

A NOTE ON GORAKSANĀTHA AND HIS WORK YOGADIPIKĀ

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ABSTRACT

Nāthas are associated with Haṭhayoga, which was reduced into a magico-religious-spiritual cult, due to its synthesis with alchemy etc. The main aim was to achieve all-potent and all-resistant body and long life. Among nine nāthas Gorakṣa is the most celebrated and is regarded as the incarnation of Shiva. He was the disciple of Allamaprabhudeva who lived at śrīśaila in Andhra Pradesh and belonged to 12th century A. D. Yogadīpikā or Yogadīpikā is an unpublished work attributed to Gorakṣa. This small work, though full of incorrect readings is significant from historical and philosophical point of view. It defines Yoga and mentions four stages. It refers to 36 tattvas, the dissolution of which leads to salvation in the form of sat-chit-ananda.

Haṭhapradīpikā and Haṭharatnāvali give in the first chapters a list of 30 siddhas in haṭhayoga. Like siddhas, nāthas are also associated with haṭhayoga. The father of haṭhayoga is Ādinātha who revealed haṭhayoga. Whatever may be the aims and objects contemplated by Ādinātha, haṭhayoga evolved with time into a composite cult, perhaps, reducing itself into a magico-religious-spiritual cult. During the medieval period, there was an upsurge of such cults and there was a synthesis of haṭhayoga with related cults like alchemy, kāpālika, vajrayāna etc. This led to a line of siddhas or nāthas who propagated the synthesised cult. The main aim was to achieve an all-potent and all-resistant physical body i.e. vajradeha and endless prolongation of life and for this process they utilised herbs, metallic preparations etc. It is difficult to identify the names of siddhas and also nāthas convincingly. These traditional nāthas and siddhas appear to be quasi-historical. According to some, siddhas and nāthas are identical.

Among the famous navanāthas - nine nāthas - Matsyendranātha figures traditionally as the first human preceptor. But the most celebrated nātha is Gorakṣanātha. He is regarded as the very incarnation

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of Śiva, who is the divine source of yoga. Mystical explanation is also given in Gorakṣasiddhāntasaṅgraha to the name of Gorakṣa.

Gakāro guṇasaṃyukto rakāro rūpalakṣaṇaḥ

Kṣakāreṇākṣayam brahma śrīgorakṣa namostu te.

Letter 'ga' implies the qualified nature, 'ra' indicates the form and features and 'kṣa' the nature as imperishable brahman.

In Telugu literature also, Gorakṣa is praised as the greatest of yogins; however, Allamaṃprabhudeva is mentioned as his guru in some respect. Gorakṣa met Allama at Śrīgiri or Śrīśaila and had taken initiation from him. This is described in a Telugu work 'Prabhuliṅga-līla' in a popular verse, by Pidaparti Somanātha Kavi of 16th century A.D. Another work in Telugu entitled 'Navanāthacaritra' by Gaurana of 14th century A.D. also mentions that Gorakṣa attained yogānanda in a cave near Pātālaganṅa in Śrīśaila. Gorakṣa was very familiar with Śrīśaila. He attained, by his yogic process, highly miraculous powers; no stroke of any weapon could cause injury on him. This he demonstrated before his guru. Allama, then asked Gorakṣa to pass a sword through his body. To the utter surprise of Gorakṣa, the sword ran through the body of Allama as if it were passing through vacant space. At this Gorakṣa further implored to initiate him into such powers and Allama blessed him with.

Date of Gorakṣa :

The date of Gorakṣa is uncertain. Kalyani Mallik places Gorakṣa in the 11th century A.D, accepting that the time between a guru and his disciple is about 100 years, considering the longevity of the yogins. Gorakṣa's disciple was Gainīnātha and Nivṛttinātha who was the elder brother of Jñāneśvar, was the disciple of Gainīnātha. Nivṛttinātha was older than Jñāneśvar by two years only.

Date of Jñāneśvar	- 1275
Date of birth of Nivṛttinātha	- 1273
Date of Gainīnātha	- 1175
Date of Gorakṣanāth (Gorakṣa)	- 1075

Thus she places Gorakṣa in 11th century A.D.

Briggs places Gorakhnāth (or Gorakṣa) prior to 12th century A.D, until new material is available. According to Nāgendranāth Upādhyaya, Gorakṣa belonged to the middle of 9th century A.D.

YOGADIPIKA

A manuscript of Yogadīpikā attributed to Gorakṣa is available in Oriental Research Institute, Mysore. It is in Kannada script and is complete in 51 granthas. Catalogus Catalogorum mentions one copy of Yogadīpa in Trivandrum also.

