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Hatha yoga pradipika

The HYP is a medieval yoga text, dating from about the 15th or 16th century, and is as much about Tantra as about yoga. It was compiled by Swātmarama. Its name means "special (pral) light (dipika) on forceful (hatha) yoga". It is much later in date than the Yoga Sūtras, and provides details of Hatha Yoga techniques which the Yoga Sūtras don't touch on. But there are also occasional sutras which touch on familiar concerns (for example, compare HYP 4.23 with YS 1.2). It is just about yoga practice, as contrasted with the Bhagavad Gītā, which is about how to live in the everyday world. The word "hatha" requires a little comment. The concept is that we live in an energy field; energy is behind all action. The energy field that we live in normally extends 4 fingers-breadth (angula) beyond the body, and it is possible also in a healthy person to achieve a situation in which the energy is concentrated inside the body. In an unhealthy person the energy dissipates further. There are blockages in an unhealthy person that makes it impossible to concentrate one's energy properly, and techniques such as nadi sōdhana are used to open the channels and improve the flow of energy. There is in fact a whole complex of energy channels or nādi within the body, of which there are 11 primary nadi, coming from a central hub (kanda) located in the lower abdomen, and branching out into many others (traditionally, 72,000). There are 10 nadi associated with perception and action: perception action link to eyes (sight) link to tongue (speech) ears (hearing) fingers & thumbs (grasping) tongue (taste) big toes (locomotion) skin (feeling) bladder & anus (excretion) nostrils (smell) sex organs (generation) If the quality of the nadi is poor, the quality of perception and action is poor. There is one more nadi, the sūsumna, which instead of flowing out, flows in, linking us to the inner world. It runs from the kanda to the base of the spine down to the top of the head. There are two pressures of energy, ha and tha, and tha, which flows through the pingala and ida channels (or nadi) respectively, and then unite to flow into sūsumna. Usually, it is not possible for one to flow into sūsumna because of a blockage at the base of the spine. The practice of Hatha Yoga tries to create a state of breakthrough allowing energy to flow into sūsumna, bringing it with it a stable state of mind. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika teaches techniques that allow this state to be achieved. The difference between the Hatha Yoga of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika and the Raja Yoga of the Yoga Sūtras is that Hatha Yoga uses prana as a primary working tool, whereas Raja Yoga uses the mind as its primary working tool. These days very few people are able to practice Hatha Yoga sufficiently strongly for it to work properly. Key Ideas The key ideas in the text are: Chapter 1 – āsana: used to stimulate energy (prana); Chapter 2 – prāṇāyāma: used to contain/condense energy; Chapter 3 – mudrā – used to direct energy; Chapter 4 – dhyaṇa: used to integrate and merge energy, Chapter Summaries Chapter 1 1-11 Introduction Hatha yoga "shines forth as a stairway to raja yoga" (1); is "the greatest secret of the yogis who wish to attain perfection". 12-16 Conditions for practice The "hermitage" described (12-14); obstacles and supports (15-16). The ten yama and ten niyama in sutras 1601 and 1601i are apparently later additions to the text; hatha yoga does not in fact place much emphasis on them. 17-56 Āsana The role of āsana is to "develop steadiness of body and mind, flexibility of the limbs; sequence for practice is āsana – prāṇāyāma – mudrā – meditation (56). 57-63 Diet and Restrictions Mitāhāra – appropriate food (57, 62-63); avoid to avoid (58-59); other things to avoid (60-61). 64-67 Conclusion Importance of practical application emphasised (64-66); hatha yoga leads to Raja Yoga (67) Chapter 2: Prāṇāyāma 1-3 Breath and mind First make the body steady, then bring steadiness to prāṇa (1), when prāṇa moves, citta moves (2) 4-5 Nādi and mala Nādis must be purified so that prāṇa can flow. 6-20 Practice guidelines Practice daily (6); nadi sōdhana (7-12); milk and ghee important foods (14); negative effects of inappropriate diet (15-16); indicators of purification (18-20) 21-36 The Śaṅkha (cleansing techniques) These should be practised by persons with imbalanced (21). 37-74 Prāṇāyāma Sūtra The teacher says prāṇāyāma is a means to cleanse the system (37); prāṇāyāma purifies the ādās and ākās, and opens the door to sūsumna (41); manomani – mind devoid of thought (42); eight types of kumbhaka (43-70); three processes of prāṇāyāma (71-74); two processes of kumbhaka (72-74) 75-77 Kundalini and Raja Yoga By practising kumbhaka, kundalini and aroused and sūsumna is freed of obstacles (76) 78-83 Prāṇa and sūsumna are essential for perfection (samādhi) (76). 