THE YOGA OF THE HAṬHĀBHĪYAŚAPADDHATI:
HAṬHAYOGA ON THE CUSP OF MODERNITY

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Abstract

The Haṭhābhīyaśapaddhati is a Sanskrit text on the practice of Haṭhayoga, probably composed in the eighteenth century in Maharashtra. This article discusses, among other things, the dating, authorship, sectarian affiliation, and unique features of the text, its relationship to other yoga texts, and its significance for the history of modern yoga. The most remarkable feature of this text is its section on āsana (yogic posture), which contains six groups of postures, many of which are unusual or unique among yoga texts. Another unique feature of this section is that the postures appear to be arranged into sequences intended to be practised in order. A manuscript of the text exists in the Mysore Palace; this (possibly along with other texts) was the basis for the illustrated āsana descriptions in Mysore’s famous book, the Śrītattvanidhi. As we discuss, it is highly likely that the Haṭhābhīyaśapaddhati was known to the most influential teacher of ‘modern postural yoga,’ T. Krishnamacharya, and therefore has a special significance for certain schools of transnational yoga.

KEYWORDS

Yoga, Āsana, Body Culture, Haṭha, Haṭhābhīyaśapaddhati, Haṭhayoga, India, Krishnamacharya, Mysore, Modern Postural Yoga, Śrītattvanidhi, Sāṅkhya-ṛatnamālā, Vyāyāma, Vyāyāmadipike
1. Introduction

The *Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati* is a Sanskrit text on the practice of Haṭhayoga that was most probably composed in the eighteenth century. It contains descriptions of more techniques than the fifteenth-century *Haṭhapradīpikā* and imparts many details on the practice of Haṭhayoga that are not found in other texts. In particular, its section on āsana (yogic posture) outlines the most extensive and sophisticated practice of complex postures of all the premodern works on yoga available to us.¹ Composed in a crude register of Sanskrit and preserved in a notebook that was probably intended for personal use, the *Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati* appears to have been created by and circulated among practitioners. Perhaps owing to its extraordinary section on āsana, this work found its way into the royal court of the Mysore Palace in the early nineteenth century, where its content on postures was absorbed by Mysore’s famous book, the *Śrītattvanidhi*. In the twentieth century, T. Krishnamacharya, whose teachings have greatly influenced modern and global forms of yoga, probably had access to a manuscript of the *Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati* in the Mysore Palace archives and used the work to inspire and sanction his innovations in postural practice.

This article will discuss the manuscript sources of the *Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati* and provide a summary of its content. It will also attempt to answer the most basic questions of authorship, provenance, and time of composition, and examine the complex relationships of this text to other works composed in Mysore in the mid-nineteenth century. Since access to other important primary sources has been declined by the Mysore Oriental Research Institute and the Palace archives, many of our concluding observations about its history in Mysore remain speculative. Nonetheless, we hope that this article will reveal the historical importance of this text and stimulate further research on the unanswered questions that remain. The structure of this article is as follows:

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¹ In this article, the word ‘premodern’ is used to refer to any system of yoga that predates the nineteenth century. Some historians refer to the seventeenth and eighteenth century of India’s history as the early modern period. However, this does not seem to be a necessary distinction in the history of yoga, because works on yoga do not reveal the influence of modernity on yoga until the nineteenth century.
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2. The Manuscripts

2.1 Catalogue Information and References in Secondary Sources

The *Hathābhyāsapaddhati* is largely absent in secondary literature on yoga. The *Descriptive Catalogue of Yoga Manuscripts* by the Kaivalyadhama Research Department (2005) and a forthcoming volume of the *New Catalogus Catalogorum* by the University of Madras do not report a work by this name. As far as we are aware, the first secondary source to mention the *Hathābhyāsapaddhati* is the *Encyclopaedia of Traditional Āsanas* (Gharote et al. 2006, lxvii), which includes the ‘kapāla-kuruṭa-haṭhābhyāsa-paddhati’ in its bibliography. Although this encyclopaedia presents its information ahistorically insofar as it does not distinguish modern from premodern material, the references to each entry indicate that the *Hathābhyāsapaddhati* was the source for many of its unique āsanas. Nevertheless, this encyclopaedia does not translate or reveal much of the content of the *Hathābhyāsapaddhati*.

A possible reason for the general absence of references to the *Hathābhyāsapaddhati* in modern scholarship (with the exception of Birch 2018 [2013]) is that a manuscript of it has not been readily available to scholars. Two manuscripts are known to exist. One, which is held at the Bhārata-Itihāsa-Saṃśodhaka-Maṇḍala in Pune, has been catalogued under the incorrect title of *Āsanabandhāḥ*. This title appears to be an invention of the catalogue’s editor, because it is not found on the front or back covers of the manuscript nor in the work itself. The absence of a colophon may be the reason for the editor’s use of a contrived title. The second manuscript is held in the private collection of Pramoda Devi Wadiyar at the Mysore Palace. This collection has been inaccessible to both local and international scholars for over twenty years and remains so.

2.2 The Pune Manuscript

A notable feature of the Pune manuscript is its unusual paper. Each sheet has been dyed red or green, and the shades of colouring seem to vary from one sheet to another. The paper has an uneven texture and blemishes, which suggest it was made by hand. In fact, in places where the paper is thin, the indentations left by the papermaker’s mould are discernible. More importantly, the scribe has copied the text untidily onto the paper in portrait profile (i.e., vertical layout). As can be seen in Figure 1, each sheet has been

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2 We wish to thank Professor Siniruddha Dash for sending us in advance the entry on *haṭha* in the forthcoming work of the *New Catalogus Catalogorum*.

3 See Khare 1960, 33. Accession no. 29, 2171.
Figure 1: Front and back of a single sheet from the Pune manuscript of the Hathābhyāṣapaddhati, Ms. no. 46/440: folio 2 recto and folio 2 verso.
folded in half to form a notepad of sorts. These material features resemble some Marathi notebooks, called banda, which were used privately to record songs and mundane information (Novetzke 2008, 104-105). Given the unusual paper and layout of the text, particularly the section on āsana (see section 8.3), it appears as though someone crudely scribed the text for their own purposes, as though recording notes on scrap paper.

The Pune manuscript is written in Devanagari script. There are many scribal errors and omissions, which are likely to have been introduced in the course of the text’s transmission. As seen in folio 2 verso (Figure 1), the format of the writing changes for the section on āsana. The text describing each āsana is written in small blocks, which are positioned side by side. Some folios have two blocks of text, as in folio 2 verso, whereas others have four blocks, one in each quadrant. The gaps beneath each block might have been intended for line drawings which, for some unknown reason, were never added.

