when the wind from the Himalayas has already reached?

*tāvat karmmāṇi kurvanti yāvajjñānam na vidyate |  
jñāne jāte pareśāni karmākarma na vidyate || 9 ||* (om. YSv)

(9) As long as [regular?] actions are performed, so long realisation is unknown. When knowledge ensues, oh, Supreme Goddess, neither action nor non-action is known.

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<sup>38</sup>7ab ≈Rudrayamalam: *uttara-tantram* 38.58cd.

<sup>39</sup>≈Kulārṇavatantra 9.28 & Yuktabhavadēva 1.80.

These verses<sup>40</sup> stem from the only two currently available sources of the *Yogasvarodaya*, namely the quotations from the *Prāṇatosiṇī*<sup>41</sup> and the *Yogakarṇikā*.<sup>42</sup> The quotations of both texts essentially correspond, but the last verses of the passage differ. It cannot be ruled out that the last three verses of the *Yogakarṇikā* in particular come from a different source and were not present within the *Yogasvarodaya*. However, their content is so closely interwoven with the preceding verses that this scenario can be considered unlikely.

The main difference to the Kriyāyoga that Rāmacandra has constructed from these verses is the definition of the actions (*kriyāḥ*) mentioned immediately at the beginning of the verses, of which the actions (*kriyās*) of Kriyāyoga is then predominantly composed, namely of (1) meditation, (2) ritual worship of God, (3) offerings, (4) recitation and (5) fire sacrifice, etc. Furthermore, while Rāmacandra declares the elements mentioned in the table 3 as waves (*kallola*) of the mind which are either required to be cultivated or reduced before any action is executed, the same elements are conceptualised in the *Yogasvarodaya* as the intentions (*saṅkalpa*) preceding the previously defined actions (*kriyās*), which should be observed.

In the three verses concluding this section, which are only handed down in the *Yogakarṇikā*, the practitioner is referred to as *mantrin* and should perform recitation and fire offerings until entering absorption (*laya*).

A possible historical link, particularly in front of the Vaiṣṇava background, is the model of Kriyāyoga as found in the *Uddhavagīta*<sup>43</sup> which is a part of the famous *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*<sup>44</sup>. Here, in chapter XXII.I-55 Kṛṣṇa describes a Vaiṣṇava form of Kriyāyoga in response to a request by his disciple Uddhava. The practice entails a very complex and devotional ceremonial veneration of the deity through offerings such as flowers and food, accompanied by the

<sup>40</sup>The numbering used here was introduced by me for practical reasons and does not correspond to the original numbering of the verses in the citations of the source texts. The *Prāṇatosiṇī* does not number the verses at all. The verses can be found in the printed edition of the *Prāṇatosiṇī* on p. 831. The verses here are in the *Yogakarṇikā* with the numbering 1.209–216 and can be found in the edition on p. 17.

<sup>41</sup>A considerable part of the *Yogasvarodaya* is quoted with reference “*yogasvarodaye*”.

<sup>42</sup>Normally the *Yogakarṇikā* quotes its sources. This passage is one of the few exceptional cases in which the verses have been taken from the *Yogasvarodaya* without citing the source. However, this passage ends after verse 1.216 with “*iti yogasaṅketāḥ*”.

<sup>43</sup>See i.e., Cakravartin et al., 2007.

<sup>44</sup>See i.e., Shastri and Tagara, 1950.

recitation of prescribed mantras, meditation, and the ritual consecration of the deity, among other rites. According to the text, this type of yoga is the most beneficial for women and the working class (22.4) and is considered a means for liberation from the fetters of Karma (22.5). The Kriyāyoga described here is presented to be in line with both the Vedas and the Tantras, considering enjoyment (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) and is promised to bestow perfection in both this life and the next, by the Lord's grace (22.49).

Furthermore, this concept of Kriyāyoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* might be linked to the *kriyāpāda*<sup>45</sup> of the Śaiva āgamas. The Śaiva āgamas are collections of various tantric traditions, written in Sanskrit or Tamil, in which cosmology, epistemology, philosophical teachings, various practices such as meditation or yoga, mantra recitation, worship of the gods, etc. are described. These texts<sup>46</sup> usually consist of four sections (*pādas*): The *jñānapāda* (knowledge section), *kriyāpāda* (action section), *caryāpāda* (behaviour section) and the *yogapāda* (yoga section).<sup>47</sup> It can be no coincidence that *jñāna*<sup>o</sup>, *kriyā*<sup>o</sup> and *caryā*<sup>o</sup> were each integrated as a separate yoga category within the taxonomy of the fifteen yogas<sup>48</sup>. The *kriyāpāda* is the section of a Śaiva āgama that describes rules and practices for the performance of various rituals such as the significant initiation (*dikṣa*), ceremonies and worship of the gods. Additionally, *prāṇāyāma* techniques and meditations are often found as parts of these rituals. There are also explanations of the nature of *mudrās*, *maṇḍalas* and *mantras*. Furthermore, various characteristics of different types of Śaiva initiates<sup>49</sup> can be found here.<sup>50</sup> The *kriyās* mentioned at the beginning of the *Yogasvarodaya* - meditation, ritual veneration, donation, recitation, fire sacrifice, etc. have hardly deniable parallels to the *kriyāpādas* of the Śaiva āgamas and thus could have their reception-historical roots precisely there. The other part, however,

<sup>45</sup> See e.g. Ganesan (2016) and *Mrgendrāgama* (*Kriyāpada and Caryāpada*) (1962), Ed. pp. 1-205.

<sup>46</sup> The fourfold division of *pādas* is only present in a limited number of Āgamas: *Kiraṇa*, *Suprabha*, *Mrgendra* and *Mataṅgaparamesvara* (as Upāgamas), see Brunner, 1993: 225-461 for an overview.

<sup>47</sup> The order or the *pādas* varies, but the *yogapāda* is always at the final position.

<sup>48</sup> see p.??.

<sup>49</sup> These are *samayin*, *putraka*, *sādhaka*, *ācārya*, and *astrābhiseka*.

<sup>50</sup> See Ganesan (2016) for a general overview of the four *pādas*. One of the few Śaiva āgamas that has been edited and translated into a Western language (French) is the *Mrgendrāgama* (*Kriyāpada and Caryāpada*). For this see Bhatt's *Mrgendrāgama* (*Kriyāpada and Caryāpada*) (1962) & Brunner-Lachaux's *Mrgendrāgama. Section des rites et section du comportement Avec la Vṛtti de Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇakanṭha* (1985).

which describes the cultivation or reduction of certain mental configurations preceding all actions (*sāṅkalpa*) or [mental] waves (*kallola*), I have not yet been able to locate in the Śaiva āgamas, but they seem to be a simplified rendering of the Pātañjalean model of Kriyāyoga that was passed on in hitherto unknown traditions that practiced this type of Kriyāyoga.

### 2.3.3 Kriyāyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

The Kriyāyoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's commentary on *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* entitled *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* presents Kriyāyoga as the first of his fifteen yogas, which he locates in Pātañjalayoga.<sup>51</sup> The term Kriyāyoga occurs in *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 2.1. According to the introduction to this *sūtra*, in the *bhāṣya*-part of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, Kriyāyoga is the means by which someone with a distracted mind can also attain yoga (*vyutthitacitto 'pi yogayuktaḥ*). In *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 2.1, Kriyāyoga is defined as follows:

*tapahsvādhyāyeśvara-praṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ |*

The yoga of action consists of austerity, the self-study and devotion to the supreme lord.

Kriyāyoga, or “yoga of action”, is the action oriented method of yoga consisting of three elements. Namely, austerity (*tapas*), which according to the *bhāṣya* should be practised both mentally and physically, the repetition of *mantras* or the study of sacred literature (*svadhyāya*) and devotion to the supreme lord (*iśvarapraṇidhāna*). According to *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 2.2, these three elements of Kriyāyoga should lead the practitioner to attain *samādhi* by reducing the so-called *kleśas*. This explanatory model is picked up by Nārāyaṇatīrtha.<sup>52</sup> The five *kleśas* consist of ignorance (*avidyā*), self-centredness (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and fear of death (*abhiniveśa*). All three main components of Patañjali's Kriyāyoga are not mentioned in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*. Nevertheless, a practice similar to the reduction of the *kleśas* can also be found here. Although the specific fear of

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<sup>51</sup>For an earlier brief discussion of Kriyāyoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* see Penna, 2004: 62-66.

<sup>52</sup>Vimalā, 2000: 71.

death (*abhinivesā*) is not mentioned, the more general term for fear (*bhaya*) is cited.<sup>53</sup> The Kriyāyoga in *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya* could, therefore, be perhaps regarded as a degenerated or simplified variant of the Pātañjalean model, which restricts itself predominantly to the aspect of the reduction of negative waves of the mind, which is comparable to the reduction of *kleśas* and adds the aspect of cultivating positive mind waves to be mix. In both systems, Kriyāyoga is a means for liberation.<sup>54</sup>

#### 2.3.4 Kriyāyoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Kriyāyoga within the complex yoga taxonomies shows two distinct models. One is Nārāyaṇatīrtha's model, which draws directly on the Kriyāyoga of *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. Additional Śaiva influences characterise the other model of Kriyāyoga that seems to have been locally prominent in the 17th century. The precisely defined *kriyās* of the *Yogasvarodaya* must be historically linked to the *kriyāpādas* of the Śaiva āgamas, whereby the core practice of reducing and cultivating specific mental configurations before any action is loosely associated with the Kriyāyoga of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. The observation that the *kriyā-*, *caryā-*, and *jñānayogas*, are an allusion to the *kriyā-*, *caryā-*, *jñāna-* and *yogapādas* of the Śaiva āgamas, shows that Nārāyaṇatīrtha, as a proponent of the *Pātañjalayoga*, was most likely not the originator of the fifteenfold taxonomy, but rather that the taxonomy of the fifteen yogas originated in local discourses around the authors and had achieved such local popularity at the time that Nārāyaṇatīrtha forced the fifteenfold taxonomy into Patañjali's *Yogaśāstra* in order to show that the *Yogaśāstra par excellence* and all those varieties of yogas that were discussed in his sphere are in truth just single aspects of the superior "classical" system of Patañjali.

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<sup>53</sup>The details of Nārāyaṇatīrtha's understanding of Kriyāyoga have already be discussed by Penna (2004: 62–66) and will therefore not be covered here again.

<sup>54</sup>The Kriyāyoga of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* will not be dealt with in detail here, as this has already been done in countless academic and informal publications. For the *sūtras* related to Kriyāyoga and Patañjali's autocommentary in Sanskrit with English translation, see Āranya, 1983: 113 et seqq. For a comprehensible and more accessible overview, see Bryant, 2009: 170 et seqq.

### 2.3.5 Excursus: Popularisation of a new Kriyāyoga in a global context

<sup>55</sup>The comparatively unique treatises on Kriyāyoga, which can only be found in the yoga literature of the 17th-century<sup>56</sup> in *Yogasvarodaya* and Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*, which deviate from the Pātañjala model, albeit not entirely, and, as shown, show clear influences of tantric origin, can be regarded as marginal phenomena for the time being. The briefly touched upon model of *Uddhavagītā*, which describes a Kriyāyoga method for *mukti* and *bhukti* through ritual worship of god, is also comparatively rare in the literature. The overwhelming majority of the Sanskrit yoga texts written in the second millennium CE, as in the case of Nārāyaṇatirtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, are based on the model of Kriyāyoga propagated in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* and the commentary literature. Accordingly, it was above all the publication of the *Yogasūtra* in the West, beginning with the translation by Henry Thomas Colebrooke in 1805<sup>57</sup> which ensured that the concept of Kriyāyoga contained therein also dominated the understanding of the term in academic and informal discourse in the West for a long time.

The Western discourse only changed with the global success and popularity of Paramahamsa Yogānanda (1893–1952) and the *Self Realisation Fellowship* he founded in 1920, which, measured against the predecessor models forms of Kriyāyoga outlined above, spread an innovative yoga practice under the generic term Kriyāyoga. The influence of Yogānanda and others significantly changed and expanded the range of meanings of the term Kriyāyoga. In addition to various books published by Yogānanda, it was above all, the book *Autobiography of a Yogi*, the autobiography of Yogānanda himself, published

<sup>55</sup>This excursus was created primarily for my personal research interest and is irrelevant to the comparative analysis conducted here. One can safely ignore this passage if one is not interested in this topic. Since Paramahamsa Yogānanda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* was one of the first books I read on the subject of yoga, I became interested in how exactly Yogānanda's Kriyāyoga is historically located and whether there is a historical connection between the early modern forms of Kriyāyoga and the modern forms of Kriyāyoga.

<sup>56</sup>The terminus *ad quem* for the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* is 1659 CE, see p.5 for the details.

<sup>57</sup>See "Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the Western "Discovery" of the Yoga Sutra". In: *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali: A Biography*. Ed. by David Gordon White. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014, pp. 53–80 for a detailed discussion.

in 1946, which paved the way for Yogānanda's success. To this day, this work is considered a classic in popular yoga literature, has been in print for over seventy years and has been translated into more than 50 languages.<sup>58</sup> It also has a large global following to this day. Yogānanda, his books, his followers and the numerous books written by his followers have popularised this innovative and new form of Kriyāyoga beyond the Indian subcontinent. The term Kriyāyoga was allegedly already defined by Yogānanda's predecessors, namely Lahidi Mahāśaya (1828-1895) and Śrī Yukteśvar Giri (1855-1936), as the central generic term for the yoga practice of this specific lineage.<sup>59</sup>

One of Yogānanda's contemporaries was Svāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī (1887-1963), who similarly propagated a new form of Kriyāyoga. Although his Kriyāyoga was initially based mainly on the Pātañjalayoga model, it was expanded under the same umbrella term with Haṭhayoga practices and possibly influenced by Yogānanda's model. This expansion and integration of new practices under the umbrella term Kriyāyoga was continued excessively by his students, above all Svāmī Satyānanda Sarasvatī (1923-2009), the founder of the famous *Bihar School of Yoga* (since 1962).

The resulting popularity of Kriyāyoga triggered a global wave and inspired others, who in turn developed similar but sometimes differently nuanced Kriyāyoga systems. One example is S.A.A. Ramaiah, who founded the *Kriya Babaji Yoga Sangam* in 1952. In this case, too, there is a global following.<sup>60</sup>.

It was the actors mentioned above, above all Yogānanda, who ensured the global popularisation of this new form of Kriyāyoga so that their concepts are at least as well known in recent public discourse, if not better known, than the Kriyāyoga of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.

These new forms of Kriyāyoga, which can only be traced from the beginning of the 19th century, are, as will be shown, a reservoir for innovative combinations and further developments of numerous practices already codified in yoga texts in the medieval to pre-colonial period, which were integrated into

<sup>58</sup>Cf. *Official Yogānanda Website*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20240323081653/https://yogananda.org/autobiography-of-a-yogi>. Website saved with the Way Back Machine of archive.org on 23.03.2024. Self Realization Fellowship.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Govindan, 2010: 51-52.

<sup>60</sup>Cf. *Kriya Babaji Yoga Sangam Website*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20240320214547/https://kriyababajiyogasangam.org/>. Website saved with the Way Back Machine of archive.org on 20.03.2024. Kriya Babaji Yoga Sangam

seemingly coherent practice systems by actors such as Yogānanda, Śivānanda, Ramaiah, etc. The statements made by their traditions about the historicity of their yoga practice utilise established narratives to lend this form of Kriyāyoga a tradition and historical legitimacy.<sup>61</sup>

### **2.3.6 The Kriyāyogas of the lineages of Paramahamsa Yogānanda, Śvāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī and Ramaiah**

So what constitutes these new forms of Kriyāyoga? To answer this question, recent publications on this topic were consulted.<sup>62</sup> The following is a brief outline of the main features of the Yogānanda, Śivānanda and Ramaiah models of Kriyāyoga without claiming to be exhaustive. To my knowledge, a comprehensive and complete historical study of Kriyāyoga has not yet been carried out and cannot be done within this framework. This attempt is an outline and should be understood as a first approach to the topic in order to differentiate between the models circulating in public discourse on the one hand and, on the other, to formulate a hypothesis on the transition from the older models to the newer models, as these are very close in time.

#### **2.3.6.1 Definitions**

The publications consulted contain various creative etymologies and explanations of the term Kriyāyoga. Hariharananda, a Kriyāyoga teacher authorised by Yogānanda<sup>63</sup> himself explains in his book *Kriya Yoga* (1989):

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<sup>61</sup>For example, tracing back yoga traditions to a legendary founding figure, the master's stay in the Himalayas, lost writings that suddenly reappear and legitimise the yoga practices can also be found in similar forms in other traditions. For example, in the lineage of T. Krishnamacharya. See Singleton and Goldberg, 2013: 81–121.

<sup>62</sup>This list is certainly not exhaustive. Nevertheless, I have consulted a wide range of these publications available to me. 1. For the Yogānanda model: Yogānanda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1949); Lowenstein and Lett's *Kriya Yoga for Self-Discovery* (2021); Satyananda's *A Systematic Course in the Ancient Tantric Techniques of Yoga and Kriya* (1981); Hariharananda's *Kriya Yoga* (1989); Kriyananda's *The Kriya Yoga Upanishad and the Mystical Upanishads* (1993) and Sturges's *The Supreme Art and Science of Rāja and Kriyā Yoga* (2015). 2. For the Śivānanda model: Sivananda's *Tantra Yoga, Nada Yoga and Kriya Yoga* (1955) and Nityānanda Giri's *Kriyāyoga: The science of Life-force* (2013). 3. For the Ramaiah model: Govindan's *Babaji* (2010).

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Hariharananda, 1989: 16.

'Kriya Yoga' are Sanskrit words, a combination of two root words. One is Kriya and the other is yoga. In the word Kriya there are two syllables: kri and ya. Kri means to pursue your work in daily life and ya means to be ever aware of the invisible God who is abiding in you and is directing and accomplishing work through you. ...The second word, 'yoga,' literally means union of the visible body with the invisible body. This union is always present in everyone.<sup>64</sup>

Another etymology of the term *kriyā* can be found in the book *Kriya Yoga for Self-Discovery* (2021):

...kri meaning "work" and ya meaning "soul" or "breath" = The Work to be done with the Souls breath.<sup>65</sup>

The most complex explanation of the term can be found in the book *Kriyāyoga: The science of Life-force* of Nityānanda Giri, who also situates himself in the Yogānanda tradition:

The word *kriyā* is composed of the letters *k, r, i, y*, and *ā*. The letter -*k* (or *ka*), *ka-kāra*, represents the Lord, *Īśvara*. The Transcendental Lord, *Parama Śiva*, when he manifests Himself in the subtle world and makes Himself ready for creation He becomes *Īśvara*. The letter -*r* (or *ra*), *ra-kāra*, represents fire, light and manifestation. Creation is not seen by us with the ether and air elements since these are subtle elements. We are able to see manifestation from the fire element onwards. The letter -*i*, *i-kāra*, represents energy or *śakti*. So *kri* is the activating power of the Lord manifested in creation. The activating power is called *prāṇa* or vital force. The letter -*y* (or *ya*), *ya-kāra*, represents the air element and the letter -*ā*, *ā-kāra*, represents form. For the manifestations to take a form, *ākāra*, the Lord acts with the air element. With the ether element there is no form. The air element or gaseous state is the first created form although we only see the forms from the fire element onwards. Through the action of air the whole universe is manifested. This

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<sup>64</sup> See Hariharananda, 1989: 83.

<sup>65</sup> Lowenstein and Lett, 2021: 91.

is the action of the Life-force, *prāṇakarma*, of the Lord. The word *kriyā* normally means action, but this is the action of god. We are made with the same principle God is. Our identification with the physical body makes us separate from God and this is the state of ignorance. We have to eradicate this ignorance by the action of God, i.e., the action of the breath, *prāṇakarma*. Our mind is the result of ignorance and is responsible for the wrong identification. Breath-practice, *prāṇakarma*, absorbs the mind into the vital force. This action of God reverses the process and leads us from body to God. This is why it is so necessary to perform that action. That is our spiritual practice. Then that action, *kriyā*, becomes yoga.<sup>66</sup>

Satyanaṇda Sarasvati, an important proponent of the Śivānanda model, defines Kriyāyoga in his book *A Systematic Course in the Ancient Tantric Techniques of Yoga and Kriya* (1981) as follows:

The Sanskrit word *kriya* means ‘action’ or ‘movement’. *Kriya Yoga* is so called because it is a system where one intentionally rotates one’s attention along fixed pathways. This movement of awareness is done, however with control. Also *kriya yoga* is so called because one moves the body into specific mudras, bandhas and asanas according to a fixed scheme of practice. The word *kriya* is often translated as meaning ‘practical’. This is indeed a good definition, for *kriya yoga* is indeed practical. It is concerned solely with practice, without the slightest philosophical speculation. The system is designed to bring results, not merely to talk about them. Sometimes the word *kriya* is translated as ‘preliminary’. This too is a good definition, for *kriya yoga* is a preliminary practice that leads first to dharana and then eventually to the transcendental state of dhyana (meditation) and yoga (union). It is a technique which has been designed to lead to that state of being which is beyond all techniques. Finally, the word *kriya* is used to describe each individual practice. Thus the process of *kriya yoga* consists of

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<sup>66</sup>Nityānanda Giri, 2013: 2-3.

a number of kriyas each being done one after the other in a fixed sequence.<sup>67</sup>

In the book *Babaji* (2010), Govindan, a student of Ramaiah, offers a simple explanation of the term:

Kriyā is an activity performed with mindfulness.<sup>68</sup>

As different as the concepts presented here may seem, they have in common that they are about consciously performed actions or practices that connect people with God or are intended to bring about a transcendent state, a state of yoga. In his definition, Nityānanda already mentions the central action (*kriyā*) that should lead to a connection with God, namely breathing practice (*prāṇakarma*). In addition, Satyānanda also mentions other practices such as directing attention, *mūdras*, *bandhas* and *āsanas*.

Further definitions can be found in the consulted texts. However, these are sufficient for the purposes here, as they illustrate the basic idea of the new models of Kriyāyoga on the one hand and show the fundamental diversity and openness of the model, which permeates all areas of these new forms of Kriyāyoga, on the other.

### 2.3.6.2 Histories of the new forms of Kriyāyoga from an emic perspective

Nityānanda Giri, who places himself in the lineage of Yogānanda, explains that Kriyāyoga is an eternal tradition that stands at the beginning of human history. He explains that this is why many of the scriptures, such as the Śivasūtrā, the Āgamas and the writings of the Siddhas, teach the techniques and principles of Kriyāyoga in many different ways. Moreover, remnants of this primal Kriyāyoga can be found in almost all philosophies, be it Buddhism, Jainism, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Mimāṃsā or Vedānta.<sup>69</sup>

Satyānanda, the founder of the *Bihar school of Yoga*, explains that there is no history of Kriyāyoga and that its origins and development have been

<sup>67</sup> Satyananda, 1981: 699.

<sup>68</sup> Govindan, 2010: 214.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. Nityānanda Giri, 2013: 2-7.

lost.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, the system of Kriyāyoga was so secret that there is not even a myth to explain its origin. Furthermore, he describes that parts of the Kriyāyoga taught by him are contained in the texts of Haṭhayoga, such as *āsanas*, *mudrās* and *bandhas*, but that these are not “integrated together”. Furthermore, he speculates that Kriyāyoga must have been known in China, as he sees strong parallels to practices in *Tai Chi Chuan*. He clearly distances himself from the Kriyāyoga of the *Yogasūtra*, which has nothing to do with the Kriyāyoga of his book *A Systematic Course in the Ancient Tantric Techniques of Yoga and Kriya* and serves solely as a preparation for Rājayoga. However, the only definitive historical statement he can commit himself to is the following:

Of history, all we will say is that kriya yoga was passed on by Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh.

Surprisingly, this same Śivānanda of Rishikesh in his book *Tantra Yoga, Nada Yoga and Kriya Yoga* (1955) explicitly traces the Kriyāyoga he taught back to *Yogasūtra* 2.1. Śivānanda uses the Kriyāyoga of the *Yogasūtra* as the overarching framework of his teaching, which also integrates *satkarma* and breathing exercises from Haṭhayoga into it.<sup>71</sup>

It is important to emphasise that Satyānanda recognises that the traditional lineage of Yogānanda also practises the same Kriyāyoga he teaches. However, he explicitly distances himself from their narrative:

Of course, there are various other groups of people in India who have practiced and taught kriya yoga. For example, Swami Yogananda, Yukteswar Giri, Lahiri Mahasaya, Mahatma Gandhi and so forth practiced kriya yoga. In fact, a thriving organization still propagates it throughout the world. They also do now know the origin of kriya yoga, but they say that it was reintroduced by the great yogi Babaji as the ideal practice for sincere seekers of wisdom in the present Kali Yuga (Dark Age).<sup>72</sup>

This narrative is by far the most widespread explanation of the origins of the new Kriyāyoga and is adopted not only in the tradition of Yogānanda, but

<sup>70</sup>Satyānanda, 1981: 699.

<sup>71</sup>Cf. Sivananda, 1982: 168-182.

<sup>72</sup>Satyānanda, 1981: 699.

also in the tradition of Ramaiah. In his book *Babajī* (2010: 31-64), Govindan, a disciple of Ramaiah, has compiled this narrative in detail, which I would now like to summarise in a nutshell.

Mahāvātara Babajī, who according to Govindan is considered an incarnation of the Buddha, was born in 203 CE in Parangipetta in Tamil Nadu under the name Najaraj into a Brahmin family, joined a group of wandering Saṃnyāsins at a young age and studied the holy scriptures. His path soon led him to Śrī Laṅka in Katirkāma (now Kataragama), where he became a disciple of Siddha Boganathar and was initiated by him into various *kriyās* such as *dhyāna*, *āsana*, *mantra* and *bhaktiyoga*. Bhoganathar later sent Babajī to another teacher, namely Siddha Agastya in Courtallam in the Pothihai hills of Tamil Nadu, located in today's Tinneveley district. He learnt the particularly important *kriyā* called *kunḍalinīprāṇāyāma* from him. Agastya then sent Babajī to Badrinath in the Himalayas, where he practised for many months and finally attained *samādhi*. After his enlightenment and attaining immortality at the tender age of 16, Babajī set himself the task of helping suffering humanity in its search for God-realisation. As an immortal, Babajī initiated great personalities such as Śaṅkarācārya (788-820) and Kabīr (1440-1518) into the techniques of Kriyāyoga over the centuries. Finally, in 1861, he initiated Lahidi Mahāśaya (1828-1895) into Kriyāyoga and gave him the task of passing it on to serious seekers. At this point, Govindan quotes the autobiography of Yogānanda,<sup>73</sup> which states that Babajī explained to Lahidi Mahāśaya that Kṛṣṇa had once passed on Kriyāyoga to Arjuna and that not only Patañjali knew it, but also Jesus Christ, who in turn had passed it on to John, Paul and other disciples. Among Lahidi Mahāśaya's 100 disciples was Śrī Yuktesvar (1855-1936), to whom Babajī is also said to have appeared three times. On one of these occasions, Babajī decided that he should send his disciple Yogānanda (1893-1952) to America to spread Kriyāyoga, which he did, gaining global fame and founding the *Self Realisation Fellowship* in 1920, which is still very active today.

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<sup>73</sup>Cf. Yogānanda, 1949: 244.

### 2.3.6.3 The practice of the new Kriyāyoga

In the following, the practices of the new Kriyāyoga are presented in outline based on the publications mentioned and consulted above.<sup>74</sup> The words of Hariharananda (1989: 144) are surprisingly apt to give an essential first impression of this complex phenomenon:

Kriya Yoga is the essence and synthesis of all yoga techniques taught in the world.

Satyānanda (1981: 703) explains that each Kriyā consists of a certain number of subordinate techniques. These always consist of a combination of the following six tools: *āsana*, *mudrā*, *bandha*, *mantra*, *prāṇāyāma* and, as he calls it, “psychic passage awareness.” This last point includes a group of exercises mainly involving “circulating awareness through the *cakras* in an ascending and descending way” or similar. A single Kriyā is an exercise unit comprising individual exercises from the six categories mentioned. However, these are not arbitrary but are integrated into a specific, and, as the protagonists of this tradition say “scientific way” in order to induce the process of concentration (*dhāraṇa*), meditation (*dhyāna*) and meditative absorption (*samādhi*). The main distinguishing feature from other yoga systems is the innovative and specific combination of the individual techniques into a practical and particularly effective sequence of exercises, referred to here as “Kriyā”.

In every model the individual exercises are drawn from the vast body of yoga literature but primarily from the exercises taught in the medieval to pre-colonial texts of the Haṭha- and Rājayoga genres. This always takes place against the background of tantric and medieval concepts of the yogic body, such as *cakra*, *nāḍī* and *vāyu* systems. A common phenomenon in the new Kriyāyoga literature is scientific explanatory models that are used as a means of legitimisation. For example, certain *nāḍīs* are located in schematic sketches

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<sup>74</sup>A comprehensive presentation and comparative analysis of the practices in the various traditions of the new Kriyāyoga would be too far-reaching for this chapter. The most detailed written practice instructions that I have consulted can be found for the Śivānanda/Satyānanda model in Satyānanda, 1981: 697–952, and for the Yogānanda model in Nityānanda Giri, 2013: 249–340.

of the brain<sup>75</sup>, or positive effects of Kriyāyoga practice are legitimised with evolutionary biology theories, such as the polyvagal theory<sup>76</sup>

Govindan (2010: 216–225) distinguishes a total of seven main categories of Kriyāyoga. The first category he mentions is *Kriya Hatha Yoga*. According to him, this is the starting point for every student of Kriya Yoga. This includes eighteen basic relaxation postures (*āsanas*), muscle blocks (*bandhas*), certain gestures (*mudrās*) and the sun salutation (*sūryanamaskāra*) defined by Babajī.

The second main category is what Govindan calls *Kriya Kundalini Pranayama*. According to him, this practice is the art and science of mastering the breath and is considered to be the most essential and effective tool in Babajī's Kriyāyoga. This is not only meant to awaken the *kundalini* but with regular practice, the student awakens all *cakras* and the associated levels of consciousness, which is supposed to ultimately lead to the breathless state of *samādhi* and self-realisation.

The third main category is *Kriya Dhyana Yoga*, which is intended to include meditation techniques that are not explained in detail but are supposed to awaken the mind's hidden faculties.

The fourth main category is *Kriya Mantra Yoga*. This involves the recitation or murmuring (*japa*) of mantras discovered by the Siddhas. The recitation of mantras must take place with faith, love and concentration.

Govindan specifies the fifth category as *Kriya Bhakti Yoga*, the yoga of love and devotion. In Govindan's words, this is the “turbojet” of self-realisation. This type of Kriyāyoga includes devotional love, chanting, ritual worship and pilgrimages to holy places.

Furthermore, *Kriya Karma Yoga* is presented as the sixth category. In this case he refers to *Bhagavadgītā* (2.47 et seqq.) and thus defines this subtype as selfless service that is performed consciously. All actions are supposed to be performed without the expectation of receiving anything in return, free from anger, selfishness, greed and personal desires. Thus, the practitioner is meant to examine his motivation before every action and is always supposed to act without selfish motives.

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<sup>75</sup>Nityānanda Giri, 2013: 215.

<sup>76</sup>Lowenstein and Lett, 2021: 188.

The seventh and final category is *Kriya Tantra Yoga*. According to this, the followers of Kriyāyoga, just like the Siddhas, lead a family life. This subtype of Kriyāyoga involves retaining the energy normally wasted during sexual activity and transporting it to the higher *cakras*. The partner is supposed to be loved as an embodiment of the divine.

A similar system is taught by Lowenstein and Lett. This initially includes a total of twelve *āsanas* and the five Tibetans, as well as typical *prāṇāyāma* techniques, *ujjāyi*, *kapalabhāti*, various *bandha* techniques such as *uddiyānabandha* or *mahābandha*, various *mudrā* techniques such as *mahāmudrā*, *sāmbhavīmudrā*, *yonimudrā*, or the so-called *Kriya Breath*. *Kriya Breath* is referred to as *kevalakumbhaka*. In addition, classical gymnastic exercises are also added<sup>77</sup> In addition to the *āsanas* of Haṭhayoga, Lowenstein and Lett also recommends *Tai Chi*, *Qigong*, physiotherapy or a personal trainer to stay fit. Now and then, a biblical quotation is used. For example, in the case of the *Third Eye Gazing* practice, he quotes Matthew (6.22). Furthermore, Lowenstein and Lett emphasise the practice of *Hong Sau* as an important element of the practice. For Nityānanda Giri, *Hong Sau*, or in this case the indologically correct transliteration *hamṣa*, is also referred to by him as *Hamṣa Sādhana*,<sup>78</sup> “the very foundation” of Kriyāyoga.

As indicated at the beginning of this section, it is clear that the term Kriyāyoga has given rise to a proliferation of different yoga techniques from earlier yoga traditions, which are integrated into innovative exercise systems and attempted to be historically legitimised in different ways. Depending on the lineage and the teacher, individual characteristics and different explanatory models exist.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Lowenstein and Lett, 2021: 118–124. Gymnastic exercises can also be found in Sturgess, 2015: 447–458.

<sup>78</sup> The *ajapājapa*, recitation of the non-recitation of the *hamṣa* mantra.

<sup>79</sup> In these books, one repeatedly comes across pseudo-scientific explanatory models and stumbles across parallels drawn here and there to other religions, such as Christianity, Buddhism, or esoteric traditions to emphasise the effectiveness and importance of certain practices and views. Particularly in the more recent publications, it can be seen that, depending on the author, typically individual expressions of the ideal type of postmodern spirituality and religiosity are expressed, which Bochinger, Engelbrecht, and Gebhardt have labelled “spiritueller Wanderer”, cf. Bochinger, Engelbrecht, and Gebhardt, 2009: 33–49.

One last exemplary publication is *The Kriya Yoga Upanishad and the Mystical Upanishads* (1993) by Kriyananda. This book offers translations of ten well-known *Yoga Upaniṣads* and one *Kriya Yoga Upanishad*. The translator claims that the name of the author of this Sanskrit Yoga Upaniṣad was lost in the course of history. His book has no bibliography, nor are the sources of the translations mentioned. Further searches for a verifiable source text of the *Kriya Yoga Upanishad* remain unsuccessful. The *Kriya Yoga Upanishad* is neither to be found in the known publications and translations of the *Yoga Upaniṣads*,<sup>80</sup> nor in publications of previously unpublished *Upaniṣads*.<sup>81</sup> Searching through various catalogues of Sanskrit manuscripts was also unsuccessful.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, it is striking that the *Kriya Yoga Upanishad* is not mentioned in any other publications on Kriyāyoga consulted. For the time being, therefore, the possibility must be considered that Kriyananda is not only the translator of the *Kriya Yoga Upanishad* but also the secret author. Perhaps he wrote this supposedly ancient source text in order to legitimise his own Kriyāyoga doctrine.

Goswami Kriyananda learnt Kriyāyoga from his teacher Shelly Trimmer, who, according to the official website of the *Temple of Kriya Yoga*<sup>83</sup> founded by Kriyananda, was a guru, yogi, kabbalist and direct disciple of Yogānanda. Kriyananda studied philosophy for four years at the University of Illinois and then embarked on a business career. Whether Kriyananda would have acquired the qualifications to translate a Sanskrit source text remains to be seen. Possibly, he was a gifted autodidact.

In the *Kriya Yoga Upanishad*, the disciple Sanskriti asks the guru Dattatreya to teach him the doctrine of Kriyāyoga. The latter agrees and explains Kriyāyoga in a total of ten chapters. The framework is formed by the eight-

<sup>80</sup> See *Yoga Upaniṣads* (1938).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. (1938).

<sup>82</sup> In *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts (Updated)* (2005: 50), two manuscripts with the title *Kriyāyoga* (AGJ 665/1 and TSM 6716) are listed, which, unfortunately, I was unable to consult. Neither manuscript is dated. AGJ 665/1 (Ganganath Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapitha, Allahabad) is a Devanāgarī manuscript on paper, and TSM 6716 (Sanskrit MSS. at the Tanjore Palace) is a Telugu manuscript on palm leaf. The author of the latter is named Venkaṭayogin. I suspect these manuscripts are probably later works that were created in the 18th century at the earliest. For now, however, no definitive statement can be made on this. However, their consultation could shed further light on the historical development of Kriyāyoga.

<sup>83</sup> *Biography of Goswami Kriyananda. Temple of Kriya Yoga Website.* <https://web.archive.org/web/20240319134009/https://templeofkriyayoga.org/goswami-kriyananda/>. Website saved with the Way Back Machine of archive.org on 19.03.2024. Temple of Kriyayoga.

limbed yoga system presented in 1.5, similar to the eight limbs of the Pātañjala scheme. The first chapter (1.6-25) presents the *Ten Spiritual Restraints*. Dattatreya explains the *Ten Spiritual Observances* in the second chapter (2.1-16). Chapter three, *The Nine Postures* (3.1-13), deals with nine āsanas with six sitting postures, one standing posture and one complex posture. The fourth chapter (4.1-63) discusses what Kriyananda calls *Mystical Anatomy*. Here, six *cakras* named after the planets (i.e. the *mūlādhāracakra* is called the “Saturn mass-energy converter *cakra*”), fourteen primary *nādīs* and *Kriya Kundalini*, which covers the ‘divine creative channel’ with its mouth, are taught. The fifth chapter (5.1-14) is entitled *Inner Purification* and contains *prāṇāyāma* techniques such as *sūryabhedana* and *candrabhedana*. Chapter six (6.1-39), entitled *Breath Control*, instructs another breathing exercise in combination with meditation on the three *akṣaras* that constitute the sacred syllable *aum*. During the inhalation (*pūraka*), the yogi is supposed to meditate on *a*, during the breath retention on *u* and during the exhalation on *m*. In addition, the breathing technique *sītālī* (6.25) and a technique called *yonimudrā* (6.33-34) are presented. Chapter seven (7.1-10) is about *Withdrawal of the Senses*. The practitioner is instructed to let the breath move through the body in a specific order. The eighth chapter (8.1-9) is entitled *Concentration*. Here, the yogin is meant to inhale and hold the breath at specific bodily locations (not the *cakras*), which are associated with the five elements and the syllables *ya*, *ra*, *va*, *la* and *ha*, as well as specific deities. The even shorter ninth chapter, *Meditation* (9.1-6), basically only states that the practice of concentration leads to meditation after a while. The tenth chapter, *Samadhi* (10.1-12), then describes the final state of yoga, which is defined as the “deep conscious trance in which the yogi experiences Absolute Wisdom”.

#### **2.3.6.4 Hypothesis on the transition from the late medieval models to the modern models of Kriyāyoga**

The *Yogasvarodaya* and Rāmacandra’s *Yogatattvabindu* were written before 1659 CE. Nārāyaṇatīrtha must have lived between 1600 and 1690 CE., and because of that, his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* was also written in this timeframe. Sant Sundardās, the author of the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* lived from 1596 to 1689.

Interestingly, Nārāyaṇatīrtha and Sundardās lived in Benares.<sup>84</sup> Thus, we can safely assume that the complex taxonomies of twelve-fifteen yogas were part of the local discourse of 17th-century Benares. One might speculate that Rāmacandra might also have lived in these surroundings, but this remains uncertain. Lahiḍī Mahāśaya, the person to whom the new forms of Kriyāyoga seem to go back, lived more than a century later, from 1828 to 1895 CE. Interestingly, Lahiḍī Mahāśaya is also said to have spent much of his life in Benares. It is, of course, utterly unclear whether Lahiḍī Mahāśaya ever read any of the works mentioned above. At least we know that he not only enjoyed an education in philosophy in Benares but also learnt English and Sanskrit.<sup>85</sup> However, it is likely that the local discourse regarding the religious-spiritual marketplace within Benares did not change abruptly. Lahiḍī Mahāśaya lived as a family man and householder,<sup>86</sup> no sectarian affiliations are known so that the whole variety of religious-spiritual market of his time were open to him. He was able to combine them freely. As can be seen from the yoga texts examined in this book, there was no lack of different yoga categories in Benares between the 17th and 19th centuries CE. Although these were still labelled differently, they were without a doubt freely combined in practice by everyone. Moreover, given the plethora of yoga practices from different yoga traditions and yoga texts presented in the previous chapter and evident in the publications of the new Kriyāyoga consulted, it is not only credible but also plausible that this phenomenon already began with Lahiḍī Mahāśaya, as Yogānanda claims in his autobiography. However, why Lahiḍī Mahāśaya chose the category of Kriyāyoga as the generic term for his yoga system cannot be answered conclusively. However, I would like to offer an educated guess.

I hypothesize that the term Kriyāyoga, as the generic term for his system of yoga, was a strategic decision of Lahiḍī Mahāśaya. It is unlikely, and there is no clear evidence that Lahiḍī Mahāśaya knew the *Yogasvarodaya*, *Yogatattvabindu* or *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. It is impossible to determine if there ever was any influence of these texts on Lahiḍī Mahāśaya and his new Kriyāyoga system. But if there was, only the fact that all three texts that mention Kriyāyoga as the

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<sup>84</sup> See Burger, 2014: 684 for dating and location of Sundardās and Penna, 2004: 24 for dating and location of Nārāyaṇatīrtha.

<sup>85</sup> Jones and Ryan, 2008: 255–256.

<sup>86</sup> See Yogānanda, 1946: ch. 34,35.

very first item in their taxonomies could have influenced his decision to unite all possible yogas and their techniques under the term Kriyāyoga. Another factor could have been that he was consciously or unconsciously driven by the emerging *Yogasūtra* hype in the West, which triggered a wave of enthusiasm in India. One wonders why he did not choose the term Rājayoga to integrate many systems as others have done before him. Maybe because the term Rājayoga was already used as a generic term for Pātañjalayoga by then.<sup>87</sup> In comparison to all other known terms for categories of yoga,<sup>88</sup> the term Kriyāyoga had the advantage that it not only formed a link to the popular and hyped *Yogasūtra*, but also provided a basic framework that was open to interpretation due to the three constitutional practices *tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *īśvarapraṇidhāna*. Thus, the term opened up the possibility to integrate the variety of post-Pātañjalean physical and non-physical yoga practices from the Tantras and texts of Hatha- and Rājayoga through a literal interpretation of the compound prefix *kriyā*<sup>o</sup> in the sense of “action”. This was likely the crucial aspect. As Birch (2020: 471-472) demonstrated in his groundbreaking article “*Hathayoga’s Floruit on the Eve of Colonialism*”, the popularity of medieval Hatha yoga practices reached an unprecedented peak across India during this period. What could be more logical than reducing the complex diversity of circulating yogas to a simple, practice-oriented umbrella term? This apparently aligned with the *Zeitgeist*. The formation of a new Hindu identity, which began in the 16th century, also culminated during the lifetime of Lahidi Mahāśaya. Therefore, it is not surprising that in creating his Kriyāyoga, he operated in line with the “*identifikatorischer Habitus*” that Axel Michaels (1998: 19-27) described as a characteristic mode of thinking in Hindu religion and Paul Hacker’s (1979) concept of “Inklusivismus”.<sup>89</sup> Whether his thoughts consciously or unconsciously went in a similar direction must of course remain open. However, we

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<sup>87</sup> See Birch, 2014.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. p. 209 for a list of the twenty-three early modern categories of yoga.

<sup>89</sup> “Inklusivismus” refers to the inclination of a religion or religious tradition to integrate other religious doctrines and practices into its own system and to view them as partial aspects of its own truth. The idea is not to see other religions as fundamentally false or opposing, but to integrate them into one’s own worldview and recognise them as partially true. In the context of Hinduism, “Inklusivismus” means that different religious concepts, deities and rituals of other traditions are regarded as acceptable and valid expressions of one’s own beliefs. This stance allows a variety of beliefs and practices to be harmonised and seen as complementary paths to the same ultimate truth.

must assume that the discursive environment of Benares at his time certainly played its part in encouraging Lahidi Mahāśaya to integrate the various yogas and basically all yoga practices circulating in the local discourse of his time under this specific term.

## 2.4 Jñānayoga

Jñānāyoga,<sup>90</sup> the “Yoga of gnosis”, is the second method of Rājayoga in Rāmacandra’s list of the fifteen yogas as well as in his source text, the *Yogasvarodaya*. In Nārāyanatīrtha’s list of the fifteen yogas presented within the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Jñānayoga takes sixth place. In the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* Sundardās presents Jñānayoga as a form of Sāṃkhyayoga. It is the second among the four types of Sāṃkhyayoga together with Brahmayoga and Advaitayoga.

### 2.4.1 Jñānayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

Jñānayoga occupies the second place in Rāmacandra’s taxonomy of the fifteen yogas but is not described according to this order in his text.<sup>91</sup> The description is given from section XXI-XXII. The overarching goal of Rāmacandra’s Jñānayoga is the long-term durability of the body (*bahutarakālaṁ śarirasthitih*) already mentioned in the introduction (section I), which is expressed here once again with other words: “From the execution of this [Jñānayoga], time does not bring about the destruction of the body.” (*tasya kāraṇāt kālaḥ śariranāśam na karoti*). Simultaneously, Rāmacandra’s Jñānayoga leads to the attainment of the “reality of Śambhu” (*śāṃbhavīsattā*).<sup>92</sup> This Jñānayoga can be practised in two ways. The first method (XXI.1) arises through the application of “non-dualistic thinking” (*avikalpatayā yuktyā*), and the second method (XXI.2) arises “through the realisation that the entire world consists of all knowledge” (...*sarvajñānamayaṁ jagat | ya evam vetti bodhena ...*). However, the

<sup>90</sup> See section XXI and XXII on p.??-??

<sup>91</sup> The description of Jñānayoga is preceded by Siddhakundaliniyoga and Mantrayoga (III-XII), Lakṣayoga (XIII-XV), Rājayoga (XVI-XVII), Caryāyoga (XVIII) and Hathayoga (XIX-XX).

<sup>92</sup> This refers to the highest reality and the state of Rājayoga. See p.?? in the edition for a discussion of the term.

text primarily deals with the first method. This method consists of viewing the world as a unity that is enlightened by the highest self (*viśvātman*). If one perceives this unity, one finds oneself in the “reality of Śambhu”. However, this supreme reality cannot be recognised without further ado since it does not show itself as the desired unity but as a tenfold multiplicity (XXI.4ab). He compares this relationship to a seed from which a whole tree with its parts grows (XXI.4-XXI.5). The seed stands for the invisible unity of world and self. The tree, with its various parts, stands for the multiplicity of the visible world. The fundamental unity of the world is like the seed from which a whole tree has grown. It is no longer visible and is not perceived. However, what is perceived is a world consisting of a multiplicity. In the case of the seed, a tree with its branches, leaves, etc. In the case of the world ten basic principles (*tattvas*): Five [gross] elements (*pañcatattva*), thinking mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), illusion (*māya*), individuation (*ahamkāra*), and modifications (*vikriyā*).<sup>93</sup> Jñānayoga is supposed to produce the realisation of oneness (XXI.7). In order to realise this, the practitioner is supposed to apply the view of unity (*aikyena darśanam*) to recognise the identity between the visible world of multiplicity<sup>94</sup>, and the invisible self (*viśvātma*). Through Jñānayoga, the practitioner then realises that the self is one with the world<sup>95</sup> and the changing forms of the worlds material appearance are empty.<sup>96</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Jñānayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya*

If we assume a correct transmission of the *Yogasvarodaya* in the *Prāṇatosiṇī*, then the text, in fact, describes two different types of Jñānayoga.

The Jñānayoga of the first passage<sup>97</sup> contains a description of the major components of the yogic body which the yogin is supposed to know. Gaining knowledge about the body is the aim of this Jñānayoga.<sup>98</sup> In particular, the

<sup>93</sup>For a discussion of the tenfold *tattva* system, see n. ?? on p. ??

<sup>94</sup>This is also referred to by Rāmacandra as *samsāra* (XXI ll. 7-9).

<sup>95</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XXII ?? l. 5: ‘Because of the power of Jñānayoga, there arises the conviction that the self is truly one (*jñānayogaprabhāvād eka eva ātmā iti niścayo bhavati*)’

<sup>96</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XXII p.?? l.3: ‘Through Jñānayoga he realises the emptiness of the mutability of form.’ (*jñānayogād vikārarūparahito jñāyate* |)

<sup>97</sup>Cf. *Prāṇatosiṇī*, Ed. p. 831-833.