78 Eight signs of perfection lean body, bright face, strong voice, clear eyes, no disease, control of semen, active digestive fire, purification of nādis. 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increase this daily. 81. After six months, the wrinkles and grey hair are not seen. They who practices it daily, even for two hours, conquers death. VAJROLI 82. Even if one who lives a wayward life, without observing any rules of Yoga, but performs Vajroli, deserves success. It is a Yogi. 83. Two things are necessary for this, and these are difficult to get for the ordinary people -- (1) milk and (2) a woman behaving, as desired. 84. By practicing to draw in the bindu, discharged during cohabitation, whether one be a man or a woman, one obtains success in the practice of Vajroli. 85. By means of a pipe, one should blow air slowly into the passage in the practice organ. (Urethra) 86. By practice, the discharged bindu is drawn out. One can draw back and preserve one's own discharged bindu. 87. The Yogi who can protect his bindu thus, overcomes death; because death comes by discharging bindu, and life is prolonged by its preservation. 88. By preserving bindu, the body of the Yogi emits a pleasing smell. There is no fear of death, so long as the bindu is well-established in the body. 89. The bindu of men is under control of the mind, and life is dependant on the bindu. Hence, mind and bindu should be protected by all means. SAHAJOLI 90. Sahajoli and Amaroli are only the different kinds of Vajroli. Ashes from burnt up cow dung should be mixed with water. 91. Being free from the exercise of Vajroli, man and woman should both rub it on their bodies. 92. This is called Sahajoli, and should be relied on by Yogis. It does good and gives moksa. 93. This Yoga is achieved by courageous wise men, who are free from sloth, and cannot be accomplished by the slothful. AMAROLI 94. In the doctrine of the sect of the Kapalikas, the Amaroli is the drinking of the mid stream; leaving the 1st, as it is a mixture of too much bile and the last, which is useless. 95. He who drinks Amari, snuff it daily, and practices Vajroli, is called practicing Amaroli. 96. The bindu discharged in the practice of Vajroli should be mixed with ashes, and the rubbing it on the best parts of the body gives divine sight. SAKTI CHALANA 97. Kutlanga (crooked-bodied), Kundalini, Bhujangi (a she-serpent) Sakti, Ishwari, Kuundali, Arundhati, -- all these words are synonymous. 98. As a door is opened with a key, so the Yogi opens the door of mukti by opening Kundalini by means of Hatha Yoga. 99. The Parameswari (Kundalini) sleeps, covering the hole of the passage by which one can go to the seat of Brahma which is free from pains. 100. Kundali Sakti sleeps on the bulb, for the purpose of giving moksa to Yogis and bondage to the ignorant. He who knows it, knows Yoga. 101. Kundali is of a bent shape, and has been described to be like a serpent. He who has moved that Sakti is no doubt Mukta (released from bondage). 102. Youngster Tapaswini (a she-ascetic), laying between the Ganges and the Yamuni, (Ida and Pingala) should be caught hold of by force, to get the highest position. 103. Ida is called the goddess Ganges, Pingala goddess Yamuna. In the middle of the Ida and the Pingala is the infant widow, Kundali. 104. This sleeping she-serpent should be awakened by catching hold of her tail. By the force of Hatha, the Sakti leaves her sleep, and starts upwards. 105. This she-serpent is situated in Muladhara. She should be caught and moved daily, morning and evening, for 1/2 a prahar (1 1/2 hours), by filling with air through Pingala by the Paridhana method. 106. The bulb is above the anus, a vitasti (12 angulas) long, and measures 4 angulas (3 inches) in extent and is soft and white, and appears as if a folded cloth. 107. Keeping the feet in Vajra-asana (Padma-asana), hold them firmly with the hands. The position of the bulb then will be near the ankle joint, where it should be pressed. 108. The Yogi, sitting with Vajra-asana and having moved Kundali, should perform Bhastrika to awaken the Kundali soon. 109. Bhanu (Surya, near the navel) should be contracted (by contracting the navel) which will move the Kundali. There is no fear for him who does so, even if he has entered the mouth of death. 110. By moving this, for two muhurtas, it is drawn up a little by entering the Susumna (spinal column). 111. By this Kundalini leaves the entrance of the Susumna at once, and the Prana enters it of itself. 112. Therefore, this comfortably sleeping Arundhati should always be moved; for by so doing the Yogi gets rid of diseases. 113. The Yogi, who has been able to move the Sakti deserves success. It is useless to say more, suffice it to say that he conquers death playfully. 114. The Yogi observing Brahmacharya (continence) and always eating sparingly, gets success within 40 days by practice with Kundali. 115. After moving the Kundali, plenty of Bhastra should be performed. By such practice, he has no fear from the god of death. 116. There is no other way, but the practice of the Kundali, for washing away the impurities of 72,000 Nadis. 