2.3 The Mysore Manuscript

This manuscript was consulted, and in part photographed, at the Mysore Palace by Norman Sjoman in 1985. We have had access only to these photographs, which are of the second half of the section on āsana (i.e., postures no. 53-114) and half a folio of text following this section. Therefore, we have not been able to verify whether this manuscript and its text are complete. The text is written in Kannada script and each description of an āsana is accompanied by an illustration in the Mysore style of art that is similar to, but in fact more detailed and complete than, the corresponding

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4 We wish to thank Camillo Formigatti at the Bodleian Library for his very helpful comments on this manuscript and pointing out its similarities to Marathi notebooks (bada). Also, Christian Novetzke (p.c. 12th-13th November 2019) was kind enough to examine this manuscript and send us his very helpful comments, which included the following: “I think this may be materially a bada but not used as one in a way that is familiar to me from the didactic kirtan tradition. However, the intersection of form with what I’ve studied is intriguing to me given the connections between yoga, indeed Hatha yoga, and the Marathi bhakti traditions that surround the Varkaris (Jnandev and Namdev in particular), the Mahanubhavs, and the Ramdas. I wonder if this isn’t some kind of material record of this interlacing?”

5 The significant difference between the Pune manuscript and a bada is that the former is not stitched at the top and was copied as bifolia (i.e., the folio has been folded in half to produce four pages of writing). The paper is so thin that it probably could not be stitched.

6 The extent of these scribal errors can be seen to some degree in the passages quoted in this article and the number of emendations required. Comparing the text of the Pune manuscript with that of the Mysore manuscript indicates that both descend from a hyparchetype that had some of these omissions and errors (see section 6).

7 We are very grateful to Norman Sjoman for sharing his unpublished photographs of this manuscript and Jacqueline Hargreaves who helped identify and digitise the manuscript in Calgary.
illustrations of āsanas in the Śrītattvanidhi (see section 9). As seen in Figure 2, the folios appear to have been cut in half and bound together to form a codex.

Each āsana of the Mysore manuscript has at least three different numbers. The first (52-112) is placed at the end of each description; the second (53-114) is in red ink at the top right corner of each illustration; and third is in the left and right margins. Also, some folios are numbered, which constitutes a fourth set of numbers. The first set corresponds exactly to the numbering of the Pune manuscript, until the scribe of the Mysore manuscript repeats numbers 86 and 87. The second set enumerates the illustrations in ascending order up to 114, which is two more than the number of āsanas in the Pune manuscript. In fact, the last posture called sukhāsana is not in the text of the Pune manuscript and its description is identical to that of the Śrītattvanidhi (āsana no. 75). Therefore, sukhāsana may have been added to the Mysore manuscript before it was incorporated into the Śrītattvanidhi. Although we have not had access to the folios containing āsana no. 1-52, it seems likely that another posture, which may also be in
the Śrītattvanidhi, was added before āsana no. 53.⁸ The third set of numbers has been written in the left and right margins by a different hand in larger numerals than those of the first two sets. The third set corresponds to the number of each āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi, the order of which is different to that of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati (see section 6). Given their position, these numbers were probably added after the manuscript was scribed, perhaps, by a person who was involved in compiling the chapter on āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi.

The Pune and Mysore manuscripts have different scribal errors and some significant divergences in their readings, but are similar enough to indicate that both descend from a hyparchetype of the text. Examples of their differences include chatrāsana and vimāṇāsana in the Pune manuscript, which are called cakrasana and vimalāsana respectively in the Mysore manuscript. As mentioned above, the Mysore manuscript may have two āsanas that are not in the Pune manuscript, which indicates that the content of the former was redacted in ways not seen in the latter. In nearly all cases, errors in the readings of the Mysore manuscript are replicated in the Pune manuscript. However, there are a few instances where the redactor of the Śrītattvanidhi has corrected poor readings and conjectured the names of missing postures in the Pune and Mysore manuscripts.⁹ Therefore, the compilers of the Śrītattvanidhi attempted to fix some of the textual problems that had occurred earlier in the transmission of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati.

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⁸ It is possible that kuṭānatrayāsana, which is āsana no. 120 in the Śrītattvanidhi, is the extra āsana in the folios of the Mysore Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati which we have not seen. It appears that a marginal note on folio 11v of the Pune manuscript (dohkuṭānaṇam || ārukuṭānaṇam || pārsvakuṭānaṇam || ityādīni kuṭānāni muṣṭinā bāhunā pāṛṣṇinā bhītyā bhūminā kartavyāni) was incorporated into the Śrītattvanidhi (and possibly the Mysore Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati) as an āsana. Cf. Śrītattvanidhi 120: kuhanatrayāsana || dāhkuhanan | pārsvakahanan | ityādīni kahanāni muṣṭinā | bāhunā pāṛṣṇinā | bhītyā bhūmyā kartavyāni || The term kuhana appears to be a corruption. The syntax of the description of this āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi is different to that of the other āsanas, which suggests that it first appeared in the transmission of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati as a marginal note and later became a description of kuṭānatrayāsana.

⁹ For example, bhūmiṁ tyāja in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati (āsana no. 73) was changed to bhūmiṁ tyākta in the Śrītattvanidhi (āsana no. 83), and āṅgaśanaṁ in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati (āsana no. 83) was changed to āṅgaśaṇaṁ in the Śrītattvanidhi (āsana no. 96). Also, the compiler the of the Śrītattvanidhi conjectured names for several postures which are unnamed in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati. For example, āsana nos. 55, 74, and 95, which are unnamed in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati, have the names pādamastakasamyojāsana, pṛṇkhāsana, and dāṇḍāsana respectively in the Śrītattvanidhi (āsana no. 115, 118, and 65).
3. Name of the Text and its Author

The opening lines of the first folio of the Pune manuscript refer to the work by the term haṭhābhyāsapaddhati, as seen in the following passage:

For those afflicted by the pain of transmigration, those excessively attached to sense objects, those obsessed with women, those fallen from caste, and [even] those who perform the most egregious actions, for their sake, this is a guidebook on the practice of Haṭhayoga (haṭhābhyāsapaddhati) composed by Kapālakurāṇṭaka. The topics in it and the techniques of the practice have been written down [here].