<sup>98</sup>Cf. *Prāṇatosiṇī* Ed. p. 831 (*jñānayogam pravakṣyāmi tajjñānī śivatām vrajet | pathanāt smaranād vyānān maṇḍanāt brahmaśādhakah*) | *tadbhedasyaikasandhānam aṣṭaiśvaryamayo bhavet | tritīrthaṁ yatra*

knowledge of the three primary channels (*nādīs*)<sup>99</sup>, as well as a system with a total of nine *cakras* is mandatory. These elements are described in detail. The introduction to this first form of Jñānayoga mentions other things the yogin should know, such as the three targets [for fixing the mind] (*laksyas*),<sup>100</sup> sixteen containers [for holding mind and often breath in the context of this type of yogic practice] (*ādhāras*) and the five [meditative] spaces (*vyomans*) through which the yogin progresses on the path to the highest state of yoga.

This first form of Jñānayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya*, like much of its content and its overall structure, is adopted by Rāmacandra in his *Yogatattvabindu*. Surprisingly, he presents the first form of Jñānayoga under a different name for unknown reasons.<sup>101</sup> Instead of Jñānayoga, Rāmacandra calls it Siddhakundaliniyoga and Mantrayoga. It is unclear why Rāmacandra made this change. Perhaps Rāmacandra did not want to teach two different forms of Jñānayoga, or he was convinced that Siddhakundaliniyoga and Mantrayoga were the more appropriate terms for this type of yoga. There is also the possibility that Rāmacandra knew Nārāyaṇatirtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, because he classifies Jñānayoga as a form of Mantrayoga, as will be shown in the next subsection. However, apart from similarities between the complex yoga taxonomies, there are no other noticeable overlaps or even citations. A detailed discussion of Siddhakundaliniyoga and Mantrayoga in Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu* can be found on p.165.

The second type of Jñānayoga of the *Yogasvarodaya*<sup>102</sup> is largely identical with Rāmacandra's Jñānayoga. Rāmacandra borrows most of the verses verbatim from the *Yogasvarodaya*. There are minor details that Rāmcandra modifies, but they do not change the overall concept and aim of this type Jñānayoga. For this reason, it will not be repeated here. The passage is reproduced in its

*nādī ca tripunyam paramesvari | svadehe yo na jānāti sa yogī nāmadhārakah | navacakram kalādhāram trilakṣam vyomapañcakam | svadehe yo na jānāti sa yogī nāmadhārakah).*

<sup>99</sup>The left lunar channel (*idā*), the right solar channel (*piṅgalā*) and the central channel (*susūmna*).

<sup>100</sup>In the sections on Lakṣayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* five targets (*laksyas*) are described in total. This is one of many inconsistencies in the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Yogatattvabindu*.

<sup>101</sup>Perhaps, the designation *jñānayoga* in this context is a result of textual corruption, as the second Jñānayoga presented later on in the text lives up to its name much better. However, without further textual evidence, this remains unproven.

<sup>102</sup>*Prāṇatosiṇī*, Ed. p. 835-837.

entirety in the first layer of the critical apparatus in section XXI on p. ?? of the critical edition of the *Yogatattvabindu* and can be consulted there.

### 2.4.3 Jñānayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates his Jñānayoga<sup>103</sup> in the context of *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*'s *sūtra* I.28, which says:

*taj japas tadarthabhāvanam* || 28 ||

It's low-voice muttering; contemplation of its meaning.

This is the last *sūtra* of an extensive section (I.23 - I.28) in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*<sup>104</sup>, which is entirely dedicated to one of the means of attaining *saṃādhi*, namely *iśvarapraṇidhāna*, devotion to Īśvara, the Supreme Lord.

Īśvara is most aptly represented by the sacred syllable *oṃ*. The above *sūtra* instructs the quiet murmuring of this syllable while contemplating its meaning (*tadarthabhāvanam*) as a practical method of *iśvarapraṇidhāna* to attain the highest state of yoga, which is called Rājayoga or *asamprajñatasamādhi*.

In this context, Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains that in this *sūtra*, the term *japa* ("low-voice muttering") refers to the practice of Mantrayoga. The term *arthabhāvana* ("contemplating its meaning") refers to Jñānayoga as a form of practice that cultivates discriminating knowledge (see previous paragraph). Furthermore, Nārāyaṇatīrtha refers to Advaitayoga, also associated with this *sūtra*, which is a form of yoga characterised by the view of the non-differentiation of the individual self and the supreme self. The *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 46) reads:

*kiñca japa ity anena mantrayogaḥ arthabhāvanam ity anena vivekajñānā  
'bhyaśarūpo jñānayogaḥ abhedabhāvarūpo 'dvaitayogaś ca saṃgrhitāḥ |*

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<sup>103</sup>For an earlier brief discussion of Jñānayoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *yogacandrika* see Penna, 2004: 76.

<sup>104</sup>An entire monograph entitled *God, Reason, and Yoga: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Commentary Ascribed to Śankara on Pātañjalayogaśāstra I.23—28* is dedicated to this section by Harimoto (2014). It provides an edition, translation and detailed discussion of this critical passage in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstravivaraṇa*.

Furthermore, by the term *japa*, the practice of Mantrayoga is indicated; by *arthabhavana*, the knowledge of discrimination, the form of practice [called] Jñānayoga, and Advaitayoga is the form of cultivating non-differentiation.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha, thus, offers two alternatives about the specific performance of the contemplation. Either, while quietly murmuring the *praṇava* syllable, which symbolises Īśvara and his qualities, the mind shall be focused on the distinction between consciousness (*puruṣa*) and primordial nature (*prakṛti*) including its effects (*tatkārya*).<sup>105</sup> This is Nārāyaṇatīrtha's Jñānayoga. Alternatively, one is supposed to reflect on the non-difference between the highest self (*paramātman*) and the individual self (*jīva*).<sup>106</sup> This is Nārāyaṇatīrtha's Advaitayoga.

#### 2.4.4 Jñānayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

The Jñānayoga of Dādūpanthī Sundardās (*Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 4.13-24) is strikingly similar to the Jñānayoga of Rāmacandras *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya*. Jñānayoga is the first subcategory of Sāṃkhyayoga.<sup>107</sup> Brahmayoga<sup>108</sup> and Advaitayoga<sup>109</sup> follow it. While Sundardās introduces Sāṃkhyayoga to teach how to distinguish the self (*ātman*) from the not-self (*anātman*) by differentiating twenty-four *tattvas* of the world, Jñānayoga goes one step further and conveys the gnosis (*jñāna*) that the world and the self nevertheless form an inseparable unity. As a result of this gnosis, Brahmayoga arises. Brahmayoga is a specific form of contemplation or state in which the yogin experiences himself as one with the Absolute and the entire universe

<sup>105</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 45): *tasya praṇavasya japaḥ vidhivad uccāraṇam, tadarhasya praṇavārthasya acintyaīśvaryāśaktiyuktasya paramātmano bhāvanam prakṛtitatkāryapuruṣebhyo vivekenānusamdhānam ...* “The low-voice muttering of *praṇava* [and] pronunciation according to the rules [along with] the contemplation of the meaning of that *praṇava*, [being associated with] the Supreme Self endowed with inconceivable power and supremacy, is the fixation of the attention with discernment from the individual self and nature with its effects.”

<sup>106</sup>Ibid. (Ed. p. 45): *athavā tadarhasya paramātmanah pūrṇasya bhāvanam jīvābhedenā punah punaś cetasi niveśanam* | “Alternatively, its meaning is the repeated memorization in the mind of the non-distinction between the individual self and the total supreme self.”

<sup>107</sup>Sundardās Sāṃkhyayoga is discussed on p.203.

<sup>108</sup>Sundardās Brahmayoga is discussed on p.159.

<sup>109</sup>Sundardās Advaitayoga is discussed on p.162.

within himself. Finally, this sequence culminates in Advaitayoga, by which the practitioner finally overcomes the state of duality and conceptualisation. Jñānayoga is the second step of the four-stage Sāṃkhyayoga.

This Jñānayoga emphasizes the recognition of the unity of the self and the universe.<sup>110</sup> According to Sundardās, the self is the cause, and the whole universe is the effect.<sup>111</sup> To illustrate the relationship of cause and effect between self and universe, Sundardās presents the same metaphor of the seed and the tree as Rāmacandra in XXI.4-5.<sup>112</sup> The rest of the section consists of different comparisons, which are supposed to illustrate the non-difference between the self and the whole or the universe.<sup>113</sup>

#### 2.4.5 Jñānayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Jñānayoga within the intricate and multifaceted texts of the early modern yoga taxonomies unveils four distinct models.

The most pervasive model is the application of non-dualistic thinking, a profound concept that allows one to perceive the unity of the self and the world. This model, with a few nuanced variations, can be found in the *Yogatattvabindu*, the *Yogasvarodaya*, and the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*. The most notable difference is that the former two texts classify Jñānayoga as a method of Rājayoga, whereas the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* categorises Jñānayoga as a subtype of Sāṃkhyayoga. The model of Jñānayoga presented by Nārāyaṇatīrtha in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is in stark contrast to the dominant model. Jñānayoga here is a form of Mantrayoga. During *prāṇavajapa*, the yogin should contemplate the distinction between consciousness or self (*puruṣa*) and the primordial nature (*prakṛti* and its effects (*tatkārya*).

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<sup>110</sup> See Burger (2014: 702) for an earlier brief discussion of Sundardās's Jñānayoga in French.

<sup>111</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 4.13: *jñāna yoga aba esaiṁ jānaiṁ | kāraṇa aru kāraya pahicānaiṁ | kāraṇa ātama āhi akhāṇḍā | kāraya bhayaū sakala brahmaṇḍā || 13 ||* "Now understand Jñānayoga. Recognize the cause and effect. The cause is the indivisible soul. The effect is the whole universe."

<sup>112</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 4.14: *jyaum amkuru tem taru vistārā | bahuta bhāmti kari nikasi dārā | śāśā patra aura pharaphulā | yaum ātamā viśva kau mūlā || 14 ||* "Just as the tree [grows] out of the seed, bringing forth countless branches, leaves, fruits and flowers, in the same way the self is the root of the universe."

<sup>113</sup> For example *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 4.20: *jyaum̄ kuñcana ke bhūsana nānā | bhinna bhinna kari nāmva baṣaṇā | gāre sarba eka hi huvā | yaiṁ ātamā biśva nahim juvā || 20 ||* "Just like various ornaments made of gold, are worn with different names and forms. However, in essence, all become one in the melting pot. In the same way, the self is not separate from the universe."

The *Yogatattvabindu* suggests an alternative model, which is not described further and involves contemplation aimed at realising that the world consists of all knowledge. The *Yogasvarodaya* describes a further type of Jñānayoga. This consists of acquiring knowledge about the yogic body and the yogic paradigms (*lakṣyas*, *cakras* and *vyomas*). Both methods are also subspecies of Rājayoga.

## 2.5 Caryāyoga

Caryāyoga, “the Yoga of conduct” occupies third place in Rāmacandra’s list of the methods of Rājayoga. However, it is absent in the *Yogasvarodaya*, mentioned as the second method in Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s fifteen yogas. It is absent in Sundardās *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*. However, Sundardās describes a yoga with the almost homophonic name Carcāyoga. Carcāyoga is considered the fourth and final method of Bhaktiyoga after Mantrayoga and Layayoga.

### 2.5.1 Caryāyoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

Rāmacandra keeps the section on Caryāyoga (section XVIII) extremely short, with only eight prose sentences. After characterising the self as ‘formless, permanent, immovable and indivisible’, Rāmacandra lets the reader know that by stabilising the mind in such a self, the self does not come into contact with sin and merit. When the mind is absorbed into the formless [self], this is Cāryayoga. That is all that Rāmacandra has to say on this subject. The brevity of the passage and the fact that the testimony of the *Yogasvarodaya* does not contain this type of yoga, but Rāmacandra clearly constructs its description on the basis of a passage on Rājayoga of the *Yogasvarodaya*,<sup>114</sup> suggests that Rāmacandra did not understand Caryāyoga and merely wanted to do justice to his taxonomy mentioned at the beginning of his text.<sup>115</sup> It is puzzling why this particular yoga with this particular description bears the name Caryāyoga. The apparent association of the first four yogas in Rāmacandra’s and *Yogasvarodaya*’s list with the four *pādas* of the Śaiva Āgamas (*kriyā-*, *jñāna-*, *caryā-*

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<sup>114</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XVIII, p. ??

<sup>115</sup>One could argue that Rāmacandra may not have done so, since not all fifteen yogas announced at the beginning are described in the course of his text anyway. I suspect that this may nevertheless have been his original intention but that Rāmacandra discarded this intention while writing his text, perhaps due to inconsistencies in his source text

and *yogapāda*) does not offer a convincing solution in this case, as *caryā*<sup>o</sup> in this context has nothing to do with the original ritual discipline or day-to-day conduct of the śaivite practices, as would be the case in the *caryāpada* of a Śaiva Āgamas. It seems, therefore, unlikely that any yoga practitioners back then practised a Caryāyoga according to Rāmacandra's concept.

### 2.5.2 Caryāyoga in the *Yogasvarodaya*

The term Caryāyoga does not appear in the sources of the *Yogasvarodaya*, namely the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* and *Yogakarṇikā*. Thus, the term is absent from its yoga taxonomy<sup>116</sup> Although the verses postulate a total of fifteen yogas, only eight are mentioned. Whether Caryāyoga is one of the seven unnamed ones is unclear. However, its presence in the taxonomies of the *Yogatattvabindu*<sup>117</sup> and the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*<sup>118</sup> would support this. For this reason, Caryāyoga was possibly a member of the *Yogasvarodaya*'s fifteen-fold yoga taxonomy. The original appearance and structure of the *Yogasvarodaya* remains conjectural. While it almost appears that the entirety of the *Yogasvarodaya* has been preserved in the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*, the *Yogakarṇikā* includes several verses attributed to the *Yogasvarodaya* not found in the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*.<sup>119</sup> Hence, it is plausible that the text was more extensive and may have included a transmission of Caryāyoga.

The *Yogakarṇikā* provides detailed descriptions of daily ritual conduct for the yoga practitioner under the heading *dinacaryā* ("daily [ritual] conduct") in verses 1.23–61. It is notable that for a significant portion of the first chapter (1.1–168), the source(s) of the verses are not indicated, which is surprising given that the remainder of the first chapter and all other chapters of the text primarily consist of compilations of verses from other texts on typical yogic topics quoted with reference. Thus, throughout the *Yogakarṇikā*, larger sections of the *Yogasvarodaya* are repeatedly but not always quoted with reference. Is it

<sup>116</sup> *Prāṇatoṣīṇī* Ed. p. 831.

<sup>117</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* I. ll. 1–4.

<sup>118</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* Ed. p. 2.

<sup>119</sup> It is striking that Rāmacandra's prosaisation is based almost exclusively on the verses of the *Yogasvarodaya* quoted by the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*. Is it possible that this was the very recension that Rāmacandra used for his *Yogatattvabindu*? Or, was he even the creator of this very recension found in the *Prāṇatoṣīṇī*?

possible that Nāth Aghorānanda, the compiler of the *Yogakarṇikā*, also drew on verses from the *Yogasvarodaya* here?

In the second part of the first chapter of the *Yogakarṇikā* (verses 1.169–280), 37 verses (1.244–280) are quoted from the *Yogasvarodaya* with reference, along-side at least four verses (1.210–213) of the *Yogasvarodaya* without reference.<sup>120</sup>

The possibility of further verses from the *Yogasvarodaya* within the first 168 verses of the *Yogakarṇikā* cannot be definitively addressed without a close examination of manuscripts of the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogakarṇikā*. However, it remains one of the most plausible scenarios that the original *Caryāyoga* within the taxonomy of the fifteen yogas of the *Yogasvarodaya* resembles the content of the *dinacaryā* section of the *Yogakarṇikā*. This section delineates daily ritual ablutions, mantra recitation, visualisation, and meditation (1.23–36), as well as other ritual acts such as dressing, applying sectarian markings (*tilaka*), including tying the hair into a knot (1.38), offerings, and the devotional performance of prostrations in front of one's own *iṣṭadevatā* (1.39–61). As they are part of the daily yoga practices, presenting them as a yogic discipline would seem natural.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>The verses lacking attribution were identified as originating from the *Yogasvarodaya* due to their presence in the *Prāṇatosñī*.

<sup>121</sup>As discussed in more detail on p. 145 the *Śivayogapradipikā* contains numerous similarities in content with the *Yogatattvabindu*, the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. With ten yogas described in total, the *Śivayogapradipikā* even comes very close to the numbers of yogas within the late medieval yoga taxonomies. These parallels strongly suggest a close connection in terms of reception history. There may not be a direct connection, but all these texts likely drew on the same intertextual network when compiling their own texts. In his dissertation on the *Śivayogapradipikā*, Powell (2023: 115) presents excerpts from a translation of a Kannada commentary on the *Śivayogapradipikā* (*tike*) by the commentator Basavārādhya. Basavārādhya precedes his commentary with the following praise of the author of the *Śivayogapradipikā*:

"The ācārya called Cennasadāśivayoginsadāśivayogiśvara, who was skilled in the *jñāna*, *kriyā*, *caryā* and *yoga*[*pādā*] of the Śivāgamas, which are the means of personal liberation, who had the intellect capable of grasping the Veda and Vedānta, who was not caught up in the confusion of the many Śāstras such as the Sāṅkhya and Pātañjala, who was accomplished in the eternal true yoga, who could visualise the many worlds such as *bindu* and *nāda* in the middle of his body (*piṇḍa*), who was an expert in *mantra*, whose mind was absorbed in *laya*, who was devoted to *hatha*, who was worthy of worship in Rājayoga, who was an expert practitioner and who was knowledgeable in many branches of learning such as Tāraka and the teachings on Brahman (*brahmopadeśa*), engaging in creating the Yogaśāstra called the *Śivayogapradipikā* in order to illuminate the inner soul of those desirous of liberation."

### 2.5.3 Caryāyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

In his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*<sup>122</sup> Nārāyaṇatīrtha presents Caryāyoga<sup>123</sup> in the context of *Yogasūtra* I.33 (*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ed. p. 52):

tasya cittasyāsūyādimalavato yogāsambhavāt tannirāsopāyam caryāyo-  
gam āha-  
maitrīkaruṇāmuditopeksāñām sukhaduḥkhapuṇyāpuṇyavisiṣayāñām bhā-  
vanātāś cittaprasādanam || 33 ||

Due to impurities of the mind like jealousy, etc., preventing the attainment of yoga, the method of removing them is Caryāyoga - Purity of the mind arises through the cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy and equanimity in circumstances of happiness, suffering, virtue and vice.

Caryāyoga is to cultivate kindness towards those in fortunate circumstances to prevent jealousy. Towards those who are in sorrowful circumstances, compassion is supposed to be cultivated to prevent ill-will. Towards those who act virtuously, one is supposed to cultivate joy to prevent aversion; and towards those who act unvirtuously, one is supposed to cultivate equanimity to prevent anger.<sup>124</sup>

With this practice of Caryāyoga, which gradually purifies the mind, the sattvic nature of the mind is brought forth. This leads to a clear and serene mind.<sup>125</sup>

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This eulogy not only suggests the great variety of different yoga teachings of the *Śivayogapradipikā*, it also confirms that authors like Cennasadaśivayogin were familiar with the Śaiva Āgamas in this intertextual network, which also influenced the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*. On the one hand, this confirms my assumption that the first three yogas in the taxonomy of the fifteen must have been derived from *pādas* of the Śaiva Āgamas, and on the other hand, that the original Caryāyoga was most likely a name for a yoga that included day-to-day ritual conduct.

<sup>122</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ed. pp. 2, 52-53, 100-101, 150.

<sup>123</sup> For an earlier brief discussion of Caryāyoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *yogacandrika* see Penna, 2004: 66-67.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 52): *tathā ca sukhitēṣu maitrīṁ sauḥārdam īṛṣyākāluṣyani-  
varttakam, duḥkhiṣu karuṇāṁ dayāmasūyākāluṣyaniवर्त्तिकाम्, punyavṛttiṣu harṣam dveṣanivarttakam,  
apuṇyāśabdītāpāpiṣu upekṣām amarṣākāluṣyaniवर्त्तिकाम् bhāvayet |*

<sup>125</sup> Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. pp. 52-53): *tad evām caryāyogena cittamalanirāsakena mukhyādiṣu  
yathākramamānuktabhāvanārūpena sāttviko dharmo jāyate | tena ca śuklenā dharmeṇā cittam prasannam  
bhavati | prasāde ca sthitipadam labhate | etac ca puṣkalaṁ viraktasyaiva sambhavatiti mukhyacaryāyogo  
vairāgyameveti saṃkṣepaḥ || 33 ||*

Since the word *caryā*<sup>o</sup> in this context refers to purposeful behaviour designed to give rise to the sattvic nature of the mind, the Caryāyoga of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* can be meaningfully translated as “Yoga of [beneficial] behaviour”.

#### 2.5.4 Carcāyoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

Within *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* (2.40–51), Sundardās describes Cārcāyoga as one of the three subtypes of Bhaktiyoga which is *bhakti* towards unmanifest consciousness (*avyakta puruṣa*) in delightful devotion.<sup>126</sup> He extensively describes the unmanifest consciousness (*avyakta puruṣa*) as being formless and eternal and so on (40), as beginningless and endless, and so on (41). Next, Sundardās describes the various layers of creation emanating from *om* (42–45). He says the unmanifest consciousness illuminates every corner of existence (46), being the inner knower of all (47). Then, Sundardās expresses the importance of deep awe towards the infinite, divine, all-knowing and incomprehensible (48–49) unmanifest consciousness.

The entire passage on Carcāyoga is characterised by a discussion and description of the unmanifest consciousness (*avyakta puruṣa*). This aspect is the core of this type of yoga. Unlimited unmanifested consciousness can be put into limiting words only, and yet the practitioner is confronted with the question of how it is supposed to be defined and determined.<sup>127</sup> And this is precisely the practice of Carcāyoga. The term *carcā*<sup>o</sup> here refers to “discussing” or “putting into words” and emphasising individual details of unmanifest consciousness to generate deep reverence for the cultivation of Bhaktiyoga, the yoga of devotional worship of *avyakta puruṣa*. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.47 illustrates this:

*carcā karaiṁ kahāṁ laga svamī | tum saba hī ke antarjāmī |  
sr̥ṣti kahat kachu anta na āvai | terā pāra kaimna dhaim pāvai || 47 ||*

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<sup>126</sup> See Burger (2014: 694–695) for an earlier brief discussion of Sundardās’s Carcāyoga in French

<sup>127</sup> Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.41ab: *avyakta puruṣa agama apārā | kaisaiṁ kai kariye nirdhhārā |*

How to discuss, where to find you, O Lord? You are the inner knower of everything. There is no end to describing creation. Your limit cannot be reached by any means.

Thus, it is clear that no direct conceptual connection exists between the Caryāyogas described above and Carcāyoga. A meaningful explanation for the conspicuous homophony of both terms cannot be offered for the time being.

### **2.5.5 Caryāyoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies**

The comparative analysis of Caryāyoga within the intricate and multifaceted texts of early modern yoga taxonomies reveals two distinct models. Additionally, the initial question regarding any connection between Caryāyogas and Carcāyoga was addressed, and a hypothesis was formulated on the original form of Caryāyoga.

In the *Yogatattvabindu*, Caryāyoga is described as stabilizing the mind in the self. This rather banal description was likely an attempt to define Caryāyoga as mentioned in the initial list. It is plausible that Rāmacandra invented this description without any real understanding of Caryāyoga, as it seems to be derived from a description of Rājayoga in his source text. It appears highly unlikely that this form of Caryāyoga was ever practiced by anyone.

Caryāyoga is absent from the testimony of the *Yugasvarodaya* and is not listed therein. However, the *Yogakarṇikā*, which extensively quotes the *Yugasvarodaya*, suggests that Caryāyoga was originally closely related to the practices within the *caryāpādas* of the Śaiva Āgamas, and thus consisted of daily ritual conduct as part of the yogic routine.

Furthermore, the comparison of Caryāyogas with Carcāyoga in Sundardās's work showed that they are entirely unrelated. In this context, Carcāyoga represents the final method of Bhaktiyoga, which aims to articulate the unmanifest consciousness in order to generate the profound awe necessary for progress on the yogic path, as presented by Sundardās in his *Sarvāṅgagapradipikā*.

## 2.6 Hathayoga

Hathayoga, “the Yoga of force”, appears without exception in all complex late medieval yoga taxonomies. In the taxonomies with fifteen yogas of the *Yogatattvabindu*, the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, it occupies the fourth position. In the yoga taxonomy of Sundardā’s *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, it is the second main type of Yoga. Hathayoga is a category in itself and the superordinate category for the three subsequent Yogas described by Sundardās, namely Rāja-, Lakṣa- and Aśṭāṅgayoga which are all considered to be methods of Hathayoga.

### 2.6.1 Hathayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*

Both texts consider Hathayoga as another method of Rājayoga. In section XIX-XX of the *Yogatattvabindu*, two categories of Hathayoga are distinguished. Both are based on the explanations of the *Yogasvarodaya*, differ only slightly in formulation, and can, therefore, be considered together.<sup>128</sup> Both passages in these two texts are characterized by their brevity.

The first type of Hathayoga described teaches the control of the breath through exhalation (*recaka*), inhalation (*pūraka*) and breath retention (*kumbhaka*) etc. With the term “etc.” (“*ādi*”), the text probably refers to other known practices of *Hathayoga*. In addition to other breathing exercises, this could also refer to the other known basic building blocks of Hathayoga, which have been associated with Hathayoga since Svātmarāma’s *Hathapradipikā*: *āsana*, *mudrā* and *nādānusandhāna*. At least *āsana* is explicitly mentioned in the *Yogasvarodaya*, but not in the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>129</sup> Both texts mention the six actions that purify the body (*śatkarma*) next. Then Rāmacandra states that when the full breath dwells within the solar channel (*sūryanādi*), the mind becomes immobile. Through the immobility of the mind, bliss arises, and the mind is absorbed into emptiness (*śūnya*). The resulting state leads to the delay of the time of death (*kālah samīpe nāgachati*). The naming of the sun channel is striking

<sup>128</sup> See *Prāṇatosinī* (Ed. p. 835) and *Śabdakalpadruma* (Ed. p. 501). These passages contain quotations from the *Yogasvarodaya* of both types of Hathayoga. See also *Yogakarṇikā* 12.23–26. Here, verses of the second category of Hathayoga are reproduced

<sup>129</sup>Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 835): *kṛtvāsanam pavanāśanā śarire roghārakam |*

in this context. The *Yogasvarodaya* is no concrete help here, as it merely speaks of an unspecified *nādi*,<sup>130</sup> in which, triggered by the preceding practice, the fullness of breath is established.<sup>131</sup> The majority of texts in the Haṭhayoga genre would certainly specify *sūṣumnā*, the central channel, in the context of the “immobility of the mind”, a central characteristic of the *samādhi* state. They would not specify the right channel associated with the sun, called *piṅgalā*. The occurrence of the yoga state, or *samādhi*, is generally associated with the entry of the breath into the central channel.<sup>132</sup> Either the term *sūryanāḍi* is to be understood here as an unfortunate synonym,<sup>133</sup> or the text is corrupt.<sup>134</sup> Another possibility would be to assume a practice associated with the *piṅgalā* channel. The term *sūryanāḍi* is found in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, a text that also served as a model for Rāmacandra.<sup>135</sup>

The second type of Haṭhayoga in *Yogatattvabindu* instructs the yogin to contemplate a non-specific form (*kīmcidrūpā*) in the colours white, yellow, blue and red equal to the radiance of ten million suns in one’s own body from head to toe (*cintyate*). This is supposed to burn away all diseases of the body and prolong life. In the *Yogasvarodaya*, there is no mention of an unspecific form. Instead, these colours and the sun’s radiance are meant to be contemplated in the area of the tip of the nose.<sup>136</sup> Rāmacandra and the *Yogasvarodaya* describe the second type of Haṭhayoga so briefly and vaguely that the reader is denied a clearer picture. It should be noted at this point that the formulation is very

<sup>130</sup> Since the YSV mentions no specific *nādi*, it is likely that it is the *nādi par excellance*, the *sūṣumnā*

<sup>131</sup> Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 835): *etan nādyān tu devesī vāyupūrnam pratisthitam | tato mano niścalam syāt tata ānanda eva hi |*

<sup>132</sup> This is already evident, for example, in the oldest written testimony of the Haṭhayoga genre, the *Amṛtasiddhi* 26.1-2: *yo 'sau siddhimayo vāyur madhyamāpadaniścalah | tadānandamayaṇ cittaṁ ekarūpam nabhaḥsamam || 26.1 | yadānandamayaṇ cittaṁ bāhyaklesāvivartitam | bhavaduhkhāni samṛtya samādhir jāyate tada || 26.2 |* Mallinson and Szántó translate: (1) “When Breath is perfected and fixed in the place of the Goddess of the Centre, then consciousness has the nature of bliss, uniform like the sky.” (2) “When consciousness has the nature of bliss, free from external afflictions, then, having the sorrows of existence, Samādhi arises.” This idea, which can be found in this genre from the 11th century at the latest, subsequently permeates the entire genre.

<sup>133</sup> In the sense of being ambiguous and overlapping with the *piṅgalā* channel.

<sup>134</sup> A conjecture of *sūryanāḍi* to *sūnyanāḍi* would be obvious. In *Jyotsnā* 4.10, Brahmānanda understands “the void” (*sūnya*) as the central channel. In *Haṭhapradipikā* 3.4, *śūnyapādavī* is a synonym of *sūṣumnā*.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.5: *pañcamam kaṇṭhacakram caturaṅgulam tatra vāme idā candranāḍi daksine piṅgalā sūryanāḍi tanmadhye sūṣumnāṁ dhyāyet saivānāhatakālā anāhatasiddhir bhavati |*

<sup>136</sup> Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 835): *ākāśe nāśikāgre tu sūryakoṭisamaṇ smaret | śvetāṁ raktāṁ tathā pīṭāṁ kṛṣṇām ity ādirūpataḥ |*

reminiscent of Bāhyalakṣya's explanations in section XXIII<sup>137</sup>. Interestingly, in Sundardā's *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*, Laks(y)ayoga is a subcategory, i.e. a partial practice, of Haṭhayoga. Is this hinting the source for this differentiation? Further parallels to practices of other texts of Haṭhayoga involving coloured or non-coloured light exist but are still conceptually too distant to convincingly assign Rāmacandra's second type,<sup>138</sup> and thus remain enigmatic for the time being.

### 2.6.2 Haṭhayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

In the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, the discussion and description of Nārāyaṇatīrthas Haṭhayoga is spread over several *sūtras* of the first two chapters, the *saṃādhipāda* (1.34) and the *sādhanapāda* (2.46–52). The commentary by Nārāyaṇatīrtha is particularly extensive and detailed here.<sup>139</sup>

Initially, Nārāyaṇatīrtha locates Haṭhayoga in the context of *sūtra* 1.34. This *sūtra* is one of several options (1.32–40) that can be applied to overcome the distractions described in *sūtras* 1.30–31, which hinder the attainment of the final state of yoga (*asamprajnātasamādhi*, *nirbijasamādhi*, or *kaivalya*).<sup>140</sup>

*pracchardanavidhāraṇābhyaṁ vā prāṇasya || 34 ||*

Or, through exhaling and restraining of the breath.

This method thus serves to establish a clear mind. This is referred to by Nārāyaṇatīrtha as Haṭhayoga. In his commentary, Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains that the term *pracchardana* means the slow outward emptying of the breath of the abdomen through one of the two nostrils in measured quantities.<sup>141</sup> The term *vidhārana* is the external continuous breath-holding of exhaled air.<sup>142</sup> Furthermore, Nārāyaṇatīrtha specifies this method of breath retention as

<sup>137</sup>Cf. p. ??

<sup>138</sup>see p.?? for the parallel passages

<sup>139</sup>For an earlier, short discussion of Haṭhyoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *yogacandrika* see Penna, 2004: 76.

<sup>140</sup>This final state of yoga is called *rājayoga* by Nārāyaṇatīrtha.

<sup>141</sup>*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.34 (Ed. p. 53): *kauṣṭhyasya vāyoḥ pracchardanam, ekataranāśāpuṇena mātrāpramāṇena śanaiḥ śanair bāhar niḥsāraṇam*

<sup>142</sup>Ibid. 1.34 (Ed. p. 53): *vidhāraṇam recitasya vāyor bahir eva sthāpanam kumbhakam* |

*recitakumbhaka*. It is the first of a total of seven breath retentions (*saptakumbhaka*) and is considered particularly praiseworthy, as hardly any rules need to be observed for this type. However, this group of seven *kumbhakas* - *recita*, *pūrita*, *śānta*, *pratyāhāra*, *uttara*, *ādhāra*, and *sama* - is specified later on in the second chapter, in the context of the fourth limb of *astāṅgayoga*, known as *prāṇāyāma* (2.49–53). The seven *kumbhakas* are discussed alongside seven out of the eight *kumbhakas* of the *Hathapradīpikā*.<sup>143</sup>

According to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the mastery of the breath and the mastery of the mind are intrinsically linked. At the same time, *prāṇāyāma* has the power to eradicate all sins, which enables the mind to concentrate and stabilize on a meditative focal point or goal (*lakṣya*).<sup>144</sup>

Finally, Nārāyaṇatīrtha authenticates the linking of *prāṇāyāma* and Haṭhayoga (*prāṇāyāmasya haṭhayogatvam uktam smṛtau*) with the famous verse of *Yogabija* (148cd–149ab), in which the syllable “ha” is linked to the sun and the syllable “tha” to the moon. Thus, *hatha* is understood as the union of sun and moon.<sup>145</sup>

The next section of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, which discusses aspects of Haṭhayoga, is only found in the context of the third limb of the *astāṅgayoga*, which is described beginning with *sūtra* 2.46.

*itāḥ param sakalarogādini vṛttidvārā haṭhayoga syopāyam āsanam āha-sthirasukham āsanam* || 46 ||

From here on, postures, being the means of Haṭhayoga, are said to be the gateways to preventing all diseases etc.

A comfortable and steady position.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid. 1.34 (Ed. p. 53): *tathā cātra pūrakavarjanād recitapūritaśāntapratyāhārottarādhārasamabhedena saptakumbhakesu madhye recitakumbhako 'yam prathamābhyaśe 'nekaniyamānapeksatāyā praśastāḥ | sarvam etad agre prāṇāyāmaprakaraṇe sphuṭi bhavīsyati |*

<sup>144</sup>*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.34 (Ed. p. 53): *tad etābhyaṁ prāṇajaye cittajayas taylor avinābhāvāt prāṇāyāmasya sarvapāpanāśakatvāt pāpanivṛtti ca cittam ekatra laksye sthiraṇ bhavati |*

<sup>145</sup>Ibid. 1.34 (Ed. p. 53): *hakāreṇa tu sūryo 'sau thakārenendur ucycate | sūryacandramasor aikyan̄ hathaity abhidhiyate ||* The context suggests here, that Nārāyaṇatīrtha associates the sun and moon with the *piṅgalānādī* (representing the sun) and *idānādī* (representing the moon). Their union would then be the inhalation through these channels with a subsequent breath retention.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha then presents various *āsanas*. Of a total of 84 *āsanas*, he describes 38 in detail. Birch (2018) observed<sup>146</sup> that Nārāyaṇatīrtha's descriptions of the *āsanas* were borrowed from earlier yoga texts, such as the *Hṛṣiprādīpikā* (which Nārāyaṇatīrtha refers to as *Yogapradīpa*), the *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā* and the *Dharmaputrikā*.<sup>147</sup><sup>148</sup>

In 2.47–48, Nārāyaṇatīrtha provides additional details on the execution of the yoga postures, which will not be elaborated upon here.<sup>149</sup> Far more important for the determination of Nārāyaṇatīrtha's Hathayoga is 2.49–51. In addition to a detailed discussion of the three basic elements of *prāṇāyāma* – exhalation (*recaka*), inhalation (*pūraka*) and breath retention (*kumbhaka*) as well as their specifics in the commentary to 2.49–50, Nārāyaṇatīrtha then discusses *kevalakumbhaka*, the fourth aspect of *prāṇāyāma*, the overarching goal and ultimate result of breath retention.<sup>150</sup><sup>151</sup>

This *kevalakumbhaka* is achieved in a lengthy process with gradually more subtle advances through the practice of ordinary *kumbhaka*, which is specified as *sahitakumbhaka*.<sup>152</sup> Only when the bodily channels have been purified through practice, and the movements of exhalation and inhalation have entirely ceased does *kevalakumbhaka* arise. An appropriate translation is “isolated breath retention”, as it is isolated from the inhalation and exhalation.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>146</sup>Cf. Birch, 2018: 105, n. 9.

<sup>147</sup>A list of the 38 of 84 *āsanas* can be found in *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 2.46 (Ed. p. 107–108): tac ca padma-siddha-bhadra-vira-svastika-siṁha-danḍa-sopāśraya-paryāṅka-mayūra-kukkuṭa-uttānakukkuṭa-paścimatāna-matsyendrapīṭha-cakra-gomukha-karma-dhanu-mrgasvastika-arddhacandra-añjaliṇi-pīṭha-vajra-mukta-candra-arddhaprasārītāśava-kapāla-guruḍa-arddhāsana-kamala-krauñcaniṣadāna-hastiṇiṣadāna-uṣṭriṇiṣadāna-kaṇapiṇiṣadāna-yogaśana-yonyāśana-samasthāna-ādibhedena caturāśītprakāram | eteśām lakṣaṇāni yogapradipādā uktāni | The detailed descriptions of the 38 *āsanas* can be found immediately following on p. 108–114.

<sup>148</sup>Penna (2004: 207–209) has briefly discussed the *āsanas* of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

<sup>149</sup>A detailed sketch of the *prāṇāyāma*-system of Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* can be found in Penna, 2004: 209–18.

<sup>150</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.34 (Ed. p. 116): asya ca lakṣaṇām yājñavalkya āha- recakam pūrakam tyaktvā yat sukhām vāyudhāraṇam | prāṇāyāmo 'yam ity uktah sa vai kevalakumbhakah || “Yājñavalkya declares its characteristic as follows - Having abandoned inhalation and exhalation, that comfortable restraint of breath is breath-control. This indeed is indeed taught as ‘isolated retention’.”

<sup>151</sup>See *Hṛṣiprādīpikā* 2.72–80 for the *locus classicus* of all descriptions of *kevalakumbhaka*.

<sup>152</sup>This *kumbhaka* is “accompanied” (*sahita*) because, unlike *kevalakumbhaka*, it is still accompanied by inhalation and exhalation. Cf. *Hṛṣiprādīpikā* 2.73.

<sup>153</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 2.51: evambhūta ubhayoh śvāsapraśvāsayor gativicchedaś caturthah prāṇāyāma ity arthaḥ | etena sahitakumbhakābhyaśa evāsyā 'sādhāraṇam | yadā nādīviśuddhiḥ syād yoginastattvadarśināḥ | tada vidhvastadoṣasya bhavet kevalasambhavah ||

The yogin who masters *kevalakumbhaka* can hold the breath for an indefinite period.<sup>154</sup> Nārāyaṇatīrtha then quotes seven of the eight *kumbhakas*<sup>155</sup> of *Hathapradipikā* (except *plāvanī*, cf. *Hathapradipikā* 2.71).<sup>156</sup> Then the other seven *kumbhakas* already mentioned in the commentary to 1.54 are explained in more detail.<sup>157</sup> The commentary to 2.50 then quotes further explanations from various texts, such as *Yogabhāskara*, *Nandipurāṇa* and *Mārkanḍeyapurāṇa* on the subject of *prāṇayāma*. In addition, the four stages (*avasthā*) of yoga practice - *ārambha*, *ghāṭa*, *paricaya* and *niṣpatti* are introduced,<sup>158</sup> etc.<sup>159</sup>

The Haṭhayoga of Nārāyaṇatīrtha thus consists primarily of two of the four main classical categories of Haṭhayoga according to the *Hathapradipikā*<sup>160</sup> - *āsana* and *kumbhaka*, which are located in Pātañjalayoga. The third main category of Haṭhayoga after the *Hathapradipikā*, namely *mudrā*, is also found in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. However, surprisingly, the *mudrās*, together with the *satkarmas*, are only taught in the context of Karmayoga. Surprisingly, because *mudrā* and *satkarma* are the elements of Haṭhayoga that form the main distinguishing feature from other yoga systems. Nārāyaṇatīrtha is not unaware of this. At the end of his section on Karmayoga, he mentions them belonging to Haṭhayoga, but nonetheless decides to present them in the context of Karmayoga. These will, therefore, only be dealt with in the corresponding sub-chapter of this work. The fourth main category of the *Hathapradipikā*, *nādānusandhāna*, is not found in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. Concerning his concept of Haṭhayoga, Nārāyaṇatīrtha makes a significant point at the end of his

<sup>154</sup>Cf. *Hathapradipikā* 2.76.

<sup>155</sup>*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 2.51, Ed. p. 118-121. The seven *kumbhakas* mentioned by Nārāyaṇatīrtha are: 1. *sūryabhedana*; 2. *ujjāyi*; 3. *sītikā(r)a*; 4. *śitali*; 5. *brahmari*; 6. *mūrchā*; and 7. *bhastrikā*.

<sup>156</sup>Cf. *Hathapradipikā* 2.48-71.

<sup>157</sup>*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 2.51, p. 121: *kumbhah saptavidho jñeyo recitādiprabhedataḥ | recitam̄ pūratih śāntah pratyāhārttarodharaḥ || samaśceti vinirdiṣṭah kumbhakāḥ saptabhedataḥ iti eteṣāṁ lakṣaṇāni cāha-recitasya bahistambho vāyo recitakumbhakāḥ*  
textitpūrakena viñā samyag yogo 'yam sukhado nr̄ṇām || 1 || pūritasyodare rodhaḥ paścadrecakasam�utah | nādiśuddhikarāḥ samyak proktāḥ pūritakumbhakāḥ || 2 || kāyasyāntarbahir vyāptir yā sa syāc chāntakumbhakāḥ || 3 || sthānayorantare rodhaḥ pratyāhārākhyakumbhakāḥ || 4 || āpūryet kramādūrdhvam ūrdhvarodho hr̄dādiṣu || 5 || uttarāḥ kumbhakāḥ sa syādadho 'dho mūrddhato 'dharaḥ || 6 || recanāpūraṇe tyaktvā manasā maruto dhṛtiḥ | yā nābhyaāpradešeṣu samāḥ kumbhaḥ prakīrtitaḥ || 7 ||

<sup>158</sup>See *Amṛtasiddhi viveka* 19,21,29 and 31 for the oldest account of the four stages. Also cf. *Hathapradipikā* 4.16-25.

<sup>159</sup>For example, the yogic dietary guidelines and the dwelling of the yogin based on the explanations of the first chapter of *Hathapradipikā*.

<sup>160</sup>Cf. *Hathapradipikā* 1.56.

commentary on *sūtra* 2.28. There, he informs us that the results of Haṭhayoga are limited to bodily perfection. Therefore, they do not directly pertain to Rājayoga.<sup>161</sup>

### 2.6.3 Haṭhayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

Sundardās traces his Haṭhayoga back to Ādinātha, Matsyendra, Gorakṣa, Carpaṭa, Kānerī and Cauraṅga.<sup>162</sup> In the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* (3.1-52), Haṭhayoga is both an individual category (3.1-12) and a superordinate category. In the following, Haṭhayoga is primarily discussed as the individual category. As a superordinate category, it subsumes three other yogas, namely Rājayoga (3.13-24), Lakṣayoga (3.25-36) and Aṣṭāṅgayoga (3.37-52). These subcategories will be only briefly characterised in this chapter. They are then discussed in detail in the respective chapter according to the order of the list of the fifteen yogas of the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>163</sup>

Sundardās initially locates Haṭhayoga within the Ādītnātha tradition and specifies the union of sun and moon as its definition.<sup>164</sup>

This is followed by describing the ideal environment for yoga practice, short practice instructions and dietary rules (3.2-8). These are very reminiscent of the explanations in the first chapter of the *Haṭhaprādīpikā*.<sup>165</sup> The chapter concludes with the naming of the six actions (*śatkarmas*). Due to the lack of details in his descriptions, it is hardly comprehensible to perform the practices without a teacher or other instructive texts. Sundardās could not have conceived his chapter on Haṭhayoga as an instruction manual. Instead, his primary aim must have been to characterise it and integrate Haṭhayoga into the overall context of his successive sequence of yogas.

<sup>161</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 98): *etac ca sarvam yogāṅgānuṣṭhānāditi sūtre sūtritamapi haṭhayogaṅgatvena deha siddhamātraphalatvena sāksādrājayogā 'naṅgatvāt kāñṭharaveṇa sūtrakṛtā noktam iti mantavyam iti samksepah* || 28 ||

<sup>162</sup> Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 1.4: *ādinātha matsyemdra aru, goraṣa carpaṭa mīna | kānerī cauraṅga puni, haṭha su yoga ini kinā* || 4 ||

<sup>163</sup> A French description of Haṭhayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* can be found in Burger, 2014: 701-709.

<sup>164</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 3.1: *abahi hahūṁ haṭhayoga sunāī | ādinātha ke bandaiṁ pāī | ravi śaśi doū eka milāvai | yāhī temi hathayoga kahāvai* || 1 ||

<sup>165</sup> See *Haṭhaprādīpikā* 1.57-60.

The ideal environment for Haṭhayoga is in a well-governed country where justice prevails. Here, the yogin is supposed to build a hut (*mathikā*) with a small door and no holes. The yogin shall smear the hut with cow dung for this purpose. A small well is dug into the ground next to the hut.<sup>166</sup><sup>167</sup>

The yogin is supposed to sit in the hut, devote himself to Hathayoga and regulate the breath.<sup>168</sup> Accordingly, for Sundardās, as in all texts with complex yoga taxonomies without exception, breath cultivation is the central element of Hathayoga. In the following, he specifies the practice of yoga postures (*āsana*).<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, Sundardās recommends ritual washing and god worship in the morning.<sup>170</sup> The diet is supposed to be regulated.<sup>171</sup> For Sundardās, this means avoiding hot, spicy and sour foods. Specifically mustard, sesame, alcohol, meat, green vegetables, ginger and garlic, shall be avoided, too.<sup>172</sup> A diet of rice, milk,<sup>173</sup> ghee, honey and gourd vegetables is recommenced. Furthermore, clear water is supposed to be ingested.<sup>174</sup> When the hathayogin eats in this way, his body is freed from disease.<sup>175</sup>

Verses 3.9–11 mention the six actions (*saṅkarmas*) - *dhauti*, *basti*, *netī*, *trāṭaka*, *naulī* and *kapālabhāti*. They are supposed to purify the channels,<sup>176</sup> and lead to success.<sup>177</sup> In the last verse of this section, we learn that the power of Haṭhayoga leads to bliss.<sup>178</sup>

As already mentioned at the beginning, Sundardās also subsumes Rājayoga (3.13–24), Lakṣayoga (3.25–36) and Aṣṭāṅgayoga (3.37–52) under the superordinate category Haṭhayoga. Sundardās's Rājayoga practice is that what

<sup>166</sup>Ibid. 3.2–3ab: *prathama sudharma deśa kahum tākai | bhalau rājya kachu deśala na jākai | tāhām jāi kai maṭhikā kari | alpa dvāra aru chidra su bharaī || 2 || lipta karai cahūṇi ora sugandhā | kūpa sahita maṭha ihīm bidhi baṇḍhā |*

<sup>167</sup>Cf. *Haṭhapradipikā* 1.12–13.

<sup>168</sup>*Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.3cd: *tāmahim paithi karai abhyāsā / gutu gami haṭha kari jātai svāsā || 3 ||*

<sup>169</sup>*Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.5ab: *hathi kari āsana sādhaiṇi bhāī hatha kari nīdrā tajatau jāī |*

<sup>170</sup>Ibid. 3.7b: *prāta sanāna upāsana koi |* What this might have looked like is described in great detail within the first chapter of the *Yogakarṇikā*.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid. 3.5c: *haṭha hī kari āhāra ghaṭāvai |*

<sup>172</sup>Ibid. 3.6: *hatha kari tiksāna kāṭuka sutyāgai | sarason tīla mada māṁsa na māṁgai | harita śāka kabahū nahīṁ sāi | himgu lasanu saba deśa bahāī || 6 ||*

<sup>173</sup>Ibid. 3.7c: *gohūṁ śāli su karai ahārā |*

<sup>174</sup>Ibid. 3.8ab: *śira sāṁḍa ghṛta madhi puni sāṁṇi sūṁthi paṭola nirmala ati pāṇṇi |*

<sup>175</sup>Ibid. 3.8cd: *yahu bhojana su karai haṭha yogi dina dina kāyā hoi nirogi || 8 ||*

<sup>176</sup>Ibid. 3.9b: *nādi śuddha horīhi mala ṭalai |*

<sup>177</sup>Ibid. 3.10c: *ye saṭa karma siddhi ke dātā |*

<sup>178</sup>Ibid. 3.12a: *yā haṭha yoga prabhāva tem, pragaṭa hoi ānanda |*

is commonly known as *vajrolīmudrā*.<sup>179</sup> Laks(y)ayoga, a practice found in all complex late medieval taxonomies, is the fixation of the gaze (*drṣṭi*) on differently located focal points or objects inside or outside the body. In the context of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, the generally known eight limbs are then discussed individually. Similar to Nārāyaṇatirtha, characteristic practices of Haṭhayoga such as *āsanas*, *kumbhakas*, *mudrās* and *bandhas* are assigned to the individual limbs. A detailed comparative discussion of the subcategories takes place in the following chapters.

