

Śāktism and *Hathayoga*

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Introduction

In this paper I shall examine one of the ways that Śāktism endured after its heyday, the “Śaiva Age” magisterially documented by Alexis Sanderson in a recent book-length article.¹ The thirteenth century, the end of Śaivism’s period of dominance, coincided with the rise of yoga, specifically yoga which used the techniques known as *hatha*, to a position of dominance among the soteriological methods employed in India.² It is *hathayoga*’s relationship with Śaivism and its Śākta manifestations that is the subject of this paper.

Scholarship on *hathayoga*, my own included, unanimously declares it to be a reformation of tantric yoga introduced by the gurus of the Nāth *saṃpradāya*, in particular their supposed founder, Gorakṣa. In much secondary literature the phrases “Nāth yoga” and “*hathayoga*” are used interchangeably. When other traditions are seen to employ the practices or terminology of *hathayoga*, they are said to be borrowing from the Nāths.³ Gorakṣa, who probably flourished in the twelfth century, and Matsyendra, who according to tradition was Gorakṣa’s guru but is likely to have lived three centuries before him, were exponents of the Śākta cult of the Paścimāmnāya or western stream of Kaula Śaivism.⁴ To this day the Nāth

¹SANDERSON 2009.

²It is at this time that yoga is first included among the *darśanas*, in the c. 12th-century *Sarvasiddhāntasamgraha*, which was composed by an anonymous Advaitavedāntin (HALBFASS 1988:352). Over the subsequent centuries the orthodox (in particular Vedāntin) interest in the *hatha* techniques of yoga continued to grow, culminating in the composition in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries of a group of “Yoga Upaniṣads” which consist for the most part of passages from earlier *hatha* texts (BOUY 1994).

³Examples of this are legion. To give just three, from different contexts: BOUY (1994:6) who describes all the texts used to compose the “Yoga Upaniṣads” as Nāth; VAUDEVILLE (1957:viii-xii) who says that Kabīr borrowed various elements from the tradition of the Nāths; and VAN DER VEER (1989:89) who says that the Rāmānandis have been “deeply influenced” by the Nāths.

⁴For an overview of the history of the Nāth *saṃpradāya* see MALLINSON 2011c.

Yogīs are renowned as *tāntrika* adepts and their monasteries are often situated near important goddess temples, such as Jwalamukhi in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh or Devi Pattan near the India-Nepal border. The Paścimāmnāya tradition is no longer extant and Nāth liturgy is now more in keeping with the tradition of the foremost surviving Śākta cult, that of the Dakṣiṇāmnāya or southern stream of Kaula Śaivism, with the goddess Bāla- or Tripurā-sundarī being the focus of their worship.⁵

The Nāths' Śākta credentials are pukka. The ascription to them of both the invention of *haṭhayoga* and the composition of the corpus of Sanskrit texts which teach its practice stands on shakier ground: it derives from the claims of the Nāths themselves and from the fact that of the small number of texts on *haṭhayoga* that have been edited, some are ascribed to Nāth gurus or mention them as the revealers of their doctrines. But the corpus of Sanskrit works on *haṭhayoga* - which is our only source for *haṭhayoga*'s formative period - has, perhaps surprisingly considering the widespread popularity of yoga today, been the subject of very little critical study. Much of my research of the last few years has concentrated on identifying the texts that constitute this corpus and using them to examine how *haṭhayoga* developed and who practised it. In the first part of this paper I shall summarise what constituted early *haṭhayoga*. I shall then show how, in contemporaneous taxonomies of yoga, Śākta techniques were grouped separately from *haṭhayoga*, under the name *laya*. Next I shall show how in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, the text which became *haṭhayoga*'s *locus classicus*, the Śākta techniques of *layayoga* were included under the rubric of *haṭha* and how at the same time the purpose of *haṭhayoga* was realigned to be more in keeping with that of *laya*. I shall then identify the practitioners of early *haṭhayoga* - who were not Śāktas - and show how they have continued to be its torchbearers. In the final part of the paper I shall attempt to locate these developments in their wider context.

Early *Haṭhayoga*

The earliest references to *haṭhayoga* are scattered mentions in Buddhist canonical works and their exegesis dating from the eighth century onwards, in which it is the soteriological method of last resort.⁶ In its earliest definition, in Puṇḍarīka's eleventh-century *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Kāla-*

⁵See e.g. VILĀSNĀTH 2010.

⁶On the Buddhist texts which mention *haṭhayoga*, see Birch 2011.

cakratantra, *hathayoga*⁷ is said to bring about the “unchanging moment” (*akṣarākṣaṇa*) “through the practice of *nāda* by forcefully making the breath enter the central channel and through restraining the *bindu* of the *bodhicitta* in the *vajra* of the lotus of wisdom”.⁸ While the means employed are not specified, the ends, in particular restraining *bindu*, semen, and making the breath enter the central channel, are similar to those mentioned in the earliest descriptions of the practices of *hathayoga*, to which I now turn.

In seeking to establish a corpus of early works on the practices of *hathayoga* we are greatly assisted by the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, which can be dated to approximately 1450 CE.⁹ Its composer, Svātmārāma, used verses from at least twenty texts¹⁰ to compile his hugely influential work, whose stated aim is to be a light on *hatha* “in the darkness of a multitude of doctrines”.¹¹

Only four of the texts drawn upon by Svātmārāma mention *hatha* or *hathayoga* by name¹² and of those only one, the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*, a Vaiṣṇava work, gives a detailed exposition of its techniques. Its *hathayoga* con-

⁷In this definition *hathayoga* is a gloss of the *mūla*’s “*hatha*”. This is the first of many instances of practices referred to in primary sources simply as *hatha* being said to constitute *hathayoga* in later systematisations, exegesis and secondary literature. This has resulted in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* often being referred to in secondary literature as the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* when only a tiny fraction of its manuscripts call it thus. We see in this the scholastic tendency towards categorisation, to identify different types of yoga and to pit them against one another. But it should be noted that the situation is more nuanced in the texts themselves: even those which do categorise different varieties do not see them as altogether different types of yoga but as contrasting (yet sometimes complementary) methods of achieving yoga. Thus compounds such as *hathayoga* and *layayoga* should be understood as *tatpuruṣas* with an instrumental case relationship: “yoga by means of *hatha*” etc. The one exception to this is *nājayoga*, which, as the aim of all methods of yoga, should be understood either as a *karmadhāraya* or as a *tatpuruṣa* of genitive relationship: “the royal yoga”. A small number of texts do identify their yoga as *nājayoga* but this is to emphasise the superiority of their method above all others rather than give a definition of *nājayoga* (see e.g. *Amanaska* 2.3-4, VASUDEVA 2011).

⁸This earliest definition of *hathayoga* is repeated verbatim in other Buddhist exegetical works (see BIRCH 2011). The verse from the *Kālacakratantra* on which Puṇḍarīka is commenting (4.119cd) says that if the *siddhi* desired by mantra-practitioners does not arise as a result of purification, yogic withdrawal and so forth, then they should accomplish it by forcefully (*hathena*) restraining *bindu* in the *vajra* in the lotus:

*samśuddhipratyāhārādibhir vai yadi bhavati na sā mantriṇām iṣṭasiddhir
nādābhyāsād dhaṭhenābjagakulīśamaṇau sādhyed bindurodhāt |*

Puṇḍarīka glosses *hathena* with *hathayogena* and defines it thus (*Vimalaprabhā* Vol. 2, p. 212):

*idānīm hathayoga ucyate | iha yadā pratyāhārādibhir bimbe dṛṣṭe saty akṣarākṣaṇam notpadyate
ayantritaprānatayā tadā nādābhyāsād dhaṭhena prāṇam madhyamāyām vāhayitvā prajñābjagata-
kulīśamaṇau bodhicittabindunirodhād akṣarākṣaṇam sādhyen niḥspandeneti hathayogaḥ ||*

⁹BOUY 1994:82-85.

¹⁰For the details of the texts used and verses borrowed, see my forthcoming monograph *Yoga and Yogis: the Texts, Techniques and Practitioners of Traditional Haṭhayoga*.

¹¹*Haṭhapradīpikā* 1.3:

*bhṛāntyā bahumatadbhvānte nājayogam ajānatām |
hathapradīpikām dhatte svātmārāmah kṛpākarah ||*

¹²*Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* 9, 26; *Yogabīja* 143, 149; *Amarauḥaprabodha* 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 24, 29, 73 and *Śivasamhitā* 5.12, 5.23, 5.222, 5.254.

sists of a yoga of the eight limbs also taught in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* but here ascribed to Yājñavalkya and others, or an alternative set of practices employed by Kapila and other *siddhas*, practices which are thus the distinguishing feature of early *haṭhayoga*.

These practices comprise ten physical techniques which in later works all came to be classed as *mudrās*. Some of these techniques, in particular those known in *haṭha* works as the three *bandhas* - *mūla*°, *jālandhara*° and *uddīyāna*° - are attitudes to be assumed in meditation, ascetic practice or breath control, which are taught or mentioned in a wide variety of earlier works;¹³ the others are unique to *haṭhayoga*. Their primary aim, which they effect either pneumatically, by making the breath enter the central channel and rise upwards, or mechanically, is to stop the lunar *bindu*, or semen, which is equated with *amṛta*, the nectar of immortality, from dripping down from its store in the head and being consumed in the solar fire at the base of the central channel. The techniques of early *haṭhayoga* are thus direct methods of addressing the ancient (and still prevalent) Indic concern with the preservation of semen, which results from its being considered to be the vital principle and its loss being thought to lead to weakness and death. The *haṭhayogin* might practise *viparītakaraṇī*, inverting himself in order to use gravity to keep his *bindu* in his head. Or he can, applying *khecarīmudrā*, insert his tongue into the opening behind his uvula thereby sealing *bindu* in the cranial cavity. Or he might, should he ejaculate, create a vacuum in his abdomen and resorb his *bindu* by means of *vajrolimudrā*.

Eight of the works used to compile the *Haṭhapradīpikā* teach one or more of the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*'s alternative *haṭha* techniques. These constitute the corpus of Sanskrit texts on what I call "early" *haṭhayoga* in contrast to the more catholic "classical" *haṭhayoga* of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* and subsequent works.¹⁴ The texts of the corpus are, in approximate chronological order,¹⁵

¹³See e.g. *Sarvajñānottara Yogapāda* 11ab as edited by VASUDEVA (2004:398 n.77): *āsanaṃ ruciraṃ baddhvā ūrdhvakāyam adbhāśīrah*, which teaches that in all the four seated *āsanas* that have just been named the head is to be held down, in the manner of the *haṭhayogic jālandharabandha*.

¹⁴A measure of the validity of using the *Haṭhapradīpikā* to establish this corpus in this way - as well as of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*'s inclusivity - is that we know of no text which predates it and teaches early *haṭha* techniques but was not used in its compilation. (As noted above, some of the *haṭha* practices, in particular the three *bandhas*, are taught in earlier works, but as one among a variety of attitudes to be assumed in meditational, ascetic or yogic postures: they are not treated individually, nor do they take the names by which they are known in *haṭhayogic* works.)