One can confidently emend the codex’s reading of -paddhatar to -paddhati. It is possible that the author is simply referring to the work as a ‘manual on the practice of Haṭhayoga,’ rather than the name of the text. However, seeing that a name of the text is absent on the front and back covers of this manuscript and there are no colophons, the compound haṭhābhyāsapaddhati is the best indication of the text’s name. Be this as it may, the name of the author or the person to which these teachings were attributed is clearly stated as Kapālakurāṇṭaka.

The designation of the work as a paddhati suggests it is a compendium that was compiled to facilitate the practice of Haṭhayoga.11 However, according to our research, it does not cite or borrow material from texts on Haṭhayoga. The only indication of it being a compilation is the two verses on yama and niyama, which were borrowed without attribution from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa.12

As far as we are aware, the author’s name Kapālakurāṇṭaka is not mentioned in any other work on yoga. Nonetheless, it appears that Kapālakurāṇṭaka was a siddha (i.e., one who had mastered yoga), because this name is included in the opening salutations of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati.13 Interestingly, the name Koraṇṭaka is in the lineages of siddhas at the beginning of the Haṭhapradīpī (1.6), Cāṅgavaṭeśvara’s Tattvasāra (872).

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10 Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati f. 1v, ll. 3-5 (सांस्रातापत्ताण्यात्यान्ति सक्तान्यं स्त्रांसनं यू भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा भ्रा
and the Rasahṛdayatantra (1.7.8). Also, the name Koraṇḍa, which is probably a variant spelling of Koraṇṭa, occurs in a list of siddhas in the alchemical compendium called the Ānandakanda (1.3.49). It is possible, but far from certain, that the names Koraṇṭaka and Koraṇḍa are related to Kapālakuraṇṭaka.

4. The Integrity of the Work

The text appears to be incomplete. This is suggested by the absence of a final colophon and the fact that the text finishes after a description of viparitakarani, which is the last (i.e., tenth) mudrā in a section entitled the ten mudrās (daśamudrā). There is no concluding statement or, as one might expect at the end of a work on Haṭhayoga, a discussion on meditative absorption, often referred to as rājayoga or samādhi.

In light of the fact that the text appears to be incomplete, it is possible that the comment in the opening lines (i.e., ‘the topics in [the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati] and the techniques of the practice have been written down’) was meant to convey that the text in our possession is a condensed version of a longer work.

5. Evidence for Sectarian Affiliation and Region

The author’s sectarian affiliation is not stated or made explicit by the inclusion of passages on a particular pantheon, ritual, or doctrinal system of a sect. Nevertheless, there is internal evidence that suggests the author was Vaiṣṇava. In the section on the śaṭkarma (i.e., the six cleansing practices), the yogin is instructed to repeat the Vāsudeva mantra in order to remove obstacles (vighna). Also, this mantra should be repeated when bathing, before eating and sleeping, and mentally at the time of

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14 The critical edition of the Haṭhapradīpi (1998, 3. n. 20.1) gives the following variants to this name: paurṇṭhakah, kaurṇṭhakah, kaurṇṭakah, ghorṇṭakah, and purṇṭtakah. As far as we are aware, none of these words have been used for the name of a siddha. We wish to thank Amol Bankar for the reference in the Tattvasūna.

15 It should also be noted that a Goraṇṭaka is mentioned as the name of a disciple of Gorakṣa in the Navanāṭhacaritra (Jones 2017, 197-8, 200), which is a 1400 CE Telugu text.
excreting. In the same passage, there is a reference to twenty-four names which begin with Keśava, which is a name of Viṣṇu.\(^\text{16}\)

The author's familiarity with Viṣṇu sources is suggested by the citation of two verses on the *yamas* and *niyamas* from the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, as noted above. The commentary on the *niyama* of purification (*sauca*) prescribes singing the names of the lord for purity of speech, which is suggestive of Viṣṇu practice.\(^\text{17}\) The same section prescribes worship of the lord (*bhāgavatpājā*) according to Viṣṇu Tantras for ascetics, Brahmmins only in name, and women.\(^\text{18}\) Also, in the section on the ṣatkarma, the practice of trāṭaka includes gazing at Viṣṇu idols for increasing one’s lifespan.\(^\text{19}\)

The *Haṭṭhābhīṣṇapaddhāti* may have been composed in Maharashtra or, at the very least, it was composed by someone who knew the local language of that area. This is suggested by a statement in the section on vajrolimudrā, in which the author refers to a type of reed called *haritaśara* in Sanskrit, and states that the vernacular term in Maharashtra and other places for this reed is *lavālā*.\(^\text{20}\) This term is defined as *Cyperus*

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17 Haṭṭhābhīṣṇapaddhāti f. 2r, ll. 8-9 (bhagavannāmasāṅkīrtanena vākṣuddhiḥ [\dots] saucam). Also, this text prescribes singing the names of god for enduring the pain of inserting a probe into the urethra (see below). On the importance of nāmasāṅkīrtana in Gauḍīya Viṣṇuvism, see Valpey 2011, 312-328. A range of citations on nāmasāṅkīrtana in Viṣṇu works are found in the eleventh chapter of the sixteenth-century Haribhaktivilāsa (e.g., 11.345, 362-363, 370, 428, 439, 443-444, 507).

18 Haṭṭhābhīṣṇapaddhāti f. 2r, ll. 11-12 (yatīnām brahmabandhuṣtryāḍināṁ vaisāṅvatanaṁtrāīḍbhagavatpurījāngahomah homah).


20 Haṭṭhābhīṣṇapaddhāti f. 2r, ll. 2-3: ‘Similar to the jāti sprout, the haritaśara by name is known in Maharashtra, etc., as lavālā (jātyākurasadṛṣ ṣaḥ haritaśaraḥ nāma lavālā iti mahārāṣṭrādau prasiddhah || jāty ] EMEND. |] JĀNTA CODEX. -Dṛṣṇā ] EMEND. |] -Dṛṣṇā CODEX).
rotundus in a Marathi dictionary. This reference to Maharashtra is circumstantial evidence for the region in which the text was composed. Nonetheless, it is very rare for a premodern work on yoga to contain such a geographical reference.

6. Date of Composition

The Ḥaḍbhṛṣṭaabhyṣapaddhati contains descriptions of one hundred and twelve āsanas, the majority of which are not found in other yoga texts. The exceptions are a small group of well-known āsanas, such as siddhāsana, kukkuṭāsana, matsyendrāsana, dhanurāsana, and so on, that were taught in nearly all of the Ḥaṭhayoga texts composed after the fifteen-century Haṭhapradipikā.