#### 2.6.4 Haṭhayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Haṭhayoga within the complex yoga taxonomies revealed several interesting nuances across the texts. In this case, the authors of the texts are largely in agreement as to which practices Haṭhayoga consists of. The major differences are based on the categorical attributions and categorisations in the texts' respective superordinate systemic approaches.

*Yogatattabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya* present a remarkable categorisation of Haṭhayoga into two main categories. The first category names *prāṇāyāma* and the *śaṭkarmas* as characteristic practices. The second category mentions contemplation on coloured light as a characteristic practice. Both texts understand Haṭhayoga as a method of Rājayoga.

In the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Haṭhayoga is primarily defined via *prāṇāyāma* and *āsana*. Nārāyaṇatirtha, however, subordinates the *śaṭkarmas* and *mudrās* to Karmayoga. For him, Haṭhayoga is merely a means to physical perfection but cannot lead directly to Rājayoga.

For Sundardās, Rājayoga is, in turn, subordinate to Haṭhayoga, whereby he does not understand Rājayoga as *samādhi*, but as a synonym for *vajrolīmudrā*. For him, Haṭhayoga also consists primarily of *prāṇāyāma*, *āsanas* and the *śaṭkarmas*. However, the *mudrās* and *bandhas* can then be found in the last subcategory of *Haṭhayoga*, the Aṣṭāṅgayoga. Sundardās does not regard all twelve yogas as alternatives but as interrelated limbs that lead to the final state of yoga, which he calls Advaitayoga. In his three main categories, 1. Bhaktiyoga, 2. Haṭhayoga and 3. Sāṃkhayoga, he sees Haṭhayoga as the central practical

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<sup>179</sup>The verses do not specify the term, but the practice is identical.

component of his path to the final yoga state. At the same time, Bhaktiyoga covers the devotional and Sāṃkhyayoga, the mysto-philosophical aspect of his twelve-limbed yoga path.

## 2.7 Karmayoga

In formal discourse, the term Karmayoga, the “Yoga of deeds”, is particularly known from the *Bhagavadgītā*<sup>180</sup>. The concept of the Karmayoga of the *Bhagavadgītā* is absent in our four complex early modern taxonomies of yogas. Instead, other concepts of Karmayoga emerged. Rāmacandra lists Karmayoga as the fifth method of Rājayoga within the yoga taxonomy of the *Yogatattvabindu*. Karmayoga is the third yoga mentioned in the yoga taxonomy of the *Yugasvarodaya* and *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. The *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* does not mention Karmayoga at all.

### 2.7.1 Karmayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya*

Both texts mention Karmayoga in their taxonomies but do not explicitly describe it in the course of the text, unlike other yoga categories. The absence surprises the reader, as the initial list of fifteen yogas and the subsequent description of Kriyāyoga, as the first entry in the list, is immediately treated first within a separate section of the text. The expectation is reinforced by the subsequent sections that more or less follow the order provided by the initial taxonomy. However, this expected structure fades away as the text progresses. This results in at least three possible explanations. Either the list merely served to illustrate the diversity of the different categories of yoga, and it was never the authors’ intention to cover all the yogas in the text, or the transmission of the text has fallen victim to corruption. The third possibility is that some yogas are present not explicitly but only implicitly in the text. Regarding the latter possibility, there exists one passage in both texts that could hypothetically cover the Karmayoga aspect of the text.

The passage under consideration belongs to section XLI. Like the previous sections, starting with XXXII, this section deals with the microcosmic

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<sup>180</sup>Cf. for example *Bhagavadgītā* 2.47–49, 3.1–7, & 4.20. Here, Karmayoga is a path (*marga*) to liberation (*mokṣa*) through action (*karma*) without attachment to one’s deeds.

equivalents of the macrocosm in the yogic body. In particular, it deals with the listing of various macrocosmic contents which are situated in specific bodily locations, such as twenty-seven stars, twelve signs of the zodiac, nine planets, etc. At the very end of this topic, in both, the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya*, a passage appears that speaks of liberation (*mukti*) through a specific action (*karma*).

The *Yugasvarodaya* (PT, Ed. pp. 843-844) reads:

samagradaśanān muktaḥ svargabhogañ ca matsukham |  
tad etac cintayā yāti rogaśokavivarjjitah ||  
yat karmā karmaṇā śaṅkā manomadhye bhaved bahiḥ |  
tat karmā karaṇam muktir ity āha bhagavān śivah ||

Freed as a result of complete vision,<sup>181</sup> [there is] heavenly pleasure and my bliss.<sup>182</sup> By contemplating that, one becomes free from sorrow and disease. That action which causes doubt in the mind should be abandoned. Performing such an action leads to liberation, says the exalted Śiva.

Thus, the specific action which leads to liberation is initiated by the complete vision of the contents of the yogic body, resulting in pleasure and bliss. One is supposed to contemplate the contents of the yogic body and abandon doubt. It is this very action (*karma*) which leads to liberation *mukti* in the *Yugasvarodaya*.

puruṣasya nṛtyadarśanāt || gītaśravaṇāt || vallabhavastuno darśaṇāt || ya  
ānanda utpadyate saḥ svargalokaḥ kathyate | rogapīḍādurjanebhyaḥ pu-  
rusasya yad duḥkham utpadyate | tad bahutaram narakaṇ kathyate | atha  
ca yatkarmakaraṇāt sarveṣāṁ lokānām svamanasi ca śubham na bharate  
tat karma bandhanam ity ucyate | atha ca yatkarmakaraṇān manomadhye  
śaṅkā na bhavati tatkarma muktikāraṇam |

<sup>3</sup> bahiḥ em.] vahiḥ PT    <sup>4</sup> karmā karaṇam em.] karmakaraṇam PT

<sup>181</sup>The formulation *samagradaśanāt* refers back to the previously mentioned microcosmic contents of the macrocosm.

<sup>182</sup>Since Śiva is speaking, *matsukham* must refer to Śiva's bliss.

The person's bliss that is generated as a result of seeing dance, listening to songs, [and]viewing beloved objects, that is called heaven. The person's suffering that arises as a result of the pain caused by disease, and wicked people, that great [suffering] is called hell. Moreover, an action that does not bring goodness to all people and one's own mind, that action is said to be bondage. Furthermore, an action that does not create fear in the mind, that action is the cause of liberation.

Rāmacandra's reformulations paint a different picture. Da es ihm nicht gelingt den thematischen Bezug auszudrücken, wirkt diese Passage diszipliniert. Darüber hinaus gelangt er zu einer zu einer anderen Grundaussage, die wohl bemerkt, an dieser Stelle vielmehr der *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* ähnelt, der es ebenfalls nicht so recht gelingen will den thematischen Bezug zu verdeutlichen. Rāmacandra sagt schlicht, dass Taten die zu nichts Gute führen den Menschen binden und das Taten die keinen Schrecken im Geiste führen die Ursache für Befreiung sind.

Thus, even though both texts do not introduce Karmayoga as a separate topic, both texts at least present a path to liberation through action (*karma*). In the *Yogasvarodaya*, the action is the contemplation of the yogic body without doubt. Whereas in the *Yogatattvabindu*, it is the cultivation of all actions that bring goodness and the renunciation of actions that lead to dread.

## 2.7.2 Karmayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates his Karmayoga<sup>183</sup> in the context of his commentary on *sūtra* 2.28.<sup>184</sup>

*yogāṅgānuṣṭhanād aśuddhikṣaye jñānadīptir āvivekakhyātēḥ* || 28 ||

As a result of the practice of the limbs of yoga upon the destruction of impurities, the lamp of knowledge up to the realisation of discrimination arises.

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<sup>183</sup>See Penna (2004: 67–20) for an earlier discussion of Karmayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

<sup>184</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ed. pp. 92–98.

This *sūtra* introduces a description of the eight well-known limbs of Pātañjalayoga. Nārāyanatīrtha explains that the practice of the eight limbs leads to the realisation of the overarching goal of yoga, the discriminating knowledge of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, thereby removing ignorance (*vidyā*) and manifesting liberation. He then presents Karmayoga as an alternative to attaining the lamp of knowledge.<sup>185</sup>

*athavā yogāṅgānāṁ dhautīvastītyādiśaṭkarmaṇāṁ mahāmudrādīnāṁ ca anuṣṭhānād dṛḍhābhyaśāj jñānadiptih | jñāyate 'neneti jñānam karaṇavargah | tasya diptih rogādyanabhighātēna tejasvitā dṛḍhatā ca, āvivekakhyātēh vivekakhyātiparyantam bhavatīty arthaḥ | rogādinā jñānasya kuṇṭhabhāvas tu prasiddha eva | sa caiteṣv aṅgesv anuṣṭhiteṣu rogapratibandhān na bhavatīty arthaḥ | tathā ca karaṇadārdhyadvārā samādhidārdhyārthārthakarmayogo 'pi prathamato 'nuṣṭheyo rogabhīruṇeti bhāvah | sa ca karmayogah ṣaṭkarmarūpo mudrārūpaś ceti dvividho nirūpita ākare yathā |*

Alternatively, as a result of executing consistent practice of the limbs of yoga, [particularly] of the six actions like Dhautī, Vastī etc. and the great seal etc., the lamp of knowledge arises. By this [word] “*jñāna* (knowledge)”, the group of sense organs is understood. Its “*dipti* (lamp)” becomes brilliant and robust without damage through diseases, etc. The meaning of [the word] “*āvivekakhyātēh* (up to the realisation of discrimination)” extends as far as the realisation of discrimination. Through diseases, etc., the state of the inefficiency of the sense organs (*jñāna*) is thus established. Furthermore, the meaning of “after having practised these limbs” is [that] there are no obstacles from diseases. And thus, Karmayoga is the means for acquiring resilience of the sense organs for the steadfastness of *samādhi*, which shall be practised first so that one does not become afraid of disease. And that Karmayoga, having the nature of the six actions and having the nature of the seals is discussed twofold accordingly.

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<sup>185</sup>This differentiation inevitably awakens the association with the differentiation of the eight-fold yoga according to Yajñavalkya and the Hāṭhayoga with *mudrās* etc. of Kapila already stated in *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* 29.

Next, Nārāyaṇatīrtha simply lists the *śatkarmas* and nine *mudrās*:

*dhāutī vastī tathā neti trāṭakam naulikam tathā | kapālabhātī caitāni ṣaṭ karmāṇi pracakṣate || karmaṣaṭkam idam gopyam dehaśodhanakārakam iti | mahāmudrā mahābandho mahāvedhaś ca khecarī || śakticālo mūlabandha uddiyānam tataḥ param | jālandharābhidho yogo viparītakṛtis tatheti || lakṣaṇāni ca tatraivoktāni |*

Dhautī, Vastī, as well as Neti, Trāṭaka and Nauli, and also Kapālabhātī - these six actions are being told. This hexade of action is to be kept secret as it produces the purification of the body. The great seal, the great lock, the great piercing and Khecarī, the stimulation of the goddess, the root lock, Uddiyāṇa [and] thereafter [that] yoga [practice which is] known as Jālandhara as well as the act of inversion. The characteristics are described there [in the following].

After that, Nārāyaṇatīrtha presents verses containing instructive descriptions of every practice borrowed from earlier yoga texts.<sup>186</sup> Even though Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates the *śatkarmas* and *mudrās* within his Karmayoga, at the very end of the section on Karmayoga he notes that they are part of the practice of Haṭhayoga.<sup>187</sup>

### 2.7.3 Karmayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Karmayoga within the complex yoga taxonomies contained some surprising findings. Although three texts with complex yoga taxonomies list Karmayoga, only one of them contains a concrete description of a yoga method labelled as such.

Karmayoga is explicitly mentioned in the yoga taxonomies of *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*, but is not introduced in a separate section and dedicated description. Nevertheless, both texts contain passages that describe

<sup>186</sup>The section on the *śatkarmas* is based on *Haṭhapradipikā* 2.24–26, whereas the descriptions of the *mudrās* are primarily taken from the *Yogacintāmani*, Ed. p. 132 et seqq.

<sup>187</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacadrikā* (Ed. p. 98): *etac ca sarvam yogāṅgānusthānāditi sūtre sūtritam api hathayogaṅgatvena deha siddhamātraphalatvena sāksādrājayogā 'naṅgatvāt kanṭharaveṇa sūtrakṛtā noktam iti mantavyam iti saṃkṣepah* || 28 ||

liberation (*mukti*) through action (*karma*). Thus, even though both texts do not introduce Karmayoga as a separate topic, both texts at least present a path to liberation through action (*karma*). In the *Yogasvarodaya*, the action (*karma*) is the contemplation of the yogic body without doubt. Whereas in the *Yogatattvabindu*, it is the cultivation of actions (*karmas*) that bring goodness and the renunciation of actions that lead to dread.

In Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, the action (*karma*) of his Karmayoga is the practice of the *ṣatkarmas* and nine *mudrās*. As a highly educated Kṛṣṇa devotee and intellectual, Nārāyaṇatīrtha should have known the Karmayoga of the *Bhagavadgītā* well. However, there is not trace of that at all. His concept of Karmayoga is, therefore, all the more unusual and innovative.

## 2.8 Layayoga

The term Layayoga, the “Yoga of absorption”, was frequently discussed in recent academic discourse primarily due to the increased popularity of academic research on the early texts of Hṛdaya and the publication of critical editions of those texts.

The Layayoga of *Dattātreayogaśāstra* (15-26) is a state of mind that one reaches through fifteen million secret methods called *samketas*. From this methodological variety, Dattātreya describes a total of seven, e.g. permanent meditation on the *sūnya*, i.e. day and night while sitting still, moving, sleeping and eating<sup>188</sup>, staring at the region between the eyebrows,<sup>189</sup> or fixation of the gaze on the big toe of the right foot.<sup>190</sup>

In the *Amaraugha* (18-19) only one method of Layayoga is mentioned. The method consists of visualising dripping nectar in the body and then meditating in Kāmarūpa, the exact location of which is not specified, on Śiva in the form of a *linga* that shines like a jewel.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>188</sup>Cf. *Dattātreayogaśāstra* 21: *tiṣṭan gacchan svapan bhunñjan dhyāyec chūnyam aharniśam | ayam eko hi samketa ādhināthena bhāṣitah* || 21 ||

<sup>189</sup>Cf. ibid. 23: *bhrūmadhyadrṣṭimātreṇa paraḥ samketa ucyate | līlā vibhūtilepaś ca uttamah parikirtitah* || 23 ||

<sup>190</sup>Cf. ibid. 24ab: *svasya daksinapādasya aṅgusṭhe laya uttamah |*

<sup>191</sup>Cf. *Amaraugha* 18: *kāmarūpe sitām devaṇi lingabhaṇi maṇisannibham | dravantaṇi cāmrtaṇi prekṣya yo dhyāyen nijavigrahe* || 18 ||

A text that in terms of content is particularly close to the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya* is the fifteenth century *Śivayogapradipikā*.<sup>192</sup> Here, a *layayogin* is someone who has succeeded in dissolving their mind, together with their inner organ and breath, in the object of meditation, or inner resonance.<sup>193</sup>

The term *laya*, in these texts, thus refers to the “dissolution” of the mind through specific methods. In other contexts, the term *laya* is also used as a synonym for *samādhi*. There are even Buddhist and Vedic texts in which the term *laya* even has negative connotations and is regarded as an obstacle to meditation or gnosis, but these views are absent from the texts of the complex yoga taxonomies.<sup>194</sup>

Layayoga occupies fifth place in the taxonomy of the *Yogatattvabindu*'s methods of Rājayoga but is not listed in the verses on the fifteen yogas of the *Yugasvarodaya*. Ultimately, however, an explicit description of Layayoga is missing in both texts.

The reason for omitting a separate section for the topic of Layayoga could perhaps be the thematic overlap with certain teachings of the text. According to Birch (2024: 37, n. 86), the fourteenth century *Śāringadharapaddhati* (4350-63) contains perhaps the oldest tradition of Layayoga. The section is introduced with the words “*atha layayoga ||*” and states that Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana and others attained the state called *laya* by performing *laya* over the nine *cakras*.<sup>195</sup> Just as in the *Yugasvarodaya* (PT pp. 832-833) and *Yogatattvabindu* (section IV - XII), *Śāringadharapaddhati* presents a description of the nine *cakras* together with instructions and results of the respective meditation on every single *cakra*. Other “classical” methods of Layayoga from earlier texts can also be found scattered in the *Yugasvarodaya* or *Yogatattvabindu*, such as the fixation of the gaze on the big toe<sup>196</sup> or the centre of the eyebrows.<sup>197</sup> To summarise, the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya* actually do include many practices typically associated

<sup>192</sup> See p. 146 for a discussion.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. *Śivayogapradipikā* 1.6: *yasya cittam nijadhyeye manasā marutā saha | līnam bhavati nāde vā layayogogī sa eva hi || 6 ||*

<sup>194</sup> See Birch (2024: 35-37) for the detailed documentation of the complex reception-historical scope of the term *layayoga* based on evidence from numerous texts of yoga's relevant subgenres.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. *Śāringadharapaddhati* 4350: *kṛṣṇadvaipāyānādyais tu sādhito layasamjnītah | navasv eva hi cakresu layam krtvā mahātmabhiḥ ||4||*

<sup>196</sup> Cf. *Yugasvarodaya* (PT p. 839; YK 2.16) as well as *Yogatattvabindu* section XXX.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. *Yugasvarodaya* (PT p. 839; YK 2.35) and *Yogatattvabindu* section XXX.

with Layayoga, but these are not referred to as Layayoga when presented in the text.

In the taxonomy of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Layayoga occupies the thirteenth place. In Sundardā's *Sarvānigayogapradīpikā*, Layayoga is presented as one of the methods of Bhaktiyoga.

### 2.8.1 Layayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha places his discussion of Layayoga<sup>198</sup> in the context of his commentary of *sūtra* I.41:<sup>199</sup>

*samprajñātasya viśayaṁ pradarśayan na samprajñātāpararyāyam layayo-  
gam āha-*  
*kṣīṇavṛttter abhijātasyeva maṇer grahitṛgrahaṇagrāhyeṣu tatsthata dañ-  
janatā samāpattiḥ* || 41 ||

Pointing out the object of [the] *samprajñāta*-type of *samādhi*, it is said that Layayoga is for nothing other than [the] *samprajñāta*-type of *samādhi* - *Samāpatti*, the state of complete absorption of the mind when it is devoid of its mental fluctuations, happens when the mind becomes like a transparent jewel that takes the form of the object placed before it, whether it is the knower, the instrument of knowing, or that which is to be known.

After the previous *sūtras* introduced various objects that can support the mind in meditation, this *sūtra* now continues the analysis of different stages within the state of meditation, regardless of its object.<sup>200</sup> When the *vṛttis* of the mind fade, the mind becomes more and more like a crystal (*maṇi*). Just as a crystal takes on the colouring (*añjanatā*) of any object placed in front of it, the clear mind focusing on any object also takes on the colouring of that very object.<sup>201</sup> With regard to the objects that serve absorption, the *sūtra* specifies here the

<sup>198</sup> For an earlier discussion see Penna, 2004: 85-89.

<sup>199</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* Ed. p. 64.

<sup>200</sup> This analysis already began in *Pātanjalyogaśāstra* I.17.

<sup>201</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* I.34 (Ed. p. 64): *uparāgeṇa tadākāratāyāṁ dṛṣṭāntam āha- abhijātasyeva  
maṇer iti | nirmalasya sphatikāder yathā japaṅkusumādy uparāgeṇa raktādyākāratā tathety arthaḥ |*

hierarchical sequence of the knower (*grahīṭṛ*), the instrument of knowledge (*grahāṇa*) and that what is to be known (*grahyā*). For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the knower is *puruṣa*. The instrument of knowledge is the sense organs, and what is to be known is the object that can be grasped by the mind.<sup>202</sup> Depending on which object the mind focuses on, it takes on its colour and nature. The term *samāpatti* refers to the complete identification of the mind with the object of meditation. Nārāyaṇatīrtha (*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ed. p. 64) then equates the term *samāpatti* with *laya*:

*teṣu yā tatsthata dañjanatā tatsthena uparāgeṇa tadañjanatā tanmayatā  
samyak tadākāratā samāpattih samyagāpattir layah samprajñātalakṣaṇo  
yogo bhavatiḥ arthaḥ |*

In those [objects] which are “coloured by that which resides there”, by colouring, that [state of] colouration, being absorbed in it, thoroughly being in the state of that form, is absorption (*samāpatti*), the total entering into [that] state is Laya, being a yoga characterized as *samprajñāta*. This is the meaning.

For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, Layayoga is therefore a synonym for the state of *samāpatti* and is attributed to the *samprajñāta* form of *samādhi*, in which the consciousness is still focussed on one of the aforementioned objects. *Samprajñātasamādhi* is also known as “*samādhi* with discrimination”, as the meditator retains awareness of the distinction between the meditator, the meditation object and the process of meditation itself. It is therefore a *samādhi* in which there is still a minimal remainder of *vṛttis*, in contrast to the final *asamprajñāta* form of *samādhi* in which the last *vṛtti* also expires and final liberation and *kaivalya* occur.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup>Ibid. 1.34 (Ed. p. 64): *kṣīṇavṛtter iti | abhyāsavairāgyābhyaṁ apagamavṛttyantarasya cittasya  
grahīṭṛgrahaṇagrāhyesu, grahitā puruṣaḥ sthūlasūksmabhedena, grahaṇaṁ grhyate 'rtha 'nenetindriyam,  
evam grāhyam ca grahitṛgrahaṇagrāhyāni |*

<sup>203</sup>See *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 1.17–22 for more detailed explanations of the *samprajñāta* and *asamprajñāta* forms of *samādhi*.

### 2.8.2 Layayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

For Sundardās, Layayoga (2.28–39) is a subcategory of Bhaktiyoga.<sup>204</sup><sup>205</sup> He describes it as a method for the liberation from the cycle of birth and death.<sup>206</sup> Sundardās emphasises that Layayoga is an incomparable method and therefore attaches great importance to it among the yoga methods he presents.<sup>207</sup> Layayoga dispels all illusion,<sup>208</sup> makes one attain the highest state,<sup>209</sup> dispels anger and difficulties,<sup>210</sup> and makes one equal to Brahman.<sup>211</sup> The main emphasis of the practice is the continuous absorption of the mind into a specific goal, which he defines as Rāma<sup>212</sup> or Hari.<sup>213</sup> This absorption is supposed to be continued throughout day and night.<sup>214</sup> To illustrate how exactly this practice is to be carried out, he draws various comparisons. For example, *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* reads 2.35:

*jaisaim gāu jamgala kaum dhāvai | pānī pivai ghāsa cari āvai |  
citta rahai bacharā kai pāsā | aisī laya lāvai haridāsā || 2.35 ||*

Just as a cow walks towards the forest, drinks water, and grazes, but its mind remains near the calf, in such a way, Haridāsā practices Laya.

Another example is *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.36:

*jyaum jananī grha kāja karāi | putra pīmghrau pauḍhata bhāī |  
ura apnai taim kṣaṇ na na bisārai | aisī laya jana kaum nistārai || 36 ||*

Just as a mother does the housework while her son plays or crawls nearby and never for a moment forgets him in her heart, Laya liberates the person who practices it.

<sup>204</sup>A description of Layayoga in French can be found in Burger, 2014: 693–94.

<sup>205</sup>See p.190 for a discussion of Bhaktiyoga in the complex yoga taxonomies.

<sup>206</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.28c: *laya binu janma marana nahiṁ chūtai |*

<sup>207</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.29a: *laya samāna nahīṁ aura upāī |*

<sup>208</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.29c: *āvāgamana sakala bhrama bhāgai || 29 ||*

<sup>209</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.30d: *parama sthāna samāvai soī || 30 ||*

<sup>210</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.32cd: *esi laya jo koi lāvai | joni san̄kāta bahuri na āvai || 32 ||*

<sup>211</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.31a: *yaha laya yoga anupa hai karai brahma samāna |*

<sup>212</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.29b: *jo jana rahai rāma laya lāī |*

<sup>213</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.38ab: *sa sam̄prakāra hari saum lavai | koi videha parama pada pāvai |*

<sup>214</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.29c: *niśi vāsara esaiṁ lai lāgai |*

These comparisons illustrate Sundardā's concept of Layayoga. Layayoga is the continuous absorption or centring of the mind on Rāma or Hari while performing the necessary daily activities. The examples of the cow and the mother emphasise that this is supposed to be done in a way that resembles the tireless love and attention of a mother towards her child.

### 2.8.3 Layayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Layayoga within the complex yoga taxonomies displays the full range of historical meanings of Layayoga. While the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya* mention Layayoga in their taxonomies, they do not dedicate specific sections to the subject, likely because many of the techniques they teach overlap with practices described in medieval Hāthayoga texts. In contrast, the *Yugasiddhāntacandrikā* and *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* propagate differing concepts.

For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, Layayoga is a synonym for the state of *samāpatti* and is attributed to the *samprajñāta* form of *samādhi*. His concept of *laya* closely aligns with those of earlier commentators on the *Yogasūtra*, such as Bhojadeva in his *Rājamārtanda*,<sup>215</sup> or Vijñānabhikṣu in his *Pātañjalabhaśyavārttika*,<sup>216</sup> who use *laya* in the sense of *nirodha*, or Śivananda's *Yogacintāmani*,<sup>217</sup> for whom *laya* is equated with *samprajñāta*.

For Sundardās, Layayoga belongs to the Bhaktiyoga branch of yoga. It is the continuous absorption or centring of the mind on Rāma or Hari while performing the necessary daily activities. Remarkably, this concept resembles the *samketa* described above in *Dattātreyyayogaśāstra* 21,<sup>218</sup> which prescribes meditation on *śūnya* day and night while sitting still, moving, sleeping, and eating. Basically, the fixation of the mind on *śūnya* is replaced by Rāma or Hari. A distant historical connection between these practices is plausible, as

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<sup>215</sup> *Rājamārtanda* 1.2: *tāsām nirodho [...] svakāraṇe layo yoga ity ākhyāyate* | Birch translates: "The cessation of those [mental activities, that is to say,] the dissolution [of them] in their own cause is known as *yoga*."

<sup>216</sup> *Pātañjalabhaśyavārttika* 1.2 reads: [...] *vṛttayas tāsām nirodhas tāsām layākhyo* [...] "Their mental fluctuations are restrained; this restraint is called absorption."

<sup>217</sup> *Yogacintāmani* (Ed. p. II) reads: *layah samprajñātah*. "Laya is *samprajñāta*."

<sup>218</sup> A technique strikingly similar to the *samketa* of *Dattātreyyayogaśāstra* 21 is the practice of *antarlakṣya* within the *Yogasvarodaya*, cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 824) and *Yogakarṇikā* 2.8-13. The passage is translated and discussed on p.133.

both texts originate from the Vaiṣṇava milieu. The observed shift in practice reflects the central position *bhakti* among Sants like Sundardās.

## 2.9 Dhyānayoga

Rāmacandra positions Dhyānayoga, the “Yoga of meditation”, at the seventh place in his taxonomy of fifteen methods of Rājayoga. In the *Yogasvarodaya*, Dhyānayoga is to be found at the fifth position. In both cases, Dhyānayoga as a single subcategory and method of Rājayoga is not discussed explicitly in the remainder of the text. Nevertheless, in the case of Dhyānayoga, the situation in these two texts seems to be similar to the treatment of Layayoga analysed above. Even if not explicitly labelled as Dhyānayoga, both texts inherently contain many specific techniques that could be assigned to this term and are labelled as *dhyānas*. As will be shown, it seems plausible that Rāmacandra and the author of the *Yogasvarodaya* did not dedicate a separate section to Dhyānayoga, as they might have been aware of the various categorical overlaps and wanted to avoid redundancy.

In the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Dhyānayoga is the fourteenth method of Rājayoga he presents, and as with all other yogas, he locates this method within the framework of the *Yogasūtra*.

Sundardās, in his taxonomy of the three yoga tetrads presented in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, does not list Dhyānayoga at all.

Thus, the only explicit description of Dhyānayoga within the texts of the complex yoga taxonomies occurs in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. For this reason I decided to discuss it first. Interestingly, Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s description parallels various *dhyāna*-related contents of the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*.

### 2.9.1 Dhyānayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates Dhyānayoga in the context of his comparatively extensive commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.39:<sup>219</sup>

*dhyānayogam āha -  
yathā 'bhimatadhyānād vā || 39 ||*

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<sup>219</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ed. pp. 56-63.

[With regard to] Dhyānayoga, it is said -  
 Or as a result of meditation on what one favours.

Below, Nārāyaṇatīrtha's commentary explains the various possibilities of Dhyānayoga:

*yathetī | kim bahunā, harirāmādirūpaṁ parameśvaraṁ bāhyam candrasūryādījyotir vā yad evesṭaṁ tad eva dhyāyet | tasmād api dhyānāl labdhasthitikasya cittasya sādhanāntaram vināpi kevale paramātmani sthitā yogyatā bhavatī arthaḥ | ayam eva dhyānayoga ukto yogagrantheṣu | vinā deśādibandhena vṛttir yā 'bhimate sthirā |  
 dhyānayoga bhaved eva cittacāñcalyanāśakah ||  
 ity ādinā |*

[Regarding the term] “yathā”. Why [say] more? One should meditate on the supreme lord in the form of Hari, Rāma, etc., or on an external light such as the moon, sun, etc. [or] just to what is favoured. Because of that, as a result of meditation alone, the stability of the mind is attained without the need for any other means, enabling one to reside in the supreme self. This is the meaning. This very Dhyānayoga is taught in the texts of yoga; [for example] in quotations such as:

Without being confined by place, etc., the fluctuations of the mind become stable in the preferred [object]. In fact, Dhyānayoga is the destroyer of the fickleness of the mind.<sup>220</sup>

In this part of his commentary, Nārāyaṇatīrtha addresses common objects for meditation that will lead to the reduction of fluctuations in the mind. Another set of meditation objects he presents in the following lines:

*yad vā yathābhimatānāṁ tīrthadevalokavarṇatattvādīnāṁ yathābhimateṣu svadehādiṣu dhyānād bhāvanāvišeṣān manasah sthitir bhavatī arthaḥ | tatra yady api brahmavido brahmamayatvādīnā sarvam eva*

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<sup>220</sup>I am yet to identify the source of this śloka.

*tīrtham̄ pratilomakūpam̄ ca tīrthāni bhavantīti tathāpi yuñjānenā  
cittaśuddhy artham̄ prathamatas tīrthādikam̄ avaśyam̄ bhāvanīyam̄ |*

What it may be, the stability of the mind arises from a specific application of meditation onto favoured [objects] like, for example, sacred sites, deities, worlds, letters, principles, etc., with regard to favoured locations within one's own body. In that case, it is stated, although the knowers of Brahman assert that because of the pervasiveness of Brahman, everything indeed is a sacred place, and even the pores of the skin become places of pilgrimage. Nevertheless, the yogin (*yuñjāna*) who is aiming at the purification of the mind, must inevitably contemplate sacred places, etc. in the beginning [of practice].

Nārāyaṇatīrtha differentiates an alternative form of *Dhyānayoga* that is suitable particularly for beginners in meditation practice. Nārāyaṇatīrtha devotes the rest of his commentary on *sūtra* 1.39 to this type of meditation, which is aimed at objects located inside the body. He first specifies *tīrthabhāvanā*,<sup>221</sup> the meditation on sacred places, in which the practitioner is supposed to meditate on various sacred places of the Indian subcontinent in different body parts. Then, he specifies *devabhāvanā*,<sup>222</sup> the meditation of different deities, which are located in body parts, and *lokabhāvanā*,<sup>223</sup> the meditation on the worlds in the body and *varṇabhāvanā*,<sup>224</sup> the meditation on letters in the body. These letters are situated in one of six *cakras*.<sup>225</sup> Finally, Nārāyaṇatīrtha describes *tattvabhāvana*, the meditation on the principles.<sup>226</sup> The commentary concludes by discussing manipulating air currents through the nostrils for beneficial results, such as in heat or cold exposure, intercourse, travelling, etc. A useful summary of the details of this part of Nārāyaṇatīrtha's commentary has already been sufficiently worked out by Penna (2004: 91-97). Thus, it is not necessary to repeat it here.

<sup>221</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* Ed. p. 57-59

<sup>222</sup>Cf. ibid. Ed. p. 59.

<sup>223</sup>Cf. ibid. Ed. p. 59.

<sup>224</sup>Cf. ibid. Ed. p. 59.

<sup>225</sup>Cf. ibid. Ed. p. 59-61

<sup>226</sup>Cf. ibid. Ed. p. 61-63

### 2.9.2 Dhyānayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya*

Dhyānayoga is mentioned in the taxonomies of both texts<sup>227</sup> but is treated as an individual topic. However, various *dhyāna* practices can be found throughout the texts. As the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya*, particularly with regards to the *dhyāna*-related practices share the concepts and even the order in which they occur, they are treated together. The respective references for *Yugasvarodaya* are noted within the first layer of the critical Edition of this work.<sup>228</sup>

The first mention of the term *dhyāna* occurs in the context of nine *cakras* in the sections IV-XII. Rāmacandra and the unknown author of the *Yugasvarodaya* instruct *dhyāna* on the respective *cakra*, or a *mūrti* located within the *cakra*. The scribe-author of manuscript U<sub>2</sub> even adds more precise instructions on the duration of the meditations on the respective *cakras*. However, as we discover in section III, this meditation practice is attributed to Siddhakuṇḍaliniyoga or Mantrayoga and not to Dhyānayoga.

Next, we encounter the term *dhyāna* in the description of *adholakṣya* in section XV, in the second subtype of Haṭhayoga in section XX, in the description of *bāhylākṣya* in section XXIII, as well as within *antaralakṣya* in section XXIV. Another mention can be detected within the list and the eight limbs of Aṣṭāṅgayoga in section XXXI. Here, Rāmacandra states that *dhyāna* will not be discussed in this context, as this has happened many times before.<sup>229</sup> Im Kontext der Beschreibung von Aṣṭāṅgayoga beschreibt das *Yugasvarodaya* *dhyāna* völlig unterschiedlich. Der unbekannte Autor nennt zwei Arten von *dhyāna*, eine grobe und eine feine Art. Die grobe Form ist mit Mantras assoziiert, die feine Form ist ohne Mantras.<sup>230</sup> The text does not provide any further details in this regard.

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<sup>227</sup>The list of mentions of *dhyāna* is based on the sections of the *Yogatattvabindu*. The corresponding passages of the *Yugasvarodaya* can be taken from the critical apparatus of the present edition of the text.

<sup>228</sup>The critical Edition starts on p. ??.

<sup>229</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* section XXXI: *dhyānam ca bahutaram prāg uktam tenātra cocyate* | This instance demonstrates Rāmacandra's attitude towards redundancy. It is likely that this approach extends to his treatment of certain yoga methods that he initially mentions but does not elaborate on in separate sections of his text, unlike his treatment of other yogas.

<sup>230</sup>Cf. *Yugasvarodaya* (PT p. 841 = YK 7.8): *dhyānan tu dvividham proktam sthūlasūksmavibhedaḥ* | *sthūlam mantramayan viddhi sūkṣman tu mantravarjītām* |

In *Yogatattvabindu* XXXII-XLI the identity of the external universe with the body is taught. Microcosmic equivalents of various contents, such as the fourteen worlds, mountains and rivers, etc., are located in the body, similar to what we have observed in the *Yugasiddhāntacandrikā*. However, Rāmacandra does not specify a concrete reason for listing these physical equivalents of the external universe in the body. The same is true for the parallel passages of the *Yugasvarodaya*. Is it possible that the components of the yogic body are listed not only for purely informal reasons, but for the purpose of meditation?<sup>231</sup>

In section XLVIII, in the context of the divisions of the lotus in the heart, meditation on this heart lotus is prescribed. This meditation is supposed to lead to the illumination of the self and enhance vitality. Therefore, I conclude that although *Dhyānayoga* is not provided with its own section in either text, it is at least implicitly present in both texts and the generic term of meditation (*dhyāna*) is nevertheless a central theme.

### 2.9.3 Dhyānayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of *Dhyānayoga* within the complex yoga taxonomies presented in the three aforementioned texts positions *Dhyānayoga* invariably as a method of *Rājayoga*. Nārāyaṇatīrtha specifies *Dhyānayoga* as a means to counteract the instability of the mind. His description suggests that the meditation techniques fall into two categories: a general category that includes meditations on the supreme deity in various forms, light, etc., and a category of techniques particularly suitable for beginners. The latter category includes *tīrthabhāvanā* (meditation on microcosmic sacred places), *devabhāvanā* (meditation on deities), *lokabhāvanā* (meditation on worlds situated in the microcosm of the body), *varṇabhāvanā* (meditation on letters within *cakras*), and *tattvabhāvanā* (meditation on fundamental principles).

*Dhyānayoga* is mentioned in the taxonomies of both the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya*, but it is not treated as an individual topic. Nonetheless, various meditation practices are found throughout these texts. Various forms

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<sup>231</sup>In the case of *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, this question cannot be answered positively. In *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 3.1 it says: *pindamadhye carācaram yo jānāti sa yogī pindasaṃvittir bhavati* || 1 || “The yogin who knows the whole world as being in his body, he is one for whom realisation of the body arises.”

of *dhyāna* are mentioned, such as meditation on *cakras*, *lakṣyas* (targets or focal points), and various bodily locations. In the context of *Aṣṭāṅgayoga*, the *Yogasvarodaya* describes two types of *dhyāna*: a gross form associated with mantras and a subtle form without mantras. Although *Dhyānayoga* does not have a dedicated section in either text, it is implicitly present throughout. Meditation remains one of the most central themes in the discussions within both texts. It seems that Rāmacandra and the unknown author of the *Yogasvarodaya* did not introduce *Dhyānayoga* as a separate section, as *dhyāna* is a topic that permeates almost all other methods of *Rājayoga*, and he wanted to avoid redundancy.

## 2.10 Mantrayoga

Mantrayoga, the “Yoga of mantra”, appears without exception in all complex early modern yoga taxonomies under consideration. Similarly, in earlier basic fourfold yoga taxonomies, Mantrayoga is always one of the four representatives. In the Vaiṣṇava text called *Dattātrayayogaśāstra* (13th century), Mantrayoga, succeeded by Layayoga, Haṭhayoga and Rājayoga, is the first yoga in the scheme. In this text, the four yogas follow a clearly defined hierarchical order. Mantrayoga is considered the method for the lowest yogis, those with low intellect. With a duration of twelve years, the goal of this Mantrayoga, namely supernatural abilities (*siddhis*), is achieved after a relatively long time. This practice consists of reciting a single mantra after installing the letters of the alphabet on one’s body.<sup>232</sup>

The *Amararaugha* (12th century) was composed within a Śaiva milieu and describes the same yogas, albeit in a different order. The scheme begins with Laya- and Haṭha-, followed by Mantra- and Rājayoga. This shows a different form of hierarchy. All yogas are subordinated here only to Rājayoga, although the relatively low status of Mantrayoga is implied as well.<sup>233</sup> The practice here consists of meditation on the *om* mantra, followed by meditation on

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<sup>232</sup>Cf. *Dattātrayayogaśāstra* 12-14.

<sup>233</sup>Cf. *Amaraugha* 6: *nityaṇ mantraparo labheta bhavatāṇ naivādhipatyāṇ tathā divyastrinavasaṅgamo* ‘py anudinaṇ na dhyāyato labhyate | hastinyas turagāḥ kareṇukarabhbhāḥ śālyān nadā gopradā jāyante haṭhayoginas tu vāśāgā naitat prasādaṇ vinā || 3 || Birch translates: “One devoted to [reciting] mantras would never obtain śivahood and sovereignty; on emeditating every day does not obtain even the first union with divine women, and a *hathayogī* cannot control cow elephants, horses, bull elephants, camels, givers of gruel and givers of cows without the serenity of [Rājayoga].”

a white deity and a mantra beginning with *om* in the heart and then in a *mandala*. After one hundred thousand repetitions and a fire offering (*homa*) after every tenth repetition, this seemingly arduous practice can not only liberate from suffering and death but also ultimately leads to Rājayoga.<sup>234</sup> However, this implicit or explicit hierarchical view which manifested itself within the early medieval texts with basic taxonomies changed a few centuries later in certain discourses. In our complex early modern yoga taxonomies, different perspectives on Mantrayoga dominate.

Mantrayoga occupies the eighth position in the taxonomy of the Rājayoga methods within the *Yogatattvabindu*. It occupies the sixth position in the *Yugasvarodaya*. In both texts, all yogas are considered equally valuable forms of Rājayoga. However, the identification of practices involving mantras is tricky in both texts. As I will argue, the *Yogatattvabindu*, or, at least some of its recipients, might have taught the repetition of *so 'ham* which sometimes is called the *ajapā* mantra.<sup>235</sup> In the available textual evidence of the *Yugasvarodaya*, a description of Mantrayoga is absent. In Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* Mantrayoga is the fifth method for his Pātañjala based model of Rājayoga. His innovation is in directly integrating Mantrayoga with Jñānayoga and Advaitayoga. Among the sequence of yogas in Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* Mantrayoga is considered to be one of the four methods of Bhaktiyoga.

In none of these texts exists an implicit or explicit statement that the practices of Mantrayoga are an inferior form of yoga practice to be performed by remarkably untalented people, or that they would take a comparatively long time to achieve the overarching yogic goals. This observation suggests that practices labelled Mantrayoga were regaining popularity despite the disparaging voices of earlier texts. Alternatively, new audiences for yoga practices, which increasingly no longer consisted only of ascetics but permeated broader strata of society, appreciated Mantrayoga due to its relative simplicity and ease.

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<sup>234</sup> For an exhaustive discussion of Mantrayoga in the *Amaraugha*, see Birch, 2024: 34–35.

<sup>235</sup> Repetition of *so 'ham* or *ajapā* mantra are e.g. attested in *Yogabija* 106–107 and *Vivekamārtanda* 29–31.

### 2.10.1 Mantrayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya*

Apart from the mention of Mantrayoga in the initial verses quoted from the *Yugasvarodaya* in the *Prānatosīni*<sup>236</sup>, the quotations we have do not contain a dedicated description of Mantrayoga, similar to the case with Layayoga and Dhyānayoga. However, in the context of the *Yugasvarodaya*'s description of Aṣṭāṅgayoga<sup>237</sup> a practice involving *mantras* is mentioned in passing. The unknown author distinguishes two types of *dhyāna* - one is said to be gross and the other subtle. The gross type is associated with *mantras*, while the subtle type is devoid of *mantras*. The available testimonies of the *Yugasvarodaya* do not provide further details.

In the *Yogatattvabindu*, however, the term Mantrayoga appears again in section III:

*idāniṁ rājayogasya bhedāḥ kathyante | ke te | ekaḥ siddhakunḍaliniyogaḥ  
mantrayogaḥ amū rājayogau kathyete |*

Now, varieties of Rājayoga are described. Which are these? One is Siddhakunḍaliniyoga and one is Mantrayoga. These two Rājayogas are described [in the following].

After that, Ramacandra discusses the three primary channels of the yogic body: *Idā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Suṣumnā*. The section concludes with the assertion that the practitioner becomes omniscient once knowledge about the central channel is generated. The subsequent sections (IV-XII), present a system consisting of nine *cakras*.

This passage is problematic from a text-critical perspective. Rāmancandra is very much orientated towards his textual source, the *Yugasvarodaya*, in terms of structure and content, particularly in the first half of his text. However, the *Yugasvarodaya* specifies *jñānayoga* instead of *siddhakunḍaliniyoga mantrayogaḥ*. As usual, the remainder of the section is very similar in content to the *Yugasvarodaya*. Nevertheless, the manuscripts offer no alternatives for the conspicuous passage, so that the text must be accepted for the time being. Another reason is the seemingly strange sentence construction, which is ultimately

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<sup>236</sup> See *Prānatosīni* (Ed. p. 831) quoted with reference *yugasvarodaye*.

<sup>237</sup> Cf. *Yugasvarodaya* PT p. 841.

unsurprising if one knows the rest of the text and can be accepted. Right after the term *mantrayogah*, the reader would have wished for a *ca* ("and"). Only the manuscript L omits the term *mantrayogah* but preserves the following dual forms, so this is not a solution either.

The first *cakra* named *mūlacakra* is provided with the following introduction:

*idānīm suṣumṇāyāḥ jñānotpattāv upāyāḥ kathyante | ādau caturdalaṁ mūlacakram vartate |*

Now, the means for the genesis of knowledge of the central channel is described. At the beginning [of the central channel] exists the four-petalled root-cakra.

Based on this description which promises the genesis of knowledge, against the background that the *Yogasvarodaya* teaches Jñānayoga here, one is forced to infer that Rāmacandra assigns the sections IV-XII, which describe the nine *cakras*, to Siddhakundaliniyoga and Mantrayoga. However, almost all manuscripts, with the exception of U<sub>2</sub>, do not provide any conclusive evidence for a practice that could be classified as Mantrayoga.

Manuscript U<sub>2</sub> contains detailed additional passages that address this issue and describes a practice that can be identified as Mantrayoga. For each *cakra*, all manuscripts instruct *dhyāna* (meditation) on the respective *cakra*. Manuscript U<sub>2</sub>, in addition to various supplementary details, always includes an indication of the duration of the meditation, measured in *ajapājapas* ("the recitations of the non-recited").<sup>238</sup> Finally, the additional material in section

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<sup>238</sup>The *cakras* additionally receive the same time indication measured in *ghatis*, *palas* and *akṣaras*. Instructions for the duration of the practice of meditation are in most of the additions of U<sub>2</sub> for each *cakra*, except the seventh *cakra* at the palate and the ninth *cakra* named *mahāśūnyacakra*. For example, manuscript U<sub>2</sub> instructs a total of 600 *ajapājapas* as the duration of meditation onto the *mūlacakra*. This refers to the duration of the voiceless uttering of the natural *mantra* of the breath: *so 'ham* ("he is I") - *ham sa* ("I am him"). As in many other yoga texts, the total amount of *ajapājapa* per day is declared to be 21600 (cf. section XI. on p.??, l.7). If 21600 *ajapājapa* equals 24 hours, then 600 *ajapājapa* would equal 40 minutes. In the additions of U<sub>2</sub>, one finds the same numbers of *ajapājapa* as in the instructions for meditation onto the seven *cakra*-system of Jayatarāma (cf. Maheśānanda et al., 2006: 163 and *Jogpradīpyakā* 889–912). The redactor of the text as found in U<sub>2</sub> applied the system of the durations for seven *cakras* to the ninefold *cakra* system of Rāmacandra. Next, the duration that was mentioned before as 600 *ajapājapa* is repeated in another scheme by stating "*ghaṭi* 1 *palāni* 40". One *ghaṭi* equals 1/60 of a day (cf. Sircar, 1966: 119).

XI of manuscript U<sub>2</sub> makes it clear that the so-called *ajapā mantra* or *haṁsa mantra* must be meant here:<sup>239</sup>

*sakāreṇa bahir yāti hakāreṇa viśet punah |  
haṁsaḥ so 'haṁ tato mantram jīvo japatī sarvadā ||*

With the sound “sa”, he exhales. With the sound “ha”, he inhales again: “I am he, he is I”. Because of that, the embodied soul constantly utters the Mantra.