¹⁵In terms of chronology, the corpus splits neatly into two halves. The *Amṛtasiddhi*, *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* and *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* are named or cited in fourteenth-century works (Bu ston Rin chen grub's 1322 catalogue of canonical works in the case of the *Amṛtasiddhi* (see SCHAEFFER 2002), the 1363 *Śārngadharapaddhati* in the case of the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* (over 30 verses cited) and *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* (5 verses shared)). Verses from the central core of the *Gorakṣasāta* are found in the *Yogabīja*, which also borrows from the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*. This, together with the coherence of the *Gorakṣasāta*'s teachings, suggests that the *Gorakṣasāta* was the source. The four texts that constitute the second half of the corpus are all to some extent derivative of those in the first half,

the following:

- *Amṛtasiddhi*
- *Dattātreyaśāstra*
- *Gorakṣaśataka*
- *Vivekamārtanda*
- *Yogabija*
- *Khecarīvidyā*
- *Amaraughaprabodha*
- *Śivasamhitā*

I shall now briefly summarise the techniques of *haṭhayoga* as taught in each of these works (other than the *Dattātreyaśāstra*, which has already been mentioned).

Amṛtasiddhi

The sectarian origins of the *Amṛtasiddhi* are unclear; it is explicitly Śaiva but contains no specifically Śākta teachings.¹⁶ The *haṭha* techniques taught in the *Amṛtasiddhi* (which are not named *haṭha*) are used to make the breath enter the central channel and raise it upwards in order to reverse the usual direction of flow in the channels of the body and stop *bindu* from moving downwards.¹⁷ The *Amṛtasiddhi* is the first text to teach the pervasive haṭha-yogic physiology in which the moon is situated at the top of the central channel from where it rains down *amṛta* which, if preventative yogic techniques are not employed, is then burnt up in the sun situated at the bottom

indicating their later date. Further details of their dependence on the earlier works are given in the notes to the descriptions of the texts below.

¹⁶ SCHAEFFER, on the strength of the *Amṛtasiddhi* teaching *haṭhayoga* and the text cycle which it is part of being traced back to Virūpākṣa/Virūpākṣanātha, identifies the text as Nāth (2002:518-519). In the text itself, however, there is nothing to suggest that it was composed in a Nāth, or even Paścimāmnāya, milieu. As well as there having been a *siddha* called Virūpākṣa/Virūpā, the name Virūpākṣa has been used from at least the 12th century to refer to the form of Śiva that presides over the Vijayanagar region (VERGHESE 1995:18) and the *Amṛtasiddhi* could also be a product of that Śaiva tradition, in particular the Kālamukha cult that flourished there prior to the Saṅgama kings' patronage of Vaiṣṇavism.

¹⁷ *Amṛtasiddhi* 11-13.

of the central channel.¹⁸ It also introduces the widespread haṭhayogic notion of the identification of the breath, semen and mind: by stopping any one of these three, all three are stopped.¹⁹

The principle aim of the *haṭha* techniques of the *Amṛtasiddhi* is thus the same as those of the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*: to stop or reverse the movement of *bindu*. Neither text associates the practices of *haṭha* with Kuṇḍalinī or the *cakras*.²⁰

*Goraḥṣaśataka*²¹

Probably contemporaneous with the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*, i.e. composed in the thirteenth century, are the first texts on yoga to be associated with Goraḥṣa, the *Goraḥṣaśataka* and *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*. Unlike the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*, neither of these works calls its yoga *haṭha*; it is just *yoga*. The *Goraḥṣaśataka* teaches that liberation is to be attained by controlling the mind through controlling the breath. One method of controlling the breath is to stimulate Kuṇḍalinī, which can be done either by using the three haṭhayogic *bandhas* mentioned earlier,²² or through *sarasvatīcālana*, “stimulating Sarasvatī”. *Sarasvatī*^o or *śakti-cālana* is not taught in the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* but it is included among the *mudrās* of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*’s classical *haṭhayoga*. In the *Goraḥṣaśataka*, it involves wrapping in a cloth the tongue, which is identified with Sarasvatī and said to be the goddess at one end of the central channel, and tugging on it in order to stimulate Kuṇḍalinī, who dwells at the other end.²³ Nowhere in the *Goraḥṣaśataka* is the preservation of *bindu* or *amṛta* mentioned.

¹⁸In the *Amṛtasiddhi* (as in later haṭhayogic texts) the archaic triad of sun, moon and fire is reduced to the pair sun and moon, the sun and fire being identified as one (*AS* 5.2).

¹⁹See *Amṛtasiddhi viveka* 7.

²⁰The *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* makes no mention of the usual six *cakras* of yogic physiology (although at verse 131 the *sahasrakamala*, which is sometimes added to that schema as a seventh *cakra*, is said to be the source of *amṛta*) but does refer to Kuṇḍalinī in passing, saying that in the *paricaya* stage of yoga she and the breath are made to move by fire (107). The *Amṛtasiddhi* mentions neither Kuṇḍalinī nor *cakras*. (At 7.8-13 it does say, however, that a solar *rajas*, the feminine equivalent of *bindu*, is found in all beings “wrapped in the goddess element” (*devīattvasamāvṛtaḥ*), and that its union with the lunar *bindu* is yoga; see footnote 102 for the text of this passage. Cf. *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 54-57, *Yogabīja* 89.)

²¹On the confusion between the *Goraḥṣaśataka* and the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* caused by the latter also coming to be known, among other names, as the *Goraḥṣaśataka*, see MALLINSON 2011b:262-263.

²²The text says that the three *bandhas* are used to restrain the breath in order to stimulate Kuṇḍalinī, who is to be stimulated in order to control the breath, suggesting that the Kuṇḍalinī paradigm has been imposed onto a yoga that worked on breath alone.

²³Later redactions of the *Goraḥṣaśataka*’s verses, such as that in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, through textual corruption and, we must assume, either a rupture in the transmission of the practice or a dissociation of the textual and practical traditions, say that the cloth is to be wrapped around the waist (see MALLINSON 2011b).

Vivekamārtaṇḍa

The framework of the text of the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* is a description of the well-known six *cakras* of yogic physiology, within which are passages on a variety of yogic subjects including an enumeration of a sixfold yoga and a section on Kuṇḍalinī in which awakening her by means of “fire yoga” (*vahnīyogena*) and raising her, together with the mind and the breath, to the *brahmadvāra*, is said to be the way for yogins to become liberated.²⁴ Immediately after this passage on Kuṇḍalinī comes a description of five haṭhayogic *mudrās*,²⁵ none of which is said to bring about the raising of Kuṇḍalinī. They have a range of physical benefits, including the raising of the *apāna* breath, but the aim most emphasised in their descriptions, particularly in that of *khecarīmudrā*, is the preservation of *bindu*. Later in the text the haṭhayogic *mudrā* called *viparītakaraṇī*, “the inverter”, is taught and this too is said to be a method for stopping the downward flow of nectar; Kuṇḍalinī is not mentioned.²⁶

Yogabīja

The *Yogabīja*²⁷ is a dialogue between Śiva and the goddess. It makes no mention of any Nāth gurus. Its yoga is similar to that of the *Goraḥśasāta-ka* in that it uses the three haṭhayogic *bandhas* and *śakticālanī mudrā*. The awakening of Kuṇḍalinī is the purpose of many of the yoga practices taught in the text;²⁸ preserving *bindu* or *amṛta* is mentioned in passing twice.²⁹

Khecarīvidyā

The *Khecarīvidyā* is a composite text in which teachings on the practice of the haṭhayogic *khecarīmudrā* have been inserted into part of a Kaula work that includes a coded description of a mantra (the *khecarīvidyā* of the text’s title), and a eulogy of *madirā*, alcohol, which is reworked into praise of Khecarī. The practice of *khecarīmudrā* enables the yogin to access various stores of *amṛta* in the body and also to raise Kuṇḍalinī via the six *cakras*

²⁴ *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 31-39. In the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* Kuṇḍalinī is not said to interact with the *cakras* in any way.

²⁵ *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 40-63 teaches *mūlabandha*, *uddīyānabandha*, *jālandharabandha*, *khecarīmudrā* and *mahāmudrā*.

²⁶ *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 113-115.

²⁷ The *Yogabīja* includes a number of verses from the *Dattātreyayogasāstra* and *Goraḥśasāta-ka* and is likely to postdate them (*YB* 116-117, 119c-121b, 122c-123b = *DYS* 144-145, 141c-143b, 138; *YB* 103, 105c-106b, 109ab, 110c-115d, 121c-122b = *GS* 35c-36b, 38c-39b, 45ab, 47a-52b, 61c-62b). The following verses are found in both the *Yogabīja* and *Haṭhapradīpikā* but in no other texts, so it is likely that the *Yogabīja* is their source: *YB* 92, 94, 118c-119b, 123c-124b, 125 (= *HP* 3.109, 3.112, 3.54, 2.46, 3.111).

²⁸ *Yogabīja* 92a-98b, 108-112, 123c-132d.

²⁹ *Yogabīja* 123, 140.

to the great store of *amṛta* in the head, with which she floods the body on her journey back down to her home at the *ādhāra*, the “base” located at the perineum. The *Vivekamārtanḍa* is mentioned near the beginning of the *Khecarīvidyā*,³⁰ but despite that text’s clear assertions that the purpose of *khecarīmudrā* is the sealing of *bindu* or *amṛta* in the head, that aim is not mentioned in the *Khecarīvidyā* (and it would be hard to reconcile with the flooding of the body with *amṛta*). In many respects the *Khecarīvidyā*’s *khecarīmudrā* has more in common with the tongue-pulling *śakticālanī mudrā* of the *Gorakṣasāta* than with the cavity-sealing *khecarīmudrā* taught in the *Dattātreya-yogāsāstra* and *Vivekamārtanḍa*.

Amarauḡhaprabodha

The *Amarauḡhaprabodha*³¹ is ascribed to Gorakṣa in its manuscript colophons and mentions four gurus associated with the Nāth order in its opening verse.³² It teaches a *haṭhayoga* (named as such) which is very similar to the *bindudhāraṇa* yoga taught in the *Amṛtasiddhi*, but it adds the awakening of Kuṇḍalinī to the benefits of the *Amṛtasiddhi*’s *mahāmudrā* and it mentions a *dhyāna* of *śakti*.³³

Śivasamhitā

The last of the texts which constitute the corpus of works on early *haṭhayoga* is the *Śivasamhitā*.³⁴ There is nothing in the *Śivasamhitā* to associate it with

³⁰ *Khecarīvidyā* 1.14.