The descriptions of each āsana in the Ḥaḍbhṛṣṭaabhyṣapaddhati correspond word-for-word with those in a chapter of the seventh book, called the Śaivanidhi, of the Śrītattvanidhi. This work was commissioned by the Mahārāja of Mysore, Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar III (Martin-Dubost 1997: 238), who was born in 1794, ascended to the throne in 1799, ruled with full administrative powers between 1810 and 1831 (after which he was removed by the British), and died in 1868. The Śaivanidhi of the Śrītattvanidhi was probably composed after the Śanḍhyārātmanālā was completed in 1849 and before the Mahārāja’s death in 1868. A comparison between the āsanas of the Ḥaḍbhṛṣṭaabhyṣapaddhati and the Śrītattvanidhi reveals that the latter was the borrower, because the Mahārāja rearranged the order of the postures. The original order of the postures is preserved in the Ḥaḍbhṛṣṭaabhyṣapaddhati because the description of an āsana will often begin by mentioning the name of the previous one. For example, the description of plough posture (lāṅgalāsana) begins by mentioning the name of the previous posture.

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21 Molesworth (1857, 417) defines lavāḷā (also lavhā) as a “rush-like grass. It grows to the height of four feet, and is commonly found on the mud banks of moḍhe and of salt creeks. Used for thatching, and mats &c. are made of it. Set down by some botanists as Cyperus rotundus.” Moḍhe may refer to a location in Maharashtra. The only place of that name that we have been able to locate is in Chhattisgarh.

22 For more information on the proliferation of āsana in yoga texts composed after the Haṭhapradipikā, see Birch 2018 [2013].

23 There is one exception: the ninety-second āsana of the Ḥaḍbhṛṣṭaabhyṣapaddhati, called ‘the pigeon in the sky pose’ (ākāśakapotasana), is not found in the Śrītattvanidhi.

24 See Ikegame 2013, vi; 10. The dates that the Mahārāja of Mysore ruled (i.e., 1799 to 1868) are attested by the annals of the Mysore Palace (Iyer & Nanjundayya 1935, 49).

25 For details on the date of the Śanḍhyārātmanālā, see section 10.
called narakāsana.26 Unlike in the Śritattvanidhi, narakāsana is placed directly before lāṅgalāsana in the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati:

Having fixed the nape of the neck on the ground, [the yogin] should lift up both feet. This is narakāsana (14). Having remained in narakāsana, he should place the top of the feet on the ground in the vicinity of the nose, join both hands, let them hang and plough the ground with the neck. This is lāṅgalāsana (15).

grīvākaṇṭhena bhūmiṁ viṣṭabhya pādāgradvayam ārdhavam umnayet ||]

In the Śritattvanidhi, narakāsana is the eighth posture and lāṅgalāsana the seventeenth. It seems that the Mahārāja rearranged the order of the āsanas with a view to foregrounding eighty āsanas (see section 9). Also, the Śritattvanidhi’s introduction to its section on āsana states that its source was a yogaśāstra,27 which indicates that its collection of āsanas was borrowed from a yoga text, such as the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati.

Although the terminus ad quem of the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati is the Śritattvanidhi (i.e., mid-nineteenth century), it is likely that the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati was composed in the eighteenth century. If one compares the Pune and Mysore manuscripts with the Śritattvanidhi, it is apparent that all three have some identical textual lacunae and incorrect readings.28 These shared textual defects reveal that these witnesses descend

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26 Narakāsana appears to be named after a realm of hell in which miscreants were hung upside down and tortured (Birch, forthcoming 2020).

27 Śritattvanidhi (Sjoman 1999, plate 1): “[These] eighty yoga postures, by the measure of scriptures on yoga, should be known. Now, the shapes of the eighty postures are written down in the manner of a yoga scripture.” (yogāsanam yogaśāstrarātanam jīveyan aśītihā || aha aśītyāsanasavarūpāni yogaśāstrarātya likhyante).

28 The textual descriptions of both witnesses are missing the names of the āsanas numbered 47, 48, 55, 66, and 74. In the text of the Śritattvanidhi, the names of these postures are missing, but it would seem that the illustrators added the names nyūḥāsana, garbhāsana, pādamastakasanyogāsana, hejñāsanyogāsana, and prenikhāsana. The names nyūḥāsana, pādamastakasanyogāsana, and hejñāsanyogāsana are unconvincing conjectures because the names of the other āsanas in the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati are based on those of animals, sages, objects, etc. The name prenikhāsana is also unconvincing because this is the name of another āsana in this collection (i.e., Hathābhhyāsapaddhati 73 and Śritattvanidhi 94). The name garbhāsana has been given to a posture that was probably called paścimaṅtāsana (the posture following it is ardhapaścimaṅtāsana). The incorrect readings shared by the available manuscript of the Hathābhhyāsapaddhati and the Śritattvanidhi include skandhayo (instead of skandhayor), pāṛṣṭi (pāṛṣṭi), āruni (āruni), jānu (jānum), skandhāh (skandham), jānu (jānum), tamadhiyā (tamadiye), and ṛiśrāmanām (bhrāmanām). There are also fifteen other instances where both texts have incorrect, albeit different, readings.
from the same hyparchetype. The fact that this hyparchetype is significantly flawed suggests that a number of intermediary witnesses separate it from the archetype of the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati. Some of the defects were emended unconvincingly in the Śrītattvanidhi,29 which reveals that the Mahārāja and his court did not have access to the archetype. Therefore, it seems reasonable to allow a period of time, at least fifty to a hundred years, for the transmission of the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati to have produced the hyparchetype known to the Mahārāja in the mid-nineteenth century.30

Although the terminus a quo of the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati remains unknown, the text is unlikely to predate the eighteenth century because, as far as we are aware, it has not been cited in any compendium or work on yoga composed before that time.