The *ajapā mantra* (“unmuttered mantra”) consists of the two syllables *haṁ* and *sah* according to the phonological association with the sound of inhalation and exhalation. Because all living beings inhale and exhale, they recite the *ajapā mantra* continuously day and night. At the same time, *haṁsa*, most often translated as “swan” or “goose” in English, is a famous and ancient metaphor for the soul travelling through the wheel of Brahman or *Samsāra*.<sup>240</sup> Sometimes this mantra is also specified as *ajapā gāyatri*.<sup>241</sup>

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114), which is 24 minutes. One *pala* equals 1/60 of a *ghaṭi*, which is 24 seconds (cf. Boethling, 1858: 4). The *Amanaska* in 1.35 (cf. Birch, 2013: 231) uses the same concept. For a more detailed tracing of the usage of the system in yogic and tantric literature, see Birch, 2013: 265, n. 46. In our case, the 24 minutes of the one *ghaṭi* plus the 16 minutes (40x24 seconds) of 40 *palas* once more sums up to 40 minutes for the instructed duration of meditation onto the first *cakra*. Other systems are less specific. *Kumbhakapaddhati* 208, i.e. states: *ṣaṇṇimeśo bhavat prāṇah ṣaḍbhīḥ prāṇaiḥ palam smṛtaṁ | palaiḥ ṣaṣṭibhir eva syād ghaṭikākālasammitā* || “Six winkings are one *prāṇa*, six *prāṇas* make up one *pala*. Sixty *palas* equal the time-period of a *ghatikā*.” According to Birch (2013) the time unit *akṣara* appears in Bhāskara’s *Siddhāntasiromāṇi* (17cd – 18ab of the *Kālamāṇḍhyāya* in the *Madhyamādhikāra*): *gurvakṣaraiḥ khendumaitair asus taiḥ | ṣaḍbhīḥ palam tair ghaṭikā khaṣaḍbhīḥ* || *syād vā ghaṭiṣaṣṭir ahaḥ kharāmair māso dinaistair dvikubhiś ca varṣam* | Birch, 2013: 265, n. 46 translates: “A breath is ten long syllables, and a Pala is six breaths, sixty Palas is one Ghaṭikā, sixty Ghatikās is a day, thirty days is a month, and twelve months is a year.” If one assumes an *akṣara* to be 1/10 of a breath and 21600 breaths per day, one hour would have 900 breaths, one minute would equal 16 breaths, one breath would equal 4 seconds, and one *akṣara* would be 0,4 seconds or 400 milliseconds.

<sup>239</sup> Probably first taught in the yoga literature in *Vivekamārtanda* 28-30

<sup>240</sup> See *Śvetāśvatara Upanisad* 1.6 and 3.18.

<sup>241</sup> The *ajapā* can be seen as a yogic appropriation of the Vedic *gāyatrīmantra*, cf. Mallinson and Singleton, 2017: 134.

Manuscript U<sub>2</sub> explains that the total daily number of all silent recitations of the *hamsa mantra* is 21600.<sup>242</sup> The association of the term Mantrayoga with the practice of *hamsa mantra* is widespread in Sanskrit yoga literature.<sup>243</sup>

From a text-critical perspective, there is ambivalent evidence regarding the authenticity of the passages under discussion. All manuscripts mention Mantrayoga in the above passage. We must, therefore, assume that Mantrayoga was originally and perhaps even deliberately specified here by Rāmacandra, even if, or precisely because, he reads the source text differently. But why?<sup>244</sup>

The fact that only the manuscript U<sub>2</sub> explicitly teaches a Mantrayoga must make one suspicious. This manuscript only contains additional material in the sections IV-XII. The most likely scenario is that the scribe of the manuscript U<sub>2</sub> made these additions to provide the missing explanations on Mantrayoga.<sup>245</sup> Manuscript U<sub>2</sub> belongs to the  $\beta$ -group of manuscripts, which often contains poorer readings in a large part of the text than the  $\alpha$ -group with the oldest manuscript N<sub>1</sub>. This also makes the other scenario seem far less likely at first,

<sup>242</sup>The number of total breaths is based on the assumption of an average breath duration of four seconds. Each day has 86400 seconds. If one divides this total number by four, one gets the 21600 breaths of the *ajapā mantra*. Birch (2013: 265, n. 46) argues that this assumption comes from *Svacchandatantra* 7.54–55. In addition to the U<sub>2</sub> manuscript of *Yogatattvabindu*, this yogic axiom is widely used in Sanskrit yoga literature. See for example *Amaraughaprabodha* 58, Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra* 5.232, *Vivekamārtanda* 46, *Gheraṇḍasamhitā* 5.79, *Dhyānabindūpanīṣad* 62ab-63ab or *Jogpradipyakā* 913.

<sup>243</sup>See e.g. *Yogabija* 147; *Śivayogapradipikā* 2.26–27 and 2.29–32. Powell (2023: 205) explains that in his text “mantra is reframed and interiorised within a *prāṇāyāma* environment, specifically in the form of the *ajapā*, the ‘unuttered’ mantra”; *Yogacintāmani* (Ed. p. 12); *Hathatattvakaumudi* 55.28; and *Yogaśikhopaniṣad* 132.

<sup>244</sup>Mantrayoga, which in the *Yogatattvabindu* III is introduced within the context of an explanation of the channels, followed by a description of the *cakras* could make sense in this context if we apply a perspective similar to *Śivayogapradipikā* 2.34: *so 'ham kṛtvātmaṇam svapada-parapadam vyaktavarṇadvayam tad vyālumped vyāñjane dve punar api racayed divyam omkāramantram | kṛtvānusvārayuktaṁ sakalamanuvaram brahmaṇādīm nayed yaḥ pūrṇānandah sa kuṇḍalyanubhavavikalahaṁ karmano muktīm eti || 34 ||* Powell (2023: 322) translates: “Having made *so 'ham* one’s personal mantra—in which the two syllables are expressed as one’s self and the Supreme—[the yogin] should take away the two consonants and refashion it as the divine mantra *om*. Having joined it with the nasal sound (*anusvāra*), it is the best of all mantras. He who leads it to the *brahmaṇādī* (i.e. *suṣumṇā*) is full of bliss, [even if] deprived of the experience of Kuṇḍalinī. He attains release from [all] *karma*.”

<sup>245</sup>The connection between Siddhakuṇḍaliniyoga and Mantrayoga established in U<sub>2</sub> is found in a similar form in *Śāradātilakatantra* 25.37ab: “The kuṇḍali Śakti abides in the *hamsah* [and] supports the [individual] Self.” (*bibharti kuṇḍali śaktir ātmānam hamsam āśritā*), see Bühnemann 2011: 218, 228.

namely that U<sub>2</sub>, despite its later dating, transmits a more original text than all other textual witnesses. However, the oldest manuscript N<sub>1</sub> has immense gaps, at least in the last third of the text. On the other hand, manuscript U<sub>2</sub> and some other manuscripts of the  $\beta$ -group are complete. Furthermore, only manuscript U<sub>2</sub> preserves the correct variant of the sentence

*bhuktimuktida śivarūpiṇī suṣumṇānādī pravartate | asyā jñānotpattau  
satyāṁ puruṣāḥ sarvajño bhavati |*

in section III. On one hand, because U<sub>2</sub> resolves substantive issues in the text, and on the other hand, because the additions are of interest from a reception history perspective, the supplementary material from U<sub>2</sub> has been included in greyscale in the edition and not relegated to a footnote. However, the stemma of the *Yogatattvabindu* suggests that manuscript U<sub>2</sub> most likely provides additional material. This material, it seems was added by the scribe due to the otherwise doubtful mention of Mantrayoga by Rāmacandra. The current factual situation does not allow any conclusion other than that Mantrayoga may have stood at this point in the original text. The only reasonable explanation for this is that Rāmacandra had a concept of Mantrayoga regarding the *cakras* in mind with this choice of words, but that he ultimately did not reflect it in his final formulations. This idea was probably very close to that of the manuscript U<sub>2</sub>, or *Śivayogapradīpikā* 2.34. This conclusion aligns with several other inconsistencies encountered throughout the text.

### 2.10.2 Mantrayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha locates Mantrayoga, like Jñānayoga before it, in the context of *Yogaśūtra* I.28.<sup>246</sup> This *sūtra* and the corresponding commentary by Nārāyaṇatīrtha have already been discussed in the chapter on Jñānayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (p.82 et seqq.) and therefore need not be repeated here.<sup>247</sup> Mantrayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is *japa* (“low-voice muttering”) of

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<sup>246</sup>For an up-to-date discussion of meditation on *prāṇava* in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, see Maas, 2009: 276–280.

<sup>247</sup>For another discussion of Mantrayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* see Penna, 2004: 71–76.

*praṇava* (“sacred syllable *om*”), which can be performed in two alternative ways, as Jñānayoga<sup>248</sup> or Advaitayoga.<sup>249</sup>

### 2.10.3 Mantrayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

Sundardās introduces his Mantrayoga (2.16-27) with the question of how the formless and featureless highest reality can be described.<sup>250</sup> For without naming it, one cannot refer to it.<sup>251</sup> A personal surrender, a devotion to the highest reality, is the basic prerequisite for Bhaktiyoga, the superordinate category of Sundardā’s Mantrayoga. The best, or verbatim the crown of all names for the highest reality, is *rāma*.<sup>252</sup> After verses of praise of the *rāma mantra* Sundardās explains that the *rāma mantra* has to be learnt from the Guru. At the beginning of Mantrayoga practice, one is supposed to recite the *rāma mantra* with the tongue, i.e. audibly.<sup>253</sup> In the course of the practice, the *rāma mantra* is then supposed to be recited mentally, constantly, day and night, in order to unite the practitioner with the omnipresent highest reality:

..pīchai hiradai maiṇ dhārai | jihvā rahita manṭra uccārai |  
 niṣa dina mana tāsaum raha lāgau | kabahūṇ naimka na ṭūṭai dhāgau ||  
 24 ||  
 puni tahāṁ pragaṭa hoī ramkārā | āpuhi āpu akhaṇḍita dhārā |  
 tana mana bisari jāi tahāṁ soī | romahi roma rāma dhuni hoī || 25 ||

(24) Afterwards, retain it [the mantra] in the heart; recite the mantra without the tongue. Night and day, let your mind stay attached to it; may the thread never break.

(25) Then there, the omnipresent one manifests; oneself becomes an unbroken stream. Body and mind forgotten there, in that state; in every hair, the sound of Rāma resonates.

<sup>248</sup>I discuss the concept of Jñānayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* on p. 82.

<sup>249</sup>I discuss the concept of Advaitayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* on p.83.

<sup>250</sup>*Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.16cd: jākai kachū rūpa nahim reṣā kauna prakārā jāi so deṣā || 16 ||

<sup>251</sup>Ibid. 2.17b: nāma binā nahim lagai piyārā |

<sup>252</sup>Ibid. 2.19cd: rāma mantra sabakai siramaurā tāhi na koi puṣṭata aurā || 19 ||

<sup>253</sup>Ibid. 2.23cd: prathama..vana suni guru kai pāsā puni so rasanā karat abhyāsā || 23 ||

Thus, Mantrayoga in *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* is a form of Bhaktiyoga that seeks union with the highest reality in the form of devotional recitation of the *rāma mantra*.

#### **2.10.4    Mantrayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies**

The comparative analysis of Mantrayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies reveals a broad range of applied variants of this form of yoga. It reflects the variety of adaption of the practice across different traditions during the 17th century.

Rāmacandra or at least some of the readers of his *Yogatattvabindu* understood Mantrayoga as a practice involving meditation on one of the nine *cakras* while mentally reciting the *ajapā* mantra.

Nārāyaṇatīrthas understands Mantrayoga as *japa* of *om* which symbolises Īśvara and his qualities. This can either be performed as Jñanayoga - while silently reciting *om* the mind is focused on the distinction between consciousness (*puraśa*) and primordial nature (*prakṛti*) including its effects (*tatkārya*). Or, it is performed as Advaitayoga - while silently reciting *om* one is supposed to reflect on the non-difference between the supreme self (*paramātman*) and the individual self (*jīva*).

Finally, Sundardās Mantrayoga is the devotional recitation of the *rāma mantra*.

We discovered that Mantrayoga has evolved in various forms across different traditions. The practices and the practitioners have undergone significant changes over the centuries, and intriguingly, Mantrayoga has seemingly shed its negative image, which was prevalent in early Hāṭhayoga traditions, and has gained in popularity.

## 2.II Lakṣyayoga

Lakṣyayoga, the “Yoga of foci”, is one of the most voluminous and most important topics<sup>254</sup> in the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>255</sup> The concept of this type of yoga has a complex history of reception, and its origins as a category of specific yoga techniques can be traced far back into early Tantric texts.<sup>256</sup> However, it was

<sup>254</sup>In the *Śivayogapradipikā* 1.8, the one who has attained the realisation of Brahman using the (in this case) three *lakṣyas* is called a knower of Rājayoga. In this text, the practice of *lakṣyas* is the primary characteristic practice of Rājayoga. In addition, being free from mental fluctuation through gnosis is specified as the second characteristic practice. (*triṣu laṣyeṣu yo brahmaśākṣatkāram gamisyati | jñāne vātha manovṛttirahito rājayogavit* || 1.8 ||)

<sup>255</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* sections XIII (overview of the five *lakṣyas*), XIV (*adholakṣya*), XV (*ūrdhvälakṣya*), XXIII (*bāhyalakṣya*), XXIV (*antaralakṣya*) and XXVII (*madhyalakṣya*) of the *Yogatattvabindu* deal exclusively with the types of Lakṣyayoga.

<sup>256</sup>The yoga practice of *lakṣyas* derives from an ancient Śaiva paradigm. The exact roots of this paradigm are difficult to reconstruct precisely. In many cases, the *lakṣyas* are taught together with a system of six to nine *cakras*, sixteen *ādhāras* and five *vyomas*, *ākāśas* or *khas*. In most texts that take up this paradigm, there is a variant of a verse also contained in the *Yogatattvabindu*, which lists the elements just mentioned as essential components of yoga. See *Yogatattvabindu* section XXVIII.1 for the verse and its variants in other contemporary and earlier texts. Perhaps the oldest datable textual evidence for the practice of yogic *lakṣyas* can be found in *Netratantra* 7.1-2, which was composed between 700-850 CE, cf. Sanderson, 2004: 243. However, here, the *lakṣyas* are only listed and not further explained, so we can assume that this practice is probably older than the *Netratantra* itself. Kṣemarāja, in his *Netroddyota* commentary, further elaborates on the three *lakṣyas*. He briefly states in the context of *Netratantra* 7.27: *trīṇi antarbahirubhayaṇāpūṇī lakṣyāṇī lakṣaṇīyāṇī yatra | nirāvaraṇāpūṇī patvāt khamanantam tu janmākhyam* “The three foci, internal, external or both, are to be attained, and because they are unobstructed, ‘The endless void is called the birth.’” Furthermore, the *lakṣyas* are no longer mentioned directly in the text. However, the *Netratantra* in 8.39-44 seems to refer to the techniques of the *lakṣyas*. At this passage of the text, the yogin has already reached *samādhi*. In this state, he is instructed not to direct his meditation towards various foci anymore. The descriptions of the foci negated here sound very similar to the descriptions of the three to five *lakṣyas* of the late medieval texts of the complex yoga taxonomies. For example, *Netratantra* 8.42 explains: *nāntaḥ śārīrasaṃsthāne na bāhye bhāvayet kvacit | nākāśe bandhayel lakṣyāṇām nādho drṣṭīṇi niveśayet* || 4.2 ||. “One should not contemplate any place of the body inside or outside. One should not fix one’s attention towards the sky (open space), nor should one direct one’s gaze downwards. Instead, the yogin should abandon everything and focus the mind on the supreme alone and in isolation”. Cf. *Netratantra* 8.44cd.

The *Mālinīviyajottaratana* (12.9) and other linked Tantras (e.g. *Kiraṇatantra* 2.22-23 and *Dikṣotara* 2.2-3.) also contain a system of *lakṣyas*. In the *Mālinīviyajottaratana*, there are six *lakṣyas*. These six *lakṣyas* are labelled as follows: 1. emptiness (*vyoman*), 2. body (*vigraha*), 3. drop (*bindu*), 4. phoneme (*arṇa*), 5. world (*bhuvana*) and 6. resonance (*dhvani*). According to Vasudeva (2004: 255), *lakṣyabheda* in *Mālinīviyajottaratana* denotes “the ultimate destination upon which the Yogi must fix his attention”. These *lakṣyas* are “different manifestations through which Śiva can be approached”. He further states: “To the Yogi engaged in the conquest of realities the *lakṣyas* serve as teleological magnets drawing him towards the sought after rewards”. Despite the same basic concept, the *lakṣyas* of the *Mālinīviyajottaratana* appear very different at first glance. On closer inspection, however, there are striking parallels with the *lakṣya* systems found in the late medieval

not labelled as an independent yoga category until the texts of the complex late medieval yoga taxonomies emerged. In the fifteen-fold yoga taxonomy of *Yogatattvabindu*, Lakṣyayoga is listed as the ninth method of Rājayoga. The *Yogasvarodaya* does not mention Lakṣyayoga in its introductory verses. The *Yogasvarodaya* dedicates two verses to listing the fifteen yogas. Although the verses announce fifteen yogas, only eight yogas are specified, probably for metrical reasons. Lakṣyayoga is not among the eight yogas mentioned but is dealt with in detail throughout the text. In the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Lakṣyayoga is the eighth yoga method Nārāyaṇatīrtha mentions.<sup>257</sup> Within the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* Sundardās presents Lakṣayoga<sup>258</sup> as one of the four methods of Hatha-yoga alongside Rāja- and Aṣṭāṅgayoga.<sup>259</sup> In contrast to the yoga categories discussed so far, Lakṣyayoga is conceptually largely congruent within the late medieval texts of the complex yoga taxonomies and differs only in a few details.

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texts treated in this chapter. For example, the first *lakṣya* of the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* 12.10abc is described as follows: *bāhyabhyantarabhedenā samuccayakṛtena ca trividham kīrtitam vyoma*. “The void is said to be threefold by the division of external, internal and that arising from accumulation.” Vasudeva (2004: 263) maintains that this elliptical definition can only be explained on the basis of the teachings on the voids of other Śaiva Tantras but notes that none of the systems he consulted show complete congruence with the position of the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra*. Nevertheless, he cites, for example, the passages from *Diksottara* 3.10c–11 and *Svaccandatantra* 4.289 that are particularly interesting for our context, in which an upper emptiness (*ūrdhvāśūnya*), a lower emptiness (*adhaḥśūnya*) and a middle emptiness (*madhyaśūnya*) are distinguished.

Taken together, the basic features of the late medieval differentiation of the five *lakṣyas* into *ūrdhva-*, *adho-*, *bāhya-*, *antara-*, and *madhyalakṣya* can already be discerned here. The *lakṣyas* of the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* are discussed in detail in Vasudeva, 2004: 253–293. This rough overview illustrates that different systems of yogic *lakṣya* practices have been circulating in the Śaiva Tantras for a very long time. Over the centuries, the techniques were passed on, copied and reused in the yoga traditions of Hatha- and Rājayoga. In addition to the four texts analysed in this chapter, different forms of *lakṣya* practice can also be found, for example, in *Vivekamārtanda*, *Śivayogapradīpikā*, (recensions of the *Hāṭhapradīpikā*), *Yogasvarodaya*, *Nityanāṭhapaddhati*, *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, *Yogacūḍāmanyupaniṣad*, *Maṇḍalabrahmaṇopaniṣat*, *Hāṭhatattvakaumudi* and *Hāṭhasaṃketacandrikā*.

<sup>257</sup> For an earlier discussion of *Lakṣyayoga* in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, see Penna, 2004: 77–78.

<sup>258</sup>The terms vary in the literature. The most common term is *lakṣya*, but *lakṣa* or *lakṣana* were also commonly specified.

<sup>259</sup>See Burger (2014: 697–98) for another discussion of Lakṣayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* in French.

### 2.II.I Lakṣyayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*, *Yogasvarodaya* and *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

The three texts present Lakṣyayoga as an explicitly simple yoga method right at the beginning of their respective discourses. The descriptions of the texts are very similar in the majority of instances. Thus, a separate analysis of them, as in the previous chapters, would be redundant. The word *lakṣya* means “goal”. In the practice of Lakṣyayoga, it refers to goals on which the gaze (*dṛṣṭi*) and the mind are directed, i.e. a “focus” for stabilising the mind on which one constantly meditates. The three texts distinguish five categories from one another, depending on the place to be focussed. The following order<sup>260</sup> is given in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*: 1. the upper focus (*ūrdhvalakṣya*), 2. the lower focus (*adholakṣya*), 3. the outer focus (*bāhyalakṣya*), 4. the middle focus (*madhyalakṣya*) and 5. the inner focus (*antar(a)lakṣya*).<sup>261</sup><sup>262</sup> Meditation on particular foci produces specific results.

#### 2.II.I.I Ūrdhvalakṣya

In the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*, the upper focus (*ūrdhvalakṣya*)<sup>263</sup> refers to the fixation of the gaze (*dṛṣṭi*) and the mind (*manas*) on the centre of the sky, or the zenith (*ākāśamadhye*). This results in the unity of the gaze with the splendour of the Supreme God (*parameśvara*). In addition, an object arises in the sky within the practitioner’s scope of vision, an object that was previously unseen.<sup>264</sup> The latter effect is cryptic. The source text, the *Yogasvarodaya*, also does not contribute to clarity in this case, as there is no parallel passage. The *Hṛthasamketacandrikā*<sup>265</sup> quotes this passage literally, without further explanation. The only clue I found is in the description of *ūrddha lakṣa*

<sup>260</sup>The order in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* is not identical, but as follows: 1. *adho lakṣa*, 2. *ūrddha lakṣa*, 3. *madhya lakṣa*, 4. *bāhya lakṣa* and 5. *amtar lakṣa*.

<sup>261</sup>Only in *Yogatattvabindu* is this *lakṣya* is designated as *antaralakṣya*. In all other texts, including the *Hṛthasamketacandrikā*, which quotes the *Yogatattvabindu*, the term *antaralakṣya* is used.

<sup>262</sup>In the *Yogatattvabindu* section XIII, in the *Yogasvarodaya* (PT) ed. pp. 833–834 and *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.25–36.

<sup>263</sup>*Yogatattvabindu* XV, *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 834) and *Yogakarnikā* 2.5.

<sup>264</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XIV (Ed. p. ??): *etasya lakṣyasya dṛḍhikaraṇat parameśvarasya tejasā saha dṛṣṭairkyam bhavati | atha cākāśamadhye yaḥ kaścid adṛṣṭah padārtho bhavati | sa sādhakasya dṛṣṭigocare bhavati |*

<sup>265</sup>*Hṛthasamketacandrikā* 2244 f. 124v ll. 1–2.

in *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 3.27. The technique described here is identical. The practitioner shall focus the gaze on the sky day and night. Sundardās explains the effect resulting from the practice in similar terms.<sup>266</sup> In 3.27cd Sundardās states: “Various kinds of splendour manifest, the essence of the Gopīs’ object of consideration becomes visible”. Due to the striking similarity of the formulations and the fact that Sundardās must have been a contemporary of Rāmacandra, a correlation is probable. Sundardās was a disciple of Dādu Dayāl (1544–1603) and a member of the school named after him, and therefore a Vaiṣṇava, so the phrase “the essence of the object of the Gopīs’ consideration” is probably the essence of Kṛṣṇa. Gopīs are paradigmatic figures of devotion (*bhakti*) to Kṛṣṇa.<sup>267</sup> Here, undoubtedly, the object of contemplation of the Gopīs must be Kṛṣṇa. Since Kṛṣṇa is considered the eighth *avātara* of Viṣṇu, the essence or being of Kṛṣṇa is probably Viṣṇu, who is sometimes called *puruṣottama* or *parameśvara*. Whether the *adr̥ṣṭah padārthah* of Rāmacandra derives from the *gopi padāratha* is uncertain, but the parallels to the wording of the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* are striking. Rāmacandra does not seem to favour any sectarian affiliation, and despite the clear Śaiva orientation of the main source text of his compilation, he is remarkably neutral in his formulations. Here, once more, he maintains his neutrality.

### 2.11.1.2 Adholakṣya

The lower focus (*adholakṣya*) of Rāmacandra is the stabilisation of the gaze (*dr̥ṣti*) at a distance of twelve fingers’ breadth from the tip of the nose or on the tip of the nose itself. The technique stabilises the *dr̥ṣti*, the breath and prolongs life.<sup>268</sup><sup>269</sup> Afterwards, the practitioner is supposed to focus inwardly and outwardly on emptiness (*śūnya*), which leads to freedom from the fear of

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<sup>266</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 3.27: *ürddha lakṣa karai ihīm bhāṃti | dusṭy ākāśa rahai dina rātī | bibidh prakāra hoi ujjiyārā | gopi padāratha disahīm sārā || 27 ||*

<sup>267</sup> See e.g. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 10.29.

<sup>268</sup> Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT): *nāsikopari deveśi dvādaśāṅgulamānataḥ dr̥ṣṭih sthirā* (*dr̥ṣṭisthiran* YK 2.5) *tu karttavyā* (*karttavyam* YK 2.5) *adholakṣam idam bhaja* (*bhajet* YK 2. 5) | *athavā* (*tathā ca* YK 2.5) *nāsikāgre tu sthirā dr̥ṣṭir iyan bhavet* (*śru* YK 2. 5) *sthirā dr̥ṣṭis cirāyuḥ syāt tathāsau* (*yasya bhavet sthirā dr̥ṣṭis cirāyuḥ* YK 2. 6) *sthiradṛṣṭimān* |

<sup>269</sup> Rāmacandra, in contrast to *Yogasvarodaya*, notes himself at this point that both options are taught as techniques of external focus (*bāhyalakṣya*). The difference for Rāmacandra appears to be not only the designation but, above all, the subsequent focussing on *śūnya*.

death (*maraṇatrāsa*).<sup>270</sup> Sundaradeva, in his *Hathasamketacandrikā*,<sup>271</sup> quotes the *Yogatattvabindu* without attribution. He adds the following alternative techniques to his description of *adholakṣya*:

athavā dr̄ṣṭir netraylor dvayor netrādhobhāgator akṣikūṭayos tad ad-  
hogallayo ūbhayor upari sthirā kartavyā | ekānte vijane dīpam āvarake  
saṁsthāpya ciram gatvāvalokyastheyam | ghaṭimātram vā ghaṭikārdham  
vā tato dīpam ācchādyā bhūmau sarvatrāvalokane sarvam śvetanīlapita  
5 sphulingakanām 'te mañḍalākāriṇiś ceti jyotiścakrāṇi pañcaṣad vā  
dr̄ṣyante | tataś cāṁdhakāre dr̄ṣyate | dīptimatsarvam svaśarīram  
dr̄ṣyate bhāsate sarvo 'pi sapradeśo dīptimān sphuṭo dr̄ṣyate | ekadārḍye  
jyotirmayacakrāṁte parameśvaraasya tejomūrtir dr̄ṣyate | pumsah  
paramānandotpattir jāyate | svadehavismṛtiś ca saṁbhavati |

10 athavā svanetrayor vartamanīr dakṣahastamadhyamātarjanībhyaṁ  
akṣikūṭayor adhāḥ kṛtvā akṣivartmanī dṛḍham cālaniye ghaṭikārdham vā  
ghaṭimātram tata evam kṛte sādhyakasyāgre suśvītajyotiḥ prākāśah prāg  
bhavatīti |

Alternatively, the gaze should be fixed without wavering on the lower parts of the corners of both eyes, just below the cheekbones. In a lonely place without people, a lamp shall be placed in the

**1–10** J = Jodhpur MS. No. 2244; C = Chennai GOML Ms. No. R 3239; C<sub>pc</sub> = ibid. *post correctionem*; M = Mysore ORI Ms. No. B 220. **10–15** J = Jodhpur MS. No. 2244; C = Chennai GOML Ms. No. R 3239; C<sub>pc</sub> = ibid. *post correctionem*; M = Mysore ORI Ms. No. B 220.

**1** dr̄ṣṭir J] dr̄ṣṭi CC<sub>pc</sub>M dvayor CC<sub>pc</sub>M] dvayor J netrā 'dhobhā-  
gator J **2** ūbhayor C<sub>pc</sub>] rūpayor CJ rūpa M upari CC<sub>pc</sub>J] pari M āvarake J] āvake CC<sub>pc</sub>M  
**3** ghaṭimātraṁ CC<sub>pc</sub>M] ghaṭimātra J **4** °pīta° J] yomta M yomta CC<sub>pc</sub> **5** ceti CC<sub>pc</sub>M] ceta J  
**6** cāṁdhakāre CC<sub>pc</sub>J] vāṁdhakāre M **9** saṁbhavati CC<sub>pc</sub>M] saṁbhavati | athavā svanetrayor  
vartmanīr dakṣahastamadhyamātarjanībhyaṁ akṣikū dehavismṛtiś ca saṁbhavati | J **10** varta-  
manīr J] vartmanā CC<sub>pc</sub>M **11** akṣikūṭayor em.] akṣikōṭayor M akṣikūṭakūṭayor CC<sub>pc</sub> akṣikūtvā J  
adhāḥ kṛtvā CC<sub>pc</sub>M] om. J akṣivartmanī CC<sub>pc</sub>M] akṣivanmanī J **12** prāg CC<sub>pc</sub>M] prāgvad J

<sup>270</sup> Rāmacandra reduces and massively changes his source text. See edition XV Ed. p. ???. Rāmacandra's *adholakṣya* on śūnya is attributed to *antarlakṣya* in the *Yogasvarodaya*. For a translation of the passage, see the subchapter on *antar(a)lakṣya* on p.133.

<sup>271</sup>The collation of the passages of the *Hathasamketacandrikā* I based on ORI B 220 (f.239 r l.8 - f. 240r l.13), GOML R 3239 (f. 258 l.14 - f. 259 l.10) and MMPP 2244 (f. 124r ll. 5-9 - f. 125r ll. 1-2).

darkness and observed for a long time. After one *ghaṭikā* (24 minutes) or half a *ghaṭikā* (12 minutes) [already], cover the lamp and then gaze all around on the ground; one may see all white, blue, and yellow sparkles forming circular patterns, and perhaps even fifty-six such circles of light become visible. As a consequence, one can see in the dark. One's own body is seen illuminated. Also, the entire place lights up [and] is seen brightly and clearly. In this phase, within the circle of light, the luminous form of the supreme lord is seen. The generation of supreme bliss arises for the person. Forgetting of one's own body occurs.

Alternatively, having placed the thumb and index finger of the right hand below the edge of the eye socket at the eyelids of the own eyes, and steadily causing to move [the fingers] at the eyelids, either for a half *ghaṭikā* (12 minutes) or for a *ghaṭikā* (24 minutes), as a result of having done this, very highly bright white light becomes visible in front of the practitioner.

Sundardā's *adho lakṣa* is the simple focusing of the gaze on the tip of the nose, which leads to the stabilisation of breath and mind.<sup>272</sup>

### 2.11.1.3 Bāhyalakṣya

The external focus (*bāhyalakṣya*)<sup>273</sup> is the fixation of the gaze (*drṣṭi*) on one of the five gross elements at different distances from the tip of the nose or, in one case, directly on the tip of the nose. The texts present the foci as alternatives. The presentation of the three texts follows the same pattern in every case. They list a specific location, followed by an element (in most cases) and a characteristic, such as an associated colour. A table is the best way to illustrate the spread of the various techniques across the texts.

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<sup>272</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.26: *prathamahīṁ adho lakṣa kauṇ jānaiṁ | nāśā agra drṣṭi sthira ānaiṁ | yātōm mana pavanā thira hoī | adho lakṣa jo sādhai koī || 26 ||*

<sup>273</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* XXIII; *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 837).

Table 4: Foci of Bāhyalakṣya

Location	Ele- ment	Characteristic	<i>Yogatattv- abindu</i>	<i>Yogasvaro- daya</i>	<i>Hathasaṃke- tacadrīkā</i>	<i>Sarvāṅgayo- gapradipikā</i>
Four finger breadths from the nose	Space	Appearing blue, full of splendour	x	x (Element missing)	x (Element = Wind; Characteristic= In the shape of smoke) <sup>274</sup>	x
Six finger breadths from the nose	Wind	In the shape of smoke	x	x	-	x
Eight finger breadths from the nose	Fire	Very red	x	x	x	x
Ten finger breadths from the nose	Water	White, fickle	x	-	-	x
Twelve finger breadths from the nose	Earth	Yellow-coloured	x	-	-	x
At the tip of the nose	Space	Full of fire, shining like ten million suns	x	-	-	-
Above the space-element	Space	Connected to the sun without the sun (thousand rays)	x	-	-	-
Seventeen-finger wide distance above the head	Light	Mass of light	x	x	-	-
In front of the gaze	Earth	Appearing in the colour of molten gold	x	x	-	-

<sup>274</sup> Possibly the text is corrupt and merged the first and second focus.

The table shows that the *Yogatattvabindu* contains the greatest variety of foci of the *bāhyalakṣya* category. Sundaradeva does not adopt all the foci in his *Yogaśaṅketacandrikā*. However, here, the transmission of this passage of the appears partially corrupt, since the text mixes up the first two foci. The *Yogaśvarodaya* only contains five of the nine foci in the table. Rāmacandra has added further foci based on the explanations of Bahirlakṣya in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.28 (Ed. 38-40).<sup>275</sup> Sundardās describes the first five foci for the five elements in a perfectly analogous fashion.<sup>276</sup> In the last verse of his explanation of *bāhya lakṣa*, he explains that there are many more *bāhya lakṣas*, but they must be revealed by the Guru.<sup>277</sup> The effects attributed to the practice of *bāhyalakṣya* are similar throughout the texts. Regardless of the variant practised, the practice promises rejuvenation, improved health, but moreover an improved social life<sup>278</sup> and a longer life span etc.

#### 2.II.1.4 *Antar(a)lakṣya*

The inner focus (*antar(a)lakṣya*) is a special case, as there are noticeable deviations between Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogaśvarodaya*. Although Rāmacandra continues to follow the *Yogaśvarodaya* in terms of structure and content for the description of his *antar(a)lakṣya*, the passages in the *Yogaśvarodaya* are not explicitly attributed to *antaralakṣya*, but are evidently assigned to the preceding *bāhyalakṣya*.<sup>279</sup> In addition, Rāmacandra simultaneously uses the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* (2.26-27) as a template for this passage, which attributes largely similar practices to the category of *antar(a)lakṣya*. In the *Yogaśvarodaya*, there is a separate description of *antaralakṣya*, the core practice of which was already integrated by Rāmacandra in the context of his *adholakṣya*.<sup>280</sup> The concept of the *antar lakṣa* of Sundardās is essentially identical.

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<sup>275</sup>The *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* teaches only three instead of five Lakṣyas: *antarlakṣya* (2.26-27); *bahiryalakṣya* (2.28); and *madhyalakṣya* (2.29).

<sup>276</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 2.29-31.

<sup>277</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.32: *bāhya lakṣa aur bahuteri so jānam jo pāvai seri | sataguru kṛpā karai jau kabahī | dei batāi chinak maim sabahi || 32 ||*

<sup>278</sup>*Yogatattvabindu* XXIII: *samagrāḥ śatravāḥ svapne ‘pi mitratām ayānti |*

<sup>279</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XXIV and *Yogaśvarodaya* (PT pp. 837-38).

<sup>280</sup>This is the meditation on emptiness (*śūnya*). Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XV and *Yogaśvarodaya* (PT p. 834).

In the XXIV section of the *Yogatattvabindu*, Rāmacandra specifies a total of three alternative *antar(a)lakṣyas*. As part of the explanations of the first *antar(a)lakṣya*, Rāmacandra first presents a description of the central channel in the yogic body, which is labelled here as *brahmaṇādī*. It originates from the spine (*brahmadaṇḍa*) and passes through the spine from bottom to top. The central channel extends from the root bulb (*mūlakanda*) to the opening of Brahman (*brahmarandhra*) at the top of the head. It is shaped like the stem of a lotus flower and shines like ten million suns. The practice of *antar(a)lakṣya* consists of meditating on it, which allows the practitioner to acquire supernatural abilities. Just the first of the three techniques appears in the context of *antar lakṣa* in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* of Sundardās, albeit in less detail. According to Sundardās, one is supposed to meditate on the central channel also called *brahmaṇādī*, which brings about the eight supernatural abilities.<sup>281</sup>

Rāmacandra's second technique for the practice of *antaralakṣya* is a meditation on a bright light above the forehead, preventing certain diseases.

His third alternative for the practice of *antaralakṣya* is meditation on the very fine red light in the centre between the eyebrows, which causes the yogin to be loved by everyone in the royal court and ensures that no one can take their eyes off him.<sup>282</sup>

The *antar(a)lakṣya* of the *Yogasvarodaya*,<sup>283</sup> the *Yogatattvabindu*, *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, and *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* differs greatly from the models in *Yogatattvabindu*, *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, and *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. It is exclusively about meditation on emptiness (*śūnya*):

antarlakṣaṁ śṛṇu subhrudigvidigādivarjitaṁ |  
bāhyabhyantara ākāśaṁ vādhāmantraṁ param mataṁ ||

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<sup>281</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.33: *amṛtaṁ lakṣa ju sunahūm prakāśā | brahma nādikā karahu abhyāsā | aṣṭa siddhi nava niddhi jahāṁlaum | ṭarahiṁ na kabahūm jivai jahāṁ laum* || 33 ||

<sup>282</sup>All three techniques of *antar(a)lakṣya* are also specified in the *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 837-28), but still in the context of *bāhyalakṣya*: *mūlakandothatalato brahmaṇādisamudbhavā | śvetavarṇā brahmarandhraparyantam eva tiṣṭhati | eṣā tu brahmarandhrākhyā tanmadhye varttate parā | padmatan-tusamākārā koṭisūryataḍitprabhā | calaty ūrddhaṁ mahāmūrttir asya dhyānād bhavec chivāḥ | anīmādy aṣṭasiddhis tu samagreṇa prasidati | lalāṭopari vā dhyātvā candran् vā jyotiḥ iśvarām | nāśayet kuṣṭharogādin mahāyūṣmān śivāḥ paraḥ<sup>25</sup> | bhruvor madhye' thāvā dhyātvā arkantu teja iśvarām | sthiradṛṣṭau rājapūjyo jīvanmuktaḥ śivo yathā | ātmānam ātmārupaṁ hi dhyātvā yo niṣkriyo bhavet | nirāśiryatattvo 'yam itaro na nṛpasthitih |*

<sup>283</sup>*Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 824) and *Yogakarṇikā* 2.8-13.

Listen to the internal focus, oh lovely-browed [Goddess], being devoid of the major and minor directions, etc. The internal and external space is the magical formula against pain, the supreme view.

*calajjāgratsusupteṣu bhojaneṣu ca sarvadā |  
sarvāvasthāsu deveśi cittam śūnye niyojayet ||*

While walking, waking, sleeping and eating at all times [and] in all states, oh Goddess, the mind shall be focussed onto emptiness.

*karttā kārayitā śūnyaṁmūrtimān śūnya iśvarah |  
harṣaśokaghaṭastho 'yaṁ janmamṛtyū labhet svayam ||*

The actor and he who causes to act are void; the form-bearer in the void is the supreme lord. Situated in a vessel of joy and sorrow, he himself experiences both birth and death.

5      *ghaṭasthāṁ cintayen mūrttimitaścintāsvarūpadhṛk |  
viṣayāṁ viśavad dṛṣṭvā tyaktvā jñātvā tu mārutam ||*

He shall contemplate [himself as] being situated in a vessel, established as form [and] carrying the nature of thought. Having abandoned sense objects as defective like poison, having realized them as consisting of the Maruts, ...

*saṁjñāśūnyamanā bhūtvā punyapāpair na lipyate |  
bāhyam abhyantaram khaṁ yad antarlakṣam iti smṛtam ||*

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<sup>1</sup> PT= *Prāṇatoṣinī* quotes *Yogavarodaya* with reference *yogasvarodaye*. YK= *Yogakarṇikā* quotes *Yogavarodaya* with reference *yogasvarodaye*.

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<sup>2</sup> subhru° PT] śukra° YK    <sup>2</sup> bāhyabhyantara ākāśam vādhāmantram param matam YK] om. PT

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<sup>3</sup> śūnyam YK] śunyah PT    <sup>5</sup> ghaṭasthāṁ YK] ghaṭasthā PT    cintayen YK] cintyayor PT    mūrttimitaś YK] mūrtir hata° PT    <sup>6</sup> dṛṣṭvā YK] duṣṭam PT    <sup>8</sup> khaṁ PT] om. YK    yad em.] yad hi YK hi PT

...having become aware of the emptiness of conception, he is not tainted by merits or sin. That which is the inner and outer space is taught as the internal focus.

*etad dhyānāt sadā kiñcid duḥkham na syāc chivo bhavet |  
śūnyan tu saccidānandam niḥśabdām brahmaśabdītam |  
saśabdām jñeyam ākāśamiti bhedadvayan tv iha ||*

Because of this meditation, any kind of suffering will no longer arise [and] one would become Śiva. Emptiness is being-consciousness-bliss, [and] called the soundless Brahman; space [on the other hand] is to be understood as with sound. Indeed, this is the twofold distinction in this world.

#### 2.II.1.5 *Madhyalakṣya*

The concept of the central focus (*madhyalakṣya*) is very similar in all three texts. In the *Yogatattvabindu*<sup>284</sup>, a light is visualised by the mind. The light is supposed to be the size of one's own body. Like a room on fire, this body shall be envisioned as filled with light. The light shall be white, yellow, red, grey or blue. The envisioned light is compared to the light of the sun, lightning or a crescent moon. *Madhyalakṣya* leads to the burning of the impurities of the mind. It also produces the sattvic quality of the mind. The practitioner becomes blissful. Rāmacandra remains very close to his original text regarding the choice of terminology and the content. Thus, there is no significant conceptual difference in comparison with the *madhyalakṣya* of the *Yogasvarodaya*.<sup>285</sup> Sundardā's descriptions in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* are shorter, but equally similar. The mind is supposed to dwell in its centre and focus on the form of the body. The

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<sup>3</sup> ākāśam PT] ākāśa YK

<sup>284</sup> See *Yogatattvabindu* XXVII, Ed. p. ??.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 839): *idāniṁ madhyalaksantu kathyate siddhikārakam | śvetam raktaṁ tathā  
pītam dhūmrākarantu nilabham | agnijvālāsamānābhā vidyutpuñjasamaprabhā | ādityamandalākāramathava  
candramāṇḍalam | jvaladākāśatulyam vā bhāvayed rūpamātmanah | etaj jyotirmayam dehaṇ manomadhye  
tu lakṣayet | eteṣāñ ca kṛte lakṣe nānāduḥkham praṇaśyati | manas astu malo yāti mahānando bhavet tataḥ |*

practice brings about the sattvic quality of the mind. However, Sundardās does not specify any visualisation of a light.<sup>286</sup>

### 2.11.2 Lakṣayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha neither divides Lakṣayoga into five,<sup>287</sup> nor in three sub-categories.<sup>288</sup> His explanations are of a more general nature. He locates Lakṣayoga within the framework of his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.35.

*lakṣayogasvarūpam upāyāntaram āha-  
viṣayavatī vā pravṛttir utpannā manasaḥ sthitinibandhinī* || 35 ||

It is said [there is] another method having the nature of Lakṣayoga

–  
Alternatively, activity directed to a sense object, which is generated, causes the stopping of the mind.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains:

*viṣayavatīti | nāsāgrādau cittasya samyamarūpāl lakṣayogād divyagand-  
hādisāksātkāro bhavati | seyam viṣayavatī pravṛttir viśvāsam utpādy-  
parameśvarādāv atisūkṣme manasaḥ sthitī sampādayatītī arthaḥ | tathā  
ca śāstriyānubhavaviṣaye jāte śraddhayā yogino dhyānādau sthirā bhā-  
vativity ayam lakṣayogah |  
yā hi nāsādidešeṣu dr̥ṣṭih pūmsām sthirā bhavet |  
sa lakṣayoga ākhyāto yoge śraddhākarah paraḥ ||  
iti smrter iti || 35 ||*

[Regarding the term] “*viṣayavatī*”. As a result of Lakṣayoga, which has the nature of concentration of the mind (*samyama*) on the tip of the nose, etc., a direct perception of divine fragrances and other objects occurs. This activity being directed to sense objects, having

<sup>286</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 3.28: *madhya lakṣa mana madhya bicārai | vapu pramāna koi rūpa nihārai  
yāte sātvik upajai āī | madhya lakṣa jo sādhai bhāī ||*

<sup>287</sup>As in the *Yogatattvabindu*, the *Yogasvarodaya* or in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*.

<sup>288</sup>As in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* or the *Śivayogapradīpikā*.

produced confidence, causes to generate fixedness of the mind in [something] very subtle, in [something like] the supreme Lord, etc. Such is the meaning.

And thus, stability in meditation, etc., arises for the yogin after the sense object from the experience of scripture has been produced with confidence. This is Laksyayoga.

For indeed, when the gaze of the person becomes steady at places like the tip of the nose, etc., that is called Laksyayoga, which in yoga, is considered the supreme faith-inspiring [practice].

Thus, it is remembered.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha is referring to the *bhāṣya* part of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* concerning *sūtra* 1.35.<sup>289</sup> In the *bhāṣya* part, various foci for meditation and specific effects that arise through concentration on the respective point are listed. Concentration on the tip of the nose creates absolute perception of odour. Concentration on the tip of the tongue leads to absolute perception of flavour. Concentration on the palate leads to absolute perception of form. Concentration on the centre of the tongue leads to absolute perception of touch. Concentration on the root of the tongue leads to absolute perception of sound. In addition, the *bhāṣya* lists the moon, sun, planets, jewels and lamps as sensory objects for focussing the mind. The resulting heightened perceptions stabilise the mind, remove doubt and are a gateway to *samādhi*. Furthermore, the *bhāṣya* explains that although the true nature of reality can be revealed through scriptures, inferences or instructions from teachers, these must be experienced personally, through one's own senses, so that the experience is not second-hand. Otherwise doubts occur for the practitioner. However, if these

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<sup>289</sup> *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* (Ed. p. 80): *nāsikāgre dhārayato 'syā yā divyagandhasaṁvit sā gandhapravṛttih jihvāgre rasasaṁvit | tāluni rūpasāṁvit | jihvāmadhye sparśasaṁvit | jihvāmūle śabda-saṁvit ity etā vṛt-taya utpannāś cittaṁ sthitau nibadhnanti, saṁśayaṁ viḍhamanti, samādhiprajñāyāṁ ca dvāribhavantīti | etena candrādityagrahamani-pradīpa-paraśyādiśu pravṛttir utpannā viṣayavaty eva veditavyā yady api hi tattac-chāstrānumānācāryopadeśair avagatam arthatattvarūpam sadbhūtam eva bhavati | eteśāṁ yathābhūtārtha-pratipā-danāsāmarthyāt, tathāpi yāvad ekadeśo 'pi kaścin na svakaraṇasaṁvedyo bhavati tāvat sarvam parokṣam ivāpavargādiśu sūkṣmeṣy artheṣu na dṛṣṭ buddhim utpādayati | tasmāc chāstrānumānācāryopadeśopodbal-anārtham evāvāsyām kaścid arthaviśeṣah pratyakṣikartavyah | tatra tadupadīśārtha-kadeśapratyakṣasatve sati sarvam sūkṣma-visayam api āpavargāc chaddhiyate | etadartham evedam cittaparikarma nirdiṣyate | aniyatāsu vṛttiṣu tadviṣayāyāṁ vaśikārasaṁjñāyāṁ upajātāyāṁ samarthaṁ syāt tasya tasyārthaḥ sya-pratyakṣikaraṇāyāti | tathā ca sati śraddhāviryasmitisamādhayō 'syāpratibandhena bhavisyantīti |*

heightened perceptions referred to in this *sūtra* are experienced personally, then faith, trust or confidence (*śraddhā*) in the statements of the scriptures etc., the entire yogic endeavour and especially the possibility of the desired liberation is strengthened.

### 2.11.3 Laksyayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Laksyayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies reveals some significant insights into this type of yoga. While it is certain that the practice involving *lakṣyas* emerged much earlier, the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies are the first texts that teach Laksyayoga as a distinct category of yoga. In comparison to earlier threefold models, which consist of *antarlakṣya*, *bahirlakṣya* and *madhya(ma)lakṣya*, whenever we read about Laksyayoga as a distinct type of yoga one encounters the fivefold model consisting of *ūrdhvvalakṣ(y)a*, *adholkaṣ(y)a*, *bāhyalakṣ(y)a*, *antar(a)lakṣ(y)a* and *madhyalakṣ(y)a*. If one encounters the concept of three *lakṣyas* in other texts like the *Netratantra* with *Netroddyota* (cf. 7.1), *Śivayogapradipikā* (cf. 4.36-50), *Maṇḍalabrahmaṇopanisat* (cf. 2.6-2.14) or *Advayatārakopanisat* (Ed. pp. 3-5) etc. it is never declared as an own type of yoga. The earliest texts which taught Laksyayoga as a distinct yoga type were either the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* or the lost *Yogasvarodaya*. From the *Yogasvarodaya*, Laksyayoga made its way into *Prāṇatoṣinī*, *Yogakarṇikā* and *Yogatattvabindu*. Via the *Yogatattvabindu*, Laksyayoga reached the *Hathasamkētacandrikā*. Nārāyaṇatirtha's Laksyayoga in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is the attempt to situate this popular type of yoga within the *Yogasūtra*. Additionally, we have witnessed a conceptionally largely congruent perspective on Laksyayoga across the texts. Thus, Laksyayoga is a signature yoga category of texts containing complex yoga taxonomies.