The work starts with obeisance to Śaṅkara, Ādinātha in two verses. Then are mentioned Matsyendranātha or Mīnanātha and Gorakṣa, the praiseworthy disciple of Matsyendranātha. The colophon mentions the name of the work as Yogadīpa written by Gorakṣanātha. The next and the last sentence at the end mentions 'Thus ends Yogadīpikā.' Hence the name may be Yogadīpa or Yogadīpikā. In verse 13 the title is mentioned as Yogapradīpa. The Trivandrum copy is also listed as Yogadīpa. Though there is no difference in the meaning of these titles, Yogadīpa might be the name given by its author and it is possible that later it came to be known popularly as Yogadīpikā. Hall also mentions in his Index to the bibliography of the Indian Philosophical systems that Sunderadeva quotes Yogadīpikā.

With regard to the language of the nātha works Mahāmahopādhyaya Gopināth Kaviraj observes—"The greatest defect in the Sanskrit writings of the sect is the frequent violation of the rules of grammar, metrics etc. Unnecessary repetition, ambiguity of expression and incoherent presentation are also to be noticed. But all these defects are insignificant in comparison with the high importance of the works from the historical as well as religious and philosophical points in view". Kalyani Mallik in her Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati also comments in the same way—"these texts are full of incorrect readings, yet they are being published. The language is not strictly grammatical". The present Yogadīpikā is no exception.

THE TEXT

This is a Manuscript of a work by Gorkhnāth-Gorakṣa as gathered

from its colophon and it begins with salutation to his Ādiguru, Śaṅkara or Pārvatīpati. This is the usual practice in all nātha works. Haṭhayoga is said to have been revealed by Lord Śiva to Pārvati and several works on Haṭhayoga and tantra are in the form of dialogue between Śiva and Pārvati. In the opening verses of Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati also Gorakṣanātha says: "Ādinātham namaskṛtya Śaktiyuktam Jagadgurum". Yogadīpikā mentions the names of Ādinātha, Matsyendranātha or Mīnanātha as siddhas. Gorakṣanātha styles himself as "śiṣya śekhara" - foremost disciple of Matsyendranātha. Here he defines the significance of the word Gorakṣnāth. Then he goes on to define the yoga as: Bahirmukhyā-ścittavṛtter nirodho yoga ucyate".

Further he defines four stages of yoga-sahaja, saṁyama, sopāya and advaita. These stages are again defined separately. One should practise the four avasthas and find out the results for himself. The avasthas are ārambhāvastha, ghaṭāvastha pracayāvastha and niṣpatti-avastha.

Another name of Kūṇḍalinī is mentioned as Bhujaṅgī. By ṣatcakracchedana (opening the six cakras) suṣumnā should be awakened. The khecarī mudrā is described as an important one and one who succeeds in Khecarī siddhi needs less sleep and food. Power of changing lower metal into gold is also attributed.

Thirty six tattvas (elements) are referred to here whereas the Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati refers to twentyfive tattvas. The salvation appears when five senses and the 36 tattvas are dissolved alongwith the manas (mind) leading to the realisation of brahmatattva in the form of sat - cit - ānanda (existence, awareness and bliss). Eighteen doṣas and other sensual attributes are also to be abandoned.

Yogadīpikā is composed by Gorakṣanātha to bless his followers. It is to remove avidyā and give light to sādhakas. Here the title also justifies the aim of Yogadīpikā to give light to all.

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सारांश

गोरखनाथ और उनकी योगदीपिका पर एक टिप्पणी

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नाथसम्प्रदाय हठयोग से जुड़ा रहा जो कि कीमिया (अलकेमी) आदि के साथ संयोजन से परिणत हो गया। इसका मुख्य उद्देश सब प्रकार से शक्तिशाली और प्रतिरोधी शरीर तथा दीर्घायु को प्राप्त करना था। नौ नाथों में गोरखनाथ सब से यशस्वी है और उन्हें शिव का अवतार माना जाता है। आन्ध्र प्रदेश के श्रीशैल में रहने वाले अल्लमप्रभु के वे शिष्य थे और उनका सम्बन्ध ईसा की बारहवीं शताब्दी से था। योगदीप या योगदीपिका एक अप्रकाशित ग्रंथ है जिसका कर्तृत्व गोरखनाथ को दिया जाता है। यह छोटा ग्रंथ यद्यपि त्रुटिपूर्ण पाठों से युक्त है तथापि ऐतिहासिक तथा दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से महत्त्वपूर्ण है। यह योग की परिभाषा करता है और चार दशाओं का उल्लेख करता है। यह ३६ तत्त्वों का उल्लेख करता है जिनका विलयन मुक्ति की ओर सत्-चित्-आनन्द के रूप में ले जाता है।