7. The Intended Audience and Trans-Sectarian Nature of the Text

The opening lines of the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati (translated in section 3) outline, in a very general way, the intended audience of the text. A broad range of people are mentioned, beginning with the most inclusive category of persons in need of liberation, that is, all those afflicted by transmigration. Then, more specific groups are identified, such as those obsessed by women31 and those fallen from caste. The last of these groups appears to refer to the people who might be the farthest from liberation, namely, those who do extremely egregious actions (atisāhasakarma).32

It should be noted that the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati does not define its audience according to caste or sectarian affiliation, and it does not mention elsewhere limits to its inclusivity. Although the author may have had a preference for Vaiṣṇava mantras and singing the names of god as noted above, his mention of Vaiṣṇava Tantras and idols is qualified with ‘etc.’ (i.e., vaiṣṇavādi), which suggests that scriptures and idols of other

29 These unconvincing emendations are discussed in the previous footnote.

30 If the text was popular, it might have been copied many times in the space of a few years. However, it seems this work was never popular because it is not quoted in compendiums on yoga and its manuscripts are exceedingly rare.

31 The dictionary (Moneir-Williams s.v.) defines straiṇa as feminine or subject to or ruled by women. In these senses, it could refer to men who are feminine or obsessed with women. The term is defined in the Vācaspatyam as strīśamūḥa (i.e., womenfolk) and glossed as such by Bhāskarakaṇṭha in his commentary on Mokṣapāya 4.7.3. However, the fact that straiṇa is used in the plural in the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati seems to suggest that straiṇa was not intended as an abstract noun. We wish to thank Christopher Minkowski for bringing this gloss to our attention.

32 Our translation of sāhasakarma as ‘egregious actions’ is consistent with the meaning of sāha in the sāhasapakaraṇa (p. 74) of the Vyavahāramālā. For a discussion of this compound in the Ḥathābhyāsapaddhati, see Birch 2018 [2013], 130 n. 73.
religions could be used. In fact, the author defines belief (āstikya) as confidence in the scriptures of Matsyendra and Gorakṣa, two Śaiva siddhas.33 Like other texts of Ṣaṭhāyoga, the Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati does not stipulate that initiation (dikṣā) is necessary in order to practise this type of yoga.

8. Unique Features of the Text

This section will focus mainly on the content of the Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati that is unattested in other texts of Ṣaṭhāyoga.

8.1 The Yogin’s Hut

The fifteenth-century Ṣaṭhapatralipikā and some related works describe a hut, which is usually large enough for only one person and has fairly generic features, such as a small door and surfaces smeared with cow dung.34 However, the Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati provides unusual details on measurements and material for a series of huts (mathikā), each of which is prescribed for certain techniques of Ṣaṭhāyoga. For the practice of the hathayogic mudrās, the hut should be covered in ashes and measure four forearm lengths (hasta) high and wide.35 If one assumes that the average forearm length is eighteen inches,36 such a hut would be high enough (i.e., 1.82 metres) for most people to stand in. Presumably of the same dimensions, a hut should be made of reddish soil for the practice of āsana37 and plaster (sudhā) for the practice of the ṣaṭkarma (basti, etc.). For sleeping, it should have a skin (carna), such as that of a tiger, and for the practice of vajroliṣṭhā, a cotton cloth.38 For the practice of the dynamic āsanas, such as ‘the pose leading to heaven’ (svargāsana), a hut much larger than the one mentioned above is required. Its dimensions are three bow-lengths high (i.e., 5.48 metres) and one bow-

31 Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati f. 2r.l.1 (matsyendragorakṣakāṇḍikāpālīkādīnām śāstreṣu viśvāsaḥ āstikyaṁ).
32 Descriptions of huts occur in the Dattātreyaśaṅkaraśāstra (54-57), the Yogāyānāvali (5.6-8), and the Ṣaṭhapatralipikā (1.12-13), which stipulates that the hut should be a bow length (dhanuṣ) in dimension (on this measurement, see footnotes 36 and 39).
33 Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati f. 1v, ll. 6-7 (caturhasṭapramāṇam ārdhvam tiryak || bhramamathikā mudrābhīṣaṇārtham).
34 The Monier Williams dictionary notes that a hasta is 24 finger-breadths (aṅgula) or ‘about 18 inches.’
35 This is probably referring to seated āsana only, as a larger hut is stipulated for other āsanas (see below).
36 Ṣaṭhābhīṣaṇapaddhati f. 1v, ll. 6-9 (mathikālakṣanam ||] caturhasṭapramāṇam ārdhvam tiryak || bhramamathikā mudrābhīṣaṇārtham || ārakṣamritikāmatikā āśanābhīṣaṇārtham || saḍhāmaṭhikā bastyādyabhīṣaṇārtham || vaṣṭhrāḍīṣṭhāmaṭhikā śāyanārtham || tālavastraḍīṣṭhāmaṭhikā vajrolyartham || bastyādyabhīṣaṇārtham ] conj. : bastyāṭhasṭhāna[ Codex).
length wide (1.82 metres). The mention of svargāsana is significant here, because this posture requires the yogin to climb up a vertical rope. Therefore, it appears that the extraordinarily high ceiling of this hut was required for performing the rope postures (rajāvāsana), ten of which are taught in the text. One might wonder how such a substantial structure was built, where it was located (i.e., within or outside of populated areas), whether it was used by more than one yogin, and whether a yogin who practised all the auxiliaries of Haṭhayoga was expected to have a cluster of different huts.

8.2 Yama and Niyama

The Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati prescribes twenty-five yamas and niyamas, the names of which are introduced by a verse borrowed from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. A commentary in prose follows these verses and explains each behavioural guideline. It is unlikely that this commentary was borrowed from an exegetical work on the Bhāgavatapurāṇa because it appears to have been written specifically for Haṭhayogins. One of its definitions mentions Haṭhayoga, another alludes to a technique specific to Haṭhayoga, and five

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39 Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati f. 1v, ll. 9-10 (trīḍhanuṣyodhivam ekadhanusyatīrṇak svargaś-[ja]-ṣanārthaḥ). A bow-length (dhanuṣya) is said to be four hastas.

40 Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati 98, f. 20r: ‘Having adopted padmāsaṇa, the yogin should hold the rope with both hands and climb up it. This is the ‘ṣana leading to heaven.’ (padmāsaṇaṁ kṛtvā hastābhyaṁ rajauṁ dhṛtvā ārohet [||] svargaśanam bhavati).


42 We would like to thank Kenneth Valpey for searching through several commentaries on the Bhāgavatapurāṇa (including some unpublished ones) for similarities with this section of the Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati.

43 Note that this observation is based on an emendation to the text. Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati, f. 2r ll. 13-14: ‘Hospitality (ātiṣṭya) is kindness towards those who have practised the methods of one’s own path, such as Haṭhayoga.’ (svamārghaḥāṭhiṣṭyaḥyabhyastānāṁ satkāraḥ ātiṣṭyam || svamārghaḥāṭhiṣṭyaḥyabhyastānāṁ ] emend.: svamārghaḥāṭhiṣṭyaḥyabhyastānāṁ Codex).