### 2.12 Vāsanāyoga

Vāsanāyoga, the “Yoga of mental residues”, is in tenth position of the methods of Rājayoga presented at the beginning of *Yogatattvabindu*. In the *Yogasvarodaya*, it is in position eight. However, neither text contains a specific description of Vāsanāyoga. However, the term *vāsanā* appears in several places in the

texts. In the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, Vāsanayoga is at position twelve.<sup>290</sup> The *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* does not list Vāsanayoga. The term *vāsanāyoga* is scarce in the entire yoga literature and only appears in the context of early modern yoga taxonomies. It is not found at all in the early and medieval yoga texts. The compound *vāsanāyoga* appears in a few places in tantric literature but never as an independent yoga category.

The term *vāsanā* is a technical term frequently used in Indian philosophy, especially in the context of the concept of *karma*. It plays a significant role in yoga and Advaita Vedānta. Furthermore, this term is important in Buddhist philosophy. The concept of the term *vāsanā* can be characterised as follows in the yoga philosophy of Pātañjalayoga and Advaita Vedānta, which is congruent with the context of the texts discussed here. *Vāsanā* denotes a certain type of karmic imprint. In the commentary literature of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, the term and concept of *vāsanā* is closely linked to the term and concept of *samskāra*. Both terms are often even used synonymously. However, a nuanced understanding can be expressed as follows: A *samskāra* is a mental imprint that is left in the mind (*citta*) by every action (*karma*). *Samskāras* trigger thoughts, memories and further actions (*karma*). *Vāsanā*, on the other hand, refers primarily to cumulative inherent imprints (*samskāras*) that exert a subconscious influence on the person's personality and actions, a behavioural tendency caused by past actions. *Vāsanās* are also those *samskāras* that exert an influence on later rebirths or control the configuration of rebirth.<sup>291</sup> Every action performed by a subject leaves an imprint or trace in the *karma* storage (*karmāśaya*) of the mind (*citta*).

Because the mind in Pātañjalayoga is the main component of the transmigrating subtle body (*sūksmaśarīra*), the configuration of the *karma* storage in the mind will determine the nature of future rebirth.<sup>292</sup> Literally, *vāsanā* even means “scent” or, in this context, “scent trail”. Metaphorically speaking, the actions leave behind a certain scent. This scent permeates the person and will continue to be felt in future actions for a long time because the accumulation of these habitual tendencies predisposes the person to certain future patterns

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<sup>290</sup>For an earlier discussion of Vāsanayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* see Penna, 2004: 82-85.

<sup>291</sup>Cf. Bryant, 2009: 418.

<sup>292</sup>Cf. *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 4.7-11.

of thought and behaviour. Thus, I think “mental residues” is a suitable translation. These patterns of thought and behaviour can be activated at any time, for example, triggered by sensory stimuli. In the context of a meditative yoga practice aimed at achieving the state called *samādhi* using concentration, a state characterised by a temporary standstill of mental activity, the *samskāras* and *vāsanās* in the yogin’s mind, when activated by sensory stimuli, would repeatedly lead to newly arising mental activity and thus to distraction from this desired goal.

If these are active, most are considered a hindrance to the ultimate goal of yoga practice and are either to be reduced or at least rendered inactive or latent. If the yogin is free from activated *samskāras* and *vāsanās* through yoga practice, he can not only reach the *samādhi* state, but he will also no longer be reborn. Thus he is freed from the cycle of rebirth (*samsāra*). It is important to emphasise that there are other highly positive *samskāras* and *vāsanās* that favour the practice of yoga, such as the habit of regular yoga practice (*yogābhyaṣa*) itself or good eating habits. However, all positive *samskāras* and *vāsanās* must be rendered inactive, for the final state of yoga of *Patañjalayogaśāstra*, the *asamprajñātasamādhi*.<sup>293</sup>

Thus, when we read about a Vāsanāyoga, we naturally expect a yoga that aims at reducing the *vāsanās* in order to achieve mental stillness and thereby *mokṣa*.

### 2.12.1 The term *vāsanā* in *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*

Similar to the case of Dhyānayoga, which both texts do not introduce as a separate category, but the concept of *dhyāna* can nevertheless be extrapolated, conclusions can also be drawn about the usage and concept of the term *vāsanā* despite the absence of a dedicated description of Vāsanayoga.

In *Yogatattvabindu*, the term plays a role in the interpretation (*nirukti*) of the word *avadhūta*. This word interpretation is explained in XLIV.3 and XLIV.4:<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> See *Patañjalayogaśāstra* 1.18, 1.50–51 and Bryant, 2009: 70–72 on 1.18 and ibid. 2009: 164–68 on 1.50–51 for a summary of the classical commentaries.

<sup>294</sup> Although most of the verses and passages in *Yogatattvabindu* XLIV are taken from *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, there is no correspondence to the verses XLIV.3–4 in this case. These verses may be authorial. The *Yogasvarodaya* does not thematise the *avadhūta* at all.

*ātmā hy akāro vijñeyo vakāro bhavavāsana | dhūta tatkampanam proktam  
so 'vadhūta udāhṛtaḥ || XLIV.3 ||*

The letter *a* is to be known as the self, and the letter *va* as the impressions of [mundane] existence; *dhūta* (“shaken off”) is said to be the special weapon; he is called an Avadhūta.

*akārārtho jīvabhūto vakārārtho 'tha vāsanā | etad dvayam yaḥ jānati so  
'vadhūta udāhṛtaḥ || XLIV.4 ||*

The meaning of the letter *a* is the being of the embodied soul, and the meaning of the letter *va* is then mental residues. He who knows this couple is declared to be an Avadhūta.

Accordingly, an Avadhūta is characterised by not only knowing the being of the embodied soul (*jīva*) and the *vāsanās* (“mental residues”) produced by action (*karma*), but the Avādhūta is an embodied soul (*jīva*) who has already shaken off all *vāsanās* and, as the following verses XLIV. 5-10 let us know, has become a perfected yogin (*siddhayogin*) by means of yoga.

In addition, the term *vāsanā* appears again in the context of *Yogatattvabindu* section LIII. This section is part of a thematic sequence of sections that differentiate metaphysical concepts of cosmogony. The discussion of cosmogony begins with section XLVIII.<sup>295</sup> From here Rāmacandra unfolds a cosmogony based on the descriptions of the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. However, he mixes, simplifies and reorganises the contents of his source texts.

Creation itself begins even before the Creator existed. He is composed of *kula* (Śakti) and *akula* (Śiva). That which existed before the Creator is called the unmanifest (*avyakta*), nameless (*anāmā*) supreme reality (*param tattvam*). According to sections XLVIII - LVII, the creation unfolds in pentads, giving rise to five qualities each. In section LIII, Rāmacandra introduces the next pentad, which he does not name for unknown reasons. However, it is based on the explanations of the pentad on *vyaktaśakti* of *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*.<sup>296</sup>

<sup>295</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* XLVIII: *idānīṃ yogasiddhar anantaram etādṛśam jñānam utpadyate* | “Now, through the accomplishment of yoga, such knowledge arises.”

<sup>296</sup> Cf. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* I.54.

This pentad consists of will (*icchā*), activity (*kriyā*), illusion (*māyā*), primordial nature (*prakṛti*) and speech (*vācā*). Each pentad has five properties. The will (*icchā*) consists of the five properties - intense passion (*unmāda*), mental residues (*vāsanā*), desire (*vāñchā*), mental state (*caitta*) and behaviour (*ceṣṭā*). The pentad can also be identified in the *Yogasvarodaya*.<sup>297</sup> None of the texts provides additional information on these five qualities.

The last mention of *vāsanā* occurs in section LVIII which is one of the most extended sections of the entire text. Therefore, Rāmacandra probably considered this topic particularly important for his entire yoga system. It bears the title “Majesty of yoga” (*yogasya māhātmyam*) and vehemently emphasises the indispensability of a teacher (*guru*) for the attainment of the reality of yoga (*yogatattva*). However, this should not be just any teacher, but a true teacher (*sadguru*):

*vikalpa etādrśo yathā samudramadhye mahttarakallolāḍambarah  
prapañcavāsanā etādrśī yathodakamadhye mahattaraṅgāḥ | tādrśāt  
saṃsārārṇavād yo nāvā param pāram prāpayati | sa sadguruḥ kathyate |*

Such mental occupation is like the roar of waves within the ocean. The manifold mental residues are like great waves in the water. He who causes to navigate the boat from such an ocean of *saṃsāra* to the other shore is called a true teacher.

Overall, within the tradition of the *Yogasvarodaya* available to us, the term *vāsanā* only appears in the context of cosmogony, and Vāsanāyoga is not present. In all three contexts in which *vāsana* is mentioned in the *Yogatattvabindu* - *avadhūta*, cosmogony and the importance of the teacher for yoga practice - it is not possible to speak of a Vāsanāyoga.

### 2.12.2 Vāsanāyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

The *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* is the only text amongst the texts of the complex late medieval taxonomies that contains a dedicated description of a Vāsanāyoga.

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<sup>297</sup> *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 847).

Nārāyaṇatīrtha locates Vāsanayoga in the framework of his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.37 and 1.38<sup>298</sup> and distinguishes two different methods of Vāsanāyoga. Let us first look at the first:

*avāntaravāsanāyogam āha- vitarāgavisiyam vā cittam || 37 ||*

With regard to [the two different methods of] Vāsanāyoga, it is said:

Or, [the mind becomes stable when directed], on a mind without the desire for sense objects.

This *sūtra* states another way of attaining *saṃādhi*. Here, the method for stabilising the mind is a meditation on the mind (*citta*) of someone whose mind is already free from craving for sense objects, for example, on the mind of a person known to have already attained this state. This person can be one's own realised teacher, but it can also be a famous yoga master of the past. In particular, the mind of the chosen person should be free of *vāsanās*. Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains:

*vīteti | vitarāgam nirvāsanam yat sanakādinām cittam tadviṣayam tadvibhāvanaparam kuryāt | nirvāsanavāsitam antahkaraṇam kuryād iti yāvat | anenātra yogino mumukṣulābhena vāsanāyogo darsitāḥ |*

[Regarding the term] *vīta* [“without”]. On a mind without desire, without sublime impressions, which is like that of Sanaka and others, he shall be entirely devoted to that reflection [which has] that [type of mind] as its object. To be precise, the mind shall be free from subliminal impressions. In this case, Vāsanayoga revealed [itself] through the attainment of the yogi's strong desire for liberation.

The most important characteristic of the chosen mind is freedom from *vāsanās*. The key indicator of having chosen the right mind as the object of meditation is the practitioner's increased desire for liberation (*mokṣa*). In the further course of his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.37, Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains

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<sup>298</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* Ed. p. 55-56.

that Vāsanayoga primarily leads to an increase in the sattvic quality of mind. This increase of *sattva*, in turn, increases the efficiency of all other practised yoga methods.<sup>299</sup> The key to this practice is that by meditating on a mind free of *vāsanās*, one's own *vāsanās* are naturally extinguished.<sup>300</sup>

Let us now turn towards the second method of Vāsanayoga. Nārāyaṇatīrtha introduces this method as follows:

*vāsanāyogasyāvāntaram bhedam āha-*  
*svapnanidrājñānālambanam vā || 38 ||*

With regards to the [other] distinction of Vāsanayoga, he says:  
 Or, [onto] the support of knowledge from dreams and sleep.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains in this regard that during sleep in dreams, some people have a vision of the favoured form of the divine, and others experience happiness through sleep. If this is the case, one can use these experiences as objects of meditation. This method works well because these experiences are based on previous very sattvic *vāsanās*. Meditating on them, therefore, also increases the sattvic quality in the waking state and thus leads to liberation.<sup>301</sup>

Thus, the first method of Vāsanayoga stands in stark contrast to the second method of Vāsanayoga. The first method of Vāsanayoga reduces negative *vāsanās* by focusing the practitioner's mind on another mind that has already

<sup>299</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 56) regarding *sūtra 1.37*: *uktañ ca smṛtau - sattvāvalambanam yat tad bijam cittaviśodhane | bhavet sa vāsanāyogo yogāntaravivardhakah | iti ||* "It is said in the Smṛti: That which supports the sattvic constitution is the primary cause for the purification of the mind, this is the Vāsanāyoga which enhances the other yogas." I have not yet succeeded in identifying the source text of this verse.

<sup>300</sup>Cf. ibid.: *tejahpratibandhajalaśaityavad iti vinaiva sādhanāntaram yogino mokṣasukhaniṣṭhāsam-havat | ayam śubho vāsanāyogo viruddhvāsanānivarttaka iti || 37 ||* "As without that which is 'like cold water combined with heat' is the yogi's inner practice, [for] this auspicious Vāsanayoga is that which removes the blocking sublime impressions, as a result of that the state of happiness and liberation arises for the yogi."

<sup>301</sup>Cf. ibid.: *svapne bhagavato yadrūpañ priyam ārādhayann eva prabuddha, evañ nidrādau yatsukham anubhūyate tad avalambanam tad vibhāvanaparam cittañ kuryāt | pūrvavāsanāprāptasattvapradhānam evāntaḥkaraṇam kuryād iti yāvat || 38 ||* "With regard to a dream, worshipping the divine in the favoured form, similarly, when one is awake, the mind should make the happiness experienced during sleep, etc., the support; that is what should be contemplated. To put it plainly: The mind should indeed cultivate the predominance of purity obtained from previous impressions."

dissolved its *vāsanās*. The second method is a specific meditation on very positive *vāsanās*. Both methods, however, increase the sattvic quality of the mind.

### 2.12.3 Vāsanāyoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The term Vāsanāyoga can only be found as an independent yoga category in the texts of the early modern yoga taxonomies, apart from Sundardās' *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*. In the entire genre of Haṭha- and Rājayoga there is not one other text that uses the term Vāsanāyoga as an independent yoga category. The taxonomies of the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya* both mention the category of Vāsanāyoga, but do not provide a detailed explanation of an associated yoga method. Only Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* contains a description of this type of yoga, which aims to increase the sattvic quality of the mind by reducing negative *vāsanās* or increasing particularly positive *vāsanās*. Nārāyaṇatīrtha conceptualises Vāsanāyoga as an auxiliary practice that enhances the effect of all the other yogas he teaches.

Since the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* was written by Nārāyaṇatīrtha in Benares and the *Yogasvarodaya*, the source of the North Indian *Yogatattvabindu*, seems to have South Indian roots, it is unlikely that the practice of Vāsanāyoga in both texts, which is not described further, can be traced back to Nārāyaṇatīrtha's influence. Especially since his localisation of the fifteen yogas in the *Yogasūtra* can plausibly be explained by the influence of contemporary oral discourse in Benares. Rather, it seems as if Rāmacandra did not describe Vāsanāyoga because it is not explicitly described in its source text, the *Yogasvarodaya*. Whether a variant of the *Yogasvarodaya* ever existed that contained a description of a Vāsanāyoga is uncertain for the time being. Judging by the importance of the concept of *vāsanā* in yoga literature, it is not unlikely that this was also a method that, similar to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, reduces negative *vāsanās* or cultivates positive *vāsanās*.

## 2.13 Śivayoga

Rāmacandra places Śivayoga, “the yoga of Śiva” at the eleventh position in his taxonomy of the fifteen methods of Rājayoga but does not dedicate a specific

section to Śivayoga, nor is the term mentioned again in the course of the text. The two verses mentioning the total number of fifteen yogas in the *Yogasvarodaya* only list eight. Śivayoga is not included in this incomplete list nor introduced as a separate topic in the *Yogasvarodaya*. However, Śivayoga likely was one of the missing seven yogas in the *Yogasvarodaya*. On the one hand, the *Yogasvarodaya* is a yoga text that originates from a Śaiva milieu. On the other hand, all other texts that deal with fifteen yogas also mention Śivayoga. Although the *Yogatattvabindu* adopts much of the content of the *Yogasvarodaya*, it conceals almost all traces of religious affiliation that were present in its source text. When Rāmacandra speaks of a god, he exclusively uses the neutral term *īśvara*. Śivayoga is not mentioned at all in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*. In the Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* milieu of a sant like Sundardā, a Śivayoga would not have been expected.<sup>302</sup> The only explicit description of a Śivayoga within the texts of the complex taxonomies is again found exclusively in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.<sup>303</sup>

### 2.13.1 Śivayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu*?

The *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Yogatattvabindu* do not dedicate a separate section to Śivayoga as a subcategory of Rājayoga, as was the case with other subcategories of Rājayoga listed in the taxonomies of the fifteen yogas. The question of why Śivayoga is listed at all but then not described raises another question. Namely, what would have been expected in such a description of Śivayoga as a method of Rājayoga? The comparison of the teachings of both texts with those of the *Śivayogapradīpikā*,<sup>304</sup> The first text ever to postulate Śivayoga as a unique system of yoga in relation to other yoga systems,<sup>305</sup> shows striking parallels in content to the texts examined here. There are also clear connections between these texts from the perspective of reception history, as will be shown in this subchapter. These observations, in turn raise a further question, namely whether the entire yoga system presented in the *Yogasvarodaya*

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<sup>302</sup>Cf. Horstmann and Rajpurohit, 2023: 7.

<sup>303</sup>See Penna (2004: 80–82) for an earlier discussion of Śivayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

<sup>304</sup>A critical edition was only recently completed as part of a most voluminous dissertation study by Powell (2023). I want to take this opportunity to thank Dr Seth Powell for making his work available for consultation before the publication of his dissertation.

<sup>305</sup>A textual history of the Sanskrit compound *śivayoga* is presented by Powell, 2023: 48–57.

and *Yogatattvabindu* could also be understood as Śivayoga, or instead whether there is a sufficiently big difference to describe Śivayoga separately after its mention in the taxonomy, because Cennasadāśivayogin, the author of the *Śivayogapradīpikā*, already equates Śivayoga and Rājayoga in verse 1.13:

In reality, there is no difference between Śivayoga and Rājayoga.  
Yet for those who worship Śiva [a difference] is thus declared, in  
order to increase wisdom.<sup>306</sup><sup>307</sup>

The *Yogasārasaṅgraha* contains a similar statement. Rājayoga, Śivayoga, *samādhi* and other terms for the highest soteriological state are equated here.<sup>308</sup>

The *Yugasvarodaya* is a text of the Rājayoga genre, originating from a Śaiva milieu. For instance, the text states that a yogin, as a knower of the first type of Jñānayoga, attains the rank of a liberated being called Śiva,<sup>309</sup> that the yogin becomes equal to Śiva through the practice of Haṭhayoga,<sup>310</sup> or that the yogin, as a result of the practice of *madhyalakṣya*, wanders the world like Śiva, devoid of sin or merit.<sup>311</sup> Furthermore, in the section on *yogamāhātmya*, a true teacher (*sadguru*) is equated with Śiva.<sup>312</sup> Additional references to Śiva can be found throughout the *Yugasvarodaya*. In contrast, while Rāmacandra draws extensively from the *Yugasvarodaya* for the compilation of his text, he largely omits Śaiva terms from his source to maintain religious neutrality.<sup>313</sup> The content parallels between our texts and the *Śivayogapradīpikā* are striking, making it

<sup>306</sup> Translated by Powell, 2023: 315.

<sup>307</sup> Śivayogapradīpikā 1.13: *na bhedah śivayogasya rājayogasya tattvataḥ | śivārcinām evam ukto buddeḥ pravṛddhaye || 13 ||*

<sup>308</sup> Yogasārasaṅgraha Ed. p. 60: *rājayogaḥ samādhiś conmanī ca manonmanī | śivayogo layastatvam sūnyasūnyam nirañjanam || amanaskam yathā caitannirālambanam nirañjanam | jīvanmuktis ca sahajam ity adir hy ekavācakam ||*

<sup>309</sup> Yugasvarodaya (PT p. 831): *jñānayogaṁ pravakṣyāmi tajjñāni śivatāṁ vrajet |*

<sup>310</sup> Ibid. (PT p. 835): *śivatulyo mahātmāsau haṭhayogaprasādataḥ |*

<sup>311</sup> Ibid. (PT p. 839): *śivavat vihared viśe pāpapunyavivarjitah |*

<sup>312</sup> Ibid. (PT p. 848): *nānāvikalpavibhrāntināśañca kurute tu yaḥ | sadguruḥ sa tu vijñeyo na tu vairaprakalpakah | ata eva maheśāni sadguruḥ śiva āditataḥ |*

<sup>313</sup> Only a few passages in the *Yogatattvabindu* reveal the Śaiva origin of its content: In Section III, the central channel is referred to as *śivarūpiṇi* (“Śiva-formed” or “in the form of benevolence”). In Section XXI.3, the highest soteriological state attainable through Jñānayoga is described as *śāmbhavisattā* (“the reality belonging to Śiva”), and in Section XLVIII.1, Śakti and Śiva appear as *kula* and *akula* in Rāmacandra’s cosmological exposition. Additionally, many of the yoga practices and concepts presented by Rāmacandra are derived from older Śaiva yoga systems.

pertinent to delineate the fundamental aspects of this similarity in light of the inquiry of this subsection. The *Sivayogapradipikā* by Cennasadāśivayogin is dated by Powell to approximately 1400–1450 CE.<sup>314</sup> Thus, we are situated around two hundred years prior to the composition of the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya*.

In contrast to the fifteenfold yoga taxonomy of our texts, Cennasadāśivayogin employs the model often used in medieval yoga literature, comprising Mantra, Laya, Haṭha, and Rājayoga, which are considered subcategories of Śivayoga.<sup>315</sup> As mentioned in the above quote from *Sivayogapradipikā* 1.13, Cennasadāśivayogin equates Śivayoga with Rājayoga, which he further subdivides into three categories: Sāṅkhyayoga, Tārakayoga, and Amanaska Rājayoga.<sup>316</sup> Cennasadāśivayogin also refers to his Sāṅkhyayoga as Jñānayoga.<sup>317</sup> To structure his text and teachings, Cennasadāśivayogin utilizes the eight limbs of Aṣṭāṅgayoga.<sup>318</sup> This is not the standard model of the eight-limbed yoga of the *Patañjalayogaśāstra*, but rather a specific model of a group of texts that interchange *dhyāna* and *dhāraṇa*. This phenomenon is otherwise only found in *śadāṅga* or *pañcāṅga* yoga systems.<sup>319</sup> Powell (2023: 168) explains that this interchange of *dhyāna* and *dhāraṇa* in an eight-limbed system is found only in the *Sivayogapradipikā*. Only the critical edition of the *Yogatattvabindu*, especially the inspection of the oldest manuscripts, could show that other texts with eight-limbed systems also conserve this sequence.<sup>320</sup> Moreover, this reversed sequence is also found in the transmission of the *Siddhasiddhāntapad-dhati*, which is closely linked to the *Sivayogapradipikā* and the *Yogatattvabindu*,

<sup>314</sup> Powell 2023: 157.

<sup>315</sup> *Sivayogapradipikā* 1.3–4: śivatattvavidāṁ śreṣṭha vakṣyāmi śṛṇu te 'dhūna | śivayogaṁ param guhyam api tvadbhaktigauravat || 3 || mantro layo haṭho rājayogaś ceti caturvidham | tam āhuḥ pūrvamunayah siddhāḥ śaṁbhuprabodhitāḥ || 4 ||

<sup>316</sup> Ibid. *Sivayogapradipikā* 1.10–11: so 'pi tridhā bhavet sāṅkhyas tārakaś cāmanā iti | pañcavimśati-tattvānām jñānam tat sāṅkhyam ucyate || 10 || bahirmudrāparijñānād yogas tāraka ucyate | antarmudrāpari-jñānād amanaska itīrtaḥ || 11 ||

<sup>317</sup> Ibid. 4.31.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid. 2.4–5: śivayogaḥ sādhakānāṁ sādhyas tatsādhanam haṭhaḥ | tasmād ādau prayuktavyam haṭhayogaṁ imam śṛṇu || 4 || aṅgāny aṣṭau haṭhasyāpi bāhyāny abhyantarāni ca | yamādīhir ato 'ṣṭāṅgair devapūjāṁ samācaret || 5 ||

<sup>319</sup> See table 10: *Yogāṅgas* with *Dhyāna* before *Dhāraṇa* in Powell (2023: 166) for an overview.

<sup>320</sup> See Section XXXI in the critical edition of the *Yogatattvabindu* on p.??.

in the manuscripts J<sub>1</sub> and J<sub>2</sub>.<sup>321</sup> The transmission of the *Yogasvarodaya* appears confusing in this respect, as it names an eight-limbed yoga but lists only *dhārana* in the verse that enumerates the limbs while subsequently explaining *dhyāna* and leaving *dhārana* unexplained. Nonetheless, this peculiar phenomenon already demonstrates the close historical reception linkage of the four involved texts. Furthermore, the *Śivayogapradīpikā* lists all the named yogas in the text, although not in a taxonomy, and thus already presents a similar diversity of yoga categories as found in the other texts with complex yoga taxonomies.<sup>322</sup> In the context of the fourth limb of the eight-limbed framework of the *Śivayogapradīpikā* named *prāṇāyāma*, Cennasadāśivayogin differentiates between three types of *prāṇāyāma*: 1. natural (*prākṛta*), 2. modified (*vaikṛta*), and 3. *kevalakumbhaka*, which unfolds by itself, with or without the practice of the first two variants.<sup>323</sup> The first variant<sup>324</sup> actually refers to the *ajapā mantra*, which is possibly alluded to by Rāmacandra in Section III, and explicitly instructed in the context of meditations (*dhyānas*) on the nine *cakras* in the manuscript U<sub>2</sub>. However, the Mantrayoga of the *Śivayogapradīpikā* is subordinated to *prāṇāyāma*.<sup>325</sup> The second variant of *prāṇāyāma* aligns with that in *Yogatattvabindu* Section XXXI.<sup>326</sup> In the third chapter of the *Śivayogapradīpikā*, which is dedicated to the fifth limb named *dhyāna*, we find detailed descriptions of the nine *cakras*,<sup>327</sup> and the sixteen *ādhāras*,<sup>328</sup> central themes also found in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*. The descriptions of the individual elements of both themes are largely congruent.

Alongside various similarities, there are also significant differences between the texts. For example, both texts include variants of Jñānayoga (Śivayo-

<sup>321</sup> See the edition of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* by Gharote and Pai (2016) in Section 2.32, Ed. p. 45.

<sup>322</sup> The *Śivayogapradīpikā* names ten yoga categories. The entire system is a system of 1. Śivayoga embedded in a system of 2. Aṣṭāṅgayoga. Within this, 3. Mantrayoga, 4. Layayoga, 5. Haṭhayoga, and 6. Rājayoga are situated. The latter is further divided into 7. Sāṅkhayoga = 8. Jñānayoga, 9. Tārakayoga, and 10. Amanaska Rājayoga.

<sup>323</sup> Cf. *Śivayogapradīpikā* 2.22: *prāṇāyāmas tridhā proktah prākṛto vaikṛtas tathā | dvābhyaṁ vinā jṛmbhate 'sau kevalaḥ kumbhakaḥ svayam* || 22 ||

<sup>324</sup> Ibid. 2.29–34

<sup>325</sup> See Powell, 2023: 205.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid. 22.4: *āgamoktavidhānenā recapūrasvabhāvataḥ | yadi prāṇanirodhaḥ syād vaikṛtaḥ sa udītritaḥ* || 24 ||

<sup>327</sup> Ibid. 3.7–16.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid. 3.17–32.

*gapradīpikā* 4.31 refers to Sāṅkhyayoga as Jñānayoga). The Śivayogapradīpikā teaches a system with a total of twenty-five *tattvas* plus *puruṣa*.<sup>329</sup> In contrast, the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* teach a simpler system with only ten *tattvas*.<sup>330</sup> While Cennasadāśivayogin initially defines a great soul (*mahātman*) as a soul that understands the true self (*ātman*) as ontologically distinct from the evolutes of *prakṛti*,<sup>331</sup> he immediately thereafter proclaims the non-duality of *ātman* and *brahman* in the sense of Advaita Vedānta or the *bhedābheda* schools of Vedānta.<sup>332</sup> In contrast, *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* teach a radical non-duality, the radical unity of the universal soul, individual soul, and creation,<sup>333</sup> reminiscent of forms of Śuddhādvaita.<sup>334</sup> In the context of Tārakayoga in the fourth chapter of the Śivayogapradīpikā,<sup>335</sup> the three *lakṣyas* *antar*, *bāhya*, and *madhyalakṣya* are taught, whereas *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* teach five *lakṣyas*. There are further differences, but perhaps the most central difference is that all the teachings in Cennasadāśivayogin's Śivayogapradīpikā are embedded within the ritual and devotional framework of the Viraśaivas.<sup>336</sup> Thus, Cennasadāśivayogin defines Śivayoga in verse 1.15 as:

Śivayoga is five-fold, indeed: gnosis (*jñāna*) comprised of Śiva, devotion (*bhakti*) to Śiva, meditation (*dhyāna*) comprised of Śiva, Śaiva religious observance (*vrata*), and worship of Śiva (*arcā*).<sup>337</sup>

Despite the clear Śaiva affiliation of the *Yogasvarodaya*, these elements are nowhere to be found. The same applies to the *Yogatattvabindu*. Even the eight-limbed (*astāṅga*) scheme is regarded in this text as a ritual worship of Śiva

<sup>329</sup> See Śivayogapradīpikā 4.19–31. Additionally, the *tattva* system of the Śivayogapradīpikā is thoroughly analyzed by Powell, 2023: 239–242.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XXXI.6 and *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 836).

<sup>331</sup> Śivayogapradīpikā 4.28: *dehatrayam prathitaśoḍaśadhāvikārān lingāni saptadaśadhā navadhā padarāthān | ātmānām aṣṭavidhayā prakṛtisabhāvam jñātvā tad anya iti jīvati yo mahātmā* || 28 ||

<sup>332</sup> Ibid. 4.29–30: *satyam jñānam anantam yad brahmaeti vadati śrutih | muktānandasavarūpam ca nanu tat tvam asi sthiram* || 29 || *naitad aham naidrad aham ceti yad anyam vibhāvayātmānam | so 'ham iti so 'ham iti nanu bhāvaya sarvam tvam ātmānam* || 30 ||

<sup>333</sup> See *Yogatattvabindu* Section XXI.7 and *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 836).

<sup>334</sup> See Glasenapp, 1985: 270–272.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid. 4.32–52.

<sup>336</sup> Powell 2023: 8.

<sup>337</sup> Śivayogapradīpikā 1.15: *jñānam śivamayaṁ bhaktiḥ śaivi dhyānam śivātmakam | śaivavrataṁ śivārceti śivayogo hi pañcadhā* || 15 || Translation by Powell, 2023: 315.

(śivapūja)<sup>338</sup> and Powell (2023) concludes that it is precisely this devotional and ritual orientation that renders the yoga system of the Śivayogapradīpikā as Śivayoga. Through this comparative examination, can it be said that the yoga systems of the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* implicitly teach Śivayoga? This question cannot be answered definitively. It is a fact that, at the level of doctrinal content, all three texts exhibit numerous commonalities. Content-wise, this question could tentatively be answered in the affirmative. However, the strong Śaiva orientation,<sup>339</sup> as observed in the Śivayogapradīpikā, is largely absent in the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Yogatattvabindu*, with both texts effectively subordinating Śivayoga to Rājayoga. The degree of Śaiva orientation in the *Yogasvarodaya* based on the quotations in the *Prānatosiṇī* appears moderate, with ten mentions of the word *śiva*, and it is almost entirely extinguished in the *Yogatattvabindu*. From this perspective, the question posed in this subsection must be answered in the negative. Nevertheless, given the background presented here, the mysterious presence of the category Śivayoga in the fifteenfold taxonomies, which lists Śivayoga as a subcategory of Rājayoga and regrettably does not explicitly explain it, is easily elucidated. Śivayoga and Rājayoga would be essentially synonymous in content, as per the view initially mentioned by Cennasadāśivayogin. The fact that both systems also teach essentially the same practices would render the absence of a dedicated section explicitly explaining Śivayoga superfluous. Thus, it is quite possible that Rāmacandra shared the perspective of Cennasadāśivayogin. Furthermore, the striking content similarities, such as the specific sequence of the eight limbs of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, lead to the conclusion that the Śivayogapradīpikā and the *Yogasvarodaya*, and thereby also the *Yogatattvabindu*, which also draws upon the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, a text closely related to the Śivayogapradīpikā,<sup>340</sup> originate from the same intertextual network. For this reason, I find it highly likely that the concept of Śivayoga, not explicitly described in the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya*, should broadly align with that of the Śivayogapradīpikā.

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<sup>338</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.1-5.

<sup>339</sup>The word *śiva* is mentioned a total of seventy-nine times in the Śivayogapradīpikā.

<sup>340</sup>For a discussion of the relationship between the Śivayogapradīpikā and *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* see Powell, 2023: 147-52.

## 2.13.2 Śivayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates Śivayoga, along with Brahmayoga,<sup>341</sup> in his commentary on *Yogaśūtra* 1.36:<sup>342</sup>

*brahmayogaṁ śivayogañ cāha-*  
*viśokā vā jyotiṣmati* || 36 ||

It is said about Brahmayoga and Śivayoga:

Or, [steadiness of the mind is gained when it is directed onto that which is] without sorrow [and] luminous.

According to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the method of Śivayoga consists of fixing the gaze internally and externally on the self in the form of light at the centre of the eyebrows. The result of this restraint of the mind (*samyama*) is freedom from sorrow (*viśokā*).<sup>343</sup> He then describes that Śivayoga, through the practices of Haṭhayoga, is free from the pains and, through the luminous perception of the witness (*sākṣin*), leads to the stability of the mind. He then refers to Śivayoga as *śāmbhavimudrā*.<sup>344</sup> His mention of Haṭhayoga suggests that he did not regard Śivayoga, or *śāmbhavimudrā*, as an alternative practice, but rather as a complementary one. Since Nārāyaṇatīrtha names Haṭhayoga as the basis for *śāmbhavimudrā* in this context and primarily uses the *Haṭhapradīpikā* as the source text for his practices of Haṭhayoga, it is plausible that his *śāmbhavimudrā* also derives from this source text. Nārāyaṇatīrtha then quotes the *Amanaska*<sup>345</sup> without reference:

*antarlakṣyā bahirdṛṣṭir nimeṣonmeṣavarjita | eṣā hi śāmbhavī mudrā sar-*  
*vatanreṣu gopitā ||*

The focus is internal, the gaze external, unblinking: this is the *śāmbhavimudrā* concealed in all the Tantras.<sup>346</sup>

<sup>341</sup>The discussion of Brahmayoga can be found in the following chapter on p.154.

<sup>342</sup>See Penna (2004: 80–82) for another discussion of Śivayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

<sup>343</sup>*Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 55): *athavā bhrūmadhyādau jyotirūpe pratyagātmani bahirdṛṣṭibandhena manasāḥ samyamād viśokā* |

<sup>344</sup>Ibid. (Ed. p. 55): *haṭhayogād āvivāyāsakṛtakleśarahitā jyotiṣmati sākṣivisayāsaṃvin manasāḥ sthairyhetur iti śivayogaḥ* | *ayam eva śāmbhavī mudrēty ucyate* |

<sup>345</sup>Cf. *Amanaska* 2.10 and *Haṭhapradīpikā* 4.6.

<sup>346</sup>This is the translation of our critical Edition of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* (2024), which also quotes this verse in 4.6.

Immediately after that, Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains that *sāmbhavimudrā* can also be mastered through *yogāsana-*, *cāñcari-*, *bhūcari-*, *khecari-*, *agaucaři-* [and] *nirvāṇamudrā*, with the instructions for these needing to be obtained from a teacher.<sup>347</sup> Nārāyaṇatīrtha's association of *sāmbhavimudrā* and Śivayoga is insightful, as *sāmbhavimudrā* is the central practice of the Rājayoga of the *Amanaska*,<sup>348</sup> and Cennasadāśivayogin also teaches *sāmbhavimudrā* as part of his Śivayoga system.<sup>349</sup> This establishes a conceptual bridge between Rāja- and Śivayoga.

### 2.13.3 Śivayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

Due to the absence of an explicit description of Śivayoga, despite its listing in the complex yoga taxonomies of the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya*, the comparative analysis of Śivayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies reveals significant insights into this type of yoga as well as reception-historical links with the authoritative Śivayoga text, the *Śivayogapradipikā*. Furthermore, the analysis of Śivayoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* - the only text in the complex yoga taxonomies that contains a detailed description of Śivayoga - illustrates how he, as a Brahmin, Samnyāsin and learned author of the 17th century in Benares, understood the type of yoga called Śivayoga.

The lack of a precise description of Śivayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya* provoked the comparison with the concept of Śivayoga in the most important Śivayoga text of all, the *Śivayogapradipikā*, especially since the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* cannot have been the origin of the mention of Śivayoga in these taxonomies. This comparison made it particularly clear that the *Yogasvarodaya* and thus also the *Yogatattvabindu* are part of an intertextual network to which the *Śivayogapradipikā* also belongs. Many of the doctrinal contents, such as the teaching of a total of nine *cakras*, sixteen *ādhāras*, a system of three to five *lakṣyas* and five *vyomas*, are essentially identical. In addition, the texts contain an Aṣṭāṅgayoga in which the order of the *aṅgas* is called *dhyāna* before

<sup>347</sup>Ibid.: *sā ca yogāsanacāñcaribhūcariķhecarya'gaucariṇirvāṇamudrābhīḥ siddhyati | prakāras guru-mukhād avagantayah |*

<sup>348</sup>Cf. *Amanaska* 2.2-10.

<sup>349</sup>Cf. *Śivayogapradipikā* 5.3.

*dhāraṇa*, which is an apparent deviation from the Aṣṭāṅgayoga of Patañjali. Although the śivaitic orientation in the *Yogasvarodaya* is already significantly weakened and almost completely extinguished in the *Yogatattvabindu*, the basic features of the doctrinal structure nevertheless remain very similar. Based on this observation, the conclusion suggests itself that a separate description of Śivayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yogasvarodaya* would have been redundant in this respect because a Śivayoga in these texts would contain what both texts already predominantly teach anyway.

For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, whose primary concern in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* was to locate the popular fifteen yogas circulating in Benares in the *Yogasūtra* in order to underpin the universality and superiority of his own yoga system, Śivayoga is equated with Śāmbhavīmudrā. It can be assumed that he took this teaching from *Haṭhapradipikā* and was unaware of independently organised systems under the name Śivayoga. The fact that his understanding of Śivayoga derives from Haṭhayoga is also confirmed by his statement that Śāmbhavīmudrā can also be mastered utilising other haṭhayogic mudrās since the mudrās in particular are the hallmark of Haṭhayoga.

## 2.14 Brahmayoga

The term *brahman*, primarily known from Vedānta and the associated Upaniṣads, signifies a profound concept in Hindu philosophy. Brahman refers to the immortal and infinite Absolute, the ultimate One, which itself has no cause, the primordial ground of all being, from which everything originates. Brahman underlies all existence and constituted the highest conception of divinity during the era of the early Upaniṣads (750–500 BCE). From this philosophical notion also emerged the anthropomorphic male principal deity Brahmā, with all goddesses and gods, including Brahmā, being aspects of Brahman. A significant concept linked to this is the essential identity of Brahman with the individual self or essence of a person, the Ātman. A paramount goal, especially in early Vedāntic yoga texts, such as the *Katha Upaniṣad*,<sup>350</sup> is to realize this identity between one's microcosmic self and the macrocosmic Brahman, thereby recognizing one's essential immortality and achieving

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<sup>350</sup> See Haas (2018) for a recent comprehensive study on the *Katha Upaniṣad*.

liberation (*mokṣa*) from the cycle of rebirth (*samsāra*). The preferred means here, and in many other Vedāntic yoga texts, is meditative absorption through reciting the syllable *oṁ*. This syllable is considered the ideal sonic representation of Brahman and thus capable of making the essential unity between the individual self and the transcendent Brahman experientially accessible.<sup>351</sup> Here, originally Vedic ideas are combined with concepts from the Śramaṇa movement's Proto-Sāṃkhyayoga. These concepts and terms, already circulating on the Indian subcontinent in pre-Christian times, exerted significant influence on later yoga traditions so that various core elements and fundamental ideas from that time can still be found in yoga literature centuries, even millennia later. For this reason, these core elements and fundamental ideas also resonate in early modern descriptions of Brahmayoga, the "Yoga of Brahman" or "Union with Brahman."

In the taxonomy of the fifteen methods of Rājayoga, Rāmacandra places Brahmayoga at position twelve. Apart from this mention, there is no further trace of Brahmayoga. It is possible that Brahmayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*, similar to the case of Śivayoga, is considered synonymous with Rājayoga and therefore not discussed separately.<sup>352</sup> In the *Yugasvarodaya*, the term Brahmayoga is absent in the extant transmission. The two verses in the *Yugasvarodaya* that mention the total number of fifteen yogas list only eight of them. Brahmayoga is not included in this incomplete list nor introduced as an independent topic in the *Yugasvarodaya*. However, Brahmayoga is likely among the seven missing yogas in the *Yugasvarodaya*, as this category is mentioned in all other complex yoga taxonomies. Nārāyaṇatīrtha positions Brahmayoga at number nine in the *Yogasiddhāntaycandrikā*. In the *Sarvāṅgagapradīpikā*, Sundardās subsumes Brahmayoga under the overarching category of Sāṃkhyayoga along with Jñānayoga and Advaitayoga. In this context, it is the eleventh and, thus, one of the penultimate yogas in the progressive and consecutive systematisation of twelve yogas described by Sundardās. Both Nārāyaṇatīrtha and Sundardās elaborate on their concept of Brahmayoga in detail.

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<sup>351</sup>Cf. *Katha Upaniṣad* 2.15–17.

<sup>352</sup>In the introductory verse of the *Yugasvarodaya* (Ed. p. 831), it is stated about the fifteen methods of Rājayoga: "By [means of] these fifteen [yogas], this [person] who is resting in Brahman shines [like a king]." (*rājaty etad brahmaśiva ebhiś ca pañcadaśadhā* ||).

### 2.14.1 Brahmayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

As previously noted concerning Śivayoga, Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates Brahmayoga, the “Yoga of Brahman” within the context of his commentary on *Yogaśūtra* 1.36.<sup>353</sup><sup>354</sup> In this case, as well, Brahmayoga involves a method of focusing the mind on a luminous (*jyotiṣmati*) meditation object that is free from sorrow (*viśokā*). This meditation object is Brahman in the form of *nāda* (“inner resonance”) and is located in the eight-petaled lotus of the heart. The union of the mind with *nāda* is free from sorrow (*viśokā*). According to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, this is because Brahmayoga is free from the misery caused by the effort of various yoga methods. Nārāyaṇatīrtha also describes this method as luminous because it has a light as its object. This light is the gnosis through the object, which consists of consciousness and bliss and is contained within the *nāda*. If the practitioner succeeds in uniting the mind with the *nāda* in the heart’s lotus, the mind is brought to a standstill.<sup>355</sup> This practice is complex, as it involves detailed meditation, visualization, *prāṇāyāma*, and the recitation of the three letters A-U-M, which form the sound of the mantra *om̄*:

tathā hy ayam atra kramah |  
 hrdayādho 'dhomukhamāṣṭadalām kamalam recakenordhvamukham  
 vibhāvyā, tatra sūryamandalām dvādaśakalātmakam jāgaritasthānam  
 akāraṁ, tadupari candramaṇḍalam ṣoḍaśakalātmakam svapnasthānam  
 ukāraṁ, tadupari vahnimāṇḍalam daśakalātmakam susuptisthā-  
 nam makāraṁ, tadupari nādākhyam turiyam brahma vibhāvayed iti  
 brahmayogah |

Thus, indeed this is the respective sequence:

In the lower [part of] the heart there is an eight-petalled lotus facing downward, by means of *recaka*-[*kumbhaka*?]<sup>356</sup> it should be

<sup>353</sup> See p. 152 for the translation of this *sūtra*.

<sup>354</sup> See Penna (2004: 89-80) for his discussion of Brahmayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.

<sup>355</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 54): viśoketi| aṣṭadalādau nādākhye brahmaṇi manasah samyogād viśokā bahutarasādhanādyāyāsaṅktaduḥkhaśūnyā jyotiṣmati jyotirviṣayā nādagatacidānandavिषयासन्यविन manasah sthitihetur ity arthaḥ |

<sup>356</sup> Since the yoga technique described here is complex and takes some time, *recaka* likely refers either to a very prolonged exhalation or an exhalation followed by a breath retention (*kumbhaka*) with empty lungs.

made upward facing, there, one should contemplate the orb of the sun, consisting of twelve digits, the wakeful state [and] the letter A; above that the orb of the moon, consisting of sixteen digits, the dreamful state [and] and the letter U; above that the orb of fire, consisting of ten digits, the deep sleep state [and] the letter M; above that, that which is known as Nāda, the fourth state, the Brahman. This is Brahmayoga.

The exact execution of the practice is not clearly discernible. Nārāyaṇatīrtha leaves it ambiguous whether the practitioner of Brahmayoga should perform all the individual steps of the visualization during precisely one *recaka*, or if one or even several *recakas* should be performed per individual step of the visualization. The practice could also be interpreted in such a way that a single *recaka* suffices to make the eight-petaled lotus face upward, and the meditation steps are then carried out without further breath technique. Similarly, it could be understood that several *recakas* are practiced until the eight-petaled lotus faces upward, after which the meditation steps are practiced without additional breath techniques. The execution of the meditation is easier to comprehend. The three steps are apparently to be performed in immediate succession to mentally recite an elongated *om*, whose concluding M (*makāra*) transitions into the *nāda*, which is associated with Brahman and the fourth state (*turiya*). Subsequently, Nārāyaṇatīrtha specifies this *nāda* by means of a quotation he draws from the *Gitāśāra*:<sup>357</sup>

*taduktam gitāśare - anāhatasya śabdasya tasya śabdasya yo dhvaniḥ |  
dhvenerantargatam jyotir jyotirantargatam manah || tanmano vimalam  
yāti tadviṣṇoh paramam padam |*

The tone of that sound is that of the unstruck sound. A light is inside the tone [and] the mind is inside the light. That mind dissolves. That is the supreme state of Viṣṇu.<sup>358</sup>

Somewhat surprisingly, Nārāyaṇatīrtha immediately thereafter quotes the *Hamsopanisad*, which does not describe the recitation of the mantra *om*,

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<sup>357</sup>=*Uttaragita* 41cd-42 and *Haṭhapradipikā* 4.49.

<sup>358</sup>The translation is taken from our new Edition of the *Haṭhapradipikā* (2024).

but rather the recitation of *haṁsa*, that is, the *ajapā* mantra.<sup>359</sup> This difference seems to be irrelevant to the point Nārāyaṇatīrtha wants to make. The concentration on the *nāda* then leads the practitioner through a sequence of ten different sounds, which the practitioner can perceive during the contemplation:

asyaiva *japakotyā nādam anubhāvayati yas tasya daśavidha upajāyate*  
 | *cīnīti prathamah, cīncīnīti dvitīyah ghantānādastrtiyah, śaṅkhanādaś-*  
*caturthah, pañcamastantrinādah, ṣaṣṭhastalanādah, saptamo veṇunādah,*  
*aṣṭamo bherīnādo, navamo mṛdaṅganādo, daśamo meghanādah | nava-*  
*mam pariatyaya daśamam eva 'bhyaset |*

Thus, caused by practicing 10 million repetitions (*japa*) of that sound, then types of that [sound] arise:

The first sound is *cīni*, the second *cīncīni*,<sup>360</sup> the third the sound of a bell, the fourth the sound of a conch, the fifth the sound of strings (*tantrī*), the sixth the sound of clasping, the seventh the sound of a flute, the eighth the sound of the *bherī*-drum, the ninth the sound of the *mṛdaṅga*-drum, and tenth the sound of a cloud. Having given up the ninth, he shall practice the tenth only.