³¹ The *Amarauḡhaprabodha* shares verses with the *Amṛtasiddhi*, *Amanaska* and *Śivasamhitā* (*AP* 20, 29, 32cd, 37ab, 38, 39cd, 40ab, 45 = *AS* 16.1c-2b, 11.3, 11.9cd, 11.3cd, 14.6, 13.5cd, 13.7cd, 19.2 (many other verses in the *Amarauḡhaprabodha* are derivative of verses in the *Amṛtasiddhi*, particularly those describing the four classes of aspirant - compare *AP* 18-24 with *AS* *vivekas* 15-18); *AP* 8 = *Amanaska* 2.32; *AP* 3, 45 = *ŚS* 5.12, 3.31 (*AS* 19.2 is likely to be the original source of the latter)). It also includes a quotation attributed to a *Śrisamputa*. It is thus to some extent a compilation, but it contains 19 verses found in the *Haṭhpradīpikā* and not elsewhere (*AP* 9, 30-31, 32ab, 34 = *HP* 4.14, 3.10-11b, 3.12ab, 3.19; *AP* 35ab, 35cd, 36, 40c-41d, 42ab, 42cd, 43ab, 43c-44b = *HP* 3.22ab, 3.23cd, 3.24, 3.26c-27d, 3.29ab, 3.30ab, 3.29cd, 3.30c-f; *AP* 44cd, 46-53 = *HP* 1.61ab, 4.70-77), so in the absence of an alternative source for those verses it seems likely that the *Amarauḡhaprabodha* was compiled before the *Haṭhpradīpikā*.

³² *Amarauḡhaprabodha* 1:

oṃ namo 'stv ādināthāya minānāthāya vai namaḥ |
namaś caurāṅgināthāya siddhabuddhāya dhimate ||

³³ *Amarauḡhaprabodha* 29-33, 55.

³⁴ The *Śivasamhitā* shares 16 verses with the *Amṛtasiddhi* (*ŚS* 2.1b, 2.1cd, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4ab = *AS* 1.15b, 1.16ab, 1.17ab+1.16cd, 1.17c-1.18b, 1.19ab; *ŚS* 2.6c-9d, 2.11-12, 3.31, 4.27ab, 4.27dc, 4.28ab, 4.34cb, 5.13, 5.17c-20b = *AS* 3.1-4, 4.3-4, 19.2, 11.3cd, 11.4bc, 11.5ab, 11.7cd, 15.1, 16.1-3; *ŚS* 4.31, 4.38, 5.14-15 = *AS* 11.6, 12.6, 15.3; several other verses in the *Śivasamhitā*’s descriptions of *mahāmudrā*, *mahābandha* and *mahāvedha* are derivative of verses in the *Amṛtasiddhi*); four verses with the *Dattātreya-yogāsāstra* (*ŚS* 3.102-105 = *DYS* 35-38; the *ŚS* also paraphrases passages from the *Dattātreya-yogāsāstra*: compare *ŚS* 5.71, 3.42-48, 3.60-61, 3.62-63, 3.72-75,

the Nāths. On the contrary, various features of the the text show it to be a product of the tradition of Śaiva non-dualism mixed with the expurgated *dakṣiṇāmnāya* Kaula cult of Tripurasundarī known as Śrīvidyā.³⁵ This cult became the most widespread and enduring of the Śākta traditions.

The Śākta orientation of the *Śivasamhitā* is made plain at the end of its teachings on the benefits of increasing numbers of repetitions of the Śrīvidyā *mantrarāja*: through thirty lakh repetitions the practitioner becomes equal to Brahmā and Viṣṇu; through sixty lakh he attains Rudra-hood; through eighty lakh, the *śaktitattva*. Finally, through one crore repetitions, he is absorbed into the absolute.³⁶

The *Śivasamhitā* mentions *haṭhayoga* by name but does not define it, nor does it make it clear which of the many practices it teaches come under its rubric. In its fourth *patala* it teaches all ten haṭhayogic *mudrās* taught in earlier works on *haṭhayoga* and, further confirming its roots in the traditions of Śrīvidyā, crowns them with its own, a haṭhayogic variety of the hand-gesture *yonimudrā* which occupies a central place in the rituals taught in the *Vāmakeśvarīmata*, one of the foundational texts of Śrīvidyā.³⁷ The *Śivasamhitā* contains detailed teachings on Kuṇḍalinī, who is said to be the “great goddess” (*paradevatā*)³⁸ and to “take the form of the creation of the universe” (*jagatsamsṛṣṭirūpā*).³⁹ The purpose of its haṭhayogic *mudrās* is to awaken Kuṇḍalinī and make her pierce a variety of lotuses and knots as she

4.88ab etc. with *DYŚ* 22c-23b, 72c-82b, 98c-100b, 89c-90b, 112-121, 157cd); one verse with the *Śāradāvilaka* (*ŚS* 2.16 = *ŚT* 25.32); and one with the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* (*ŚS* 3.81 = *VM* 119). Ten of the fifteen verses which the *Śivasamhitā* shares with the *Haṭhapradīpikā* are not to be found in other texts (*ŚS* 3.5a-6b, 3.43, 3.108-109, 4.21, 4.23ab, 4.47ab, 4.88ab, 5.47, 5.222a-d, 5.254 = *HP* 4.22a-23b, 2.14, 1.18-19, 3.2, 3.6ab, 3.24cd, 3.87ab, 1.43, 2.76, 1.11).

³⁵ See the invocations of the goddess Tripurabhairavī at 5.84 and 5.240, and teachings on the associated tripartite Śrīvidyā *mantrarāja/mūlavidyā*. The *mantrarāja* consists of *vāgbhava* + *kāmarūpa* + *śakti*, whose condensed forms are *aīm*, *klīm*, and *saulḥ*; it is taught at 5.80-85 and 5.234-235. Its three components also combine to make the *mūlavidyā* in the *Vāmakeśvarīmata* (1.93-101). The *yoginīs* said in the *Śivasamhitā* to be situated at the *cakras* correspond to those in Bhāskararāya's *Saubhāgyabhāskara* commentary on *Lalitāsahasranāmastotra* 148-158. The assertions that the yogī can make himself irresistible to women (5.104), that he can become a second Kāma (3.93), and instructions to meditate on Kāma (4.3), have parallels with the “love magic” taught in the *Vāmakeśvarīmata* and the associated earlier Nityā tantras, a Śākta textual corpus from which the cult of Tripurā developed and which was independent of the Vidyāpīṭha literature (SANDERSON 2009:47; cf. GOLOVKOVA 2010:9, 41-53). The *Śivasamhitā*'s vedantic teachings (see in particular the first *patala*) confirm the connection with the cult of the southern Śāṅkarācāryas of Kanchi and Shringeri.

³⁶ *Śivasamhitā* 5.250a-251b:

triṃśallakṣais tathā japtair brahmaviṣṇusamo bhavet |
rudratvaṃ ṣaṣṭibhir lakṣaiḥ śaktitattvam aṣṭibhiḥ ||
koṭyaikayā mahāyogī liyate parame pade |

³⁷ *Vāmakeśvarīmata* 1.164 and 2.13, and 3.27 in Jayaratha's *Vāmakeśvarīmatavivaraṇa ad loc.*

³⁸ *Śivasamhitā* 2.23b.

³⁹ *Śivasamhitā* 2.24a.

risers upwards.⁴⁰ Despite incorporating and reworking many of the *Amṛta-siddhi*'s verses on *mahāmudrā*, *mahābandha* and *mahāvedha*, and several verses from the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*, nowhere does the *Śivasamhitā* mention *bindudhāraṇa* as the aim of any practice of yoga. Even *vajrolimudrā*, the practice of urethral suction which in the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* and the *Haṭhapradīpikā* is for the preservation of the yogin's *bindu*,⁴¹ is made purely Śākta in the *Śivasamhitā*,⁴² where its sole purpose becomes the absorption of one's partner's *bindu* or *rajas*, in order to combine them within one's own body.⁴³

So, to summarise early *haṭhayoga*: in its earliest formulations, which are found in texts that are neither Śākta nor associated with the gurus of the Nāth *saṃpradāya*, *haṭha*'s distinguishing feature is a variety of physical techniques which are used to keep *bindu* or *amṛta*, i.e. semen, in the head. In contrast, contemporaneous Nāth works emphasise the purpose of their yoga, which they do not call *haṭha*, as being the raising of Kuṇḍalinī. To this end, the *Goraḥṣasataka* and *Yogabīja* prescribe *śakticālanī mudrā*, the one physical yoga technique exclusive to early Nāth yoga. Meanwhile another early Nāth work, the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*, co-opts the *mudrās* of *haṭhayoga* but they are still said to work only on *bindu*, not Kuṇḍalinī. In later Nāth and other Śākta works of the canon, the co-option of the *haṭha* techniques (along with their name) is more developed, so that in the *Śivasamhitā* the purpose of the *haṭhayogic mudrās* has become the raising of Kuṇḍalinī and *bindudhāraṇa* is not mentioned.

Other methods of yoga

I shall now turn to a typology of yoga which became commonplace and which, like the description of *haṭha* practices, is found for the first time in the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*. Dattātreya teaches three methods of yoga: *mantra*, *laya* and *haṭha*. All three lead to *rājayoga*, i.e. *samādhi*.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ *Śivasamhitā* 4.23-24.

⁴¹ The *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*'s teachings on *vajroli* (vv. 150c-159b) name only *bindudhāraṇa* as its aim, not the absorption of commingled sexual fluids. The *Haṭhapradīpikā*'s teachings on *vajroli* (vv. 3.82-89) describe it as a technique of *bindudhāraṇa* for the male yogin (a verse found in some witnesses after 3.89, but not in the edited text, enjoins the absorption of both *rajas* and *bindu*). At the end of the section teaching *amaroli* and *sahajoli*, two practices supplementary to *vajroli*, it is said (vv. 3.95-98) that the true *yoginī* absorbs male *bindu* mixed with her own *rajas*, thereby achieving total success (*sarvasiddhim*), knowing the past and present and becoming a *khecari*.

⁴² ŚS 4.78-87.

⁴³ Kuṇḍalinī is not mentioned in the context of *vajroli* even in the *Śivasamhitā*, but in the c. 17th-century *Haṭharatnāvalī* the practice is explicitly said to awaken her (2.82).

⁴⁴ DYS_{10a-11b}.

In some texts these different yogas are hierarchised and said to be suitable for corresponding degrees of aspirant.⁴⁵ In contrast to the attitude implied in the Buddhist texts referred to at the beginning of this paper, which place *mantrayoga* at the centre of their systems of practice and mention *haṭhayoga* as the yoga of last resort, in haṭhayogic works *mantrayoga* is for the lowest level of aspirant,⁴⁶ middling aspirants are suited to *layayoga*⁴⁷ and *haṭhayoga* is for those of the highest calibre.⁴⁸

Mantrayoga

Mantrayoga corresponds to the central practice of the tantras of the Śaiva Mantramārga, namely the repetition of mantras in order to obtain *siddhis*. Of the Sanskrit works on early *haṭhayoga*, only the two texts most obviously produced in Śākta milieux, namely the *Khecarīvidyā* and *Śivasamhitā*, teach mantras for obtaining *siddhis*.⁴⁹ In other works mantra practice is omitted altogether⁵⁰ or reduced to either the *ajapā gāyatrī* (the involuntary repetition of *ha* on the outbreath and *sa* on the inbreath)⁵¹ or the repetition of *om* as a purificatory technique.⁵²

Layayoga

Layayoga means “yoga through dissolution”. It is achieved by a wide variety of methods, the best known of which is the raising of the serpent goddess Kuṇḍalinī upwards from the base of the spine to union with Śiva in the head via a sequence of, usually, six *cakras*. The *cakras* are associated with progressively more subtle elements and Kuṇḍalinī’s upward journey represents a reversal of creation, a *laya* or “dissolution”.⁵³

⁴⁵The different degrees of aspirant are also taught in the *Amṛtasiddhi* (*vivekas* 15-18) but the *Amṛtasiddhi* does not give a corresponding typology of yogas.