44 Haṭhayāṣaṇapaddhati f. 2r, ll. 9-10: ‘Celibacy (brahmacarya) is the conservation of [every] drop of semen through the penis and drawing in sexual fluids, etc.’ (upasthadvāraśāvibindor aparatanam raj-[jā]-yākārṣanam ca brahmacaryam || upasthadvāraśāvibindor ] Goodall: upasthadvāraśāvibindor Codex). This alludes to vajrolimudrā.
others are directed towards those who practise yoga. Furthermore, the scriptures of Gorakshanatha, who is considered the founder of Hathayoga, are mentioned. In light of this, it is worth noting that the term tapas is reinterpreted as the performance of one’s religious obligations (svadharma), which indicates that the author was more interested in associating Hathayoga with religious practice in general, rather than extreme asceticism, such as sitting amidst five fires.

8.3 Āsana

The statement introducing the section on āsana declares that the aim of the postures is to enable the yogin to do the śātkarma. The same point is made at the end of this section, with the additional comment that the āsanas make the body firm. The preliminary role of śātkarma in healing excess phlegm and fat before one begins the practice of yoga, as stipulated in the Hathapradīpikā, appears to have been redefined in the Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati.

One of the striking features of the Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati’s teachings on āsana is the six headings that divide the postures into groups:

45 Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati ff. 1v-2r: ‘Non-attachment (asaṅga) is [defined as] indifference towards people who do not practise yoga’ (abhyaśapratīyogijanānāṁ asanēhaḥ asaṅgah); ‘shame (hṛi) is compunction for the absence of religious activity, which destroys one’s practice [of yoga]’ (abhyaśanāśake dharmāhve lajā hṛīḥ || dharmāhve ) diagnostic conj. Goodall: ḍharm+ Codex); ’not accumulating (asaṅcaya) is the absence of collecting goods that are different to those needed for the practice [of yoga]’ (abhyaśapayogīvastvanavastusangrāhāhavah asaṅcayaḥ || -vastvanavastu- ] diagnostic conj. Niradbara Mandal (2016, 21): ‘-vastva+vastu- Codex); ‘roaming to sacred places (tirthātana) is traveling from place to place in order to see people who are accomplished in the practice’ (abhyaśa-siddhānāṁ darśinātārtham deśe deśe paryāyatam tirthātana || tirthātana ) conj.: tirthaṁtana Codex); ‘and striving to help others (parārthehā) is the effort aimed at helping a student’s practice [of yoga] succeed’ (śvyābhīṣṇa-siddhyarthaṁ yatnāḥ parārthehā).

46 Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati f. 2r, ll. 1-2: ‘Belief (āstikya) is confidence in the scriptures of Matsyendra, Goraksha, Kāki, Kāpālīka and others’ (matsyendra-gorakṣa-kākākapālīkādinnāḥ śāstreṣu viśvāsah āstikyam). It is not clear who Kāki and Kāpālīka might be, or whether kākākapālika was the intended name. In fact, it seems somewhat likely that kākākapālika is a corruption of khaṇḍakāpālika, who is mentioned in some manuscripts of the Hathapradīpikā (1.8).

47 Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati f. 2v ll. 1-2: ‘Now, the postures are explained for procuring the capacity [to do] the śātkarma’ (atha śātkarmayogiyatāpratītāpānayeṣaṁsāti śātkarmāṇi kuryate).

48 Hathābhīṣṇokapaddhati f. 23v, l. 1: ‘When the practice of āsanas has brought about firmness of the body, the yogin should do the śātkarma (āsanaḥ āsanaṃ śātārtham śātārtham sati śātkarmāṇi kuryata).

49 Hathapradīpikā 2.21: ‘One with excess fat or phlegm should first practise the śātkarma. However, another person should not do them when the humours are balanced’ (medasleśmādhikah pārvam śātkarmāṇi samācāret | anyas tu nācaret tāṁ doṣaṁ samākhāvataḥ).
Although each group is not referred to as a sequence (krama) in the section on āsana, the text stipulates that the postures should be performed in sequence.\(^{50}\) Furthermore, in many instances,\(^ {51}\) the description of an āsana begins by stating that the yogin must be positioned in the previous posture. This is seen in the example cited above, in which the description of lāṅgalāsana begins with ‘having remained in narakāsana’ (narakāsane sthitvā [...]). In practice, the instructions on lāṅgalāsana rely on the fact that the yogin is initially positioned in narakāsana. In other words, the author describes the transition between āsanas and thus the sequential nature of the practice. This contrasts with descriptions of āsanas in other yoga texts, which describe each posture as though it were unconnected to others.\(^ {52}\)

One might hypothesise that the author of the Haṭhābhīṣaṇaśaṇdhaḥ grouped similar postures together in order to make each description more succinct. An example of this is seen in Haṭhapradīpiṇī 1.26, which stipulates that the initial position for accomplishing uttānakārmāsana is kukkuṭāsana. In this case and others like it, the initial position is similar in form to the final one, which enables the author to keep the description of uttānakārmāsana succinct. However, in the Haṭhābhīṣaṇaśaṇdhaḥ, there are instances where two postures of different shapes are linked together. For example, the reed posture (vetrāsana), in which the spine is deeply extended, is followed by the ball posture (kandukāsana), in which the spine is flexed, as described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Verse No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supine</td>
<td>uttāṇa</td>
<td>1–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prone</td>
<td>nyubja</td>
<td>23–47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>sthāna</td>
<td>48–74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td>uttāḥna</td>
<td>75–93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postures with Ropes</td>
<td>rajju</td>
<td>94–103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postures which pierce the Sun and Moon</td>
<td>sūryacandrābhedaṇa</td>
<td>104–112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{50}\) In the section on the satkarma (f. 23r. l. 4), there is a reference to performing the postures in sequence: “then, \(†[...]† one should do the āsanas according to the sequence beginning with the bull’s leg [posture]” (tatah \(†\) tadd eva sankhyayā† vṛṣapāḍādikramēṇa āsanānī kuryāt). Vṛṣapāḍaśeṣāsana is the first posture taught in the section on āsana.

\(^{51}\) In the Haṭhābhīṣaṇaśaṇdhaḥ, these are āsanas no. 12, 15, 17–18, 26, 28–31, 33–34, 40, 44, 56, 58, 74, and 92.