When the mind is fixed on this, according to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the mind enters a state of absorption, and mental activity dissipates. Sin and merit are burned away. By the nature of pure energy (*maśakti*), Sadāśiva is revealed as the all-encompassing peace of mind.<sup>361</sup>

<sup>359</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. pp. 54-55): *haṁsopaniṣadi coktaḥ – haṁsānusamdhānaphalabhuṭo 'nekavidhah saphalah |*

<sup>360</sup> Vielleicht sind diese Begriffe onomatopoetisch gemeint. Der Klang erinnert an das Zwitschern eines Vogels oder das Zirpen einer Grille.

<sup>361</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 55): *tasmān manovilīne manasi gate saṅkalpavikalpe dagdha-punyapāpe sadāśivo maśaktyātmanā sarvatrā 'vasthitah śāntah prakāśayati | ity ādinā |*

### 2.14.2 Brahmayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*

In Sundardās's Brahmayoga, as described in his *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* (4.25-35),<sup>362</sup> it is a form of contemplation,<sup>363</sup> which is described as difficult.<sup>364</sup> Without experience, one cannot reach its end.<sup>365</sup> Sundardās describes that only a selfless person attains Brahmayoga, whereas one who indulges in sensory pleasures wanders aimlessly.<sup>366</sup>

It says in *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 4.27:

*brahmayoga soī bhala pāvai | pahile sakala sādhi kari āvai |  
brahmayoga saba upara soī | brahmayoga bina mukti na hoi || 27 ||*

That person truly attains Brahmayoga who first masters all practices and then comes to it. Brahmayoga is supreme above all, [and] without Brahmayoga, there is no liberation.

With Brahmayoga, Sundardās initially seems to describe a state that must be attained. As an independent practice, Brahmayoga is an advanced form of yoga, because, as Sundardās explains, all preliminary exercises must have been mastered to practice it. This likely refers to a prolonged yoga practice comprising the previously described yogas, which qualify the practitioner for Brahmayoga. One must have progressed far enough on the yogic path that, as mentioned earlier, selflessness has been achieved and one no longer indulges in sensory pleasures. In verses 4.29-35, Sundardās then describes what can either be interpreted as a mystical form of contemplation or as an introspective experience of mystical unity. This is articulated in the form of a verbalization from the first-person perspective, demonstrated by two of these verses.

In *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 4.29 and 4.33, Sundardās writes:

*saba saṃsāra āpa maiṁ deśai | pūraṇa āpu jagata mahim̄ peṣai |  
āpuhi karatā āpuhi haratā | āpuhi dātā āpuhi bharatā || 29 ||*

<sup>362</sup> See Burger (2014: 703-704) for her discussion of Brahmayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*.

<sup>363</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 4.25c: *brahmayoga kā kaṭhina bicārā |*

<sup>364</sup> Ibid. 4.26a: *brahmayoga ati dūrlabha kahiye |*

<sup>365</sup> Ibid. 4.25d: *anubhava vinā na pāvai pārā || 25 ||*

<sup>366</sup> Ibid. 4.26bd: *paracā hoī tabahim̄ tau lahiye | brahmayoga pāvai niḥkāmī | bhramata su phirai indriyārāmī || 26 ||*

All of existence reveals itself within me, I pervade the entire universe. I am the creator, I am the destroyer. I am the giver, I am the sustainer.

*aham abheda achedya aleśā | aham agādha su akala adeśā |  
aham sadodita sadā prakāśā | sakṣī aham sarva mahim vāsā || 33 ||*

I am inseparable, I am unassailable, without stain. I am unfathomable, supremely timeless, and without direction. I am eternally arisen, always luminous. I am the witness, dwelling in all the universe.

In the last verse, Brahmayoga is even equated with Brahman itself:

*aham parama ānandamaya aham jyoti nija soī |  
brahmayoga brahmahi bhayā dubidhyā rahī na koi || 36 ||*

I am supremely filled with bliss, I am the self-luminous light. Brahmayoga is Brahman itself, fear and doubt do not remain anymore.

### 2.14.3 Brahmayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Brahmayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies reveals, on the one hand, the underlying continuities of the Vedāntic concept of Brahman and, on the other hand, exciting developments in the yoga practices associated with the term Brahmayoga in the 17th century.

For Nārāyaṇatirtha, Brahmayoga is a form of yoga distinguished by a complex technique involving the syllable *om*, associated with Brahman, culminating in absorption into its *nāda*. After the practitioner has performed this practice and passed through various stages of perceiving the *nāda*, Sadāśiva is ultimately revealed as all-encompassing inner peace. Notably, the practice culminates not in the revelation of Brahman but in the revelation of Sadāśiva.

For Sundardās, Brahmayoga is both a state and a practice. It is a state in which the practitioner must have already reached a very advanced level of yoga practice. In the context of his twelve-limbed yoga system, one must

first have mastered Bhaktiyoga and Haṭhayoga. Through Bhaktiyoga, one's devotion to Rāma, Sundardās' term for the unmanifest consciousness (*avyakta puruṣa*), must have become unwavering.<sup>367</sup> Through the diverse practices of Haṭhayoga, body, breath, and mind are cultivated to a degree that allows Brahmayoga to arise. This initially occurs through the overarching category of Sāṃkhyayoga, where duality becomes conscious. In the state and contemplation of Brahmayoga, the practitioner experiences and realizes both self and world as unity, eventually dissolving duality and unity in the non-duality of Advaitayoga, the final stage of his system. It is fascinating to observe how Sundardās attempts to harmonize the philosophical differences of Sāṃkhya, Vedānta, and Advaita Vedānta by merging them into a progressive sequence. His descriptions of Brahmayoga read like a collection of Upaniṣadic statements on the essential identity of Ātman and Brahman.

In light of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* and the *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*, despite the absence of specific descriptions of Brahmayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu*, it seems plausible that the undescribed Brahmayoga in these two texts would have incorporated core elements and fundamental ideas of Vedānta. Perhaps the authors understood Brahmayoga, as in the case of Śivayoga, as another synonym for Rājayoga.

## 2.15 Advaitayoga

The search for the term *advaitayoga* in the digitized collections of Sanskrit [yoga] texts yielded an astonishingly low number of results. The term Advaitayoga, the “Yoga of Non-Duality,” appears as a distinct yoga category only in the yoga texts of the 17th century. Besides the texts of the complex yoga taxonomies, I found this usage exclusively in the *Haṭhapradīpikā Siddhāntamuktāvali*,<sup>368</sup> where a total of 48 verses (6.115–162) are dedicated to this yoga.

In the *Yogasvarodaya*, the term Advaitayoga is entirely absent in the extant transmission. The two verses that mention the total number of fifteen yogas in the *Yogasvarodaya* list only eight of them. Advaitayoga is not present in this

<sup>367</sup>For an analysis of Bhaktiyoga in Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*, see p.193.

<sup>368</sup>The *Haṭhapradīpikā Siddhāntamuktāvali* survives in a single manuscript (MMPP Ms. no. 6756) from 1708 CE. The manuscript contains a recension of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* with a total of six chapters and 1553 verses, making it by far the most extensive recension of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*.

incomplete list and is not introduced as an independent topic in the *Yogasvarodaya*. Since Advaitayoga is present in all other complex yoga taxonomies, it can be assumed that this list also implies an Advaitayoga. Advaitayoga is the thirteenth method of Rājayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*. Beyond this mention, the term *advaitayoga* does not appear in the text, and it is not treated as an independent topic. Similar to the cases of Śivayoga and Brahmayoga, Advaitayoga could be implicitly present in the text, making a separate description redundant for Rāmacandra. Indeed, in the context of Section XXI, there is an explicit reference to applying non-dualistic thinking to achieve Jñānayoga.<sup>369</sup> Rāmacandra also states shortly after that one who is always devoted to non-duality will always attain the reality of Śambhu.<sup>370</sup>

Sundardās presents Advaitayoga as the final non-dual state in his twelve-limbed sequence of yogas and not as an independent method. For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, Advaitayoga is a specific method of meditative murmuring (*japa*) of the mantra *om* or *pranava*. Since Advaitayoga has already been covered in the context of the analysis of Jnānayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* on p.82, it need not be repeated here. Therefore, only the determination of Advaitayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* remains to be addressed.

### 2.15.1 Advaitayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

Sundardās's description of Advaitayoga (4.37-50)<sup>371</sup> follows immediately after his description of Brahmayoga. As previously mentioned, this is not a practice but rather the final state of yoga, the description of which begins in verses 4.30-36. While the mystical experience described in the Brahmayoga verses, which can be articulated as an infinite and absolute unity experience, remains within the realm of the comprehensible, Sundardās uses his formulations to immerse the reader into the ultimate dissolution of the state of non-duality, the final state of yoga in his exposition. Thus, Advaitayoga is the direct result of the preceding contemplation of Brahmayoga. Through numerous nega-

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<sup>369</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* XXI.1: *ekam eva jagat paśyed viśvātmā suvibhāsvaram | avikalpatayā yuktyā jñānayogaṁ samācaret* || "He shall see the world as only one, illuminated by the supreme self. By the method of non-dualistic thinking, he shall accomplish Jñānayoga."

<sup>370</sup> Ibid. XXI.3ab: *prāpnōti śāmbhavīm sattām sadādvaita parāyanāḥ* |

<sup>371</sup> See Burger (2014: 703-704) for her discussion of Advaitayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*.

tions, Sundardās attempts to show the reader what lies beyond any form of description or comprehension. This can be illustrated with some examples:

*aba advaita sunahūṁ ju prakāsā | nāhaṁ nā tvam nāṁ yahu bhāsā | nahīṁ  
prapāmca tahāṁ nahīṁ pasārā | na tahāṁ srsti na sirajanahārā || 37 ||*

Now listen to the realisation of non-duality: there is no “I”, no “you” and nothing that arises. There is no mundane illusion, no spaciousness, no creation and no creator.

*na tahāṁ prakrti puruṣa nahīṁ icchā | na tahāṁ kāla karma nahīṁ varṇchā  
| na tahāṁ śūnya aśūnya na mūlā | na tahāṁ sukṣma nahīṁ sathūla || 38 ||*

There, neither primordial nature nor consciousness exists, there is no desire. There, neither time nor activity nor aspirations exist. There, neither void nor non-void is the root. There, neither subtle nor gross matter exist.

*na tahāṁ bhāva nahīṁ tahāṁ bhaktī | na tahāṁ mokṣa nahīṁ tahāṁ  
mukti | na tahāṁ jāpya nahīṁ tahāṁ jāpi | na tahāṁ mantra nahīṁ laya  
thāpi || 46 ||*

There, neither existance nor devotion exists. There, neither liberation nor salvation exists. There, neither the recitation nor the one who recites exists. There, neither Mantra nor absorption established exists.

Various other negations follow, which also negate specific yoga practices:

*na tahāṁ sādhaka siddha samādhi | na tahāṁ yoga na yuktyārādhī | na  
tahāṁ mudrā baṇḍhana lāgai | na tahāṁ kuṇḍalinī nahīṁ jāgai || 47 ||*

There, neither the practitioner nor the accomplished dwelling in *samādhi* exists. There, neither yoga nor the means of worship exists. There, neither seals nor locks apply. There, the Kuṇḍalinī does not awaken.

In conclusion, Sundardās states:

*jñē jñātā nahiṁ jñāna tahaṁ dhyē dhyātā nahiṁ dhyāna | kahanahāra  
sundara nahiṁ yaha advaita baśāna || 50 ||*

There, neither the knower, the known, nor knowledge exists.  
There, neither the meditator, the meditated upon, nor meditation exists. Sundar says, there is no speaker; this is the abode of non-duality.

Structurally, Advaitayoga, along with Jñānayoga and Brahmayoga, is situated within the overarching category of Sāṅkhyayoga. Sundardās depicts a progression through these four yogas. Sāṅkhyayoga initially teaches the distinction between the Self and the Non-Self, the doctrine of dualism between consciousness and matter from the perspective of the classical Sāṅkhya system. The goal of Sāṅkhyayoga is to recognize this duality as the difference between what is the Self and what is not the Self. Following this is Jñānayoga, which fundamentally shifts the perspective from duality to identification. The aim of Jñānayoga is to recognize the non-difference between the Self (*ātman*), the body, and the world. Only after the practitioner has recognized this fundamental unity can he, through Brahmayoga, perceive the entire world within himself. Ultimately, in the resulting Advaitayoga, the state of duality and conceptual distinctions are transcended, and all opposites dissolve. The practitioner is detached from the world, maintaining equanimity toward all existing phenomena without negating their existence. All the yogas described by Sundardās within the framework of the twelve yogas ultimately aim at this non-dual state. In the state of Advaitayoga, where duality is overcome, no limiting concepts remain, and the practitioner attains the state of final liberation.

## 2.15.2 Advaitayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Advaitayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies sharpens our understanding of this yoga category. While Rāmacandra's Jñānayoga involves the application of non-dualistic thinking, Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates both Jñānayoga and Advaitayoga in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* within the context of his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.28.

For Nārāyaṇatīrtha, both methods are based on the murmuring (*japa*) of the mantra *om* or *pranava*. This *japa* practice only differs in its accompanying contemplation method. The variant of Jñānayoga involves contemplation focused on the distinction between consciousness (*puruṣa*), primal nature (*prakṛti*), and its effects (*tatkārya*). In contrast, the Advaitayoga variant involves an alternative contemplation focused on the non-difference between the supreme Self (*paramātman*) and the individual self (*jīva*).<sup>372</sup>

In Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, Jñānayoga and Advaitayoga are situated within the same tetrad along with Brahmayoga. All three yogas are forms of Sāṃkhyayoga. However, Sundardās presents Advaitayoga as the final non-dual state of yoga and no longer as a specific method that can be applied to reach this state. If Rāmacandra held a similar perspective, it would be plausible why he did not dedicate a separate section to Advaitayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*, even though one searches in vain for Advaitayoga in the *Yugasvarodaya*. Thus, it is only the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* that explicitly includes a method of Advaitayoga among the early modern texts with complex taxonomies.<sup>373</sup>

## 2.16 Siddhayoga

Siddhayoga, the “Yoga of the Siddhas” is the fourteenth method of Rājayoga in Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*. The text itself describes two distinct types of Siddhayoga. In the *Yugasvarodaya*, it is entirely absent. It does not appear within its list nor within the rest of the text. Nārāyaṇatīrtha describes not a Siddhayoga, but a Siddhiyoga, which is the eleventh yoga he describes in his *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. Sundardās does not include either Siddhayoga or Siddhiyoga in his *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*.

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<sup>372</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 46): *kiñ ca, japa ityanena mantrayogaḥ, arthabhāvanamityanena vivekajñānā bhyāsarūpo jñānayogaḥ, abhedabhbāvarūpo ḍvaitayogaś ca samgrhitāḥ |*

<sup>373</sup> Remarkably, the *Haṭhapradipikā Siddhāntamuktāvali* describes Advaitayoga both as a practice or method and as a state. The state is the identity of Ātman and Brahman (6.124, 6.121). The practitioner transcends all dualistic perceptions and realises the omnipresent nature of the Self (6.130, 6.150). As a practice, Advaitayoga involves deep meditation and contemplation, whereby the mind is centred on the Self and unity with Brahman. This is represented by the focus on the inner and outer merging of the self with the universe (6.120) and the contemplation of *nāda* (6.133).

### 2.16.1 Siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga and Siddhayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

In *Yogatattvabindu* Section III, a yoga is described that is referred to as Siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga (“The Kuṇḍalinīyoga of the Siddhas”).<sup>374</sup> The presence of the second element of the compound “*kundalini*” is difficult to explain, as *kundalini* is neither mentioned in the sections about this yoga nor in the rest of the text. Siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga is also mentioned immediately alongside Mantrayoga.<sup>375</sup> In the *Yogasvarodaya*, the corresponding passage in the transmission of the *Prāṇatoṣīṇi* (Ed. pp. 831–823) is designated as Jñānayoga. However, the content of both passages is essentially identical. It seems that Rāmacandra only exchanged the name. Before we address why this yoga is named Siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga, we should first characterize its practice.

The section about Siddhakuṇḍalinīyoga describes the names and paths of the three main channels of the yogic body: Idā (left channel), Piṅgalā (right channel), and Suṣumnā (central channel). Rāmacandra emphasizes the importance of the central channel by explaining that the central channel grants both enjoyment and liberation (*bhuktimuktipradā*). He then explains that the practitioner attains omniscience once the knowledge of the central channel arises. This leads into the subsequent sections IV–XII, where a system consisting of nine *cakras* is described.<sup>376</sup> The presentation of the *cakras* is introduced with the statement: “Now, the means for the genesis of knowledge of the cen-

<sup>374</sup> Siddhas, often called masters of yogic and tantric practices, are highly renowned figures who cannot be confined to a single religious tradition or order. These accomplished practitioners appear in medieval Sanskrit and Tibetan texts associated with Hṛdayoga, Śaiva Tantra, and Vajrayāna Buddhism, spanning the Indian subcontinent and the Himalayan regions. For example, the *Hathapradipikā* (1.4–9) is an early fifteenth-century text that provides a famous list of Siddhas. Svātmārāma, the author, refers to a lineage beginning with Ādinātha and Matsyendranātha. However, he lists twenty-nine great adepts (*mahāsiddhas*) who are described as “used the power of Hṛdayoga to smash the rod of death and [so] are roaming the worlds.” Although Nātha figures such as Gorakṣa and Cauraṅgi are included, the list is not exclusive to the Nātha order. It is not a traditional lineage or order of succession. Many of the personalities listed, such as Manthānabhairava, Kākacanḍīśvara, and Pūjyapāda, are associated with the alchemical traditions of the Rasāyana Siddhas. Figures such as Virūpākṣa are revered in both the Śaiva and Buddhist traditions. Therefore, Siddhas embody the ideals of Tantra and Hṛdayoga and illustrate the different sectarian roots of these practices. Cf. Powell, 2023: 35–36.

<sup>375</sup>The aspect of Mantrayoga and the issues arising from the term in this context have already been thoroughly discussed in the Mantrayoga section on p.118.

<sup>376</sup>The reception history and genesis of the ninefold *cakra* system have been convincingly presented by Seth Powell, and thus do not need to be repeated here. Cf. Powell, 2023: 215–218.

tral channel are described.”<sup>377</sup> Rāmacandra teaches a meditation onto each individual *cakra*, resulting in extravagant outcomes:

Table 5: The nine *cakras* of Siddhakunḍalinīyoga

Name	Location	Focus of Meditation	Result of the Meditation
1. <i>mūlacakram</i>	At the beginning of the central channel.	In its middle is <i>kāmapiṭha</i> in the shape of a triangle. In the middle of this seat ( <i>pīṭha</i> ) exists a single form in the shape of a flame of fire.	Any literature, [such as] śāstras, poetry, drama, etc., appears in the person’s mind without learning.
2. <i>svādhiṣṭhā-nacakram</i> [divine seat of <i>uddiyāna</i> ]	Penis	In its middle exist an extremely red light.	The adept becomes very handsome.
3. <i>nābhīsthāne padmam</i>	Navel	In its middle exists a <i>cakra</i> with five angles. In the middle of it is a single form.	The body of the person becomes durable.
4. <i>hṛdayamadhe kamalam</i> [ <i>anāhatacakra</i> ]	Heart	In its middle exists an eight-petalled lotus facing downwards. Within the eight-petalled lotus [which is within the twelve petalled lotus] is a central receptacle ( <i>karṇikā</i> ) in the form of a <i>linga</i> . Within the bud is a single thumb-sized figurine ( <i>puttalikā</i> ), the embodied soul ( <i>jīva</i> ).	The women of the inhabitants of the world [which are] Humans, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Guhyakas, Vidyādharaś, in the heavenly world, underworld, and open space become obedient to the will of the practicing person.

Continued on next page

<sup>377</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* Section IV: *idāñīm suṣumṇāyāḥ jñānotpattāv upāyāḥ kathyante |*

Table 5: (continued)

Name	Location	Focus of Meditation	Result of the Meditation
5. <i>kanṭhasthāne kamalam</i>	Throat	In its middle exists the one consciousness ( <i>puruṣa</i> ) shining like a thousand moons.	All diseases which are [otherwise] not possible to be controlled vanish. The person lives up to 1001 years.
6. <i>ājñācakram</i>	Middle of the eyebrows.	In its middle exists a certain object in the form of a blazing fire without parts.	The body of the person becomes non-aging and immortal.
7. <i>cakram tālumadhye</i>	In the middle of the palate.	In its middle exists a unique red central receptacle named "the little bell" ( <i>ghāṇṭikā</i> ). In its centre is a site. In the middle of that exists the hidden digit of the moon, which is oozing a stream of nectar.	As a result of meditation on this digit, death does not reach him. As a result of uninterrupted meditation, the stream ( <i>dhārā</i> ) of nectar flows.
8. <i>aṣṭamacakra brah-marandhrasthāne</i> [divine seat <i>jā-landhārapitha</i> ]	aperture of Brahman (fontanelle on the head)	In middle of it, there is a streak looking like the form of smoke and fire, and in such a way, the unique image of the person exists.	Direct perception of both the coming and going of the soul in space. Affliction from the earth-element does not arise [anymore] even if one is within the earth. One constantly sees everything direct [and] one becomes separate [from matter]. The span of life increases greatly.

Continued on next page

Table 5: (continued)

Name	Location	Focus of Meditation	Result of the Meditation
9. <i>mahāśūnya-cakram</i> and <i>mahāsiddha-cakram</i> [divine seat of <i>pūrnagiri</i> ]	above the previous <i>cakra</i> (distance is not indicated)	(A) In the middle is a single upward-facing extremely red thousand-petalled lotus. In centre of this lotus exists one central receptacle in the shape of a triangle. In the middle of that central receptacle exists the seventeenth digit. (B) Above that is the place of infinite supreme bliss. There exists the upper power ( <i>ūrdhvāsakti</i> ) as a unique digit.	(A) Suffering does not arise in the mind of the practitioner. (B) Whatever the person wants arises. Even though [one is] enjoying royal pleasures, amusing oneself amongst women and watching musical performances, the digit of the person grows daily like the digit of the moon in the bright half of the month. His body is not affected by merit and sin. As a result of uninterrupted meditation [onto this digit], the ability to illuminate one's own nature arises. He sees remote objects as if they were near.

Why does Rāmacandra specify this form of yoga as *Siddhakundalinīyoga*, although *kundalini* does not play an explicit role here? A straightforward explanation would be the corruption of an early archetype of the *Yogatattvabindu* from which all surviving manuscripts are derived. The term would have been entirely unproblematic if Rāmacandra referred to this yoga as *Siddhayoga*.

Sections III-XII of the *Yogatattvabindu* are largely a prose adaptation of the *Yogasvarodaya*. However, unlike the *Yogatattvabindu*, the term *kundali* is mentioned once in the context of the fourth *cakra* in the heart.<sup>378</sup> It is puzzling why Rāmacandra, in his prose adaptation of this passage, did

<sup>378</sup> *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 832): *prāṇavāyoḥ sthalāñcāsyā liṅgākāraṇ tu karṇikā | kālikākhyā karṇikeyam asyā madhye tu kundali |*.

not include the term *kundalī*. Therefore, another plausible explanation could be a lack of diligence in transcribing the text. The whole section on *cakras* shows clear influences from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*.<sup>379</sup> It is noteworthy that the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* also locates the *kundalinī* in the context of the third *cakra* at the navel, a concept that Rāmacandra also does not adopt.<sup>380</sup> Moreover, *kundalinī* is an important central element in the metaphysics of the Nāths.<sup>381</sup> According to Mallinson (2011: 20), the composition of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* marks the moment when the Nāth Sampradāya established a solid sectarian identity. Additionally, the present Nāth Sampradāya traces itself back to the so-called “nine Nāths,” a list of Siddhas whose names closely follow early lists of Siddhas.<sup>382</sup> A famous yogic technique associated with the Nāth Siddhas is the awakening of the *kundalinī*, which, as a result of its awakening, ascends through a certain number of *cakras* up the central channel.<sup>383</sup> Thus, the term *siddhakundalinīyoga*, the “Kuṇḍalinīyoga of the Siddhas,” is sensical because Rāmacandra attributed this specific *cakra* teaching to the Siddhas. What remains unclear is why Rāmacandra does not mention *kundalinī* in his explanations, even though we find the term in both of his source texts in the the respective context, and why *kundalinī* does not play a role here. The answers to these questions must remain unanswered for the time being.

<sup>379</sup>This is evident, for example, in the inclusion of the concept of *ūrdhvāśakti* in the context of the ninth *cakra* in Section XII.

<sup>380</sup>Cf. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.3: *tr̥tyām nābhicakram̥ pañcāvartam̥ sarpavat kundalākāram | tan-madhye kuṇḍalinīṁ śaktiṁ bälārkakoṭisannibhām̥ dhyāyet | sā madhyā śaktiḥ sarvasiddhidā bhavati |* 2.3

<sup>381</sup>Cf. for example *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 1.7, 1.12, 1.14, 2.3, 4.21.

<sup>382</sup>Cf. Mallinson, 2011: 5.

<sup>383</sup>Cf. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 6.86: *śakteyākuñcanam agnidiptikaraṇam tv ādhārasampiḍanāt sthānāt kuṇḍaliniprabodhanam atah kṛtvā tato mūrdhani | nitvā pūrṇagirin̥ nipātanam adhā kurvantī tasyāś ca ye khaṇḍajñānaratās te njapadām teṣām hi dūram padam |* Cf. also *Yogatarāṅgini* 1.48–49: *kim ca, yena dvārena gantavyam brahmasthānam anāmayam | mukhenācchādyā taddyāram prasuptā paramēśvari || 48 || yena dvārena yena mārgeṇa kṛtvā anāmayam jananamarāṇādīduḥkhacintārahitam̥ brahmasthānam akhaṇḍānandapadan̥ gantavyam taddyāram mukhenācchādyā prasuptā paramēśvari kuṇḍali śaktih || 48 || prabuddhā vahniyogena manasā marutā saha | sūcivād gunam ādāya vrajati ūrdhvam̥ suṣumnayā || 49 || vahniyogena prāṇapriteritānalāśikhāsambandhena kṛtvā prabudhā tyaktanidrā sati manasā marutā prāṇena ca saha yuktā suṣumnayāvadhyānādyā kṛtvā ūrdhvam̥ sahasradalābhimukham̥ vrajati | drṣṭāntam̥ āha—sūcivād iti yathā sūci svasaṃktam̥ gunam ādāya ūrdhvam̥ paṭasya prati tantvantarālām vrajati tadvad iyam api svakalpitasaṭcakram̥ tad adhītiṣṭhati tat tad evatādi sakalaprapāñcaṇ samṛ̥tya vrajati || 49 ||*

In Section XLIV, the second, and this time explicit, mention of Siddhayoga is found, including a description of the characteristics that define a Siddhayogin. This passage is not based on the *Yogasvarodaya*, but most of the verses presented here are derived from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* with some significant editorial changes. Some verses of this passage are possibly even from Rāmacandra's own hand. The entire section revolves around the characteristics of an Avadhūta person (*avadhūtapurusa*).<sup>384</sup> In the last three verses of this passage, the Avadhūta is equated with a Siddhayogin, in the sense of a "Yogin who has perfected yoga." Through Siddhayoga, one becomes a Siddhayogin:

*viśvātitā tayā viśvam ekam eva virājate |  
saṃyogena sadā yasya siddhayogī sa gadyate || XLIV.8 ||*

By her [Śakti?], who transcends the universe, the entire world shines as one. He who is always united with this is called a perfected Yogi.

*sarvāśām nijavrttīnām vismr̥tim bhajet tu yah |  
sa bhavet siddhasiddhānte siddhayogī sa gadyate || XLIV.9 ||*

He who obtains oblivion from all inherent fluctuations [of the mind], he is called a Siddhayogin according to the doctrine of the Siddhas.

*udāśināḥ sadā śānto mahānandamayo 'pi ca |  
yo bhavet siddhayogena siddhayogī sa kathyate || XLIV.10 ||*

One who is always indifferent, peaceful and immersed in great bliss by means of Siddhayoga<sup>385</sup> is said to be a Siddhayogin.

Thus, a Siddhayogin has realized the unity within the Universe, has stilled his mind, and is always indifferent, peaceful, and immersed in great bliss. He has attained all this by means of Siddhayoga.

<sup>384</sup>A recent discussion of the reception history of the term *avadhūta* can be found in Sravani Kanamarlapudi. "Avadhūta: Examining the Emergence and Institutionalisation of an Antinomian Ascetic". In: *Journal of Hindu Studies* 16 (2023), pp. 241–269. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhs/hiad017>.

<sup>385</sup>Interestingly, the term *siddhayogena* is not attested in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*.

The use of the instrumental *siddhayogena* in this context confirms that it is a genitive *tatpurusa* and not a *karmadhāraya* compound. Unfortunately, there are no clear instructions or explicit descriptive statements that would define the practice of Siddhayoga. Nonetheless, it is possible to derive them from the previous statements.

Verse XLIV.2, for example, says that the alms of the Avadhūta<sup>386</sup> are “difference and non-difference” (*bhedābheda*). A very similar perspective can already be found in the Jñānayoga section XXI. Although the term *bhedābheda* is not used in this section, we can infer that the practice of Siddhayoga should involve the cultivation of this specific philosophical perspective.

In verse XLIV.3, there is an etymological explanation (*nirukti*) of the term *avadhūta*, which might have originated from Rāmacandra himself. The letter “*a*” stands for the self (*ātman*), the letter “*va*” stands for the mental impressions (*vāsanās*), and *dhūta* “shaking off” is his special weapon. Thus, an Avadhūta/Siddhayogin is someone who dedicates himself to a Yogic practice that ensures the reduction of the *vāsanās*. This is another hint at the concept that might underlie the term Siddhayoga.

Furthermore, there are no other statements that could further specify a Siddhayoga based on this passage. In summary, it can be inferred that Siddhayoga likely consists of a method for the reduction of *vāsanās*, as well as a specific form of philosophy and practice, presumably based on the doctrine of the Siddhas (*siddhasiddhānta*), which is expounded in texts like the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*. Based on these observations, it can be concluded that the Siddhayoga in Rāmacandra’s *Yogatattvabindu* should be understood as the “Yoga of the Siddhas,” encompassing the specific teachings and practices of the Siddhas.

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<sup>386</sup> Originally, the Avadhūta was considered an antinomian ascetic who detached himself from all societal bonds and did as he pleased. Over the centuries, in the words of Kanamarlapudi (2023), he became “sanitized” and more socially acceptable. The Avadhūta was integrated into the Brahmanical *āśrama* system, his unconventional traits and unorthodox practices were tamed, and the Avadhūta was thereby elevated to a legitimate and eventually even the highest class of the *saṃnyāsa āśrama*.

## 2.16.2 Siddhiyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

Siddhiyoga, the “Yoga of supernatural powers” in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* denotes an advanced stage of Yogic practice on the path to *samādhi*. This stage is reached when a high degree of mastery over the mind. From this mastery, various supernatural abilities can be acquired through specific practices such as austerity (*tapas*) or meditative exercises (*saṃyama*), which are presented in the second chapter (*sādhanapāda*), but especially in the third chapter (*vibhūtipāda*) of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. According to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, this stage is conducive to the attainment of *samādhi*.<sup>387</sup> As with all other yogas, Nārāyaṇatīrtha locates Siddhiyoga in the first chapter, specifically within his commentary on *sūtra* I.40:

*cittasthitijayasya jñāpakām siddhiyogam samādhy anukūlam āha -  
paramāṇuparamamahattvānto 'sya vaśikārah || 40 ||*

It is said that Siddhiyoga indicates mastery of the stability of the mind, which is conducive to *samādhi* -

His (the yogins) mastery extends from the smallest particle of matter up the greatest extend.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha explains that the control of the Yogi encompasses total and unhindered mastery over everything. This mastery is conducive to *samādhi* because it prevents afflictions such as hunger and thirst. It is a significant indicator that the Yogi has mastered his mind.<sup>388</sup>

Towards the end of his commentary on *Yogasūtra* I.40, Nārāyaṇatīrtha states that this advanced stage of yogic practice can be achieved through various methods and leads to the highest possible firmness (*dṛḍhatā parā*).

*ayam eva siddhiyogaḥ prāṇaspandanirodhādyair upāyair dṛḍhatā parā |  
siddhiyoga bhaved atra yogaḥ siddhikaraḥ paraḥ || ityādinā || 40 ||*

<sup>387</sup>The description of Siddhiyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* by Penna (2004: 84-85) portrays Siddhiyoga solely as a state that facilitates *samādhi*, but completely overlooks the practical aspect of Siddhiyoga, which is the cultivation of particular supernatural abilities (*siddhis*).

<sup>388</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 106): *parameti | asya sthiracittasya yoginah paramamahattvāntah  
paramamahattvām yeṣāṁ viyatpuruṣādināṁ tatparyanto vaśikārah apratighātah kenāpy apratibandhyatā |  
saiva kṣutpipāsādi- piḍāpratibandhadvārā samādhisādhikā cittajayasya ca jñāpiketi bhāvah |*

This indeed is Siddhiyoga. By means such as the cessation of the movement of breath, supreme firmness arises. Here, Siddhiyoga means the supreme yoga that brings about accomplishment. Thus it is said.

Next, Nārāyaṇatīrtha links Siddhiyoga with specific supernatural abilities (*siddhis*) as he illustrates in his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 2.35. Siddhiyoga is exemplified here by the result of the practice of non-violence (*ahimsā*).<sup>389</sup> Once the Yogi has achieved stability in non-violence through the practice of *pratipakṣabhbava*<sup>390</sup>, he creates a sphere of non-violence where no enmity exists. This sphere of non-violence even neutralizes natural enmities, such as those between the mongoose and the snake, as Nārāyaṇatīrtha informs us.<sup>391</sup> Finally, we encounter Siddhiyoga in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's commentary on *Yogasūtra* 2.43, where Siddhiyoga is explicitly linked with a broader spectrum of attaining supernatural abilities (*siddhis*). In particular, asceticism (*tapas*) is the crucial catalyst for success in Siddhiyoga. It is here that the full scope of the concept of Siddhiyoga becomes comprehensible, as it explicitly builds upon and expands the explanations from *Yogasūtra* 1.40:

*tapah sādhyām siddhim āha-*  
*kāyendriyasiddhair aśuddhikṣayāt tapasah* || 43 ||

Asceticism is said to cultivate perfection:  
 Perfection of the senses and the body manifests as a result of asceticism on account of the removal of impurities. || 43 ||

*kāyeti | tapasah tapo 'bhyasād, aśuddhikṣayād yatheṣṭagatyādipratibandhaka pāpamalāder nāśāt, kāyendriyasiddhīḥ kāyendriyāṇām alpatvama-hattvadūrārthadarśitvādisāmarthyarūpā siddhir bhavatī arthaḥ | kāyasyātilāghavena*

<sup>389</sup>The supernatural ability resulting from the practice of *ahimsā* is the creation of a sphere of non-violence. The Yogi who has perfected *ahimsā* can no longer suffer any violence. This is, incidentally, the first supernatural ability that manifests for the Yogi who practices Pātañjalayoga.

<sup>390</sup>The intentional cultivation of opposing thoughts, e.g., when one feels sorrow or anxiety and then concentrates on positive or pleasurable thoughts.

<sup>391</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* (Ed. p. 104): *evam ahimsāparasya yoginas tatphalabhūtam siddhiyogaṁ darśayati-ahimsāpratisthāyām tatsannidhau vairatyāgah* || 35 || *ahimseti | uktapratipakṣabhbavenāhimsāsthairye sati tatsannidhau ahimsām bhāvayataḥ samipe vairatyāgah | sahajavirodhinaḥ mahinakulādinām api nirmatsaratayā 'vasthitir bhavatī arthaḥ* || 35 ||

*dūradeśagamanādikam dharmaviśeṣayattam mahattvenānyair abādhyatvādi ca bhavati | indriyāṇām dūrārthaśukṣmārthavyavahitānekārthagrāhitā bhavatīti yāvat | etena paramāṇuparamamahattvānto 'sya vaśikāra iti sūtrenokta- siddhiyogasyātrāntarbhāvo jñātavyah |*

[Regarding the term] *kāya* (“body”). As a result of the practice, the heat of asceticism (*tapas*) arises.<sup>392</sup> As a result of the destruction of impurities and other obstructions such as sin and filth, which hinder free movement and the like, perfection of the senses and the body manifests, meaning the ability of the body and senses to become small, large, see distant objects, etc. Through the extreme lightness of the body, there is the ability to travel to distant places, etc. and through other capacities dependent on special qualities, unobstructedness, etc., arises. To be precise, the [ability] of the senses to perceive distant, subtle, covered, and multiple objects arises. This is indicated by the *sūtra* “his control extends from the smallest atom to the greatest magnitude.” - It should be understood that Siddhiyoga is included here.

### 2.16.3 Siddhayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Siddhayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies enhances our understanding of the usage of the term as a yoga category in the 17th century. In the *Yogatattvabindu*, there are two distinct mentions of Siddhayoga: Siddhakunḍalinīyoga and Siddhayoga. The former term refers to a specific yoga practice that describes the three main channels and meditation on various *cakras*. This concept of the yogic body and the ninefold *cakra* system is either attributed to the Siddhas or it leads the Yогин to become a perfected being (*siddha*). The *kunḍalini* remains unmentioned in the explanations of this yoga, although it would have been expected in this context.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>392</sup>The heat of *tapas* bakes the body and destroys impurities that are mentioned in the following.

<sup>393</sup>Already in the *Śāringadharapaddhati* (1363 CE), the oldest text presenting a ninefold *cakra* system within the framework of Layayoga, this system is linked with the concept of *kunḍalini*. *Śāringadharapaddhati* 4351-4352 reads: *prathamā brahmacakram syāt trirāvartam bhagākṛti | apāne mūlakandākhye kāmarūpam ca taj jaguh ||5|| tad eva vahnikuṇḍam syāc chaktih kunḍalini tathā | tām ji-*

The context in which the latter term is embedded does not mention any explicit practice; however, the term is unequivocally linked to the doctrine of the Siddhas (*siddhasiddhānta*). For Rāmacandra, Siddhayoga was the “Yoga of the Siddhas” or the yoga of the followers of the Siddha doctrine. We can, therefore, deduce that Rāmacandra was not the only one using the term Siddhayoga in this sense in the 17th century.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha describes a Siddhiyoga, not Siddhayoga. Since Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s placement of the fifteen yogas in the *Yogasūtra* can be seen as a response to the popularity of the fifteen yogas, we can assume that he was also familiar with the term Siddhayoga, which was possibly imbued with the same meaning that Rāmacandra had in mind. He viewed the model of Pātañjalayoga that he advocated as superior, and to demonstrate this, he aimed to show that his yoga system was so universally designed that all the fifteen popular yogas were already encompassed within it. The doctrine of the Siddhas, for instance, in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, could hardly be situated within the *Yogasūtra* even with considerable effort. It is likely for this reason

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*varūpiṇīm dhyāyej jyotiṣkām muktihetave ||6||* “The Brahmacakra is the first. It is triple-coiled and shaped like a yoni [and] is situated within *apāna*. [It is] called the root bulb. That is known as Kāmarūpa. (5) That (cakra) alone is the fire pit and the śakti known as *kundalini*. One should meditate on this, which is the embodiment of life, as a luminous weapon, for the sake of liberation.” (6) Immediately following the presentation of the nine *cakras* is a section on Rājayoga, which includes two methods. The first method is attributed to Dattātreya. This method involves guiding the breath and mind by contracting the *mūlādhāra* along the posterior path in the back (*pāscime danḍamārgē*) to the end of the Śākhini channel. After the three *granthis* are pierced and the mind and breath reach the *brahmarakandara*, the sound-born *bindu* dissolves into the void (4364–4367). The second method, however, involves the awakening of *kundalini*, which ascends through the *cakras* (in this case, notably only five), uniting as śakti with śiva in the head, producing nectar that floods the entire body, leading to *samādhi* and transforming the Yогин into a Siddha. This is described in verses 4368–4371: *athavā mūlaśaṇsthānām udghātais tu prabodhayet | sup-tām kundalinīm śaktim bisatantunibhāktim ||22|| suṣumnāntah pravesyāva pañca cakrāni bhedayet | tatah śive śasāṅkābhe sphurannirmalatejasī ||23|| sahasradalapadmāntaḥsthite śaktim niyojayed | atha tatsudhāyā sarvām sabāhyābhyanṭarāṇ tanum ||24|| plāvayitvā tato yogi na kiṁ cid api cintayet | tata utpadyate tasya samādhir nistarāṅgītah | evaṁ nirantarābhyaśād yogi siddhalah sa jāyate ||25||* “Alternatively, one should awaken the dormant Kundalini Śakti, which is as subtle as a lotus fiber, by means of striking the place of the *mūla*-[ādhāra]. (22) Having entered the interior of the Suṣumṇā, one should pierce the five *cakras*. Then, in the pure, radiant light resembling the moon, in Śiva ... (23), one should join the Śakti to the thousand-petaled lotus. Then, with that nectar, one should flood the entire body inside and out. (25) Having flooded [the body with that nectar], the yogi should not think of anything. Then arises his unwavering *samādhi*. Thus, as a result of practising constantly, the yogi becomes a Siddha.” This passage indicates that the *cakra* system described by Rāmacandra was originally intrinsically linked with the concept of *kundalini* and Siddhahood. From this perspective, Rāmacandra’s designation “Siddhakundaliniyoga” is understandable.

that Nārāyaṇatīrtha chose the phonologically similar term Siddhiyoga. By introducing Siddhiyoga, he could cover the entire range of practices that lead to supernatural powers, the *siddhis*, within the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.

## 2.17 Rājayoga

Rājayoga<sup>394</sup> occupies the fifteenth and thus the final and most superior position in Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu* within his yoga taxonomy. In the *Yogasvarodaya*, Rājayoga holds a similarly superior role. In both texts, Rājayoga initially presents a yoga path with fifteen different methods. These methods are variously named yogas, all leading to the state of Rājayoga. In these texts, Rājayoga is an umbrella term for different yoga methods and a designation for an exalted state that produces particular effects. It is noteworthy that Rājayoga is not explicitly linked to *samādhi* even once.<sup>395</sup>

A different interpretation is observed in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. Here, Rājayoga is synonymous with *asamprajñātasamādhi*, the final state of Pātañjalayoga. Rājayoga is therefore only the goal and not a method. However, in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's text, Rājayoga can be achieved through fifteen methods, all of which he situates within his own yoga system, aiming to demonstrate its superiority by subordinating all other contemporary yoga methods to Pātañjalayoga.

In stark contrast, Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* attributes Rājayoga differently. Here, Rājayoga, along with Laksayoga and Astāṅgayoga, is considered a subcategory of Haṭhayoga, primarily denoting a specific technique widely known as *vajrolimudrā*.

Thus, once more, we can observe how the competitive environment of Hinduism's diverse soteriological practices plays out in thematically, spatially, and temporally precisely delimited discourses that are played out in such negotiation processes.

<sup>394</sup> An outstanding article that reconstructs the reception history of the term Rājayoga in great depth is Jason Birch. "Rājayoga: Reincarnations of the King of All Yogas". In: International Journal of Hindu Studies 17, 3 (2013) (2014), pp. 401–444.

<sup>395</sup> In medieval texts from the 12th to 15th centuries, Rājayoga was primarily a synonym for *samādhi*. Cf. Birch, 2014: 401. The *Yogatattvabindu* is a prime example of the many attempts observed from the 16th century onward in various texts to reinterpret the name Rājayoga and associate it with different yoga systems.

### 2.17.1 Rājayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

Rājayoga is the overarching theme of Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu*. Rāmacandra's text aims to document the method of Rājayoga. That is clearly stated at the very beginning of the treatise.<sup>396</sup> Rāmacandra's Rājayoga encompasses a total of fifteen variants, which are listed as follows: Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Caryāyoga, Haṭhayoga, Karmayoga, Layayoga, Dhyānayoga, Mantrayoga, Lakṣayoga, Vāsanāyoga, Śivayoga, Brahmayoga, Advaitayoga, Siddhayoga, and Rājayoga itself. However, only Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Caryāyoga, Haṭhayoga, Mantrayoga, Lakṣayoga, and Siddha[kuṇḍalini]yoga are explicitly introduced as methods with their own sections. Dhyānayoga, Vāsanayoga, Karmayoga, and Advaitayoga are at least implicitly present. Śivayoga and Brahmayoga are mentioned initially as methods but are not further elaborated upon in the text. We can, however, infer that Śivayoga<sup>397</sup> and Brahmayoga<sup>398</sup> were simply regarded as synonyms for Rājayoga, and thus Rāmacandra did not see the need to introduce them as independent categories. The mention of Rājayoga in the list of methods for Rājayoga appears redundant. However, it was possibly placed at the end of the list to express its superiority as the “king of yogas,”<sup>399</sup> as there is no separate yoga method named Rājayoga found in the text. However, other yoga categories not listed among the initial fifteen methods of Rājayoga are mentioned. These include Aṣṭāṅgayoga,<sup>400</sup> Satyayoga,<sup>401</sup> and Sahajayoga.<sup>402</sup> The reasons for their absence in the initial list are not entirely clear, especially since Sahajayoga is even referred to as the “universal ruler among the [methods]

<sup>396</sup> *Yogatattvabindu* section I: śrī ganeśāya namah || atha rājayogaprakāra likhyate |

<sup>397</sup> The Śivayoga of the *Śivayogapradipikā* closely aligns with the overall content of the *Yogatattvabindu*, suggesting the possibility of synonymous usage.

<sup>398</sup> For instance, Divākāra writes in the first verse of the *Bodhasāra*: *rājayogo rājñām nṛpānām svasthāne sthitvāpi vādhayitum śakyatvāt tatsambandhiyogo jīvabrahmaiyaviśayakajñānalakṣaṇo ...* Birch (2014: 430, n. 51) translates: “Rājayoga is the yoga of kings, because rulers can accomplish it even while remaining in their position (that is, as kings). In this connection, its [main] characteristic is knowledge concerning the union of the individual self with Brahman.” The *Yogatattvabindu* occupies a similar position. Here, too, Rājayoga is yoga for kings, and the main characteristic of the *Bodhasāra* is the union of *jīva* and Brahman. Thus, it is possible that Rāmacandra shared this view and considered Brahmayoga synonymous with Rājayoga.

<sup>399</sup> Much in the sense of the *Amanaska* 2.3cd: *rājatvāt yogānām rājayoga iti smṛtā*.

<sup>400</sup> A discussion of Aṣṭāṅgayoga can be found on p.??.

<sup>401</sup> A discussion of Satyayoga can be found on p.206.

<sup>402</sup> A discussion of Sahajayoga can be found on p.206.

of Rājayoga” in the last sentence of the *Yogatattvabindu*,<sup>403</sup> suggesting its extremely high yet still Rājayoga-associated status.

A distinctive feature of the *Yogatattvabindu* is the result of Rājayoga mentioned directly in the introduction. Here, it speaks of “long-term durability of the body,”<sup>404</sup> which, as Rāmacandra explicitly emphasizes, occurs under special circumstances, namely “even if the practitioner is enjoying manifold royal pleasures and even when there is manifold royal entertainment and spectacle.”<sup>405</sup> The name Rājayoga here implies that the practitioner can live like a king and, despite engaging in excessive forms of worldly enjoyment, still experience the positive effects of yoga without renouncing the world and becoming an ascetic. Numerous passages in the text suggest that the Rājayoga of the *Yogatattvabindu* was indeed directly addressed to kings, especially aspiring kings, i.e., young princes (*kumāras*). Due to the scope and significance of this topic, it is addressed elsewhere in this work.<sup>406</sup> It is important to emphasize that the term Rājayoga in this text also consistently carries the meaning of “Yoga for kings.”

Furthermore, the following effects or signs of the Rājayoga methods are explicitly addressed in sections XVI,<sup>407</sup> XVII,<sup>408</sup> and XLII.<sup>409 410</sup> The following table lists these effects according to the sections:

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<sup>403</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* LIX: *rājayogamadhye iti cakravartī nāmakathanam |*

<sup>404</sup>*Yogatattvabindu* section I: *...bahutarakālam śarīrasthitir bhavati |*

<sup>405</sup>Ibid. section I: *...yena rājayogenānekarājyabhoga samaya eva anekapārthivavino da prekṣaṇasamaya eva ...*

<sup>406</sup>See p.??.