117. This middle Nadi becomes straight by steady practice of postures; Pranayama and Mudras of Yogis. 118. Those whose sleep has decreased by practice and mind has become calm by samadhi, get beneficial accomplishments by Sambhavi and other Mudras. 119. Without Raja Yoga, this earth, the night, and the Mudras, be they howsoever wonderful, do not appear beautiful. (Note --Raja Yoga-asana. Earth--steadiness, calmness. Night--Kumbhaka, cessations of the activity of the Prana, just as King's officials cease moving at night. Hence night means absence of motion, i.e., Kumbhaka.) 120. All the practices relating to air should be performed with concentrated mind. A wise man should not allow his mind to wander away. 121. These are the Mudras, as explained by Adinatha (Siva). Every one of them is the giver of great accomplishments to the practiser. 122. He is really the guru and not to be considered as Isvara in human form who teaches the Mudras as handed down from guru to guru. 123. Engaging in practice, by putting faith in his words, one gets the Siddhis of Anima, etc., as also evades death. Chapter 4: Samadhi 1. Salutation to the Guru, the dispenser of happiness to all, appearing as Nada, Bindu and Kali. One who is devoted to him, obtains the highest bliss. 2. Now I will describe a regular method of attaining to Samadhi, which destroys death, is the means for obtaining happiness, and gives the Brahmananda. 3-4. Raja Yoga, Samadhi, Unmani, Manonmani, Amaratwa, Laya, Tatwa, Sunya, Asunya, Parama Pada, Amanasska, Adwaitama, Niralanba, Niranjana, Jiwana Mukti, Sahaja, Turya, are all synonymous. 5. As salt being dissolved in water becomes one with it, so when Atma and mind become one, it is called Samadhi. 6. When the Prana becomes lean (vigourless) and the mind becomes absorbed, then their becoming equal is called Samadhi. 7. This equality and oneness of the self and the ultra self, when all Samkalpas cease to exist, is called Samadhi. 8. Or, who can know the true greatness of the Raja Yoga. Knowledge, mukti, condition, and Siddhis can be learnt by instructions from a guru alone. 9. Indifference to worldly enjoyments is very difficult to obtain, and equally difficult is the knowledge of the Realities to obtain. It is very difficult to get the condition of Samadhi, without the favor of a true guru. 10. By means of various postures and different Kumbhakas, when the great power (Kundali) awakens, then the Prana becomes absorbed in Sunya (Samadhi). 11. The Yogi whose sakti has awakened, and who has renounced all actions, attains to the condition of Samadhi, without any effort. 12. When the Prana flows in the Susumna, and the mind has entered sunya, then the Yogi is free from the effects of Karmas. 13. O immortal one (that is, the yogi who has attained to the condition of Samadhi), I salute thee! Even death itself, into whose mouth the whole of this moveable and immovable world has fallen, has been conquered by thee. 14. Amaroli, Vajroli and Saholi are accomplished when the mind becomes calm and Prana has entered the middle channel. 15. How can it be possible to get knowledge, so long as the Prana is living and the mind has not died? No one else can get moksa except one who can make one's Prana and mind latent. 16. Always living in a good locality and having known the secret of the Susumna, which has a middle course, and making the Vayu move in it, (the Yogi) should restrain the Vayu in the Brahma randhura. 17. Time, in the form of night and day, is made by the sun and the moon. That the Susumna devours this time (death) even, is a great secret. 18. In this body there are 72,000 openings of Nadis; of these, the Susumna, which has the Sambhavi Sakti in it, is the only important one, the rest are useless. 19. The Vayu should be made to enter the Susumna without restraint by him who has practices the control of breathing and has awakened the Kundali by the (gastric) fire. 20. The Prana, flowing through the Susumna, brings about the condition of manonmani; other practices are simply futile for the Yogi. 21. By whom the breathing has been controlled, by him the activities of the mind also have been controlled; and, conversely, by whom the activities of the mind have been controlled, by him the breathing also has been controlled. 22. There are two causes of the activities of the mind; (1) Vna (desires) and (2) the respiration (the Prana). Of these, the destruction of the one is the destruction of both. 23. Breathing is lessened when the mind becomes absorbed, and the mind becomes absorbed when the Prana is restrained. 24. Both the mind and the breath are united together, like milk and water; and both of them are equal in their activities. Mind begins its activities where there is the breath, and the Prana begins its activities where there is the mind. 25. By the suspension of the one, therefore, comes the suspension of the other, and by the operations of the one are brought about the operations of the other. When they are present, the Idriyas (the senses) remain engaged in their proper functions, and when they become latent then there is moksa. 