\(^{52}\) For example, the description of dhamurāsana in Haṭhapradīpiṇī 1.27 begins with the instruction, ‘Having held the big toes with both hands, one should stretch like a bow as far as the ears.’ The initial position is not mentioned. The case of kukkuṭāsana (Haṭhapradīpiṇī 1.26), mentioned below, is a rare exception.
Figure 3: Vetrāsana and Kandukāsana (Hathābhīṣapaddhati Āsana no. 17 and 18) as illustrated in the Śrīnatvanidhi Āsana no. 9 and 6. (Sjoman 1996, detail from plates 2 (inverted) and 1, respectively.)
Having remained in sofa posture (paryankāsana), [the yogin] should join the hands and feet. This is vetrāsana. Having remained in vetrāsana, he should pull apart his hands and feet and take them upwards. He should [then] press the ground with his spine. This is kandukāsana.53

The illustrations of these two poses in the Śrītattvanidhi show the significant change in the yogin’s position (Figure 3).

The author’s efforts to describe sequences of āsanas can also be inferred by the headings of supine, prone, stationary, standing, and so forth, which appear to group the postures. These headings do not characterise the shape of the āsanas, because postures of different shapes and movements are brought together under each heading. Instead, the heading appears to refer to a reoccurring position. For example, in the prone group, a prone position links six of the twenty-five āsanas, each of the six beginning with ‘having lain pronely’ (nyubjaśāyanaṃ kṛtvā).54 These twenty-five postures include inversions, arm balances, push-ups, and tumbles. Therefore, the notions of ‘prone’ appears to refer to the way the āsanas are performed in sequence, rather than to groups of similarly shaped postures.

It is also worth noting that the sequential nature of the Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati’s descriptions of āsanas aids the reader in understanding them. In many cases, the terse description of an āsana can only be understood by considering the one that precedes it. For example, the description of the garland pose (mālāsana) is perplexing when it is read by itself, because it simply says that the yogin should place his bodyweight on the hands, knees on the shoulders, and heels on the chest.55 One might think that this has to be done from a squatting position. However, when squatting, the spine is flexed and this makes it impossible to place the feet on the chest when the knees are above the shoulders. If one considers the parasol pose (chatrāsana), which is the posture that precedes mālāsana in the Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati, the yogin is in an extreme back-bend with his feet placed on the back of the head and his bodyweight entirely on the hands.


54 The supine āsanas referred to here are Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati no. 1-6, 8-11, 16, 21-22, and the prone āsanas are Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati no. 23-25, 41, 46-47.

55 Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati f. 12v: ‘Having supported oneself on the ground with the hands, one should place the knees on the shoulders, the heels on the chest and remain thus. This is the Garland pose’ (haṣṭābhīyām avanīm avaṣṭabhīya skandhayor jānanti samśṭhāya pārṣṇī urasi niḥāya tiṣṭhet [[|]] mālāsanaṁ bhavati ||57|| skandhayor ] emend. : skandhayo Codex, Śrītattvanidhi, jānanti ] Śrītattvanidhi : jānanti Codex. pārṣṇī emend. : pārṣṇī Codex, Śrītattvanidhi).
Figure 4: Chattrāṣana and Mālasana (Hathābhyāṣapaḍhāti Āsana no. 56 and 57) as illustrated in the Śrīkattvanādhi Āśana no. 35 and 44. (Sjoman 1996, detail from plates 6 and 8.)
With the spine deeply extended, it is possible for him to bring the feet forward beyond the head, place the knees on the shoulders and finally the feet on the chest, thus accomplishing mālāsana, as seen in Figure 4.56

Other unique features of the āsanas in the Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti include āsanas which require repetitive movement, the use of rope, and a wall (Birch 2018 [2013], 134-36).

### 8.4 Śaṭkarma

The śaṭkarma of the Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti are bhrāmaṇaκriyā, ādhāraśuddhiκriyā, nauli, dhauti, gajakaṛaṇi, neti, manthanapraveśa, kapālabhāti and trāṭaka. The first two and the seventh are not mentioned by the Haṭhapradipikā, which is the earliest known work to include the śaṭkarma. The aim of bhrāmaṇaκriyā and ādhāraśuddhiκriyā is to clean the rectum (ādhāraκambu). The first is similar to cakrikarma in the Haṭharatnāvali (1.29-32) and the second to basti in the Haṭhapradipikā (2.26-28). According to the Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti, bhrāmaṇaκriyā is said to cleanse the rectum in upwards of three months,57 and ādhāraśuddhiκriyā is called gaṇeśaκriyā among religious heretics and ascetics.58

Before the practice of nauli, the yogin is advised to clench repeatedly the sphincter muscles (kambu)59 like the anus of a horse.60 Although this somewhat resembles the technique of aśvinīμudrā in the Gheraṇḍasamhitā (3.82-83), the Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti is unique in prescribing it as a preliminary practice for nauli. The practice of manthanapraveśa, ‘churning and inserting,’ requires the use of curved probes (śalāka) made of various substances, which are inserted into the nose, ears, and eyes in order to clean them.61

Trāṭaka is described in greater detail than in other yoga texts. Various gazing points are

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56 We wish to thank Jacqueline Hargreaves for her assistance in understanding this particular sequence of postures.

57 Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti f.23r, ll. 3-5 (dine dine bhrāmaṇaṃ dvīsahasrasaṅkhyāṃ trīsahasrasaṅkhyāṃ kuryāt [...] || māṣatrayā yārdhvaṃ ādhāraκambuṣuddhaṃ bhavaṃ || dine dine ) emend. : dine di Codex.

58 Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti f.23r, ll. 15-16 (yaṃ ādhāraśuddhiκriyā gaṇeśaκriyeyti pā[khaṇḍatāpa]sādau prasidhā). James Mallinson’s guru taught him this technique by the name gaṇeśaκriyā (p.c. 25th November 2019).

59 The Monier Williams dictionary defines kambu as conch or shell. We are assuming that in this context it means the anal sphincter muscles.

60 Haṭhābhīyāsāpadhāti f. 23v, ll. 7-8 (naulisiddhiyarthaṃ aśvāḥdāraκambuvad vāraṇaḥ vāraṇaḥ kamboṃ akūraṇaḥ || vāraṇaḥ vāraṇaḥ ) conj. : vāraṇa Codex).