<sup>407</sup>*Yogatattvabindu* section XVI: *idānīm rājayogayuktasya puruṣasya yac charīracihnañ tat kathyate /*

<sup>408</sup>Ibid. section XVII: *anyad rājayogasya cihnām kathyate |*

<sup>409</sup>Ibid. section XLII: *idānīm rājayogāc charīre etādṛśāni cihnāni bhavanti |*

<sup>410</sup>Indirectly, the individual methods of Rājayoga also have their own effects.

Section XVI	Section XVII	Section XLII
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● He is rich at all times.</li> <li>● He dwells distant from the world. He dwells in the world, having permeated it.</li> <li>● Neither birth nor death exists for him.</li> <li>● Happiness does not exist.</li> <li>● Suffering does not exist.</li> <li>● Descent does not exist.</li> <li>● Moral conduct does not exist.</li> <li>● Abode does not exist.</li> <li>● In the mind of this perfected one, a light appears immediately before him, which is the connection with God.</li> <li>● Neither does he have a caste, nor does he have any sign.</li> <li>● He is without parts, immaculate and uncharacterized.</li> <li>● Whatever wish for the most excellent fruit, affectionate woman, etc. arises, he obtains that very enjoyment. His mind truly does not suffer attachment in this situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Even when there is the attainment of a kingdom, etc., the perception of a reward does not arise.</li> <li>● Even in loss, suffering does not arise within the mind, and neither does desire arise.</li> <li>● Even when whatever object has been obtained, aversion towards any object does not arise; and concerning this object, affection of the mind does not arise.</li> <li>● The mind is equal towards a person who has expertise in sacred scriptures, a friend or an enemy.</li> <li>● An indifferent view arises.</li> <li>● When for him who freely moves across the entire world being furnished with enjoyment and happiness, the pride of the ability to do these things does not arise within the mind; and one does not proclaim the ability to do these things among all his followers—this is also said to be of Rājayoga.</li> <li>● Whether one has new clothes made of silk, or old, worn clothes with holes, whether one is smeared with sandalwood and musk, or smeared with mud—when delight and grief do not reside within the mind, it is that which is Rājayoga.</li> <li>● When the mind is neither bored nor overwhelmed situated in a city, a forest, an uninhabited village, or a village full of people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The eradication of all diseases occurs.</li> <li>● He has a vision of the entire earth.</li> <li>● Knowledge of the principles (<i>tattvas</i>) arises.</li> <li>● He understands all languages.</li> <li>● The body becomes as strong as a diamond.</li> <li>● Even with the bite of a snake, death does not occur.</li> <li>● Hunger, thirst, drowsiness, and heat do not trouble the person.</li> <li>● Perfection of speech arises.</li> <li>● Fatigue does not occur in the body.</li> <li>● The person assumes the nature of the wind.</li> <li>● He sees the entire earth with a glance.</li> <li>● The eight supernatural powers beginning with “becoming infinitely small” etc. (<i>animādi</i>) arise.</li> <li>● The nine treasures (<i>navanidhi</i>) approach nearby.<sup>411</sup></li> <li>● Within the ten cardinal points in space, the power over death and rebirth arises.</li> <li>● Wherever there is a desire to go in the world, one goes there.</li> <li>● Ignorance disappears everywhere.</li> <li>● One sees the supreme Lord nearby.</li> <li>● There is the capability of accomplishing tasks and removing obstacles.</li> </ul>

Table 6: Effects of Rājayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu*

## 2.17.2 Rājayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya*

Just like in the *Yogatattvabindu*, Rājayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* has fifteen variants. Of these fifteen, however, only eight yogas are named: Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Karmayoga, Haṭhayoga, Dhyānayoga, Mantrayoga, Urayoga<sup>412</sup> and Vāsanāyoga. The other variants are not named, presumably for metrical reasons. In this case, Rājayoga is again considered both as a fifteenfold method and as a state. All fifteen methods lead to the practitioner dwelling in Brahman. The term here implies both the highest or most superior form of yoga and the highest yogic state. Rājayoga leads to a long life and the attainment of the eight supernatural powers. In comparison to the *Yogatattvabindu*, which presents Rājayoga as a yoga that can be practiced despite royal sensual pleasures, the introduction in this text merely states that the practitioner is worthy of being revered by kings. The quotation of the *Yogasvarodaya* in the *Prāṇatosiṇī* (Ed. p. 831) reads:

atha rājayogaḥ || yogasvarodaye |  
 iśvara uvāca |  
 rājayogaṁ pravakṣyāmi śṛṇu sarvatra siddhidam |  
 guhyād guhyataram devi nānādharmam parātparam ||  
 rājayogena deveśi nr̥papūjyo bhaven narah |  
 rājayogi cirāyuś ca aṣṭaiśvaryamayo bhavet ||  
 pañcadaśaprakāro'yaṁ rājayogaḥ ||  
 kriyāyogo jñānayogaḥ karmayoga haṭhas tathā |  
 dhyānayoga mantrayoga urayogaśca vāsanā |  
 rājaty etad brahmaśiva ebhiś ca pañcadaśadhāḥ ||

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<sup>412</sup>The term Urayoga is possibly a corruption of the text. Jason Birch suggested emending to *lakṣayoga*, as Lakṣayoga plays a central role in the course of the text. Karen O'Brien-Kop suggested *ūha* as a possible reading for *ura* - a term derived from the older meditation framework of Sāṃkhya, which emphasizes *ūha* (reflection), *śabda* (speech), and *adhyayana* (study). Oberhammer, for example, discusses this term in his analysis of the *Yuktidīpikā* (commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* from the 7th century BC). Unfortunately, the term is not found a second time in the surviving material of the *Yogasvarodaya*. In view of the mention of Sāṃkhyayoga in Sundarā's *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā*, this possibility cannot be ruled out. Unfortunately, the surviving material of the *Yogasvarodaya* does not support this idea. Sven Sellmer suggested that it may not be a mistake, but an abbreviated form of *uraga*. Uragayoga translated as "Snake yoga" and could be a synonym for Kuṇḍaliniyoga. However, I could not find this word attested anywhere else.

Now Rājayoga. [As described] in the *Yogasvarodaya*. God said: “I will teach Rājayoga, listen! In every case it bestows completion. [It is] more secret than secret, oh goddess, [its] nature is manifold, [and it is] higher than the highest. By means of Rājayoga, oh goddess, a man becomes [worthy] of being worshipped by kings. The Rājayogin may have a long life and he may be equipped with the eight [supernatural] powers. This Rājayoga has fifteen varieties: Kriyāyoga, Jñānayoga, Karmayoga, Haṭhayoga, Dhyānayoga, Mantrayoga, Urayoga and Vāsanāyoga. By [means of] these fifteen [yogas], that [person] who is resting in Brahman shines [like a king].”

### 2.17.3 Rājayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*

In his introduction to the first *sūtra*, Nārāyaṇatīrtha takes Rājayoga as a synonym of *saṃādhi* (“meditative absorption”) and *nididhyāsana* (“profound meditation”). Later on, he equates Rājayoga more specifically with *asamprajñātasamādhi* and *nirbijasamādhi*.<sup>413</sup> Thus, the Rājayoga of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* designates the final state, the goal of the Pātañjalayoga system,<sup>414</sup> and not a method to achieve the state. He provides fifteen different yogas to reach this state. All yoga methods are, in turn, embedded within the eight limbs of Pātañjalayoga. In his commentary, Nārāyaṇatīrtha situates and explains all of them within the *saṃādhipāda* and *sādhanapāda* of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. This can best be understood from Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s own words:

*brahmavid āpnoti param | brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati | tam eva  
viditvā 'timṛtyum eti nānyah panthā vidyate 'yanāya | tarati śokam  
ātmavit | ity ādiśrutisiddhaparamapuruṣārtha sādhanatānandāt-  
masākṣatkārasādhanatāyā śravaṇamananānidhyāsanādini, ātmā vā*

<sup>413</sup> *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.20 (Ed. p. 25): *tataḥ paravairāgyād asamprajñātā itareśān pūrvavilakṣaṇānām manusyānām mumukṣūnām bhavaty arthaḥ | ayam eva ca rājayoga ity ucyate | tad uktān smṛtau - samādhis tatra nirbijo rājayogaḥ prakīrtitāḥ | dipavad rājate yasmād ātmā saccinmayāḥ prabhuḥ ||*

<sup>414</sup> This has previously been noted within the distinguished article by Jason Birch (2014: 414-415) on the reception history of yoga named “Rājayoga: Reincarnations of the King of All Yogas”. Here, Birch states that the earliest occurrence of the term “rājayoga” in a commentary on the *Yogasūtra* may be Vijñānabhikṣu’s *Yogasārasamgraha* (16th century). Here, too, Vijñānabhikṣu understood Rājayoga as *saṃādhi*.

're draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ | ity ādinā 'mnātāni  
 | tatra nididhyāsanam pradhānam | tatsahakṛtād eva manaso 'laukikā  
 'bādhitātmagocarapramāsambhavāt, sarvavijñānādirūpaphalasaṁvādāc  
 ca | nididhyāsanañ caika tānatādirūpo rājayogāparaparyāyaḥ samādhiḥ  
 | tatsādhanam tu kriyāyogaḥ, caryāyogaḥ, karmayogo, haṭhayogo,  
 mantrayogo, jñānayogaḥ, advaitayogo, lakṣayogo, brahmayogaḥ, śivayogaḥ,  
 siddhiyogo, vāsanāyogo, layayogo, dhyānayogaḥ, premabhaktiyogaś  
 ca | tad etat sarvam sāmānyaviśeṣabhāvenāṣṭāṅgayogena kavalikṛtam  
 iti manasi nidhāya sāṣṭāṅgam saphalam yogam samādhisādhanav-  
 ibhūtikaivalyārthakaiś caturbhīḥ pādair vyutpādayisyan prekṣāvat  
 pravr̥ttaye viṣayaprayojanādhikārisambandhān darśayan prathamam  
 sāstrasyārambhaṁ pratijānīte bhagavān patañjaliḥ | atha yogānuśāsanam  
 || 1 ||

The knower of Brahman attains the supreme. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman itself. Having realized that alone, one transcends death; no other path is known. The knower of the self traverses sorrow. This is established in the scriptures as the supreme purpose of human life, and the means to realize the blissful nature of the self is hearing, reflection, profound meditation, etc. Oh, the self, indeed, must be seen, heard, reflected upon, and profoundly meditated upon. Among these, profound meditation is the most essential part. Only because of that, the extraordinary perceptions of the mind arise - as a result of the occurrence of the right idea of the dwelling place of the unobstructed self and, as a result, the information of the fruits of the first appearance of all-encompassing insight. Profound meditation, characterized by being humbly inclined towards unity, is another synonym for Rājayoga or *samādhi*. The means to this include Kriyāyoga, Cāryāyoga, Karmayoga, Haṭhayoga, Mantrayoga, Jñānayoga, Advaitayoga, Lakṣayoga, Brahmayoga, Śivayoga, Siddhiyoga, Vāsanāyoga, Layayoga, Dhyānayoga, and Premabhaktiyoga. All these are encompassed generally and specifically through the eight-limbed yoga. Keeping this in mind, the yoga with eight limbs which is fruitful, through the chapters regarding the subjects *samādhi* ("meditative absor-

tion”), *sādhana* (“practice”), *vibhūti* (*supernatural powers*) and *kaivalya* (*isolation*) teaching the connections regarding the objective of the topic for its application in a comprehensible manner the venerable Patañjali revealing the most excellent beginning of his treatise states: Now, the teaching of yoga begins.

#### 2.17.4 Rājayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

The Rājayoga of Sundardāś (3.13–24) is subsumed along with Laksyayoga and Aṣṭāṅgayoga in the tetrad of Haṭhayoga.<sup>415</sup> In contrast to Rāmacandra, who portrays Haṭhayoga as a form of Rājayoga, Sundardāś understands Rājayoga as a form of Haṭhayoga. This form exclusively refers to what is generally known as *vajrolimudrā*.<sup>416</sup>

Although the association of Rājayoga and *vajrolī* might seem surprising in light of the modern understanding of Rājayoga as meditation,<sup>417</sup> or its use in medieval yoga texts (12th - 15th centuries CE) as a synonym for *samādhi*,<sup>418</sup> *vajrolimudrā* was already regarded in early *haṭha* texts, such as the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*,<sup>419</sup> as a suitable method to achieve Rājayoga. Śrinivāsayogi goes even further in the *Hatharatnāvalī*. For him, one can only become a *rājayogī* through the practice of *vajrolī*.<sup>420</sup> According to Mallinson (2018: 205), *vajrolimudrā* was originally used by ancient ascetic traditions as a technique for the retention and conservation of semen (*bindudhārana*) by reabsorbing the fluids emitted by both sexes during the act through the urethra, thus maintaining the celibacy so crucial to these traditions under all circumstances. Mallinson showed through texts written from the second millennium CE onward that these practices were first made accessible to an audience beyond their ascetic originators, allowing householders to benefit from yoga practice without having to forgo the pleasures of sexual intercourse. Simultaneously, this technique was adapted by

<sup>415</sup> For another discussion of Rājayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, see Burger, 2014: 696–697.

<sup>416</sup> In an outstanding and groundbreaking article titled “Yoga and Sex: What is the Purpose of Vajrolimudrā?” (2018), Mallinson determined the history, method, and purpose of *vajrolimudrā* based on textual, ethnographic, experiential, and anatomical data.

<sup>417</sup> Cf. De Micheliis, 2004: 178–180.

<sup>418</sup> Cf. Birch 2014: 401.

<sup>419</sup> Cf. *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* 183–184.

<sup>420</sup> *Hatharatnāvalī* 2.104.

tantric Śaiva traditions. They synthesized the originally purely physiological concept of *vajrolimudrā* with two of their own concepts: the use of sexual fluids as the ultimate offering in rituals and its internalization as a visualization of the united sexual fluids being directed upward through the central channel. As a result, *vajrolimudrā* was no longer considered merely a physiological method for maintaining celibate efforts but, through this synthesis with tantric ideas, became a method leading to a divine body,<sup>421</sup> the attainment of all supernatural powers (*siddhis*),<sup>422</sup> or the awakening of *kundalini*.<sup>423</sup>

Only against this background can the Rājayoga of Dādūpanthī Sundardās be adequately understood, whose practical aspect must be derived from only two verses.

*rājayoga kīnā śīva rāī | gaurā samga anaṅga na jāī | ghrta nahim dharai  
agni ke pāsā | rājayoga kā badā tamāsā || 14 ||*

Śīva performed Rājayoga with Gaurī (Parvatī), without being overcome by the god of love (*anaṅga*)<sup>424</sup> Just as clarified butter cannot stay near fire, Rājayoga is a great challenge.

*nāḍicakra bheda jau pāvai | tau caḍhi biṁda apūṭhau āvai | karānī kathina  
āhi ati bhārī | baśabarttānī hoi jau nārī || 15 ||*

Having pierced the network of channels (*nāḍicakra*), then the rising semen arrives unbroken. The practice is hard and very difficult, even when the women is under control.

The name *vajrolimudrā* is not mentioned. However, the practice referred to as Rājayoga in these verses is practically identical to the medieval models of *vajrolimudrā* described above.<sup>425</sup> Rājayoga consists of a practice involving sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, which leads to not being overpowered by the god of love, the personification of desire.<sup>426</sup> The Yogi is

<sup>421</sup> Śivasamhitā 4.87

<sup>422</sup> Dattātreayayogaśāstra 175

<sup>423</sup> Cf. Haṭharatnāvali 2.82

<sup>424</sup> Anaṅga is another name for Kāma (lit. “desire”), the god of love.

<sup>425</sup> The same conclusion is drawn by Burger (2014: 696) and Mallinson (2018: 195).

<sup>426</sup> Mallinson (2018) mentions *Hathābhyaśapaddhati* (f. 28r, ll. 6–9), which describes that the Yogi can have sex with sixteen women a day without giving up celibacy and without succumbing to passion once the practice of *vajroli* is well established.

encouraged to make the semen rise after it has pierced the network of channels (*nāḍīakra*). The entire process is described as extremely difficult, even if the woman cooperates.

The first verse describes Śiva practicing Rājayoga with Pārvatī. Due to subsequent references to *vajrolī*, this implies engaging in sexual intercourse. Despite the physical union with Pārvatī, who symbolizes beauty and passion, Śiva was not overpowered by the god of love (*anaṅga*), who represents desire and passion. To illustrate the difficulty of Rājayoga, Sundardās uses the image of clarified butter, which cannot remain near the fire without melting and burning. This image symbolizes how something very pure, like ghee, typically cannot withstand the presence of something that could consume or destroy it. This purity, the clarified butter, represents yogic celibacy, while the fire represents the source of desire, namely the woman, Pārvatī. The celibacy of a Yogi in this situation is highly threatened, as it is extremely difficult to resist the urge. Unlike anyone else, Śiva can enjoy the sexual act with Pārvatī without being consumed by her flames and without giving up his celibacy. He succeeds in using Rājayoga to pierce the network of channels with the semen<sup>427</sup> and then make it rise within himself. The comparison illustrates the high degree of self-control and difficulty required to practice this form of Rājayoga, as it is natural for desire to arise in the presence of attractive stimuli. Accordingly, the last verse of this chapter states:

*rājayoga cinha ye jānaiṁ biralā koi | triyā saṁga mati kijiyahu jo aisā nahīṁ  
hoi || 24 ||*

Those who truly understand the characteristic of Rājayoga are  
rare indeed; he who does should not shun the company of women.

The other verses describe the one who has mastered Rājayoga. These descriptions are similar to those in the *Yogatattvabindu*. The positive effects of Rājayoga are far-reaching. The practitioner's resilience is increased immeasurably. Neither hunger nor thirst, sleep or laziness, cold and heat, nor old age

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<sup>427</sup> It remains unclear whether this refers to his own semen or a mixture of male and female semen, as in the *Yogaśikhopaniṣad* 1.157cd: *rajaso retaso yogād rājayoga iti smṛtā* | Here, Rājayoga is defined as the union of female generative fluid or menstrual blood (*rajas*) and semen (*retas*).

can affect him (3.19). Fire cannot burn, nor can water drown him; he does not age and becomes immortal with a body as hard as a diamond (3.20). He goes wherever he wants; nothing in the world can stop him, and he can dwell in heaven with the gods or in the netherworld with the demons if he desires (3.21) etc. The Rājayogī here strongly resembles the archetypal Avadhūta, who can do as he pleases. Particularly interesting is the statement that he is liberated (*muktā*) and yet enjoys the eight pleasures, untouched by sin and merit.<sup>428</sup> I could only identify the eight pleasures in the *Yogatattvabindu* (Section XXII). They are listed there and include: 1. Silken clothes, 2. A mansion with five or seven rooms, 3. A large bed with a soft mattress and cover, 4. A woman belonging to the Padminī group of women,<sup>429</sup> 5. A comfortable seat, 6. An exceptionally valuable horse, 7. Appetizing food, and 8. Various drinks. The original idea of *vajroli*, namely maintaining celibacy despite the enjoyment of sexual intercourse, is further expanded here. Through the Rājayoga of Sundardās, the Yogi apparently need not renounce anything. That demonstrates the character of the comprehensive syncretistic equation of *vajroli* and Rājayoga that Sundardās undertakes here. He reduces the practice of Rājayoga to one of the fundamental practices of Hāṭhayoga, namely *vajroli*. This practice allows the Yogi to enjoy the world's pleasures without facing the consequences that would affect the overarching goals of yoga. That opens the door for Sundardās to unreservedly transfer the general characteristics of the results of Rājayoga from other traditions to his own model. The very classification of Rājayoga as a subcategory of Hāṭhayoga shows that Sundardās certainly did not understand Rājayoga as the king of all yogas as in *Amanaska*,<sup>430</sup> rather the term Rājayoga here implies that the practitioner can live like a king, indulge in the associated sensual pleasures, and remain a Yogi, without wandering as a possessionless, world-renouncing ascetic seeking liberation.

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<sup>428</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.17: *disai saṃga pūni muktaḥ | aṣṭa prakāra bhoga kau bhuktā | pāpa punya kachu parasai nāmhit̄ | jaisaiṁ kamala rahai jala māmhit̄ || 16 ||*

<sup>429</sup>See n. ?? on p. ??.

<sup>430</sup>*Amanaska* 2.3cd: *rājatvāt yogānāṁ rājayoga iti smṛtaḥ |*

### 2.17.5 Rājayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Rājayoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies demonstrates the complex cross-traditional negotiation processes of the 17th century. It underscores the prominence of Rājayoga as a universal category in an interplay between continuity and innovation.

The analysis of the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya* shows the use of the term Rājayoga as a superior and at the same time universal category. All yogas listed in these texts are presented as methods of Rājayoga. Here, Rājayoga carries multiple connotations. At the first level, Rājayoga must be understood as the “king of yogas” since it is placed at the top of the lists, as seen in the earlier fourfold taxonomies. At the same time, Rājayoga is a specific state to be attained but can be reached through very different yoga methods. Regarding the desired state, the *Yogatattvabindu* notably departs from the earlier connotations with *samādhi* and shifts the interpretation of this once primarily soteriological state, which still resonates but surprisingly weakly, towards a state that emphasises more worldly concerns. Specifically, one property of Rājayoga is unmistakably highlighted. Despite extensive involvement in sensual pleasures, the practitioner attains all the mental and physical benefits of a yoga practice. That occurs against the backdrop that these texts, the *Yugasvarodaya* targets householders and ascetics,<sup>431</sup> and the *Yogatattvabindu* targets wealthier social strata, probably *kṣatriyas*. Therefore, in the latter text, the meaning of “Yoga for kings” is also clearly implied at a second level. The inclusivist schema<sup>432</sup> that emerges in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya* also appears in Nārāyaṇatirtha’s *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. In Nārāyaṇatirtha’s text, Rājayoga can be achieved through fifteen yogas or yoga methods, all of which he situates within his own yoga system, aiming to demonstrate its superiority by subordinating all other contemporary yoga methods he knew to Pātañjalayoga. Nārāyaṇatirtha equates Rājayoga with *asamprajñātasamādhi*, the ultimate state of Pātañjalayoga. Thus, Rājayoga is considered solely as

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<sup>431</sup>The quotations from *Yugasvarodaya* in the *Yogakarṇikā* make it clear that the practices attributed to *Yugasvarodaya* – such as *nāḍikṣālanam* (YK 4.74–77) – were undoubtedly only performed by professional ascetics.

<sup>432</sup>Inclusivist in the sense of Paul Hacker’s “Inklusivismus” (1979).

the goal and not as a specific method. However, that reflects the discursive power and social esteem Rājayoga had in Nārāyaṇatīrtha's lifetime. Although Nārāyaṇatīrtha undoubtedly considers his Pātañjalayoga as the ultimate and superior yoga system, which is evident in his attempt to incorporate or perhaps more aptly subjugate the fifteen yogas to the *Yogaśūtra*, Rājayoga was so significant in his discursive environment that he equated the term Rājayoga, a term that originated from Śaiva traditions, with the final goal, the quintessence of Pātañjalayoga, namely *asamprajñātasamādhi*.

Sundardās, as an author with a clear Vaiṣṇava orientation, naturally sought to distinguish himself from other discursive authorities and degraded Rājayoga in his *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* to a mere method of Hṛdayoga, namely *vajrolimudrā*, which, according to his descriptions, is not only difficult to master but was also widely considered disreputable and frowned upon.<sup>433</sup> He keeps his descriptions so vague and brief that it is unimaginable that this description could have served as a practical guide. This categorisation could only have served a strategic purpose, namely, similar to the *Yogatattvabindu*, *Yogaśvarodaya*, and the *Yogaśiddhāntacandrikā*, to strengthen and propagate his own yoga model in contrast to other models, especially those models that place Rājayoga at the top of the hierarchy. Sundardās deliberately knocks Rājayoga off his throne in his model. Through this categorisation, he manages to subtly undermine the authority of Rājayoga without having to ignore it. In comparison to the other texts of the complex yoga taxonomies, his yoga taxonomy proceeds more skillfully in terms of eloquence, systematics, and diplomatic finesse.

Taken together, we witness a struggle for interpretive authority, a competitive environment of yoga traditions entangled in discursive negotiation processes, where each actor tries to assert themselves. All authors came from an environment where many yoga traditions intersected, and a lively exchange existed.

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<sup>433</sup>The fact that participants in the discourse were troubled by *vajrolimudrā* is shown, for example, in Mallinson. The new critical edition by Mallinson (2024) has shown that in the most widely disseminated recension of the text, the section on *vajrolimudrā* was significantly shortened, likely due to disapproval of these practices. The same phenomenon was observed in the new critical edition of the *Hṛdayapradīpikā* (2025). In most recensions of this text, the section on *vajrolimudrā* was either moved to the end or removed entirely.

## 2.18 Other yogas

Up to this point, the comparison of individual yoga categories has been based on the order set out in *Yogatattvabindu*. This means that most of the yoga categories used in all texts have already been covered. However, there are still some yogas that need to be addressed. These will be described in the following sections and, if they appear in more than one text, they will be compared with each other.

### 2.18.1 Bhaktiyoga

Forms of Bhaktiyoga, “Yoga of devotion”, are absent in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*. Nārāyaṇatīrtha, however, places his Premabhaktiyoga at the topmost position in the yoga taxonomy of the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*. For him, this method of yoga is the final and most important element for attaining Rājayoga or *samādhi*.<sup>434</sup> Sundardās, on the other hand, places Bhaktiyoga at the very beginning in his treatise on all limbs of yoga, the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*.<sup>435</sup> In his progressive sequence of twelve yogas, Bhaktiyoga forms the very foundation of his yoga system. In Sundardās’s system, Bhaktiyoga is both an individual category and an overarching term of the first tetrad, subsuming the three methods already discussed: Mantrayoga,<sup>436</sup> Layayoga,<sup>437</sup> and Cācāyoga.<sup>438</sup>

#### 2.18.1.1 Premabhaktiyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacanrikā*

Nārāyaṇatīrtha introduces Premabhaktiyoga, the “Yoga of devotion with unconditional love”, in his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 1.32:

*tatpratiṣedhārtham ekatattvābhyaḥ saḥ || 32 ||*

<sup>434</sup>An earlier description of Premabhaktiyoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* can be found in Penna 2004: 97–102. Unlike Penna, Nārāyaṇatīrtha does not mention the four types of *prāṇidhāna* merely for informational purposes. Rather, Nārāyaṇatīrtha illustrates the superiority of his concept of Premabhaktiyoga, which encompasses all four methods.

<sup>435</sup>An earlier discussion of Bhaktiyoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* in French can be found in Burger 2014: 690–692.

<sup>436</sup>See p.123.

<sup>437</sup>See p.109.

<sup>438</sup>See p.89.

For the purpose of their elimination, the practice of concentrating on a single principle [should be performed].

This *sūtra* refers back to the disturbances (*vikṣepas*) mentioned in *Yogasūtra* 1.30, which lists the obstacles to the stilling of the fluctuations of the mind (*cittavṛttinirodha*). These disturbances are disease (*vyādhī*), incompetence (*sthāna*), doubt (*saṃsaya*), carelessness (*pramāda*), sloth (*ālasya*), lack of detachment (*avirati*), erroneous conception (*bhrāntidarśana*), not obtaining a base for concentration (*alabdhahūmikatva*), and instability (*anavasthitatva*).

According to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, the devout worship of Īśvara (*iśvara-praṇidhāna*) is indispensable for the elimination of the nine disturbances. Nārāyaṇatīrtha asserts that even minimal or incomplete practice of *praṇidhāna* can yield remarkable results. Simply uttering the name of Īśvara destroys accumulated sins. This destruction, along with faith, etc., results in complete devotion, thereby achieving all desired outcomes.<sup>439</sup>

*Praṇidhāna* can be practiced in four ways: the highest (*paramamukhya*), the most excellent (*mukhya*), the one belonging to the most excellent (*mukhyajātiya*), and the one enabling the most excellent (*mukhyakalpa*).<sup>440</sup> All four methods serve the progressive fixation of the mind on Īśvara and are based on the expositions of the *Bhagavadgītā* 12.8-II.

The first type (*paramamukhya*) of devout worship is the loving and continuous fixation of the mind and intellect on Īśvara. This form of *praṇidhāna* is compared to the devotion and love of the Gopīs for Kṛṣṇa. The mind of the Gopī melts upon hearing the multitude of divine qualities and, like molten copper poured into a mold, firmly takes its shape.<sup>441</sup>

The second type (*mukhya*) is also known as the practice of *nididhyāsana*. If the first type is impossible, this form should be adopted initially. It is char-

<sup>439</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.32 (Ed. pp. 49–50): *yathā 'gnikaṇo 'tisvalpo 'pi tṛṇarāśaiṁ jvālayam*■  
*tenaiva vardhitāḥ pūrnāḥ sarvāṇī sūcītāni kāryāṇī janayati | tathā bhagavato yathākathaī cinnāmoc-*  
*cāraṇādirūpam api praṇidhānam ajāmilāder iva pāparāśīṁ nāśayat tena nāśenaivādhikam sampādyamā-*  
*nam śraddhādinā pūrṇam bhajaniya icchāsahakṛtam sarvābhilaśitam sādhayate | tasmāt praṇidhānam evā-*  
*vaśyakam |*

<sup>440</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 50): *tac ca caturvidham paramamukhyam, mukhyam mukhyajātiyam,*  
*mukhyakalpañ ceti |*

<sup>441</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 50): *tatrādyam gopinām iva tadguṇaगान्धारवान् नादिना drutacetaso drutatām*  
*rasyeva dr̥dhatadākāratā tadvisayakavṛttipravāharūpam prema mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayim buddhim*  
*niveśaya | ity ādinoktam | anena premabhaktiyogo darśitaḥ | sa ca parameśvaracaraṇāravindavīśayakaikān-*  
*tiyatīkāprēmapravāho 'navacchinna ity arthaḥ |*

acterized by repeatedly drawing back the outwardly directed and wandering mind through practice and focusing it on the exalted self within.<sup>442</sup> This variant is intended for practitioners who are unable to maintain the mental constancy required for the first method.

For those who cannot fix their mind on the Supreme God through love or constant repetition, the third type (*mukhyajātiya*) is recommended. That primarily involves devout service to God, such as recitation of God's name, fasting, etc. This service and all actions, good or bad, should be dedicated to the Supreme God without attachment to the results.<sup>443</sup>

The fourth type (*mukhyakalpa*) is finally for those who cannot yet practice the third type, the devout service to God. Here, the practitioner is encouraged to renounce the fruits of all actions and to rest in the self.<sup>444</sup>

In the context of the repeated practice [of concentration] on a single principle to eliminate the nine disturbances of *Yogasūtra* 1.32, Nārāyaṇatīrtha identifies the one principle (*ekatattva*) as the Supreme God, and the practice (*abhyāsa*) as Premabhaktiyoga. Premabhaktiyoga, he asserts, is the culmination of all the methods above. Moreover, according to Nārāyaṇatīrtha, Premabhaktiyoga unites both results: the removal of disturbances and the reception of God's grace.<sup>445</sup>

The continuous flow of mental fluctuations (*vṛttipravāha*) generated within the framework of Premabhaktiyoga can be practised either with qualities

<sup>442</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 50): *dvitiyaṁ tadasāmarthye bahihpravṛttisvabhāvasya manasaḥ pratyāhāreṇa punah punarbhagavatyātmani nivēśanarupee bhyāśo nididhyāsanākhyah* | To illustrate this explanation, Nārāyaṇatīrtha quotes *Bhagavadgītā* 12.9: *atha cittam samādhātum na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram | abhyāsayogaṇa tato mām icchāptum dhanañjaya | ity ādy uktam |*

<sup>443</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 50): *trītyān tu tadasāmarthye 'pi svabhāvata eva kṛtānām api karmānām phalechāmī tyaktvā parameśvare paramagurāvaraṇam sādhu vā 'sādhu vā karma yadyadācaritaṁ mayā | tatsarvam tvayi samnyastam tvatprayuktah karomy aham | iti samkalpavisēśarūpam |*

<sup>444</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 50): *atthaitad apy aśakte 'si kartṛm madyogam aśritah | sarvakarmaphalatyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān | ity ādinoktaṁ bhagavadgītādvādaśādhyāye |*

<sup>445</sup>Cf. *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* 1.32 (Ed. pp. 50–51): *atra ca prañidhānaśabdenoktam | tatra nididhyāsanam samānaviṣayatayā sāksātkāra janakatvasādhanam karmādi yogebhyaścāntarāṅgamityabhipretya, arthabhāvanaśabdena pūrvamādratam yady api tathāpy adr̄śadvārā krpātiśayaphalakādantaraṇyābhāvaphalakāc ca | tasmāt paramān mukhyāmī bhaktiyogamī sarvopāyaphalabhūtam ayam ata eva tadubhayaphalakām premākhyam abhyāsam āha- tatpratiśedhārthamekatattvābhyāsaḥ | 32 || tatpratiśedheti | teṣāṁ vikṣepānāmī pratīśedhārtham anāyāsenā nāśārtham ekasmimīlī tattve mukhyabhogati, abhyāsaḥ gopināmī iva tadguṇaṇāśravaṇādīnā dravibhūtasya cetaso mūṣānikṣiptadrutatām rasyeva dṛḍhatadākāratārūpaprema abhyāsayoga�uktena cetāśā nānyagāminā | ity ādinā bhagavatsūcītah kārya ityarthah | yad balād anāyāsenā sampannāyāmī jivanmuktau vikṣepāpī praśamam upayānti | na vāsudevabhaktānām aśubham vidyate kvacit | ity ādismrteḥ |*

(*saguṇa*) and distinctions (*savikalpa*), focusing on a specific form of God, such as Vāsudeva mentioned by Nārāyaṇatīrtha, or without qualities (*nirguna*) and without distinctions (*nirvikalpa*), focusing on the "indivisible reality, free from internal, external, and contradictory distinctions, not overlaid with any attributes, which is the true, inseparable essence" (*ekam sajātvijātiyasyagatabhedarahitam tattvamanāropitam akhaṇḍartha*).<sup>446</sup>

Nārāyaṇatīrtha further emphasizes the particular significance of Premabhaktiyoga in his commentary on *Yogasūtra* 2.45. Here, it is *iśvarapraṇidhāna* in the form of *premabhakti*, which leads the Yогin to the grace of God, which is required for the perfection of *samādhi*.<sup>447</sup> Thus, this passage also clarifies why Nārāyaṇatīrtha places Premabhaktiyoga at the pinnacle of his yoga methods.

### 2.18.1.2 Bhaktiyoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

Sundardās specifies Sanaka, Nāradamūni, Śuka, Dhruva and Prahlāda as important representatives of his Bhaktiyoga.<sup>448</sup> He describes Bhaktiyoga in verses 2.1-15. Initially, Sundardās describes the attitude necessary for Bhaktiyoga in verses 2.2-7: one should control their senses. Regardless of where one is, they should not become attached to them.<sup>449</sup> Without falling into illusion (*māyā*) and deception, one should remain equanimous towards everything. Gold and women should be banished, and one should not be overwhelmed by desire.<sup>450</sup> Moreover, virtues such as good conduct, contentment, forgiveness,

<sup>446</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. pp. 51-52): *athavā ekam sajātvijātiyasyagatabhedarahitam tattvamanāropitam akhaṇḍartha iti yāvat | tasya abhyāsaḥ tad ekam ajaram amṛtam abhayam iti vṛttipravāhaḥ kārya ity arthaḥ | atrātmavyatirekeṇa dvitiyam yo na paśyati | ātmarāmaḥ sa yogindro brahmibhūto bhaved iha || ātmakriḍasya satataṁ sadātmamithunasya ca | ātmany eva sutṛptasya yogasiddhir adūratāḥ || abhiyogāt sadābhyaśāt tatraiva ca viñiscayāt | punah punarānirvedat siddhyed yogo na cānyathā || iti skandokeḥ | tasmat saguṇātmavadākārākāradhārāvāhīvṛttipravāhaḥ savikalpo nirguṇagocaro dhārāvāhiko nirvikalpako vā kāryo 'nāyāsenā mokṣam icchateti yāvat || 32 ||*

<sup>447</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.32 (Ed. p. 107): *iśvarapraṇidhānasādhyasiddhim āha - samādhisiddhariśvarapraṇidhānāt || 45 || samādhitī | iśvarapraṇidhānam pūrvam vyākhyātām | samādher uktalakṣaṇasya siddhir apratibandhenānāyāsenā tatkrpayā gurvādīdvārā ca dṛḍhā prāptir bhavatīty arthaḥ | etac ca phalam premabhakteḥ svataḥ puruṣārthaḥ rūpāyā nāntariyakam yathā phalārthino vrksādisānnidhyec chāyām gandhādir ity anyatra vistaraḥ || 45 ||*

<sup>448</sup>*Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 1.3: *sanakādika nārada mūni, śuka aru dhruva prahalāda | bhakti yoha so ina kiyaun, sadguru kām ju prasāda || 3 ||*

<sup>449</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.2cd: *jitendriya aru rahai udāsi | athavā grha athavā bana vāsi || 2 ||*

<sup>450</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.3cd: *māyā moha karai nahim kāhū | rahai sabani sauṇ beparavāhū | kanaka kāminī chādai samāngā | āśā tṛṣṇā karai na amṛgā || 3 ||*

patience, and compassion should be cultivated.<sup>451</sup> Furthermore, one should view all beings as equal, from the king to the insect,<sup>452</sup> and keep the words of the true Guru in their heart, etc. These verses are reminiscent of the elements of *yamas* and *niyamas* from Aṣṭāṅgayoga systems.<sup>453</sup>

Furthermore, Sundardās' writes in verse 2.7:

sāra grahai kūkasa saba nāśai | ramitā rāma ista sira rāśai |  
āṁna deva kī karai na sevā | pūjai eka niramjana devā || 7 ||

One should seize the essence and abandon all impurities, keeping the beloved Rama at the forefront of the mind. One should not serve any other gods, but worship only the one pure and formless deity.

Although Sundardās refers to the Divine as Rāma here, he represents the Nirguna type of Bhaktiyoga.<sup>454</sup> For Sundardās, Rāma is nothing other than a designation of the unmanifest consciousness (*avyakta puruṣa*).

The ritual worship (*pūjā*) mentioned in 2.7d is used by Sundardās as a metaphor and comparison for the form of Bhaktiyoga he describes in verses 2.9-11. The external *pūjā* is performed internally in Bhaktiyoga. One's discipline is the ritual washing, and one offers the flowers of love and devotion.<sup>455</sup> The lamp (*ārati*) for the worship is knowledge, and the bell (*ghaṇṭā*) is the unstruck sound (*anāhada śabda*) he contemplates, etc. He offers his entire body and mind, becomes humble, and falls at the feet of the Divine.<sup>456</sup> Hieran lässt sich eine klare Kritik am ritualistischer Gottesverehrung ableiten, die Sundardās bereits im ersten Kapitel zum Ausdruck bringt.<sup>457</sup>

The concluding verses illustrate the deep emotional devotion. One never abandons the attitude of the servant, and love grows day by day.<sup>458</sup> This inner

<sup>451</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.4ab: *śīla santoṣa kṣamā ura ghārai | dhiraja sahitā dayā pratipārai |*

<sup>452</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.5d: *kīrī kumjara sama kari jānaim || 5 ||*

<sup>453</sup>In fact, in the presentation of his variant of Aṣṭāṅgayoga 3.37-52, Sundardās refrains from giving a concrete description of the *yamas* and *niyamas*. He only specifies them in verse 3.37.

<sup>454</sup>In *Sarvāṅgoyogapradīpikā* 2.15, Sundardās himself describes this form of Bhakti as without attributes: *yaha so bhakti aliṅgani |*

<sup>455</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.9cd: *saṁjama udaka sanāna karāvai | prema priti ke puṣpa caḍhāvai || 9 ||*

<sup>456</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.11: *jñāna dīpa ārati utārai | ghaṇṭā anahada śabda vacārai | tana mana sakala samarpana karaī | dina hoī puni pāyani paraī || 11 ||*

<sup>457</sup>Cf. ibid. 1.12-49.

<sup>458</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.12cd: *sevaka bhāva kadaī nahim caurai | dina dina priti adhika hi jorai || 12 ||*

attitude of service is compared to the attitude of a faithful wife towards her husband.<sup>459</sup> She serves continuously without interruption. Sundardās calls this form of devotion “incomparable” (*bhakti ananya*).<sup>460</sup>

### 2.18.2 Bhaktiyoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Bhaktiyoga within the four texts of the complex early modern yoga taxonomies leads to enriching conclusions about the yoga category of Bhaktiyoga in the 17th century. For Sundardās, Bhaktiyoga is the primary component, the foundational element and the devotional aspect of his yoga system. The fact that he presents this yoga as the basis of his *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* is due to the central position of Sant Bhakti, which spread in all forms of Sant religion from the fourteenth century onwards, from Maharashtra in the south, through Sindh, Punjab, and Haryana in the north, and from Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west to the plains of the Ganges in the east.<sup>461</sup>

Nārāyaṇatīrtha’s placement of Premabhaktiyoga at the top of the taxonomy of yoga methods for attaining Rājayoga in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā* can likely be seen as a response to the then-dominant position of the Bhakti movement. It also reveals that he was very keen to draw his readers’ attention to the universality and superiority of Pātañjalayoga.

In the case of the *Yogasvarodaya*, the text’s origin can explain the absence of Bhaktiyoga. The rivers Godāvarī and Kāverī mentioned in the text suggest that the *Yogasvarodaya* was composed in more southern regions, where the Bhakti movement had much less influence.<sup>462</sup>

The absence of Bhaktiyoga in Rāmacandra’s *Yogatattvabindu* can be partly attributed to the sources he used for its composition. Since Rāmacandra largely adhered strictly to the contents of his two source texts, the *Yogasvarodaya* and the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, which do not mention Bhaktiyoga, Bhaktiyoga is also absent in the *Yogatattvabindu*. However, Rāmacandra composed his text in northern Indian regions where the Bhakti movement was

<sup>459</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.13ab: *jyaum pratibratā rahai pati pāsā | aisaiṁ svāmi ki dhiṁga dāsā |*

<sup>460</sup>Cf. ibid. 2.14cd: *sadā asaṇḍita sevā lāvai | soi bhakti ananya kahāvai || 14 ||*

<sup>461</sup>See Horstmann and Rajpurohit (2023: 3–16) for an introduction to the Sant traditions.

<sup>462</sup>I discuss the role of the rivers of the *Yogasvarodaya*, *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* and *Yogasvarodaya* on p. ??, n. ??.

widespread at the time, as he replaced the southern rivers of the *Yogasvarodaya* with the northern rivers Vipāśā (modern Beas) and Śatarudrā (modern Sutlej). For that reason, another explanation comes to the fore in his case. Given that the *Yogatattvabindu* was explicitly aimed at the upper classes of society, Bhaktiyoga was likely seen as incompatible with its audience, as the founders and followers of the Sant traditions were often from lower castes or even untouchables. The Sants criticized the caste system. Thus, particularly farmers and artisans, as well as people from the middle class in trade and women, were attracted by the egalitarian and anti-ritualistic messages. It is, therefore, plausible why Bhaktiyoga found no place in Rāmacandra's "Yoga for Kings".

### 2.18.3 Aṣṭāṅgayoga

Aṣṭāṅgayoga, the "eight-limbed yoga" is invariably incorporated by all authors who present complex yoga taxonomies in their texts, yet in entirely different manners. Rāmacandra does not mention Aṣṭāṅgayoga within his enumeration of the fifteen methods for Rājayoga but introduces it in a separate section of his text. The author of the *Yogasvarodaya* presents an incomplete enumeration of the fifteen yogas, naming only eight of them, excluding Aṣṭāṅgayoga by name. However, similar to Rāmacandra, he presents Aṣṭāṅgayoga within his text. Unlike the *Yogatattvabindu*, it appears that Aṣṭāṅgayoga in the *Yogasvarodaya* is considered part of the fifteen methods of Rājayoga. Rāmacandra, in compiling his text, which heavily relies on the *Yogasvarodaya*, seems to have inadequately considered this when establishing his variant of the fifteen yogas, which he describes inconsistently and unsystematically throughout the text. Nonetheless, the Aṣṭāṅgayoga of the *Yogatattvabindu* remains part of Rāmacandra's Rājayoga. In contrast, Nārāyaṇatīrtha does not include Aṣṭāṅgayoga among his fifteen methods for achieving Rājayoga. Strictly speaking, Aṣṭāṅgayoga is not one of Nārāyaṇatīrtha's methods for Rājayoga. Nevertheless, he situates his fifteen yogas within the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, the *locus classicus* of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, thus allowing Aṣṭāṅgayoga to partially frame the fifteen yogas in the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*.<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> Due to the absence within Nārāyaṇatīrtha's fifteen yogas and because Aṣṭāṅgayoga of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* has been extensively discussed in secondary literature, a renewed discussion

Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* presents a starkly different scenario. Here, Aṣṭāṅgayoga is the last of the four methods of Hṛthayoga.

### 2.18.3.1 Aṣṭāṅgayoga in the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yogasvarodaya*

Since Rāmacandra's compilation of his Aṣṭāṅgayoga section largely follows the *Yogasvarodaya*,<sup>464</sup> yet deviates in some interesting places, it is insightful to compare both texts.<sup>465</sup> Both texts begin with an enumeration of the limbs of Aṣṭāṅgayoga. Notably, the *Yogasvarodaya* lists only seven of the eight limbs, omitting *dhyāna*.<sup>466</sup> Intriguingly, subsequent verses describe *dhyāna* but not *dhāraṇā*. The *Yogatattvabindu* lists all eight limbs, but Rāmacandra deviates from the Pātañjalayoga model, presenting *dhyāna* before *dhāraṇā*.<sup>467</sup> However, following his source, Rāmacandra omits subsequent explanations of *dhāraṇā*. He also does not explain *samādhi*. Both texts provide detailed lists of six *yamas* and *niyamas*. Variations in the *Yogatattvabindu* reflect the influence of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, as well as Rāmacandra's ideas.<sup>468</sup> The similarities and differences can be found in the following tables. Notably, both texts omit non-violence (*ahimsa*) and sexual abstinence (*brahmacyāra*).

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is omitted here. Nārāyaṇatīrtha comments on the eight limbs in his commentary on *sūtra* 2.29 as follows: *yamaniyamāsanaprāṇāyāmapratyāhāradhāraṇādhyānasmādhayo* 'śāvaṅgāni' || 29 || *yameti* | *tatra yamāḥ svata eva saphalatvādatyāvāśyakāḥ* | *sarvamumukṣujanasevyā ādau*, *paścāt tatsāpeksā niyamāḥ* | *etad ubhayād dhina cittasthairyasyāpeksānyāsanāni* | *tatsāpeksāḥ prāṇāyāmāḥ* | *tatsāpeksāḥ pratyāhārahāḥ* | *tatsāpeksā dhāraṇāḥ* | *tatsāpeksām dhyānam* | *tatsāpeksāḥ samādhiḥ savikalpa ityastau sākṣat paramparayā vā nirvikalpasya samādher aṅgānity arthaḥ* | *aṣṭāṅgamaithune kriyāniśpatteraiṅgino* 'ngatvavat samādhiḥ savikalpa ity aṣṭau sākṣat paramparayā vā nirvikalpasya samādher aṅgānity arthaḥ | *aṣṭāṅgamaithune kriyāniśpatter aiṅgino* 'ngatvavat samādher aṅgino 'ngatvā vā bodhyam | *tena na ko'pi doṣaḥ* || 29 || In summary, Nārāyaṇatīrtha states that the limbs, beginning with the *yamas*, build upon each other and culminate in *samādhi*, which he also calls Rājayoga at the beginning of his commentary.

<sup>464</sup> Additionally, influences from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.32–38 can be identified in this passage.

<sup>465</sup> See *Yogatattvabindu* wection XXXI and *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 841).

<sup>466</sup> Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 841): *idāniṁ yogamāṣṭāṅgam śrūṇu laksāṇasamayutam* | *yamaś ca niyamaś caiva cāsanam prāṇasanyamāḥ* | *pratyāhāro dhāraṇā ca samādhiś ca viśesataḥ* |

<sup>467</sup> See p. ?? n. ?? for a discussion and further references on the reversed order of the limbs of Aṣṭāṅgayoga.

<sup>468</sup> The *yamas* of *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.32 are: calmness (*upāśamāḥ*), conquest of all senses (*sarvendriyajayaḥ*) and conquest of food, sleep, cold, wind, and heat (*āhāranidrāśitavātātapajayāḥ*). The *niyamas* of the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.33 are: living in solitude (*ekāntavāsa*), detachment (*niḥsamgata*), indifference (*udāsinyam*), contentment with what is obtained (*yathāpraptisamṛtuṣṭih*), aversion (*vairasyam*), and dedication to the feet of the guru (*gurucaraṇāvārūḍhatvam*).