⁴⁶*DYS* 12-14.

⁴⁷*ŚS* 5.17-20.

⁴⁸*ŚS* 5.21-23.

⁴⁹The teachings on the mantra of Khecarī that were central to the earliest form of the *Khecarīvidyā* (before the teachings on the haṭhayogic *khecarīmudrā* were incorporated into it) become a relic in its later redactions. The coded definition of the mantra was obscure to commentators and the verses in which it is taught were unintelligible to scribes, so were corrupted in most, if not all, recensions of the text. See *KbV* 1.30c-38b and MALLINSON 2007:199 n.225.

⁵⁰This is most striking in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, on which see below.

⁵¹*Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 28-29, *Gheraṇḍasamhitā* 5.86-87; cf. *Śāradatilaka* 25.50-52.

⁵²*DYS* 87c-88d, *VM* 70, *ŚS* 3.54, 3.71; cf. *adhya* 6 of the *Yogayājñavalkya*.

⁵³Dissolution into the elements is also mentioned at *Yogasūtra* 1.19: *bhavapratyayo videhaprakṛtilayānām*. Śaiva works predating the haṭhayogic corpus often mention *laya*, particularly in the context of meditations that lead the *yogin* up through a hierarchy of elemental *tattvas*, and they teach some of the techniques associated with the *layayoga* taught in haṭhayogic works, but they do not teach *laya* to be a particular variety of yoga (personal communication from Alexis Sanderson June 2011).

The *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* gives a mythological explanation of the origin of *layayoga* which I shall now translate in full:⁵⁴

[Dattātreya said]

“*Layayoga* happens as a result of the dissolution of the mind by

⁵⁴ *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* vv. 15-26:

layayogaś cittalayāt saṃketais tu prajāyate |
 ādināthena saṃketā aṣṭakoṭiḥ prakīrtitāḥ ||15||
 sāṃkṣṭir uvāca
 bhagavan ādināthaḥ saḥ kiṃrūpaḥ kaḥ sa ucyatām ||16||
 dattātreya uvāca
 mahādevasya nāmāni ādināthaś ca bhairavaḥ |
 śabareśāś ca devo 'yaṃ līlayā vicaran prabhūḥ ||17||
 śrīkaṇṭhparvate gauryā saha pramathanāyakaiḥ |
 mithaḥ śrīparvate caiva kadalīvanagocare ||18||
 girikūṭe citrakūṭe supādapayute girau |
 kṛpayaikaikasamketam saṃkaraḥ prāha tatra tān ||19||
 tāni sarvāṇi vaktuṃ hi na śaknomi tu vistarāt |
 kāni cit kathayiṣyāmi saḥajābhyaśavatsukham ||20||
 tiṣṭhan gacchan svapan bhūñjan dhyāyec chūnyam aharnīśam |
 ayam eko hi saṃketa ādināthena bhāṣitāḥ ||21||
 nāsāgradṛṣṭimātreṇa aparāḥ parikīrtitāḥ |
 śīraḥpāścātyabhāgasya dhyānam mṛtyuṃ jayet param ||22||
 bhrūmadhyadṛṣṭimātreṇa parāḥ saṃketa ucyate |
 lalāṭe bhrūtale yaś ca uttamaḥ saḥ prakīrtitāḥ ||23||
 savyadakṣiṇapādasya aṅguṣṭhe layam uttamam |
 uttānaśavavad bhūmau śayanam cōktam uttamam ||24||
 śīthilo nirjane deśe kuryāc cet siddhim āpnuyāt |
 evaṃ ca bahusaṃketān kathayām āsa śaṅkaraḥ ||25||
 saṃketair bahubhiś cānyair yaś cittasya layo bhavet |
 sa eva layayogaḥ syād haṭhayogaṃ tataḥ śrṇu ||26||

B = *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*, ed. Brahmamitra Avasthī, Svāmī Keśavānanda Yoga Saṃsthāna 1982

• J₁ = Mān Simh Pustak Prakāś 1936 • W₁ = Wai Prajñā Pāṭhaśālā 6/4-399 • M = Mysore Government Oriental Manuscripts Library 4369 • W₂ = Wai Prajñā Pāṭhaśālā 6163 • U = *Yoga-tattvopaniṣad*

15a °layāt] J₁W₁MW₂; °layaḥ BU 15b saṃketais] BW₁W₂; saṃketas J₁M, kotiśaḥ U • tu prajāyate] parikīrtitāḥ U 15d saṃketā aṣṭa°] BJ₁W₁W₂; saṃketās sārḍha° M 16a °nāthaḥ saḥ] B; °nāthasya J₁W₁, nāthaś ca M, nātha*śc*a W₂ 16b kiṃrūpaḥ kaḥ sa ucyatām] B; ko yaṃ rūpaḥ sa ucyate J₁, kiṃrūpaḥ kaḥ sa ucyatām W₁, ko 'yaṃ puruṣa ucyate M, ko yaṃ rūpaḥ sa ucyatām W₂ 17b °nāthaś ca bhairavaḥ] MW₂; °nāthādikāny api BW₁, °nāthasya bhairavaḥ J₁ 17c śabareśāś ca devo 'yaṃ] MW₂; śiveśvaraś ca devo 'sau B, śivariśāś ca devo yaṃ J₁, śiveśvaraś ca devo yaṃ W₁ 17d vicaran] J₁W₁MW₂; vyacarat B 18a śrīkaṇṭha°] BJ₁W₁; śrīkaṇṭhaḥ MW₂ 18b saha pramatha°] BJ₁W₁W₂; sahasrapramatha° M (unn.) • °nāyakaiḥ] M; °nāyakān BJ₁-W₁W₂ 18c mithaḥ śrīparvate caiva] M; himākṣaparvate caiva BJ₁W₁, himālayas tu parvate W₂ 19b supādapayute girau] BW₁; sapādaniyatai gurau J₁, sa yathā niyayoginaḥ M, sapādānilaye girau W₂ 19d saṃkaraḥ prāha tatra tān] BJ₁W₁W₂; śabarebhyo hi dattavān M 20b na śaknomi tu vistarāt] BW₁; na śaknomīti vistarāt J₁, nānyaś śakto hi taṃ vinā M, nan saknomi tu vistarāt W₂ 21b dhyāyec] W₁M; dhyāyan BJ₁W₂, dhyāyen U • chūnyam ahar niśam] niśkalam iśvaram U 22c °pāścātya°] M; °paścāc ca BJ₁W₁, paścāt W₂ (unn.) 22d mṛtyuṃ] mṛtyu W₂ • jayet param] BW₁; jaye param J₁W₂, °jayo varaḥ M 23c lalāṭe bhrūtale yaś] BJ₁; lalāṭe bhūtale yaś W₁W₂, līlavibhūtilepaś M 24c uttāna°] BJ₁M; uttānaḥ W₁W₂ • °śavavad] BW₁M; °śikha[rā]d J₁, śaravad W₂ 24d śayanam cōktam uttamam] śapasana-cottamottamam J₁ (unn.), śayanam cōttamottamam M 25a śīthilo] BW₁W₂; śīthilā J₁, haṃseva M 26d haṭha°] M; karma° B, dharma° J₁W₁, dhaṭa° W₂

means of *saṃketas*, ‘esoteric techniques’. Ādinātha has taught eighty million *saṃketas*.”

Saṃkṛti said:

“Please tell me, what form does Lord Ādinātha take? Who is he?”

Dattātreyā said:

“The names of Mahādeva, the great god, are Ādinātha, Bhairava and Lord of the Śābaras. While that mighty god was sporting playfully with Pārvatī in the company of the leaders of his troop in [various places such as] Mount Śrīkaṇṭha, Śrīparvata, the top of a mountain in the region of the Banana Forest, [and] the mountain at Citrakūṭa covered with beautiful trees, he, Śaṅkara, out of compassion secretly told an esoteric technique to each of them in those places. I, however, cannot teach all of them in detail. I shall gladly proclaim some of them, [such as this one] which consists of a simple practice and is easy:

While staying still [or] moving, sleeping [or] eating, day and night one should meditate on emptiness. This is one *saṃketa* taught by Śiva. Another is said to be simply staring at the tip of the nose. And meditation on the rear part of the head conquers death. The next *saṃketa* is said to be simply staring between the eyebrows. And that which is [staring] at the flat part of the forehead between the brows is said to be excellent. [Another] excellent dissolution is [staring] at the big toes of the left and right feet. Lying supine on the ground like a corpse is also said to be an excellent [dissolution]. If one practices in a place free from people while relaxed, one will achieve success. Śaṅkara has thus taught many *saṃketas*. That dissolution of the mind which occurs by means of [these] and several other esoteric techniques is *layayogaḥ*. Next hear about *haṭhayoga*.”

Other works from the same period also mention *saṃketas* taught by Śiva.⁵⁵ Jñāndev’s commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Bhāvārthadīpikā* (popularly known as the *Jñāneśvarī*), concludes its lengthy teachings on Kuṇḍalinī by declaring:⁵⁶

⁵⁵The *saṃketas* of the *siddhas* are also mentioned frequently in the Hindi verses attributed to Gorakṣa. See e.g. the *Gorakṣbhāṣī, sākhīs* 106, 115, 217.

⁵⁶*Jñāneśvarī* 6.291:

pimḍeṃ piṃḍācā grāsu | to hā nāthasaṃketicā ḍaṃsu | pari dāunu gelā uddeśu | māvāviṣṇu ||
291 ||

See KIEHNLE 2005:31. KIEHNLE (*loc. cit.*) understands *nātha*° here to refer to the Nātha *saṃpradāya* of Yogīs but

The swallowing of the body by the body: this is a *saṃketa* of Śiva, although here it is Lord Viṣṇu who explains it.

The *Yogabija*, whose yoga is very similar to that of the *Jñāneśvarī*, concludes its description of the raising of Kuṇḍalinī in a similar fashion, saying:⁵⁷

This alone is Śiva's *saṃketa*; it is characterised by [also] being the *saṃketa* of the *siddhas*.