26. By nature, Mercury and mind are unsteady; there is nothing in the world which cannot be accomplished when these are made steady. 27. O Parvati! Mercury and breathing, when made steady, destroy diseases and the dead himself comes to life (by their means). By their (proper) control, moving in the air is attained. 28. The breathing is calmed when the mind becomes steady and calm; and hence the preservation of bindu. The preservation of this latter makes the satva established in the body. 29. Mind is the master of the senses, and the breath is the master of the mind. The breath in its turn is subordinate to the laya (absorption), and that laya depends on the nada. 30. This very laya is what is called moksa, or, being a sectarian, you may not call it moksa; but when the mind becomes absorbed, a sort of ecstasy is experienced. 31. By the suspension of respiration and the annihilation of the enjoyments of the senses, when the mind becomes devoid of all the activities and remains changeless, then the Yogi attains to the Laya Stage. 32. When the thoughts and activities are destroyed, then the Laya Stage is produced, to describe which is beyond the power of speech, being known by self-experience alone. 33. They often speak of Laya; but what is meant by it? Laya is simply the forgetting of the objects of senses when the Vnas (desires) do not rise into existence again. SHAMBAVI MUDRA 34. The Vedas and the Sastras are like ordinary public women. Sambhavi Mudra is the one, which is secluded like a respectable lady. 35. Aiming at Brahman inwardly, while keeping the sight directed to the external objects, without blinking the eyes, is called Sambhavi Mudra, hidden in the Vedas and the Sastras. 36. When the Yogi remains inwardly attentive to the Brahman, keeping the mind and the Prana absorbed, and the sight steady, as if seeing everything while in reality seeing nothing outside, below, or above, verily then it is called the Sambhavi Mudra, which is learnt by the favor of a guru. Whatever, wonderful, Sunya or Asunya is perceived, is to be regarded as the manifestation of that great Sambhu (Siva). 37. The two states, the Sambhavi and the Khechari, are different because of their seats (being the heart and the space between the eyebrows respectively); but both cause happiness, for the mind becomes absorbed in the Chitta-sukha-Rupa-atmana which is void. UNMANI 38. Fix the gaze on the light (seen on the tip of the nose) and the mind becomes calm and Prana has entered the Linga (i.e., Atman) in the day (i.e., while Surya or Pingala is working) or at night (when Ida is working), but should always contemplate after restraining both. When the air has ceased to move in the right and the left nostrils, and has begun to flow in the middle path, then Khechari Mudra can be accomplished there. There is no doubt of this. 43. If the Prana can be drawn into the Sunya (Susumna), which is between the Ida and the Pingala, and made motionless there, then the Khechari Mudra can truly become steady there. 44. That Mudra is called Khechari which is performed in the supportless space between the Surya and the Chandra (the Ida and the Pingala) and called the Vyoma Chakra. 45. The Khechari which causes the stream to flow from the Chandra (Soma) is the beloved of Siva. The incomparable divine Susumna should be closed by the tongue drawn back. 46. It can be closed from the front also (by stopping the movements of the Prana), and then surely it becomes the Khechari. By practice, this Khechari leads to Unmani. 47. The seat of Siva is between the eyebrows, and the mind becomes absorbed there. This condition (in which the mind is thus absorbed) is known as Turya, and death has no access there. 48. The Khechari should be practiced till there is Yoga-nidra (Samadhi). One who has induced Yoga-nidra, cannot fall a victim to death. 49. Freeing the mind from all thoughts and thinking of nothing, one should sit firmly like a pot in the space (surrounded and filled with the ether). 50. As with air, in and out (i.e., in Brahma randhura). 51. By thus practicing, night and day, the breathing is brought under control, and, as the practice increases, the mind becomes calm and steady. 52. By rubbing the body over with Amrita (which is the nectar of immortality), I salute thee! Even death itself, into whose mouth the whole of this moveable and immovable world has fallen, has been conquered by thee. END OF KHECHARI 53. Placing the mind into the Kundalini, and getting the later into the mind, by looking upon the Buddhi (intellect) with mind (reflexively), the Param Pada (Brahma) should be obtained. 54. Keep the atma inside the Kha (Brahma) and place Brahma inside your atma. Having made everything pervaded with Kha (Brahma), think of nothing else. 55. One should become void in and void out, and void like a pot in the space. Full in and full outside, like a jar in the ocean. 56. He should be neither of his inside nor of his outside world; and, leaving all thoughts, he should think of nothing. 