The <i>yamas</i> of the <i>Yogatattvabindu</i>	The <i>yamas</i> of the <i>Yugasvarodaya</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>peace (<i>sāntih</i>)</li> <li>conquer of the six senses (<i>saññām indiyānāṁ jayah</i>)</li> <li>little food (<i>āhāraḥ svalpah</i>)</li> <li>conquer of sleep (<i>nidrājayah</i>)</li> <li>conquer of cold (<i>śaityajayah</i>)</li> <li>conquer of heat (<i>uṣṇajayah</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>peace (<i>sāntih</i>)</li> <li>contentment (<i>santosah</i>)</li> <li>appropriate diet (<i>āhārah</i>)</li> <li>minimal sleep (<i>nidrālpā</i>)</li> <li>control of the mind (<i>manaso damah</i>)</li> <li>an empty mental faculty (<i>śūnyāntahkaraṇam</i>)</li> </ul>

Table 7: The *yamas* of the *Yogatattvabindu* and *Yugasvarodaya*

The <i>niyamas</i> of the <i>Yogatattvabindu</i>	The <i>niyamas</i> of the <i>Yugasvarodaya</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>restraining the mind from fickleness and establishing steadiness (<i>khalu manah cāpalabhāvān nivārya sthairyे sthāpyate</i>)</li> <li>seeking solitude (<i>ekānte sevanam</i>)</li> <li>equanimity towards all living beings (<i>prānimātre samābuddhiḥ</i>)</li> <li>indifference</li> <li>one shall not desire any object (<i>udāśīnyām kasyāpi vastuni icchā na kartavyā</i>)</li> <li>contentment with whatever is obtained (<i>yathā lābhasantosah</i>)</li> <li>never forgetting the name of the Supreme Lord (<i>parameśvaraṇāma na vismarāṇiyam</i>)</li> <li>not indulging in self-pity (<i>manomadhye dainyām na karttavyam</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discarding fickleness (<i>cāpalyan tu düre tyaktvā</i>)</li> <li>establishing steadiness of mind (<i>manahsthairyaṇ vidhāya</i>)</li> <li>constantly uniting the mind with the breath (<i>ekatra melanām nityam prāṇamātreṇa sā matih</i>)</li> <li>always maintaining a detached attitude (<i>sadodāśinabhāva</i>)</li> <li>renouncing all desires (<i>sarvatrecchāvivarjana</i>)</li> <li>being satisfied with whatever comes (<i>yathālābhena santuṣṭah</i>)</li> <li>keeping the mind fixed on the Supreme Lord (<i>parameśvaraṇāsah</i>)</li> <li>giving up pride and oblations (<i>mānadā-naparityāga</i>)</li> </ul>

Table 8: Comparison of *niyamas* from the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya*

The discussion of postures (*āsanas*) in both texts is brief. The *Yugasvarodaya* addresses *āsana* in half a verse, stating that there are as many postures as there are living beings.<sup>469</sup> Rāmacandra explains that the characteristics of

<sup>469</sup>Cf. *Yugasvarodaya* (PT p. 841): *āsanāni ca tāvanti yāvanto jivajantavaḥ* | The author of this verse alludes to the numerous animal names of many yoga positions. See e.g. Gharote et al. (2006).

postures are discussed in many other treatises. Therefore, he does not cover this topic.<sup>470</sup>

The *Yogasvarodaya* states that breath control (*prāṇāyāma*) is of three types and takes various forms. It asserts that young people are not capable of practising *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma*, but through the great power of spiritual merit (*mahāpunyaprabhāva*), the great soul (*mahātmā*) can do so.<sup>471</sup> The author explains only the first type of *prāṇāyāma*, which is a standard form of alternate nostril breathing accompanied by visualisation. The *mahātmā* inhales through the left channel (*iḍā*), i.e., the left nostril, meditating on its moonlike appearance. Then he holds his breath (*kumbhaka*) for as long as possible. When his mind is filled with great splendour, and his body with air, and fear of the power of intense trembling arises, he should then exhale very slowly through the right channel (*piṅgalā*), i.e., the right nostril, meditating on its sunlike nature. He should repeat this like a moth repeatedly flying into the fire, which ultimately leads to the purification of the body.<sup>472</sup>

Rāmacandra only mentions that *prāṇāyāma* is unsuitable for young practitioners (*sukūmāra*), thus omitting any explanation of its practice.<sup>473</sup> Taking Rāmacandra at his word, this statement may indicate his intended audience. Why would he not describe a single breathing technique in his entire text?<sup>474</sup> Both texts briefly explain the withdrawal of the senses (*pratyāhāra*). In the *Yogasvarodaya*, *pratyāhāra* means withdrawing the mind from the cyclical existence (*samsāra*) and from the engagements with sensory objects. After the Yogi has thus discarded the states and transformations of the mind, he remains composed of emptiness. Similarly, in the *Yogatattvabindu*, the Yogi should turn his mind away from cyclical existence and dwell in the self, thereby restraining the emerging transformations of the mind.

<sup>470</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* section XXXI: *āsanasya lakṣaṇam bahūgrantheṣu nirūpitam asti | tenātra na nirūpyate |*

<sup>471</sup>Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 841): *prāṇāyāmas tridhā ceti bahudhā prathamam śṛṇu | āsane prānasamyāme na śaktāḥ sukumārakāḥ | mahāpunyaprabhāveṇa śakyate tu mahātmanā |*

<sup>472</sup>Cf. *Yogasvarodaya* (PT p. 841): *iḍāṁ śāśiprabhāṁ dhyātvā mandendunā tu pūrayet | pūrayitvā yathāśakti dhyānayogi tu kumbhayet | mahājyotirmano bhūtvā vāyuḥpūrṇakalevaraḥ | śaktitrāsan tu santrāsyā recayed vāyum arhitāḥ | piṅgalāṁ arkavarṇān tu tyajed dhyātvā śanaiḥ śanaiḥ | ayaṁ pataṅgāḥ kāṣṭhāgnipratyāsena punaḥ punaḥ | kṛtvā kalevaraṁ sūddhaṁ kuryād yatnair mahātmanā |*

<sup>473</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* section XXXI: *prāṇāyāmas tu sukumāreṇa sādhītuṇ na śakyate | atas tasya nāmamātrāṇi kathyate |*

<sup>474</sup>The intended audience of Rāmacandra's *Yogatattvabindu* is discussed in detail on p.??.

The description of meditation (*dhyāna*) is similarly concise in both texts. The *Yogasvarodaya* mentions two types of meditation: a gross one consisting of *mantra* (*mantramaya*) and a subtle one without *mantra*. Further details are not provided. The *Yogatattvabindu* merely states that meditation has been taught many times before<sup>475</sup> and is therefore not discussed here.<sup>476</sup>

In the *Yogasvarodaya*, *samādhi* is the state of the motionless intellect (*buddhi*), free from inhalation and exhalation. Rāmacandra does not mention *samādhi* at all in the *Yogatattvabindu*. At first glance, this seems peculiar, as the reader might expect a commentary on the highest state of yoga. However, if Rāmacandra addresses young practitioners (*sukūmāras*), it is entirely reasonable why he does not recommend them to cease breathing.

### 2.18.3.2 Aṣṭāṅgayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*

Aṣṭāṅgayoga (3.37–52) is for Sundardās the final method in his four-method system of Hṛdayoga.<sup>477</sup> It supplements the preceding three descriptions of Hṛdayoga (environment for yoga practice, dietary rules, and *śatkarmas*), Laksayoga (*foci for meditation*), and Rājayoga (*vajrolimudrā* for celibacy preservation), giving the entire *hṛtha* practice a framework. Sundardās's system only becomes complete with the introduction of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, forming the central structure. The first main category, Bhaktiyoga, covers the devotional aspect of his yoga system, while Hṛdayoga addresses the physical and practical part of yoga. The final main category, Sāṃkhyayoga, concludes the system, primarily covering the philosophical backgrounds (Sāṃkhyayoga itself and Jñānayoga) and higher forms of contemplation in the ultimate stages of the yoga path according to Sundardās (Brahmayoga and Advaitayoga). It is precisely here, within the context of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, that most of the characteristic practices of Hṛdayoga, namely *āsanas*, *kumbhakas*, *murdrās*, and *bandhas*, are introduced. The order of the eight limbs follows the Pātañjalayoga model.

<sup>475</sup> Probably Rāmacandra refers to the descriptions of *dhyāna* in his own text. See p. 114 for the references.

<sup>476</sup> Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* section XXXI: *dhyānam ca bahutaraṁ prāg uktam tenātra nocyate |*

<sup>477</sup> Already in the *Sāṅgadharapaddhati* 4372–4375, a six-limbed yoga system, a variant without *yama* and *niyama*, is subordinated to Hṛdayoga: *atha hṛdayogaḥ dvividhā hṛthah syād ekas tu goraksādisusādhitah | anyo mrkandaputrādyaiḥ sādhito niśam ud�ataiḥ ||1|| tatra gorakṣasadṛśaiḥ sādhito yah sa kathyate | dhīrair api hi duḥsādhyaiḥ kim punaḥ prākṛtair janaiḥ ||2|| āsanam prāṇasāṃrodhah pratyāhāraś ca dhāraṇā | dhyānam samādhir etāni yogāṅgāni smṛtāni ṣaṭ ||3||*

However, Sundardās first mentions the two initial limbs, observances *yama* and restrictions *niyama*, each with ten different aspects, which he spares himself from listing.<sup>478</sup><sup>479</sup>

The second limb, the practice of postures (*āsana*), should be performed regularly to purify the body. For Sundardās, the two most important *āsanas* are the accomplished posture (*siddhāsana*) and the lotus posture (*padmāsana*).<sup>480</sup> In the context of breath control (*prāṇāyāma*), Sundardās initially emphasises that these exercises must be learned from a Guru. He then describes the basic form of alternate nostril breathing. That involves inhaling through the left nostril (*idā nādī*), followed by a retention phase, and then exhaling through the right nostril (*piṅgalā nādī*). During the retention phases, one should mentally recite the mantra twelve times. At this point, no further details about the mantra are provided. However, retrospectively, it could be the *rāma* mantra mentioned in Sundardās's Mantrayoga (2.16–27). The retention phases should be doubled and tripled over time and are accordingly named upper (*uttama*), middle (*madhyama*), and lower (*kaista*) stages.<sup>481</sup> Additionally, Sundardās mentions the eight breath retentions (*kumbhakas*) and five types of seals (*mudrās*), as well as the three locks (*bandhas*). Further differentiations must be provided by the Guru.<sup>482</sup> Sundardās does not offer detailed descriptions of these practices. Regarding the fifth limb, the withdrawal of the senses (*pratyāhāra*), Sundardās is very brief. He defines *pratyāhāra* as controlling the mind so that one never craves the “taste of sensory objects” (*bīṣai svāda*). He uses the metaphor of a turtle retracting its limbs into its shell to illustrate *pratyāhāra*.<sup>483</sup>

Concentration (*dhāraṇā*), the sixth limb according to Sundardās, involves focusing on one of the five elements: earth (*pṛthvi*), water (*apa*), fire (*teja*), air

<sup>478</sup>Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 3.37cd: *prathamahim yama aru niyama bicārai | palari tekā daśa daśahir prakārai* || 37 ||

<sup>479</sup>The omission occurs due to the presentation of many typical elements of *yamas* and *niyamas*, which has already taken place in the context of his chapter on Bhaktiyoga (cf. p. 193).

<sup>480</sup>Cf. ibid. 3.38: *bahuryau karai su āsana sabahi | nirma śarira hoi puni tabahi | tāmahiṁ sārabhūta dvai sādhai | siddhāsana padmāsana bāmdhai* || 38 ||

<sup>481</sup>Cf. ibid. 3.39–40: *prāṇāyāma karai bibhi aisi | sataguru samdhī batāvai jaisi | idā nādī kati pūrai bāi | recaka karai piṅgalā jāi* || 39 || *pūri piṅgalā idā nikārai | dvādaśa vāra mantra bidhi dhārai | dviguṇa triguṇa kari prāṇāyāmam | uttama madhyama kāniṣṭā nāmam* || 40 ||

<sup>482</sup>Cf. ibid. 3.41: *kumbhaka aṣṭā bhāmti ke jānaiṁ | mudrā paṁca prakāra su ṭhānaiṁ | bāmdha tīni nīki bidhi lāvai | aura bheda sadaguru tāim pāvai* || 41 ||

<sup>483</sup>Cf. ibid. 3.42: *pratyāhāra pakari mana rāṣai | bīṣai svāda kabahūm nahim cāṣai | jaisaim kurama sakucai aṅgā | esaiṁ indri rāṣai samgā* || 42 ||

(*vāyu*), and ether (*ākāśa*), along with their associated deities, for five *ghaṭikās* each.<sup>484</sup><sup>485</sup>

Sundardās divides meditation (*dhyāna*), the seventh limb of his Aṣṭāṅgayoga, into two categories: meditation with qualities (*saguṇa*) and meditation without qualities (*nirguṇa*). The former involves meditation on one of six *cakras*, while the latter pertains to meditation on the formless self.<sup>486</sup>

Verses 3.45–48 describe the system of the six *cakras*, which is widely spread in medieval Hathayoga texts: *ādhāra*, *svādhishṭāna*, *manipūra*, *anāhata*, *viśuddha*, and *ājñā*. Sundardās concludes by stating that only through meditation on the six *cakras* can the realisation of the formless (*nirguṇa*), the second form or stage of meditation, be achieved.<sup>487</sup>

From the *nirguṇa* stage of meditation arises the eighth limb, meditative absorption (*samādhi*). When the fluctuations of the mind and senses are absorbed, in the final stage of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, the individual self (*jīvātma*) and the supreme self (*paramātmā*) merge like salt in water.<sup>488</sup> Sundardās characterises this state as follows:

*kāla na śāi śastra nahiṁ lāgai | yantra maṇṭra tā deṣata bhāgai | śīta uṣna  
kabahūṁ nahiṁ hoī | parama sāmādhi kahāvai soī || 51 ||*

Time cannot affect it and no weapon can violate it. It is beyond the effect of *yantras* and *mantras*. It is not affected by cold or heat; this is called the supreme *samādhi*.

## 2.18.4 Aṣṭāṅgayoga in the complex early modern yoga taxonomies

The comparative analysis of Aṣṭāṅgayoga within the four texts of early modern yoga taxonomies reveals the nuanced and varied usage of the term Aṣṭāṅ-

<sup>484</sup> One *ghaṭikā* equals 1/60 of a day, cf. Sircar (1966: 114). 1/60 of a day corresponds to 24 minutes. Five *ghaṭikās* equal exactly two hours.

<sup>485</sup> Cf. ibid. 3.43: *pamca dhāraṇā tatva prakāśā | prthi apa teja vāyu ākāśā | akṣara sahitā devatāni dhyāvai | pamca pamca ghaṭikā laya lāvai || 43 ||*

<sup>486</sup> Cf. ibid. 3.44: *dhyāna su āhi ubhai ja prakāra | eka saguṇa ika nirguna sārā | saguna su kahiye cakra sthānam | nirguna rūpa ātamā dhyānam || 44 ||*

<sup>487</sup> Cf. ibid. 3.48: *iti ṣaṭa cakra dhyāna jau tānai | tabahiṁ jāī nirguṇa pahacānai | gaganākāra dhyāya saba thairā | prabhā marici jala nahiṁ aurā || 48 ||*

<sup>488</sup> Cf. ibid. 3.49–50: *aba samādhi aisi bidhi karaī | jaisaim laimna nīra mahiṁ garaī | mana indri ki vṛtya samāvai | tākau nāma samādhi kahāvai || 49 || jīvātma paramātmā doī | sama rasa kari jaba ekai hoī | bisarai āpa kachu nahiṁ jānai | tākau nāma samadhi vaṣānai || 50 ||*

gayoga in the 17th century. This analysis uncovers three distinct models despite the common terminology.

Nārāyaṇatīrtha adheres strictly to the *locus classicus* of Aṣṭāṅgayoga, the Pātañjalayoga model, without modifications. He endeavors to integrate various popular yoga forms of his discursive environment into this system.

In contrast, the Aṣṭāṅgayoga of the *Yogasvarodaya* and *Yogatattvabindu* stems from Śaiva milieus, as evidenced by the reversed order of *dhyāna* and *dhāraṇā* and differing interpretations of *samādhi*. This approach is diametrically opposite to Nārāyaṇatīrtha's. While Nārāyaṇatīrtha incorporates popular yogas into the Pātañjala-Aṣṭāṅgayoga, these texts incorporate Aṣṭāṅgayoga into the inclusive Śaiva strategy of hierarchically structuring various yogas, subordinating it to a form of Rājayoga.

Similarly, in Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*, Aṣṭāṅgayoga is placed within a sequence of yogas, categorized as a subcategory of Haṭhayoga and subordinated to Advaitayoga as the highest yoga. However, Sundardās does not emphasize a hierarchical valuation but strives to integrate all yogas into an interlocking and cohesive system where each yoga has an equally important function on the path to the ultimate goal. Unlike the other texts, Sundardās uses the limbs of his Aṣṭāṅgayoga to incorporate typical Haṭhayoga practices such as *mudrās* and *bandhas* and to establish a *cakra* system. These associations reinforce the impression of a harmonious interaction of all twelve yoga methods.

The models illustrate the cross-traditional struggle for interpretive authority in a competitive atmosphere. However, we must also understand this as an expression of yoga models evolving in the discursive tension between innovation and tradition, adapting to new contexts and interpretations. Incorporating popular and regional practices into established systems reflects a dynamic cross-traditional integration of new yogic influences within the yoga traditions of the 17th century.

### 2.18.5 Sāṃkhyayoga

In the complex early modern yoga taxonomies, the term Sāṃkhyayoga (4.1-12), the “Yoga of the enumerative philosophical method” appears only in the

*Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā*.<sup>489</sup> Sundardās specifies Rṣabhadeva, Kapilamūni, Dattatreyā, Vaśiṣṭha, Aṣṭavakra, and Jaḍabharata as important representatives of Sāṃkhyayoga.<sup>490</sup> After Bhaktiyoga and Haṭhayoga, Sāṃkhyayoga is the third and final main category in Sundardās's yoga system. Sāṃkhyayoga forms the starting point for the three subsequent yogas associated with it, namely Jñānayoga,<sup>491</sup> Brahmayoga,<sup>492</sup> and Advaitayoga.<sup>493</sup> Before the Yogi recognises unity with the world through Jñānayoga, experiences unity with the universe through Brahmayoga, and ultimately overcomes duality in Advaitayoga, Sāṃkhyayoga primarily serves to create awareness of the duality to be transcended by differentiating the self from the non-self.<sup>494</sup> Compared to classical Sāṅkhya, consciousness (*puruṣa*) here is referred to as the self (*ātama*) and primordial nature (*prakṛti*) as the non-self (*anātama*):

ātama śuddha su nitya prakāśā | ana ātamā deha kā nāśā |  
ātama sukṣma vyāpaka mūlā | ana ātamā so paṁca sthūlā || 2 ||

The self is pure, eternal and illuminating. The not-self relates to the destructible body. The self is subtle, omnipresent and the fundamental cause, while the non-self is composed of the five gross elements.

pr̥thi apu teja vāyu aru gaganā | ye paṁcauṇī ātama samagnā |  
paṁcani maim mila aura bikārā | tini yaha kiyā prapāmca pasārā || 3 ||

Earth, water, fire, air and ether - these five are attached to the self. In these five elements, other transformations occur, and these three [self, non-self and transformations] have created the proliferation of the universe.

<sup>489</sup> Sāṃkhyayoga also appears in *Śivayogapradipikā* 4.19–31. Here, it belongs to Rajayoga within the description of *samādhi* and is thus embedded in the basic structure of an Aṣṭāṅgayoga.

<sup>490</sup> *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 1.5: *rṣabhadeva aru kapila mūni, dattatreyā vaśiṣṭha | aṣṭavakra ru jaḍabharata, ina kai sāṃkhya sudṛṣṭa* || 5 ||

<sup>491</sup> A discussion of Jñānayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* can be found on p.82.

<sup>492</sup> A discussion of Brahmayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* can be found on p.159.

<sup>493</sup> A discussion of Advaitayoga in the *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* can be found on p.162.

<sup>494</sup> Cf. *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* 4.1: *aba sāṃkhya su yoga hi suni lehū | pičhai hamako doṣa na dehū | ātama ana ātamā bicārā | yāhi tem sāṃkhya su nirddhārā* || 1 ||

The non-self consists of the five gross elements: earth (*pr̥thi*), water (*apu*), fire (*teja*), air (*vāyu*), and ether (*gāganā*); the five subtle elements: sound (*śabda*), touch (*saparśa*), form (*rūpa*), taste (*rasa*), and smell (*gandhā*); the five senses of perception (*jñānendriyas*): hearing (*śrotra*), touch (*tvak*), sight (*cakṣu*), taste (*jihvā*), and smell (*ghrāṇa*); the five organs of action: speech (*vākyā*), grasping (*pāṇi*), moving (*pāda*), excreting (*pāyu*), and reproducing (*upastha*); and the inner organ (*antahkaraṇa*) consisting of mind (*mana*), intellect (*buddhi*), consciousness (*citta*), and ego (*ahamkāra*).<sup>495</sup> These comprise twenty-four *tattvas* in total.

Sundardās then elaborates on the inner organ. The thinking mind (*mana*) generates thoughts and doubts. The intellect (*buddhi*) discerns and recognises what is good or bad. Consciousness (*citta*) generates awareness. The ego (*ahamkāra*) produces self-awareness and pride.<sup>496</sup>

Finally, Sundardās distinguishes the subtle transmigratory body (*liṅga śarīra*), composed of the five subtle elements and the inner organ, totalling nine *tattvas*, from the gross body, which is subject to decay and comprises the gross elements, the senses of perception, and the organs of action.<sup>497</sup>

Sundardās concludes by explaining that these twenty-four elements work together, with the soul (*jīva*) as the driving force behind them. He also refers to the soul as the knower of the field (*kṣetrajña*) or eternally auspicious (*nirantara śivā*). The soul permeates everything and is omnipresent. It appears to be involved in everything but is ultimately unbound. As the witness, it is distinct from all else, the twenty-four *tattvas* of the non-self. The self and the non-self are eternal and not subject to ageing and death. However, the gross body (*deha*) is transient.<sup>498</sup>

<sup>495</sup>Cf. ibid. 4.4-6: *śabda saparśa rūpa rasa gandhā | tanmāṭṛkā pāñca tana baṇḍhā | śrotra tvak cakṣu jihvā ghrāṇam | jñāna su indriya kiyau baṣāṇam |* 4 || *vākyā hi pāṇi pāda aru pāyuḥ | upastha sahitā pāñca samajñāyuh | karma su indriya ina kau nāmā | tatpara apanai apanai kāmā |* 5 || *mana uru buddhi citta ahamkārā | catuṣṭa antahakaraṇa vicārā | tina kai lakṣaṇa bhinnai bhinnaṁ | mahāpuruṣa samujñaye cīnhā |* 6 ||

<sup>496</sup>Cf. ibid. 4.7-8ab: *samkalpai aru bikalapa karai | mana so lakṣaṇa esau dharai | buddhi su lakṣaṇa bodhahim jāmni | kikai burau lei pahicāni |* 7 || *caitana lakṣaṇa citta anūpā | ahaṁkāra abhimāna svarūpā |*

<sup>497</sup>Cf. ibid. 4.8cd: *nau tatvani kau limga śarīra | paṇḍraha tatva sthūla gaṇbhīrā |* 8 ||

<sup>498</sup>Cf. ibid. 4.9-12: *ye caubisa tatva baṇḍhānam | bhinna-bhinna karikiyau vaṣāṇam | saba kau preraka kahiye jīvā | so kṣetrajña nirantara śivā |* 9 || *sakala viyāpaka aru sarvagā | disai samgi āhi asaṅgā | sākṣi rūpa sabani tem nyārā | tāhi kachū nahim lipai bikārā |* 10 || *yaha ātama ana ātama nirānā | sagajnai takauṁ jarā na maranā | sāṁkhya su mata yāhi saum kahiye | sataguru binā kahauṁ kyaum lahiye |* 11 || *sāṁkhya yoga so yaha kahau, bhinna hi bhinna prakāra | ātama nitya svarūpa hai, deha anitya vicāra |* 12 ||

### 2.18.6 Satyayoga

The term Satyayoga, the “Yoga of truth” appears in the *Yogatattvabindu* in XLIV.7 in the section on *avadhūtapuruṣasya laksanam*. Rāmacandra adopted the verse from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* and redacted it. All manuscripts of the *Yogatattvabindu* read *sat�ayogabhāk* in the fourth *pāda* of the verse. Here, the source text reads *siddhayogiraṭ*. As discussed in the edition on p. ?? n. ??, Rāmacandra might have used the term as a synonym for Siddhayoga<sup>499</sup> or it might be a typographical error of Siddhayoga. By the definition of this verse, Satyayoga would be a yoga in which the practitioner dedicates himself to the union of two aspects of Śakti, here defined as expansion (*prasāra*) and contraction (*saṃkoca*). What exactly this is supposed to mean is not described further.

### 2.18.7 Sahajayoga

The concept of Sahajayoga is closely linked in literature with that of the Avadhūta in the classical sense. The typical Avadhūta has cast off *samsāra* and scorns worldly and religious activities. This figure is usually associated with *nirguna bhakti*, the worship of the formless Divine. Instead of engaging in complex spiritual practices, he dedicates himself, if at all, to the only true practice, which is the repetition of the Divine name.<sup>500</sup>

The model of the Avadhūta that emerges in Rāmacandra’s *Yogatattvabindu* continues a trend that Kanamarlapudi (2023: 18) calls the “sanitization” of the Avadhūta. In her study, she describes the term’s historical development and identifies a clear development. Over the centuries, the Avadhūta, the original antinomian ascetic, was gradually integrated into the Brahmanical *āśrama* system. His antinomian behaviour, unconventional traits, and unorthodox practice were tamed, and according to Kanamarlapudi, the Avadhūta became a legitimate and eventually even the highest class of the *saṃnyāsa āśrama*.

Ein Aspekt dieser Entwicklung ist beispielsweise parallel in der frühen Geschichte Hathayoga zu beobachten. Mallinson (2011: 17) stellt fest, dass in der frühen Geschichte des dem Gorakṣa zugeschriebenen Hathayoga (11. -

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<sup>499</sup>The siddhayoga of *Yogatattvabindu* is discussed on p. 165.

<sup>500</sup>Mallinson, 2011: 15.

13. Jh.) “the antinomian external practices of Tantra were internalized and, together with the visualizational techniques of *kundaliniyoga*, were melded with the physical practices of early Haṭha Yoga, whose original aim was the sublimation of sexual continence into liberation.”

Rāmacandra’s continues the trend of sanitization and refines the Avadhūta for royal adoption. The Avadhūta becomes the ideal type of the Rājayoga-practicing *kṣatriya* or king. Rāmacandra cuts off the last threads of the image of Avadhūta that is still connected to the antinomian ascetic.<sup>501</sup> On the contrary, Rāmacandra’s Avadhūta does not scorn worldly activity; rather, he is indifferent to it yet fully involved in it and extremely positive towards worldly pleasures. The natural consequence is that Rāmacandra elevates Sahajayoga to the practice *par excellence* for a king, as will be explained in detail below.

Rāmacandra defines Sahajayoga, the “natural yoga”, at the end of his text in section LIX. This section is presented as the “secret teaching of the scriptures of yoga in all scriptures.” This secret is explicitly directed at kings.<sup>502</sup> In short, Rāmacandra declares that this secret of yoga should only be revealed to a king whose mind is free from deceit, who does not fear the teacher, who trusts in noble words, is always filled with happiness, and is surrounded by enchanting things, etc.

Then Rāmacandra explains to whom this secret should explicitly not be revealed: not to those who blame others, criticise, misbehave, do not speak the truth, lack compassion, and enjoy conflict.<sup>503</sup>

Finally, Rāmacandra reveals the secret teaching. The secret teaching describes the person who embodies the highest reality. This person is free from existence and non-existence (*bhāvābhāvaviniṁuktah*).<sup>504</sup> And although this

<sup>501</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* XLIV p.??.

<sup>502</sup>Cf. *Yogatattvabindu* LIX: *yasya rājño manomadhye kapaṭam nāsti | yasmin drṣte deśakasya trāso na bhavati | yasya manah śuddham bhavati | yasya prthivyām kīrtir bhavati | yasya manomadhye satpuruṣava-canaviśvāsa bhavati | yo rājā sadānandapūrṇo bhavati | yasya pārśve pratyakṣam anekā manoharivastūni bhavanti | etādrśasya rājño 'gre yogarahasyam kartavyam |*

<sup>503</sup>Cf. ibid. LIX: *yah paranindā rato bhavati | dūrācāro bhavati | bhrātumitrasya ca yogyaṁ vastu na dadāti | yo satyaṁ na vati | yo yogināṁ manomadhye nindām karoti | yasya manomadhye dayā na bhavati | yah kalahapriyo bhavati | svakāryakaraṇe sāvadhāno bhavati | guroḥ kāryakaraṇe 'nādito bhavati | etādrśasyāgre na yogah kriyate na pathyate |*

<sup>504</sup>This statement implies a characterisation of the highest reality (*tattva*), which in *Amanaska* 2.62 is described as free from the duality of existence and non-existence: *bhāvābhāvadvayātitan*

person is constantly exposed to worldly pleasures, they are free from all attachments. This person is a yogin made of perpetual bliss (*sadānandamayo yogī*) and practices constant equanimity towards happiness and sorrow. The person has realised the indivisible highest self and performs actions without personal desires or attachments.<sup>505</sup>

While an ordinary person must first stabilise the gaze (*dṛṣṭiḥ sthirā kartavyā*), stabilise the sitting posture (*āsanam dṛḍham kartavyam*), and stabilise the breath (*pavanah sthiraḥ kartavyaḥ*) to achieve this state, a perfected person no longer needs to adhere to this discipline (*etādrśah kaścin niyamah siddhasya noktaḥ*).

*manahpavanābhyaṁ yadā sahajānandaḥ svasvarūpeṇa prakāśyate | sa  
sahajayogaḥ kathyate | rājayogamadhye iti cakravartī nāmakathanam |*

When by means of mind and breath the natural bliss appears through ones own true nature, it is called Sahajayoga (“natural yoga”). Among [the methods] of Rajayoga, it is referred to by the name of “Universal Ruler”.

That is the core message of the secret of yoga in all scriptures. It recalls the *rājaguhyam* of the Mokṣopaya, a teaching through which rulers could attain a state free from suffering.<sup>506</sup> These words conclude Rāmacandra’s *Yogatattvabindu*. Sahajayoga is referred to as *cakravartī* (“Universal Ruler”).<sup>507</sup> That indicates that while Sahajayoga still belongs to the category of Rājayoga, at this point, Rājayoga must primarily be understood as “Yoga for Kings,” with Sahajayoga being the undisputed supreme ruler within this category. For a king who rules and enjoys the amenities of this position, this is the aspired state, the ultimate. As a *kṣatriya*, he can maintain the soteriological state of salvation through Sahajayoga and continue fulfilling his caste duties without

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*svapnajāgarāṇātigam | mrtyujīvananirmuktam tattvam tattvavidō viduh* || 62 || “The knowers of the highest reality know that the highest reality is beyond the duality of existence and non-existence, passes beyond [both] sleep and waking and is free from dying and living.” (Translated by Birch: 318).

<sup>505</sup>Cf. ibid. LIX.1-8.

<sup>506</sup>Cf. *Mokṣopaya* 2.II.10-17.

<sup>507</sup>In light of this statement, one might wonder why the fifteen yogas place Rājayoga at their final position, given that the fifteen yogas are already presented as methods of Rājayoga. In my opinion, considering these explanations, Sahajayoga should be placed at the top. Indeed, it should be considered that this could be an early error in the transmission.

continuous practice. The duties of a ruler sometimes involve “cruel” actions, such as enforcing laws, possibly through war. Additionally, Sahajayoga enables the king, despite being an “enjoyer of the earth,” to achieve soteriological completion without the deprivations typical for ascetics.<sup>508</sup> The term *sahaja*<sup>°</sup> in this context thus primarily means natural but in the sense of “preserving its original nature” and “not undergoing further change.”<sup>509</sup>

## 2.19 Conclusion

The comparison of the medieval complex yoga taxonomies in the four texts *Yogatattvabindu*, *Yogasvarodaya*, *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, and *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* reveals a remarkable diversity of a total of twenty-three different yoga categories. These categories are contextualised and structured differently depending on the text and show significant differences even within overlapping yoga categories in most cases.

1. Kriyāyoga
2. Jñānayoga
3. Caryāyoga
4. Carcāyoga
5. Haṭhayoga
6. Karmayoga
7. Layayoga
8. Dhyānayoga
9. Mantrayoga
10. Lakṣyayoga
11. Vāsanāyoga
12. Śivayoga
13. Brahmayoga

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<sup>508</sup> See also Hanneder, 2006: 121.

<sup>509</sup> Cf. *Sanskrit Wörterbuch*, 1858: 99.

14. Advaitayoga
15. Siddhayoga
16. Siddhakunḍalinīyoga
17. Siddhiyoga
18. Aṣṭāṅgayoga
19. Bhaktiyoga
20. Premabhaktiyoga
21. Sāṃkhyayoga
22. Satyayoga
23. Sahajayoga

The degree of difference in the taxonomies and the significantly divergent interpretations of the yoga categories among the texts indicates that the transmission was not a purely textual phenomenon with a linear reception history. Instead, the complex yoga taxonomies were likely part of cross-traditional and overlapping oral discourses. That is supported by the fact that the authors of the texts containing these complex early modern yoga taxonomies come from different religious traditions.

While Rāmacandra Paramahamsa, the author of the *Yogatattvabindu*, was initiated as a Daśanāmī Samnyāśī and, despite the Śaiva roots of his *sampradāya*, propagated a religious universalism as an Advaita Vedāntin, the author of the *Yogasvarodaya* likely came from a South Indian Śaiva milieu. Nārāyaṇatīrtha was a famous *saṃnyāsa* intellectual, a successful writer born as a Brahmin and a follower of Kṛṣṇa,<sup>510</sup> while Sant Sundardās was considered one of the most educated Dādūpanthīs and propagated the Sant belief system as a representative of Vaiṣṇava *bhakta* in his works.<sup>511</sup>

It is noteworthy that two of the authors, namely Sundardās and Nārāyaṇatīrtha, spent a significant part of their lives in Benares. Sundardās lived in Benares between the first decade of the seventeenth century and around 1625 CE, where he was trained in the dominant knowledge systems of

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<sup>510</sup>Cf. Ko, 1993: 41.

<sup>511</sup>Cf. Horstmann and Rajpurohit, 2023: 84-87.

the time, including aesthetics and the tradition of artistic poetry (*kāvya*).<sup>512</sup> Ko (1993: 56) convincingly narrows the flourishing period of Nārāyaṇatīrtha to 1600–1690 CE. It is generally agreed that Nārāyaṇatīrtha also spent much of his life in Benares, though the exact period is yet to be determined.<sup>513</sup> It is possible that both authors lived in Benares simultaneously.

The few clues that exist for locating Rāmacandra and the *Yogatattvabindu* first of all narrow the place of its composition to the northern part of India. One of the most compelling reasons for this conclusion is listing nine rivers in Section XL, all located in North India. Compared to Rāmacandra's primary source text, the *Yugasvarodaya*, the *Yogatattvabindu* mentions the rivers Vipāśā (modern Beas) and Śatarudrā (modern Sutlej) instead of the central-southern Indian rivers Godāvārī and Kāvērī, indicating a northern context.<sup>514</sup> Although the *Yugasvarodaya* was likely composed much further south, this work circulated in northeastern India. This observation is based on the fact that it is currently known only through specific citations, namely in the *Prāṇatosinī*, written near Calcutta,<sup>515</sup> the *Yogakarṇikā*, whose origin is unknown,<sup>516</sup> and the *Śabdakalpadruma*, which Radhakanta Deva (1784–1867) also compiled in Calcutta. Thus, it can be inferred that northeastern India was a significant area for the circulation of the *Yugasvarodaya*. Given that Rāmacandra extensively drew from the *Yugasvarodaya* for the compilation of the *Yogatattvabindu*, and since his fifteen yogas were part of an oral and literary discourse centred in Benares, it would be plausible that Rāmacandra also resided in Benares for some time. In conclusion, this hypothesis is supported by the fact that Sundaradeva lived in Benares<sup>517</sup> and his citations of the *Yogatattvabindu* in the *Hathasarṅketacandrikā* represent the oldest verifiable evidence of the *Yogatattvabindu*.<sup>518</sup> Based on the cumulative evidence, the hypothesis of Rāmacandra compiling the *Yogatattvabindu* in Benares appears to be the most likely.

<sup>512</sup>Cf. ibid. p. 86.

<sup>513</sup>Penna, 2004: 24.

<sup>514</sup>See n. ?? on p. ??.

<sup>515</sup>Cf. Shāstri 1905.

<sup>516</sup>The only available printed edition of the *Yogakarṇikā* by Nath Sharma (2004) is based on a manuscript presumably from Benares, cf. Nath Sharma, 2004: vi.

<sup>517</sup>Cf. Birch, 2018: 123.

<sup>518</sup>See p.5.

What is certain is that both the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya*, as has been shown,<sup>519</sup> must have been written before 1659 CE. Thus, all complex early modern yoga taxonomies emerged within a very narrow timeframe between 1600–1690, with a significant portion of the texts produced in the discursive environment of Benares. This circumstance is essential for understanding why these complex yoga taxonomies developed in this specific period and region.

Indeed, each author and text has individual reasons for addressing or codifying the complex yoga taxonomies. Rāmacandra's text, for instance, appears to have been intended for the education of young princes or potential kings. The taxonomy serves both as an encyclopedia and a way to convey the superiority of Rājayoga, in the sense of a “Yoga for Kings,” and its methods through a hierarchical taxonomy. Integrating the fifteenfold yoga taxonomy from the *Yugasvarodaya* is undoubtedly a continuation of an older Śaiva strategy. This strategy aimed to integrate yogas from various traditions into a hierarchical schema, emphasizing a Śaiva interpretation of *samādhi* and liberation in life (*jīvanmukti*).<sup>520</sup> Fundamentally, this is an extension of the older fourfold taxonomy that subordinated Mantra, Laya, and Hṛīyoga in hierarchical order to Rājayoga.

In the case of the *Yugasiddhāntacandrikā*, Ko (1998: 34–35) suggests that Nārāyaṇatīrtha, in line with Paul Hacker's concept of “inclusivism” (1979), sought to integrate the increasingly popular medieval yogas into his context. Ko sees this as an attempt by Nārāyaṇatīrtha to not only equate the perceived inferior foreign and popular forms of medieval yoga with his form, the Pātañjalayoga model but also to subordinate them to it.

Sundardās's *Sarvāṅgayogapradipikā* has a less instructional and more informal or encyclopedic character, placing great emphasis on both systematics and aesthetics. However, it also follows a clear agenda much less hierarchical than those taxonomies that place Rājayoga at the top. Instead, Sundardās seeks to find a common thread and establishes an overarching context between the yoga categories he discusses. He creates a harmonious order through

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<sup>519</sup>The dating of the *Yogatattvabindu* and the *Yugasvarodaya* can be found on p.??.

<sup>520</sup>The Śaiva subordination of yogas into a Rājayoga model began after the 10th century CE and was first described by Birch, 2019.

a successive and logical sequence, beginning with Bhaktiyoga, with an evident Vaiṣṇava influence, moving through Ḥathayoga, encompassing various body-oriented yogas. His system culminates in philosophically oriented yogas, starting with Sāṃkhyayoga, which creates awareness of duality through the philosophical contemplation of the world's components. This differentiation is then resolved in the experience of unity in Brahmayoga, ultimately leading to the state he considers the *summum bonum*, Advaitayoga.<sup>521</sup>

This categorical and interpretative diversity reflected in the complex taxonomies suggests a veritable cross-traditional yoga boom in the milieu of the authors considered, marking an unprecedented wave of popularity, particularly for medieval and body-oriented yoga forms like Ḥathayoga, which various traditions and the educated elite increasingly engaged with. At the same time, the comparison of the texts of the yoga taxonomies revealed a genuine struggle for asserting interpretive authority, a contest over the interpretation and classification of yoga categories, and an attempt to highlight one's conception of the best yoga. In our case study, within its clearly defined discursive framework, the previously mentioned popularity at that time permeated many social strata. Yoga and its efficacy were endowed with high soteriological significance to the extent that by the 17th century, yoga could not be absent from the curriculum in the circles of the ruling classes. Furthermore, it becomes evident that the meanings of the various yoga categories were very fluid and were discursively negotiated in lively and dynamic exchange processes. It is therefore not surprising that the phenomenon of early modern complex yoga taxonomies developed in a specific fertile ground. One such fertile ground was the 17th-century Benares, located in northeastern India.

Benares has always been a centre of knowledge, attracting scholars from near and far for centuries. However, with the onset of Muslim rule in India, many prominent scholars teaching in Benares left the city for fear of religious persecution. By the 16th century, Benares experienced a cultural revival, primarily sparked by the open religious policy of the Mughal Emperor Akbar and his immediate successors, the "Pax Mughalia".<sup>522</sup> That was a

<sup>521</sup>As Burger (2004: 706) observed, Sundardās three yoga tetrads strongly recall the tripartite division of yogas in the *Bhagavadgītā* with Bhakti, Karma, and Jñāna.

<sup>522</sup>In 1556, at the age of 13, Akbar ascended the throne of the Mughal Empire, which had been partially reconquered by his father but collapsed immediately after his death under almost

significant catalyst for the emerging formation of not just the solidification of religious identities in northern India,<sup>524</sup> but also a general increasingly pronounced “Hindu” identity, which both took shape during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>525</sup> Yoga played a crucial role in the development of this new identity. Under the patronage of the Mughal emperors, Benares once again became a melting pot of intellectual and religious exchange, attracting many scholars to resettle there, as evidenced by the examples of Sundardās and Nārāyaṇatirtha. Concurrently, as Birch (2020: 471-472) demonstrated in his article “*Hathayoga’s Floruit on the Eve of Colonialism*”, there was a general flourishing of *Hathayoga* literature in both North and South India. From the sixteenth century onwards, *Hathayoga* literature became increasingly diverse. Authors from various traditions, mainly learned Brahmins, sought to expand

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hopeless circumstances, cf. Stietencron, 1989: 53. Following a period of military consolidation of his empire, a divided situation marked by social and religious tensions prevailed in northern India. Hindus, in particular, were humiliated and exploited. Rajasthan, Gujarat, and central India were not part of his empire. Beginning with his marriage to the daughter of the Rajput prince Rājā Bihāri Mal of Amber in 1562, Akbar initiated a policy of pacification. More wives from the princely houses of Rajasthan followed, all of whom retained their religious customs. He issued decrees allowing Hindus to rebuild temples and perform religious practices in public. Overall, Akbar’s reign was characterised by a very open religious policy. For instance, he promoted Hindus like Todar Mal and Mān Singh to high political positions for the first time, cf. ibid., p. 70. Akbar encouraged interfaith dialogue and even created a lodge-like free-thinking order, the Dīn-i-llāhi, the “divine faith,” aiming to collect the best from all religions and discard anything that was rationally unconvincing to find a common truth, cf. ibid. p. 62. During this time, numerous previously destroyed Hindu temples were rebuilt in Benares, cf. ibid., pp. 58-59. Later vassals of the Mughal emperors, especially the later Kachwaha Rajput rulers of Amber, notably under Rājā Man Singh I, constructed numerous temples and ghats in the city, cf. Hooja, 2006: 493-495. His immediate successor, Shāh Jahāngir (1605–1627), continued the open religious policy, cf. Jahangir (1999). It was only during the reign of Shāh Jahān, who ruled the Mughal Empire from 1628-1658 that the government’s general attitude became less favourable towards Hindus again from 1632 onwards. Shāh Jahān ordered a law for the destruction of Hindu temples under construction, as his Islamic theologians sought to prevent the construction and renovation of temples of other religions. However, it remains unclear how strictly this law was enforced and to what extent this religious policy shift after three-quarters of a century of religious dialogue and tolerance affected the population. The impacts were at most marginal. During Shāh Jahān’s reign, seven instances of temple destruction are documented.<sup>523</sup> How his rule specifically impacted Benares is unclear but presumably minimal. For example, the then Rājā of Amber, Jai Singh I, who ruled from 1627–1667, was an important military ally, and his father, Man Singh I, had invested large sums in the construction of Hindu temples in Benares. Only under Aurangzeb (1658-1707) was a distinct resurgence of anti-Hindu policy.

<sup>524</sup>ohanlon2011religious.

<sup>525</sup>Clark, 2006: 188.

Hṛīyoga and integrate other yogas and religions. The beginnings of this development, highlighted by Birch, are discernible here.

Another catalyst that initiated the floruit of Hṛīyoga literature was the acquisition of corporate identities of the four main ascetic orders of North India (Nāths, Daśanāmī samnyāsīs, Rāmānandīs, and Udāsīs). By 1600, the Nāth yogīs were reportedly organized into 12 panths, with all their headquarters located in North India.<sup>526</sup> This acquisition of corporate identities of the ascetic orders strengthened the discursive weight of their views, teachings and texts on the market of religious options in northern India. Thus, other religious traditions were stimulated to deal with those impulses.

Thus, the complex early modern yoga taxonomies of medieval yogas resulted from the convergence of various yogic traditions and associated religions in melting pots of intellectual and religious exchange during the early blossoming phase of a new, more diversified wave of yoga literature, mainly disseminated through hubs like Benares.<sup>527</sup> Moreover, they are a literary testament to this process and reflect the discursive negotiations and repositioning of authors from different traditions in response to new yogic impulses affecting them.

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<sup>526</sup>Mallinson, 2011: 17.

<sup>527</sup>Given the high likelihood that the *Yogasvarodaya* was composed in more southern regions, we can assume that the discourse surrounding complex Yoga taxonomies had another area of dissemination. There is no doubt that South Indian scholars were drawn to Benares. This is evidenced by the authors discussed here: on one hand, Nārāyaṇatīrtha, who was originally from Kaza in the Guntur District of present-day Andhra Pradesh and then spent a significant part of his life in Benares, cf. Ko, 1993: 43. On the other hand, Sundaradeva, the author of the *Hṛīhasaṅketacandrikā*, also originated from more southern regions before moving to Benares, cf. Birch, 2018: 123 n. 61.



# **Appendix**

## **Figures**



Figure 1: Viṣṇu Viśvarūpa, India, Rajasthan, Jaipur, ca. 1800–1820, Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 38.5 × 28 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Given by Mrs. Gerald Clark.

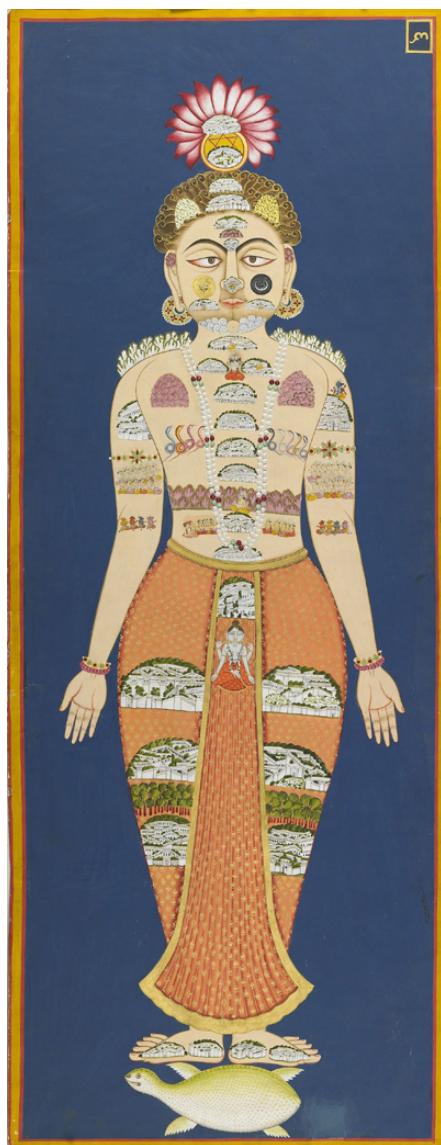


Figure 2: The Equivalence of Self and Universe (detail), folio 6 from the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* (Bulaki), India, Rajasthan, Jodhpur, 1824 (Samvat 1881), 122 x 46 cm, RJS 2378, Mehrangarh Museum Trust.



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