These *saṃketas* thus denote a variety of practices said to have been taught by Śiva, some of which have Śākta overtones, in particular the raising of Kuṇḍalinī, who in the *Jñāneśvarī* passage cited above is said to be “mother of the world” and “the highest goddess”.⁵⁸ Other roughly contemporaneous texts also give teachings on *laya* (without calling its techniques *saṃketas*). These are all overtly Śaiva and some also originate in milieux influenced by Śaivism's more Śākta manifestations. Foremost is the practice of *nādānu-sandhāna* (which is also often called simply *nāda*): concentration on the internal sounds which arise in the course of yogic practice, sometimes as sequences of progressively more subtle sounds that correspond to the stages of Kuṇḍalinī's ascent. The *Śivasambhitā* says that *nāda* is the best form of *laya*.⁵⁹ Sequences of the sounds of *nāda* are taught in a variety of Śaiva works, including Śākta Tantras such as the *Brahmayāmala*, *Kubjikāmata* and *Matsyendrasambhitā*.⁶⁰

The second *khaṇḍa* of the *Amanaska*, which is likely to predate the *Dattā-treyayogasāstra* by a century or two and shares 22 verses with the *Kulārṇa-vatantra*, also teaches *laya*. *Laya* is achieved by *sāmbhavīmudrā*, in which the *yogin* is to gaze outwards unblinkingly, while focussing internally. This technique is said first to have been given by Śiva to Umā, the primal Śakti. It is also taught in the *Candrāvalokana* of Matsyendra.⁶¹ In the *Amanaska*'s

both internal and external evidence suggest otherwise: the poet is pointing out that the teaching derives from Śiva even though it is being told by Viṣṇu, and the verse was written several centuries before *nātha* was used to refer to members of an order of yogis (MALLINSON 2011C).

⁵⁷ *Yogabija* 136ab:

sa eva nāthasaṃketaḥ siddhasaṃketalakṣaṇaḥ |

⁵⁸ *Jñāneśvarī* 6.272, 6.281.

⁵⁹ ŚS 5.44 and 5.47.

⁶⁰ On *nāda* in Śaivism see VASUDEVA 2004:273-280.

⁶¹ *Amanaska* 2.10-11 (2.10 = *Candrāvalokana* 1, *Haṭhapradīpikā* 4.36):

antarlakṣyaṃ bahirdṛṣṭir nimeṣonmeṣavarjitā |
eṣā hi sāmbhavī mudrā sarvatantreṣu gopitā||2.10||
ādiśaktir umā caiṣā matto labdhavati purā |
adhunā janmasamskārat tvam eko labdhavān asi||2.11||

first *khaṇḍa*, which probably postdates the *Hathapradīpikā* by about a century, the rewards of gradually increasing periods of *laya* are taught. In the last, which results from remaining in *laya* for 24 years, the *yogin* becomes absorbed in the *śaktitattva*.⁶²

In the *Śārṅgadharapaddhati*, a lengthy compendium of verses on a wide range of subjects compiled near Jaipur in 1363, *laya* is said to have been mastered by Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana and others, and to involve a series of meditations working upwards through nine *cakras* and finally bringing about the union of the body's three *śaktis*.⁶³ The *Amarauḥaprabodha* defines *laya* as meditation on Śiva in the form of a *liṅga* at Kāmarūpa's location in the body, and as flowing *amṛta*.⁶⁴ The *Khecarīvidyā* does not define *laya* but does teach that after five months of visualisation of Kuṇḍalinī's ascent and her flooding the body with *amṛta*, the yogi achieves *laya* in the five elements⁶⁵ and it associates *laya* with *unmanī*, the "supramental state".⁶⁶

To summarise: the *saṃketas* or "secret techniques" of *layayoga* comprise a variety of meditations on, and visualisations of, places and energies in the body, in contrast with the physical practices of *hathayoga*. They are taught by Śiva, often in works of Śākta orientation.

The yoga taught in the early texts associated with Nāth gurus, with its emphasis on the raising of Kuṇḍalinī, corresponds more to the techniques of *laya* than to those of *hatha*. An early and disjointed attempt at combining the two can be found in the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*; the somewhat later *Śivasamhitā* presents a more coherent synthesis; the most influential fusion is that found in the *Hathapradīpikā*, to which we now turn.

The Classical *Hathayoga* of the *Hathapradīpikā*

Soon after its compilation by Svātmārāma in the fifteenth century, the *Hathapradīpikā* became the most influential work on *hathayoga*, in part, no doubt, because it was the first text explicitly to make *hatha* its central concern. Texts that taught the hierarchy of *mantra*, *laya* and *hatha* yogas⁶⁷ were known to

⁶² *Amanaska* 2.82:

caturviṃśatibhir varṣair layasthasya nirantaram |
śaktitattvasya siddhiḥ syāc chaktitattvamayo bhavet ||

⁶³ *Śārṅgadharapaddhati* 4350-4363.

⁶⁴ *Amarauḥaprabodha* 27.

⁶⁵ *Khecarīvidyā* 2.39.

⁶⁶ *Khecarīvidyā* 2.113ab.

⁶⁷ I.e. the *Dattātreyayogasāstra*, *Yogabīja*, *Amarauḥaprabodha* and *Śivasamhitā*.

Svātmārāma, but he reduced their typology to a distinction between *haṭha-yoga* and *rājayoga*, excluding *mantra* and *laya* yoga. The practices taught in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* are all *haṭha* and they lead to *rājayoga*, i.e. *samādhi*.

Mantra practice is notable by its complete absence in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*.⁶⁸ In contrast, many of the techniques of *layayoga* are incorporated wholesale⁶⁹ and are thus for the first time taught under the rubric of *haṭha-yoga*.⁷⁰ It is also in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* that various other practices which were to become emblematic of *haṭhayoga* are for the first time taught as part of *haṭha*. These include non-seated *āsanas*, complex *kumbhakas* (methods of breathing), and the *ṣaṭ karmāṇi*, six techniques for cleaning the body.

We see in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* the culmination of the process begun in the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*, in which the Śākta *laya* technique of the visualisation of the rising of Kuṇḍalinī is overlaid onto the physical techniques of *haṭhayoga*, techniques originally used for the purpose of *bindudhāraṇa*, the preservation of semen.⁷¹ The *mudrās* taught in the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* and *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* as methods of *bindudhāraṇa* are now said to be for raising Kuṇḍalinī.⁷²

The *Haṭhapradīpikā*'s blanket agglomeration of the various techniques of *haṭhayoga* and *layayoga* creates a somewhat incoherent whole. The shoe-horning of Kuṇḍalinī into the subtle physiology first found in the *Amṛta-siddhi*, in which the moon is in the head and the sun already occupies Kuṇḍalinī's seat at the *ādhāra* at the base of the spine, is awkward.⁷³ The *Haṭhapradīpikā* teaches two *khecarīmudrās*:⁷⁴ the first keeps *bindu* in the

⁶⁸ *Mantrayoga* does perhaps get a lexical nod in the name by which Svātmārāma classifies the cleansing practices, the verses teaching which are among the few that I am yet to find in earlier works and which may thus be the work of Svātmārāma himself. Despite teaching seven such practices, he calls them the *ṣaṭ karmāṇi*, "six acts", which is the name also given to a group of six magical methods of overpowering one's enemies that can be activated by means of mantras taught in texts of the Śaiva Mantramārga (see BÜHNEMANN 2000; the same phrase can also refer to the six duties of a brahmin).

⁶⁹ For the most part the *laya* techniques are incorporated without alteration. An exception is the *saṃketa* of lying like a corpse taught in the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* (24cd), which in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* (1.32) becomes an *āsana*, namely *śavāsana*, "the corpse pose" widely taught in modern yoga.

⁷⁰ *Laya* is often mentioned in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, particularly in the context of practices that elsewhere come under the name of *layayoga*, and at one place (4.103) *haṭha* and *laya* are differentiated, but the subject matter of the text is, as evinced by its title, explicitly said to be *haṭha*, with the implication that all the practices taught therein are *haṭha* practices.

⁷¹ I know of one exception to the principle of the raising of Kuṇḍalinī not involving physical techniques in pre-*haṭha* Śaiva works: in his commentary *ad Netraṇtra* 7.30, Kṣemarāja says that clenching and unclenching the anus makes Kuṇḍalinī point upwards.

⁷² *Haṭhapradīpikā* 3.5:

tasmāt sarvaprayatnena prabodhayitum iśvarīm |
brahmadvāramukhe suptāṃ mudrābhyāsaṃ samācāret ||

⁷³ Cf. *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 56ab, where the homology of the masculine *bindu*, *śiva* and *indu* is felicitous, but that of the triple-gendered *rajas*, *śakti* and *sūrya* seems forced.

⁷⁴ *Haṭhapradīpikā* 3.31-53, 4.43-4.55.

head and the second floods the body with *amṛta*.

The reformulation of the haṭhayogic *mudrās* as means of raising Kuṇḍalinī found in the *Śivasamhitā* is more coherent. Unlike Svātmārāma, the compiler of the *Śivasamhitā* completely removed *bindudhāraṇa* from the aims of the haṭhayogic *mudrās*. The coherence of the *Śivasamhitā* is partly because its compiler was happy to flaunt his sectarian affiliation, giving him a freer hand than Svātmārāma had. As noted above, the *Śivasamhitā* is a product of the Śākta Śrīvidyā tradition. As well as that cult's mantras it teaches detailed visualisations of the *cakras* through which its techniques make Kuṇḍalinī rise. Each *cakra* is to be visualised as having a specific group of syllables in its spokes, together with a *siddha* and a *yoginī*, and the *yoginīs* correspond to those taught elsewhere in the texts of Śrīvidyā.⁷⁵ In contrast, the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, despite stating that the purpose of the haṭhayogic *mudrās* is the raising of Kuṇḍalinī, makes no mention of *cakras*. Svātmārāma, in addition to casting light on *hatha*, had two unspoken further aims when compiling the *Haṭhapradīpikā*. He sought to lay claim to *haṭhayoga* for the *siddha* tradition while continuing a process that had started at least two centuries earlier, in which Śaiva yoga was being severed from its sectarian roots. The beginnings of this process can be seen in the teachings on yoga found in the *Matsyendrasamhitā*, in the introduction to his edition of which Csaba Kiss has made the observation that the text's cult is indicative of

... a phase in the history of yoga when yogic teachings start to become detached (perhaps not for the first time) from the mainstream religion, in this case tantric Śaivism, by eliminating sectarian boundaries through the concealment of sectarian marks such as easily decodable deity names, mantras and iconography and start to prepare for a formative period of a pan-Indian yoga, which can again become an alternative for the official/conservative religion.⁷⁶

Thus Svātmārāma, while seeking to stake a claim on *haṭhayoga* for the *siddha* tradition, also sought to avoid alienating any of that tradition's disparate elements. The list of synonyms of *samādhi* which he gives at the beginning of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*'s fourth *upadeśa* is a roll call of the various goals of different *siddha* traditions' methods of yoga,⁷⁷ but nowhere does

⁷⁵ See footnote 35.

⁷⁶ Kiss 2009:97.