57. The whole of this world and all the schemes of the mind are but the creations of thought. Discarding these thoughts and taking leave of all conjectures, O Ramal! obtain peace. 58. As camphor disappears in fire, and rock salt in water, so the mind united with the atma loses its identity. 59. When the knowable, and the knowledge, are both destroyed equally, then there is no second way (i.e., Duality is destroyed). 60. All this movable and immovable world is mind. When the mind has attained to the unmani avastha, there is no dwaita (from the absence of the working of the mind). 61. Mind disappears by removing the knowable, and, on its disappearance, atma only remains behind. 62. The high-souled Acharyas (Teachers) of yore gained experience in the various methods of Samadhi themselves, and then they preached them to others. 63. Salutations to Thee, O Susumna, to Thee O Kundalini, to Thee O Sudha, born of Chandra, to Thee O Manonmani! to Thee O great power, energy and the intelligent spirit. 64. I will describe now the practice of anahata nada, as propounded by Goraksha Natha, for the benefit of those who are unable to understand the principles of knowledge -- a method, which is liked by the ignorant also. 65. Adinatha propounded 1 1/4 crore methods of trance, and they are all extant. Of these, the hearing of the anahata nada is the one, the chief, in my opinion. 66. Sitting with Mukta asana and with the Sambhavi Mudra, the Yogi should hear the sound inside his right ear, with closed eyes, nose, and the mouth should be closed and then the clear sound is heard in the eyebrows a little, with the mind contemplating as before (in the Sambhavi Mudras, that is, inwardly thinking of Brahma, but apparently looking outside). This will create the Unmani avastha at once. TARAKA 39. Some are devoted to the Vedas, some to Nigama, while others are enwrapt in Logic, but none knows the value of this mudra, which enables one to cross the ocean of existence. 40. 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As camphor disappears in fire, and rock salt in water, so the mind united with the atma loses its identity. 59. When the knowable, and the knowledge, are both destroyed equally, then there is no second way (i.e., Duality is destroyed). 60. All this movable and immovable world is mind. When the mind has attained to the unmani avastha, there is no dwaita (from the absence of the working of the mind). 61. Mind disappears by removing the knowable, and, on its disappearance, atma only remains behind. 62. The high-souled Acharyas (Teachers) of yore gained experience in the various methods of Samadhi themselves, and then they preached them to others. 63. Salutations to Thee, O Susumna, to Thee O Kundalini, to Thee O Sudha, born of Chandra, to Thee O Manonmani! to Thee O great power, energy and the intelligent spirit. 64. I will describe now the practice of anahata nada, as propounded by Goraksha Natha, for the benefit of those who are unable to understand the principles of knowledge -- a method, which is liked by the ignorant also. 65. Adinatha propounded 1 1/4 crore methods of trance, and they are all extant. Of these, the hearing of the anahata nada is the one, the chief, in my opinion. 66. Sitting with Mukta asana and with the Sambhavi Mudra, the Yogi should hear the sound inside his right ear, with closed eyes, nose, and the mouth should be closed and then the clear sound is heard in the eyebrows a little, with the mind contemplating as before (in the Sambhavi Mudras, that is, inwardly thinking of Brahma, but apparently looking outside). This will create the Unmani avastha at once. TARAKA 39. Some are devoted to the Vedas, some to Nigama, while others are enwrapt in Logic, but none knows the value of this mudra, which enables one to cross the ocean of existence. 40. With steady calm mind and half closed eyes, fixed on the tip of the nose, stopping the Ida and the Pingala without blinking, he who can see the light which is the all, the seed, the entire brilliant, great Tatva, approaches Him, who is the great object. What is the use of more talk? 41. One should not meditate on the Linga (i.e., Atman) in the day (i.e., while Surya or Pingala is working) or at night (when Ida is working), but should always contemplate after restraining both. When the air has ceased to move in the right and the left nostrils, and has begun to flow in the middle path, then Khechari Mudra can be accomplished there. There is no doubt of this. 43. If the Prana can be drawn into the Sunya (Susumna), which is between the Ida and the Pingala, and made motionless there, then the Khechari Mudra can truly become steady there. 44. That Mudra is called Khechari which is performed in the supportless space between the Surya and the Chandra (the Ida and the Pingala) and called the Vyoma Chakra. 45. The Khechari which causes the stream to flow from the Chandra (Soma) is the beloved of Siva. The incomparable divine Susumna should be closed by the tongue drawn