⁷⁷ *Haṭhapradīpikā* 4.2-4.4:

athedānīm pravakṣyāmi samādhikramam uttamam |
mṛtyughnaṃ ca sukhopāyaṃ brahmānandakaraṃ param ||4.2||

he mention sect-specific features such as metaphysics, mantras, or sets of *cakras*.⁷⁸

Svātmārāma's appropriation of *haṭhayoga* for the *siddha* tradition is evinced by his naming as masters of *haṭhavidyā* approximately thirty *mahāsiddhas*, including Matsyendra, Gorakṣa, Virūpākṣa, Cauraṅgī and Carpaṭi, whose names also occur in lists of Nāth gurus.⁷⁹ The texts that he used to compile the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, however, come from a much broader range of traditions. Thus Svātmārāma borrows approximately 20 verses from the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra*, yet he makes no mention of Dattātreya anywhere in the text. The *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* is the product of a Vaiṣṇava tradition which coalesced into the yogi suborders of the Daśanāmī Saṁnyāsīs, in particular the Girīs and the Purīs.⁸⁰ Dattātreya is the tutelary deity of the Jūnā Akhārā, which today is the largest of the Saṁnyāsī *akhārās* and whose members are predominantly Girīs and Purīs, and there is a long history of rivalry, or at least differentiation, between the Nāths, with Gorakṣa as their first guru, and the Saṁnyāsīs, with Dattātreya as their *iṣṭadevatā*.⁸¹ To this day the Nāth Yogīs of northern India, despite displaying an otherwise broad inclusivity, will have little to do with Dattātreya.

rājayogaḥ samādhiś ca unmaṇi ca manonmaṇi |
amaratvaṁ layas tattvaṁ śūnyāśūnyam paraṁ padam ||4.3||
amanaskaṁ tathādvaitaṁ nirālambaṁ nirañjanam |
jīvanmuktiś ca sahaḥā turyā cety ekavācakaḥ ||4.4||

⁷⁸The six-*cakra* system was yet to achieve hegemony in yogic discourse. See e.g. the *Śārṅgadharapaddhati* which mentions groupings of both six and nine *cakras* (4298-4300, 4351-4360).

⁷⁹HP1.5-8.

⁸⁰Textual, ethnographic and iconographic sources show that the Śaiva orientation of these suborders did not take hold until the seventeenth century as part of the formalisation of the Daśanāmī order (see my forthcoming monograph *Yoga and Yogis: The Texts, Techniques and Practitioners of Traditional Haṭhayoga*).

⁸¹See for example the early eighteenth-century *Bachittar Nāṭak* of Guru Gobind Singh, *caupāi* 23-24 (translated in KOHLI 2005:126):

Then I created Datt,
who also started his own path,
His followers have long nails in their hands,
And matted hair on their heads,
They do not understand the ways of the Lord. 23
Then I created Gorakh,
Who made great kings his disciples,
His disciples wear rings in their ears,
And do not know the love of the Lord. 24

The second largest *akhārā* of the Saṁnyāsīs, the Mahānirvāṇī, has as its tutelary deity Kapila, who, as mentioned above, is credited in the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* as being the originator of some of the practices of *haṭhayoga*.

Munis and Siddhas

Some of the *Hathapradīpikā*'s teachings on the more gymnastic *āsanas* are taken from the *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā*.⁸² As an ancient *ṛṣi* not closely associated with an ascetic order, there were no sectarian reasons to sideline Vasiṣṭha and he does get a brief mention in the *Hathapradīpikā* when it is said that the *āsanas* taught therein are those that were accepted by *munis* such as Vasiṣṭha and *yogins* such as Matsyendra.⁸³

This distinction between *munis* or *ṛṣis* and *yogins* or *siddhas* is found in a wide range of texts.⁸⁴ In a somewhat confused analysis based in the main on the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* and the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*, the *Śārngadhara-paddhati* says that *hathayoga* is of two sorts, one practised by Gorakṣa and others, another by Mārkaṇḍeya and others.⁸⁵ The latter refers to the yoga taught to Mārkaṇḍeya by Dattātreya in the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*. Elsewhere in the *Śārngadhara-paddhati rājayoga* is said to be of two varieties.⁸⁶ The first, which was mastered by Dattātreya and other *mahātmanas*, corresponds to the *bindudhāraṇa hathayoga* of the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra*; the second, whose practitioners are not identified, uses the breath to raise Kuṇḍalinī upwards through five *cakras*. The roughly contemporaneous Maithili *Varṇaratnākara* gives a list of *siddhas* and a list of *munis*.⁸⁷ Among the former are a number of Nāth gurus, including Gorakṣa; among the latter are Mārkaṇḍeya and Kapila.

What this boils down to is a distinction between *layayoga*-practising *siddhas* such as Gorakṣa and *hathayoga*-practising *munis* such as Kapila or Dattātreya, which manifests among today's ascetics as a distinction between the Śākta Nāths and the relatively more orthodox Daśanāmīs and Rāmānandīs. This distinction should not be applied too rigorously, however, because there are many anomalies, in particular lexical ones. Thus Kapila, though most commonly said to be a *muni*, is described as a *siddha* in texts

⁸²The *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā*'s verses on these *āsanas* are also found (sometimes with changes of metre) in earlier Pāñcarātrika texts, texts which are thus the first to teach non-seated *āsanas* as techniques of yoga. See for example those on *mayūrāsana* at *Vimānārcanakaḥ* 96, *Pādmasaṃhitā yogapāda* 1.21-22, *Ahīrbudhnyāsaṃhitā* 31.36-37, *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā yogakāṇḍa* 1.76-77, *Yogayājñavalkya* 3.15a-3.17b and *Hathapradīpikā* 1.30.

⁸³*Hathapradīpikā* 1.18. Elsewhere in the *Hathapradīpikā* we find more references to these two traditions: after the description of *bhadraśana*, which, like *mayūrāsana*, is taught in a variety of Pāñcarātrika works that predate the *Hathapradīpikā* (*Vimānārcanakaḥ* 96, *Pādmasaṃhitā yogapāda* 1.16c-1.17d, *Ahīrbudhnyāsaṃhitā* 31.41, *Vasiṣṭhasaṃhitā* 1.79, *Yogayājñavalkya* 3.12), it is said that *siddhayogins* call it *gorakṣāsana* (*Hathapradīpikā* 1.54).

⁸⁴As well as the examples given here, see also Vyāsa's *Bhāṣya* on *Yogasūtra* 3.51, *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 74 and *Jñāneśvarī* 6.154-156.

⁸⁵*Śārngadhara-paddhati* 4372.

⁸⁶*Śārngadhara-paddhati* 4364-4371.

⁸⁷*Varṇaratnākara* pp. 57-58.

as diverse as the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Dattātreyayogasāstra* itself.⁸⁸

The *Muni* tradition of *Hat̥hayoga*

Kapila's ambiguous status is important for our understanding of the *muni* tradition which developed the techniques of early *hat̥hayoga*. The first formulation of the practices distinguishing it from other methods of yoga is taught in the *Dattātreyayogasāstra* where it is said to be the doctrine of the school of Kapila and other *siddhas*; the practices are taught as an alternative to the way of the *kavi*, the eightfold yoga practised by Yājñavalkya.⁸⁹ BRONKHORST has shown how Kapila was associated with the practice of “non-Vedic” asceticism⁹⁰ and the *Dattātreyayogasāstra* appears to confirm this when it contrasts Kapila's yoga with that of the more orthodox Vedic *ṛṣi* Yājñavalkya.

The practices of ascetics beyond the Vedic pale are only mentioned in passing in early textual sources. In fact, very little of the actual practices of ascetics is taught in texts, Sanskrit or otherwise. This is not surprising: asceticism and scholarship are uncommon bedfellows.⁹¹ The only ascetic practice that is treated in any depth in Sanskrit texts is yoga, and this is because it is one of the few of their practices which is not restricted to ascetics alone. The *Śivasamhitā*, for example, is explicitly aimed at householders.⁹² The techniques of *hat̥hayoga* are not taught in Sanskrit texts until the 11th century or thereabouts. It is my contention that they did not appear *ex nihilo*, but that they developed from techniques practised by ascetics from at least the time of the Buddha. The Buddha himself is said to have tried both pressing his tongue to the back of his mouth, in a manner similar to that of the hat̥hayogic *khecarīmudrā*,⁹³ and *ukkuṭikappadhāna*, a squatting posture which may be related to hat̥hayogic techniques such as *mahāmudrā*,

⁸⁸ *Bhagavadgītā* 10.26, *Dattātreyayogasāstra* 131.

⁸⁹ *Dattātreyayogasāstra* 29, 130-131.

⁹⁰ BRONKHORST 2007:61-68. To the examples given by BRONKHORST may be added verse 20.153 of the *Bṛhatkathāslokaśaṃgraha* which suggests the antinomian nature of the soteriological practices of Kapila: of Caṇḍasiṃhā's city Budhasvāmin writes, “There the vices that usually terrify those who want to be liberated from the wheel of rebirth are prescribed by Kapila and others in treatises on liberation” (*yena doṣena saṃsānāt paritrasyanti mokṣavah | sa tasmin mokṣasāstreṣu śrūyate kapilādibhiḥ ||*).

⁹¹ Studying books is scorned by the Nāths (YOGĪ 1924:11) and this attitude is found among other traditional yoga-practising ascetics of today. At the 2010 Haridwar Kumbh Mela I was informed, over the din of competing loudspeaker systems blaring out *pravacans* from ascetic-scholars, that within living memory it was normal for any Rāmānandī ascetic who dared to expound the *śāstras* to the public to be thrown off his *āsan* and beaten up by his peers.

⁹² See ŚŚ 5.258-260, the final verses of the text.

⁹³ See MALLINSON 2007:17-19.

mahābandha, *mahāvedha*, *mūlabandha*,⁹⁴ and *vajrāsana*⁹⁵ in which pressure is put on the perineum with the heel, in order to force upwards the breath or Kuṇḍalini.⁹⁶ Elsewhere in the Pali Canon these same practices are associated with *tāpasas* and Ājīvikas,⁹⁷ who, together with other austerities, are also said to practise the “bat-penance” (*vagguli-vata*), which is generally assumed to mean suspending oneself upside-down from a tree, thus inverting oneself in a fashion not dissimilar to the haṭhayogic *viparītakaraṇī mudrā*. In early Sanskrit sources too we find mentions of ascetics practising austerities suspended upside-down.⁹⁸ All these practices are undertaken by ascetics who are celibate and it seems likely that some of their austerities were linked with the preservation of semen in the manner of similar techniques taught in the texts of early *haṭhayoga* as methods of *bindudhāraṇa*, and that these ancient and previously obscure ascetic practices come to light as the *mudrās* of early *haṭhayoga*.

Within these older sources we find no mention of forerunners of *vajrolīmudrā*,⁹⁹ the quintessential and crudest method of *bindudhāraṇa*, in which semen is resorbed through the urethra. Not all ascetics, whether those of mythology or scriptural prescription, were celibate¹⁰⁰ and it may be that some of their historical counterparts used the technique of *vajrolīmudrā* in order to be able to have sex and preserve their *bindu*, to have their cake

⁹⁴See e.g. *Dattātreya-yogāsāstra* 132-136, 143-145.

⁹⁵See e.g. *Gorakṣasārika* 15. This variety of *vajrāsana* is variously known as *svastikāsana*, *siddhāsana* and *mūlabandhāsana* (see GOODALL 2004: 349-350 n.730).

⁹⁶The Buddha is said to try this and a variety of other ascetic techniques in the *Mahāsīhanādasutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 1:78).

⁹⁷Ājīvikas are said to practise *ukkuṭīkappadhāna* in the *Naigūṭṭhajātaka* (*Jātaka* 1:493) and the *Kassapasīhanādasutta* (*Dīghanikāya* 1:166), *tāpasas* in the *Setaketu* and *Uddālaka Jātakas* (*Jātaka* 3:235, 4.299). *Ukkuṭīkappadhāna* is also mentioned in *Dhammapada* 141 and *Anguttara Nikāya* 1.296 and 2.206.

⁹⁸See e.g. *Vaiḥānasasmārtasūtra* 8.8 (CALAND 1929:191), which mentions those “who hang with their head downwards” in a list of celibate hermits who practise a variety of austerities, and the following references in the *Mahābhārata*: 1.13.10-13 and 1.41.1-3, in which the *ūrdhvaretas muni* Jaratkāru finds his ancestors performing penance by hanging over a big hole (cf. Agastya at 3.94.11-14, whose ancestors say they are performing the penance in order to get offspring); 1.26.2, in which Garuḍa sees some Vālahilyas hanging upside-down; 3.185.4-5, in which Manu practises extreme *tapas* (as well as hanging upside down, he is also said to stand on one leg and hold up his arms); 12.126.18, in which the *muni* Tanu meditates upside down; 13.7.8-13, in which Bhīṣma describes a variety of ascetic practices to Yudhiṣṭhira, amongst which is hanging upside down. The practice of hanging upside-down was relatively common until recently but appears from my ethnographic inquiries to have died out. See e.g. the c.1830 illustration of *tapkar āsan* from an illustrated manuscript of Jayatārāma’s *Jogpradīpakā* reproduced at BÜHNEMANN 2007:51, and the photograph of an “Urdhamukhi Sadhu” at OMAN 1903:46. Hanging upside down or performing a headstand has been a Sufi practice for at least a thousand years (SANAULLAH 2010:643).

⁹⁹McEVILLEY’S claim (1981:66) that *vajrolī* is referred to in the *Brhadāraṇyakoṇiṣad* is not borne out by the text.

¹⁰⁰Dattātreya himself is said in the 17th *adhyaīya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* to have indulged in wine, women and song in an unsuccessful attempt to dissuade some young sages from seeking his tutelage. The final verse of the same *adhyaīya* (17.25) says that he practises *tapas* and also that he is “a master of yoga meditated upon by *yogins* seeking liberation” (*yogīśvaraś cintyamāno yogibhir mukṭikāṅkṣibhiḥ*).

The *dharmasāstras* allow *vānaprasthas* to take wives with them to the forest but they are to remain chaste and undertake more extreme austerities than the solitary *saṃnyāsīs* (KANE 1974:928-9).

and eat it, as it were. It is this understanding of *vajroli* that has remained predominant in India, rather than the more infamous aim found in Śākta haṭhayogic texts such as the *Śivasambhitā*, that of absorbing the commingled sexual fluids of both the male and female partners.¹⁰¹ Although our earliest clear-cut reference to *vajroli* is in the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra*,¹⁰² a recent edition of a section of the *Brahmayāmala* which teaches the *asidhāravrata*, the “knife’s edge penance”,¹⁰³ suggests a milieu in which *vajroli* might have been used. As taught in the *Brahmayāmala*, the *asidhāravrata* was a form of *coitus reservatus* quite distinct from Śākta sexual practices which employed sexual fluids in ritual. Its emphasis on continence would have been nicely complemented by *vajrolimudrā*, which could have been employed should the ascetic have fallen off the knife-edge.

So far, among the sources cited as evidence for the ancient *muni* tradition of *bindu*-oriented *haṭhayoga*, other than the *Amṛtasiddhi* there are no Śaiva works. But the Śaiva associations of some of its practices are clear, even as taught in the Vaiṣṇava *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra*.¹⁰⁴ Most obviously, there are the names of *mudrās* such as *jālandharabandha*, *uddīyānabandha*, *mahāmudrā*, *mahāvedha*, *vajroli*, *sahajoli*, *amaroli* and *khecarīmudrā*, all of which are redolent of Śaivism. *Mahāmudrā* is said in the *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* to have been taught by Bhairava.¹⁰⁵ And in *vajrolimudrā* there is perhaps a link between *haṭhayoga* and the practices of the earliest Śaiva ascetics. The *asidhāravrata* mentioned above was probably practised by Pāśupatas and

¹⁰¹See e.g. *Saṅkaradigvijaya* 9.90, where Kṛṣṇa is said to use *vajroli* in order to be able to sport with the *gopīs* and *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* 3.14, where Śiva is said to use it while making love to Gaurī so that Kāma cannot reach him. Cf. *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* 2.13; see also footnote 114.

¹⁰²*Vajroli* may also be obliquely referred to at *Amṛtasiddhi* 7.8-13:

sa bindur dvididho jñeyaḥ pauraṣo vanitābhavaḥ |
 bījaṃ ca pauraṣaṃ proktaṃ rajaś ca strīsamudbhavaṃ ||7.8||
 anayoḥ bāhyayogena sṛṣṭisamhārau jāyate nṛṇāṃ |
 yadā tv abhyantare yogas tadā yogo hi bhanyate ||7.9||
 kāmarūpo vased binduḥ kūṭāgāraṅṅyaṅkoṭare |
 pūrṇagiri sadā sparsād vrajanti madhyamāpathe ||7.10||
 yonimadhye mahākṣetre javābindūrasannibhaṃ |
 rajo vasati jantūnāṃ devītatvasamāvṛtaḥ ||7.11||
 binduś candramayo jñeyo rajaḥ sūryamayas tathā |
 anayoḥ saṃgaṃ sādhyāḥ kūṭāgāre ’tidurghaṭe ||7.12||
 eṣa tattva paro dharma eṣa yogaḥ paro mataḥ |
 eṣa muktīprado mārگاḥ eṣa guhyatamaḥ paraḥ ||7.13||

J = Maharaja Mansingh Pustak Prakash, Jodhpur, Acc. No. 1242.

8a dvididho] *em.*; vividho J 9b sṛṣṭisamhārau] *em.*; sṛṣṭisamhāra J 10b kūṭāgāra°] *em.*; kūṭādhāra J 10d vrajanti] *em.*; *vā* jānti J 13b yogaḥ] *em.*; yoga J 13d paraḥ] *em.*; paraṃ J

¹⁰³HATLEY 2011

¹⁰⁴The *Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* names Śaiva ascetics among the possible practitioners of its yoga teachings when it mentions “he who says *namaḥ śivāya*” (*namaḥśivāyavāci*) at verse 44.

¹⁰⁵*Dattātreyaयोगśāstra* 132.

Atimārga ascetics, who were separate from the Mantramārga traditions in which Śāktism developed.¹⁰⁶

Strengthening the link between the practices of *haṭhayoga* and those of earlier ascetics is the fact that the ascetic traditions whom our textual sources show to have been most closely associated with the practice of *haṭhayoga* since its first textual codification, traditions which are today best represented by the Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsīs and the Rāmānandīs, are also the ascetic orders most closely associated with the practice of *tapas*: their ascetic practices include many of the austerities mentioned together with the forerunners of haṭhayogic techniques in our earliest sources, and some of the *āsanas* taught in later manuals of *haṭhayoga* correspond exactly to ancient austerities such as standing on one leg or holding one or both arms in the air for long periods.¹⁰⁷ The origins of many of the physical practices of *haṭhayoga* are thus to be found in *tapas*, in particular the bodily austerities undertaken by the ascetics most often associated with the practice of yoga in early sources, rather than in the more rarefied formulations of mental yoga taught in, say, the *Yogasūtra* and its commentaries or Buddhist works.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, all formulations of yoga as *yoga* prior to the appearance of the haṭhayogic corpus show it to be a mental, meditative practice, its physicality limited to sitting in a suitable position and regulating the breath.

It was onto the *bindudhārāṇa*-oriented *haṭhayoga* of this ascetic tradition that the Kuṇḍalinī-oriented *layayoga* of the *siddha* tradition was grafted. The name *haṭha* suggests the difficult asceticism with which its early techniques had been associated, but this did not sit well with all of the practitioners of the newly Śākta *haṭhayoga*, either *laya*-practising *siddhas* or householders unsuited to practising *tapas*.¹⁰⁹ In the *Yogabīja* we see an attempt to obfuscate the primary meaning of *haṭha* by resorting to an esoteric *nirukti* which is often repeated in later works and secondary literature: *ha* means “sun”,

¹⁰⁶HATLEY 2011:??

¹⁰⁷These austerities include going naked, sitting in the summer sun surrounded by fire, remaining immersed in cold water at night in winter, and spending long periods standing up (sometimes on just one leg) or holding up one or both arms. For examples see the references in notes 97 and 98, as well as the following: *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa* 31.24, *Kathāsaritsāgara* 6.4.11, *Kūrmapurāṇa* 2.27.29-30, *Matysapurāṇa* 35.17, 171.1 etc; *Vāyupurāṇa* (*Revākaṇḍa*) 54.50, *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 7.3.2 and *Liṅgapurāṇa* 1.69.76.

¹⁰⁸*Tapas* is one of the five *niyamas*, “observances”, prescribed at *Yogasūtra* 2.32. In his *Bhāṣya* thereon, Vyāsa defines *tapas* as the endurance of opposites (*dvandvasahanam*); “opposites” include hunger and thirst, heat and cold, and *sthānāsana*, “standing up and sitting down”, which may refer to the physical postures maintained for long periods by ascetics. Other parts of *haṭha* practice also correspond to the *tapas* of old. *Prāṇāyāma*, in concert with its expiatory and purificatory capabilities (on which see VASUDEVA 388-389), is said in dharmasāstric literature to be the highest form of *tapas* (*Manu* 2.83, 6.70; *Viṣṇu* 55.17, *Vasiṣṭha* 25.5). *Matsyendrasambhitā* 4.2 says that *prāṇāyāma* is both yoga and *tapas*; *Amanaska* 2.42 says that the various techniques of *prāṇāyāma* are unpleasant and difficult (*dubhātmacakair durjayaiḥ*).

¹⁰⁹In some modern manifestations of yoga the physical practices of *haṭhayoga* are identified with *tapas*. See SMITH 2009:174-175.

tha means “moon” and their *yoga* or union is *haṭhayoga*.¹¹⁰ The rehabilitation of the word *haṭha* in the face of yoga’s universalisation was ultimately unsuccessful, however, and the use of the word in the context of yoga fell out of favour in all but scholastic typologies of the subject and, in recent years, in secondary and popular literature on yoga. In vernacular literature *haṭh* continued to refer to extreme ascetic practices.¹¹¹

Conclusion

I shall conclude with some speculative remarks on the broader context of the Śākta co-option of *haṭhayoga*.

Firstly, my findings raise the question of why these physical yoga techniques started to be codified approximately one thousand years ago, particularly if, as I contend, they were already ancient. This seems to me to be connected with the severing of yoga from its sectarian moorings mentioned earlier, which served to make yoga available to all. Much of the practice of *haṭhayoga* as taught in its texts appears to be for ascetics. Several of its techniques are distasteful or difficult and take a lot of time and effort to master: the yogin is often instructed to carry out his practice in an isolated hut. But at the same time most of the texts of *haṭhayoga* are explicitly anti-sectarian

¹¹⁰ *Yogabija* 148c-149b, which is cited at *Haṭhatattvakaumudī* 55.29; cf. *Haṭharatnāvalī* 1.22. Of the various possible referents of sun and moon, the most commonly given in this context are the *piṅgalā* and *iḍā nāḍīs* (i.e. the channels carrying *prāṇa* which run from the base of the central column to the right and left nostrils respectively); see e.g. *Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 32. Other possibilities include the *prāṇa* and *apāna* breaths (*Amṛtasiddhi* 6.11-13), Śakti and Śiva, as menstrual fluid and semen (*Vivekamārtaṇḍa* 74-76), or the tip of the tongue and the forehead (*Khecarividyā* 2.72-74).

¹¹¹ The Yoga Upaniṣads largely consist of verses from *haṭhayogic* works (BOUY 1994) yet only the *Yogatattvopaniṣad* mentions *haṭha* (in verses taken from the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra*: *Yogatattvopaniṣad* 19, 24 = *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* 9c-10b, 26). The one Sanskrit text produced in a Nāth milieu after the formation of the Nāth *saṃpradāya*, namely the circa 1700 *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, makes no mention of “*haṭha*” yoga. In Hindi works, what might be understood as *haṭhayoga* is referred to simply as *yog/jog*. Other than in the doxographies of Sundarāsa, the word *haṭh* (the Hindi form of *haṭha*) is used only once in the context of yoga in the corpus of medieval Hindi literature, in the *Prāṇ Saṃkalī* of Caurāṅgināth (v. 256), in which *haṭh jog* is said to be the union of the sun and moon. Elsewhere in the medieval Hindi corpus, *haṭh* in the context of religious practice refers to extreme austerities and is usually scorned (see e.g. *Gorakhbhāṇī sākhī* 31, *Guru Granth Sāhib* 905.4 and 1305.6 (in the latter *haṭh* is associated with hanging upside down), and the verses attributed to Carpaṭnāth found in a manuscript dated 1711 CE and translated in SINGH 1937:68-71). Jayatarāma’s 1737 CE Braj Bhasha reworking of the long recension of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* is called *Jogpradīpakā* and, despite the many references to *haṭha* in its source text, does not use the word *haṭhalhaṭh* in its 964 verses, except when listing the *Haṭhapradīpikā* among its sources (v. 956). Hindi-speaking yogis in India today do occasionally use the compound *haṭh-yog*, perhaps influenced by Sanskrit texts. In their understanding *haṭhayoga* encompasses difficult and uncomfortable practices, including non-physical ones such as *mauma*, a vow of silence. I have heard such ascetics translate *haṭhayoga* into English as the conveniently homophonic “hard yoga”.

and universalist,¹¹² and state or imply that anyone can practice yoga.¹¹³ *Vajrolimudrā* in particular - if only as an ideal¹¹⁴ - would have assisted in opening up the yoga practice of ascetics to all. The *Śivasamhitā* says that through its practice even householders can attain liberation, without observing the restrictions taught in the texts of yoga.¹¹⁵

Written in simple Sanskrit and free from the abstruse metaphysics of the *Yogasūtra* and its exegesis, or the esoterica of Śaiva yoga manuals, the texts of *haṭhayoga* are the first works on yoga that are accessible to all. This made its aims, liberation and *siddhis*, also accessible to all, without the need for priestly intermediaries, ritual paraphernalia or sectarian initiations. We see a similar democratisation of religion in the *bhakti* cults that started to develop during the same period and this may have been a corollary of the demise of Śaivism, at least as a grand, state religion.

The democratisation of yoga was responsible for the production of its texts. Ascetics had learnt *haṭhayoga* through oral teachings for centuries, but once its teachings had opened up to householders, texts were produced, perhaps as the result of patronage by these new practitioners, who would have enlisted pandits to codify the teachings of ascetic gurus. At first these yoga manuals were written in Sanskrit, which would have limited their audience, but vernacular texts containing teachings on yoga soon appeared. Jñānudev's late thirteenth-century *Bhāvārthadīpikā* commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, popularly known as the *Jñāneśvarī*, contains exquisite teachings in Marathi on the ascent of Kuṇḍalinī, and the Tamil *Tirumantiram*, which probably dates to a similar period,¹¹⁶ has extensive teachings on haṭhayogic tech-

¹¹²E.g. *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* 41a-42b:

brāhmaṇaḥ śramaṇo vāpi bauddho vāpy ārhato 'thava|
kāpāliko vā cārvākaḥ śraddhayā sahitaḥ sudhiḥ||
yogābhyāsarato nityaṃ sarvasiddhim avāpnuyāt|

¹¹³Women are said to practise *vajroli* at *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* 155 and *Haṭhapradīpikā* 3.84, 3.95-98. Cf. *Haṭhatratnāvalī* 2.80-117. *Amṛtasiddhi* 19.6 says that both the *avadhūta* and *grhastha* can practise yoga. The *Śivasamhitā* is aimed squarely at householders (but it is less open to women: unlike in the *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* and *Haṭhapradīpikā* women are not mentioned as practitioners in its description of *vajroli*).

¹¹⁴Householder wrestlers in Kota, Rajasthan, for whom the refinement and preservation of *bindu* is an important part of their practice, speak highly of *vajroli* but do not practise it (personal communication from Norbert PEABODY June 11th 2010).

¹¹⁵*Śivasamhitā* 4.79:

svecchayā vartamāno 'pi yogoktaniyamair vinā|
mukto bhaved grhastho 'pi vajrolyabhyāsayogataḥ||

Cf. *Dattātreya-yogaśāstra* 152:

svecchayā vartamāno 'pi yogoktaniyamair vinā|
vajroliṃ yo vijānāti sa yogi siddhibhājanah||152||

¹¹⁶See GOODALL 1998:xxxvii n.85 and 2004:xxix.

niques. Vernacular yoga manuals do not appear in the north until the seventeenth-century *Jñānasamudra* and *Sarvāṅgayogapradīpikā* of the Dādūpanthī scholar, Sundaradāsa, and the eighteenth-century *Jogpradīpakā* of the Rāmānandī Jayatarāma.¹¹⁷

The universalism and antisectarianism taught in the texts of *haṭhayoga*, which facilitated the coming together of the Śākta and ascetic yogas, was mirrored by the ascetic milieu of the time, which saw a common ascetic identity develop, drawing on a wide range of sources, from Śākta to Sufi, with the result that, to this day, the *yogins* of the various North Indian ascetic orders are very similar in appearance and lifestyle. However, by the seventeenth century, out of this relatively homogeneous ascetic soup, various ascetic sects did solidify. The co-option of *haṭhayoga* by the fledgling Nāths may have been part of this process of sect-formation, symbolising their abandonment of more licentious Kaula practices in favour of a celibate ascetic lifestyle. Thus the final verse of the *Gorakṣasataka* is the following declaration:¹¹⁸

We drink the dripping liquid called *bindu*, “the drop”, not wine;
we eat the rejection of the objects of the five senses, not meat;
we do not embrace a sweetheart [but] the Suṣumnā *nāḍī*, her
body curved like *kuśa* grass; if we have intercourse †... † it
takes place in a mind dissolved in the void, not in a vagina.

The “Śāktisation” of *haṭhayoga* - and yoga more broadly conceived - was entirely successful, to the extent that even the celibate *bindu*-yoga traditions were made more Śākta through incorporating Kuṇḍalinī into their practice.¹¹⁹ She features widely in the so-called “Yoga Upaniṣads” which were

¹¹⁷I do not include here the *Gorakbbāṇī*, the esoteric *paḍas* and *sakhīs* ascribed to Gorakṣa but probably written in the sixteenth century, whose obscurantist esotericism disqualifies their use as manuals by aspiring yogins.

¹¹⁸*Gorakṣasataka* 101 (cf. *Haṭhapradīpikā* 3.46-48.):

yā bindvākhyeti dhārā vīgalitamanasā tām pibāmo na madyaṃ
pañcānām indriyāṇām viṣayanirasaṇaṃ carvayāmo na māṃsam |
āliṅgāmo na kāntām kuśakuṣīlataṇuṃ nāḍikām tām suṣumnām
śūnye citte pralīne †pravilaya vivaśan† maithunaṃ cen na yonau ||101||

¹¹⁹The Śāktisation of *haṭhayoga* obscured the origins of its practices. In secondary literature it is widely assumed that the *mudrās* of *haṭhayoga* arose in Śākta milieux. As I have shown, it is likely that they in fact developed amongst non-Vedic ascetic traditions. To add to the textual evidence I have cited, I would like to mention two pieces of external, negative evidence that suggest that the *haṭhayogic mudrās* were not part of Śākta practice. The *bindudhāraṇa* techniques unique to early *haṭhayoga*, such as *kbecarimudrā*, *vajrolimudrā* and *vīparītakaraṇī*, are not found in Tibetan sources, implying that they were not part of the tantric traditions, in particular that of the *siddhas*, including “Nāths” such as Matsyendra and Gorakṣa, which travelled to Tibet during the centuries prior to the establishment of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. Secondly, I have long been puzzled about how, if *kbecarimudrā* developed in Śākta milieux, there are no comparisons of it with sexual intercourse in our textual sources, when there are such obvious parallels between the tongue entering the void above the palate and the penis entering a

compiled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; several of the *mudrās* taught in the *Jogpradīpakā* are said to raise Kuṇḍalinī; and a Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsī that I met at Gangotri in 2006 told me that his mastery of *vajrolimudrā* enabled him to resorb his semen should Kuṇḍalinī make him involuntarily ejaculate as she passed through his *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra*. Persian works on yoga composed from perhaps the fourteenth century onwards in order to satisfy Islamic interest in the subject are full of descriptions of Śākta practices.¹²⁰

In fact, so successful was this Śāktisation of yoga and its appropriation by the Nāths, that yoga and yogis of all stripes came to be associated by some with the more malevolent practices of Śāktism,¹²¹ an association that persists to this day despite the oldest and most persistent *haṭhayoga* tradition being that of the generally benevolent *munis*, represented today by the Daśanāmī Saṃnyāsīs and Rāmānandīs. It is the *muni* tradition that has been responsible for all the new texts and exegesis of *haṭhayoga* since the time of the *Haṭhpradīpikā*. Meanwhile the Śākta and, in some cases, sinister, Nāths have produced no further manuals of *haṭhayoga* and have ceased to practise it,¹²² preferring to remain true to their roots and practise Śākta tantric ritual.

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vagina; I can only surmise that *khecarīmudrā* developed outside of a milieu in which sexual rituals were practised, such as the ancient non-Vedic ascetic tradition.

¹²⁰ERNST 2009.

¹²¹See MALLINSON 2012.

¹²²I know of two exceptions to prove this rule. Firstly, BOUILLIER (2008:128) reports the failed attempts of Svāmī Śiv Nāth Jī, the *mahant* of an *āśram* in Orissa, to interest any of the Nāths' main *jamāt* (itinerant monastery) in learning *haṭhayoga*. Secondly, on the 11th November 2011 "Yogī Bābā" Anūp Nāth Jī demonstrated a sequence of complex gymnastic *āsanas* to me at the Nāth monastery at Jwalamukhi. When I asked him where he had learnt it from, he said that it had come to him automatically when he was a boy.

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¹²³This work is reproduced at CALLEWAERT & DE BEECK 1991:489-510. I have used the verse numbering of the latter.

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