61 A similar practice is mentioned in the Khecarīvidyā. See Mallinson 2007, 27, 207 n. 250.
stipulated for specific purposes and benefits. The yogin is supposed to gaze at the face of a woman with the intention of renouncing sense objects. Gazing at the moon quietens the eyes, gazing at space purifies, gazing at a shadow in the moonlight during the hot season, as well as Vaiṣṇava and other idols, prolongs life, and gazing at other objects is for realising their falseness.\textsuperscript{62} It also seems that gazing at gems can bring about the ability to see whether they are fake or genuine.\textsuperscript{63}

Various wholesome foods (pathya), which are said to have been taken from a physician’s book (vaidyagrantha), are prescribed in the \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi}.\textsuperscript{64} It also contains the following advice on diet, which seems consistent with the theme of cultivating indifference (vairāgya) that is a feature of the section on \textit{vajroli mudrā} (see section 8.6):

Eating should be done very quickly. The taste of foods, etc., and their imperfections should not be noticed. One should eat food as though it were medicine.\textsuperscript{65}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{62} \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi} f. 24v, ll. 5-8 (\textit{strāyamkhun tu visayatvagabuddhāya nirikṣet} || \textit{candraśya nirikṣanam netraśāntyartham} ākāśanirikṣanam amalaprāptaye uṣṇe candrikāyaṁ chāyānirikṣanam āyuryuddhyartham vaiśāvadāṁmurtinirikṣanam tatraśayantvānuirdvyārtham || nirikṣet \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣet Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. amalaprāptye \textsuperscript{emend.:} atmalaprāptye Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. vaiśāvadām nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} vaiśāvadām Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. amalaprāptye \textsuperscript{emend.:} atmalaprāptye Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. vaidyagranthe \textsuperscript{emend.:} vaidyagranthe Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. amalaprāptye \textsuperscript{emend.:} atmalaprāptye Codex. nirikṣanam \textsuperscript{emend.:} nirikṣanam Codex. vaidyagranthe \textsuperscript{emend.:} vaidyagranthe Codex.)
\item \textsuperscript{63} \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi} f. 24v, ll. 8-9: ‘Success at trāṭaka occurs when one can ascertain [the authenticity] of gems, etc., seeing [them] in regard to their fakeness and genuineness’ (\textit{ratnādiparikṣa duṣṭapadārthe parikṣa uṣṭhpādārthe parikṣa bhavati iti trāṭakasādvidhiḥ} || \textit{ratnādiparikṣa} \textsuperscript{emend.:} \textit{ratnādiparikṣa} Codex. parikṣa \textsuperscript{emend.:} parikṣa Codex. parikṣa \textsuperscript{emend.:} parikṣa Codex. trāṭaka- \textsuperscript{emend.:} \textit{srāṭaka} Codex.)
\item \textsuperscript{64} \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi} f. 23r, l. 7 (\ldots\ldots) ityādīni vaidyāyānthe prasidhānī pathyānī.
\item \textsuperscript{65} \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi} f. 23v ll. 8-9 (\textit{bhaksanam tu attivarayā kartavyam} || \textit{annādānām rucir na grāhīyā vaigunyam ca na grāhīyam} \textsuperscript{emend.:} \textit{annādānām Codex. aṣṭadhavada annāma bhuvajita} \textsuperscript{emend.:} \textit{annādānām Codex. aṣṭadhavad} \textsuperscript{emend.:} \textit{aṣṭadhavand Codex}.)
\item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapadāthi} f. 24v, ll. 10-11 (\textit{karmaśaṭkābhāyāśānantarām daśamudrāśādhihive aṣṭavidhakumbhākān kuryāit).
the *Haṭhāpradīpikā*.\(^{67}\) Nevertheless, the *Haṭhābhāṣyāsāpadhati* teaches a unique method called ‘moving all the winds’ (*sarvāyucālana*) as a preliminary practice to the eight kumbhakas:\(^{68}\)

Having inhaled and inserted the jaw in the pit of the throat, one should do a *kumbhaka*. In the *kumbhaka*, [the yogin should] take up the two regions of the abdomen, [which are] above the buttocks and below the two bones called the ribs [that are] below the stomach. He should hold the air in the abdomen by contracting the pelvic floor (*ādhāra*); take the air into the chest by contracting the throat; perform *paścimatānāsana* and belch. Then, he should exhale. By practising thus, he becomes capable of doing the eight *kumbhakas*.\(^{69}\)

The above passage appears to be describing the application of the three locks (*bandha*), which are taught in the section on *mudrās*. Although the *bandhas* are not named in this section, it seems that the abdomen, throat, and pelvic floor are manipulated in the same way as *uḍḍīyāna-, jālandhara-, and mūlabandha*, in order to move the breath from the abdomen to the chest. One can infer that this is done in a seated posture, before the yogin adopts *paścimatānāsana*.

\(^{67}\) The obvious exception is the exclusion of *plāvini* and the inclusion of *kevala*, which is not considered to be one of the eight *kumbhakas* in the *Haṭhāpradīpikā*, but is the result of practising the eight. Other peculiarities include *sīkāra* being done when one is about to yawn and *mārčchā* appears to involve the manipulation of semen (*bindu*), but the description of *mārčchā* is unclear because the relevant text has been corrupted. *Mārčchā* usually means ‘swooning’ or ‘fainting’.

\(^{68}\) *Haṭhābhāṣyāsāpadhati* f. 24v, ll. 13-14 (*aṣṭāvāhikumbhakasiddhayave sarvāyucālanaḥ* kṛyāḥ | *-cālaṇābhāṣyāḥ kṛyāḥ*) diagnostic conj.: *cā-ānāvirbhāvākāryāḥ* Codex. This conjecture is based on the reference to *sarvāyucālana* ([–]abhyāse on f. 25r l. 4).


\(^{70}\) This posture is described at *Haṭhābhāṣyāsāpadhati* 48, f. 11r: ‘Having extended the legs like a stick, the yogin should hold the big toes with the hands, fix the forehead on the knees, and remain thus. This is *paścimatānāsana*’ (daṇḍavau bhumau caranau pratāya hastāḥ bhāyaṁ angustthaḥ dhrītvā jānāpi lātāṁ vinyasya tiṣṭhet | *paścimatānāsanyā bhavati | [48]| daṇḍavau ] Codex : daṇḍad Śrītattvanidhi. caranau ] Codex : carau Śrītattvanidhi. jānāpi ] Śrītattvanidhi ] jānau Codex. paścimatānāsanyā bhavati ] conj. : omitted in Codex, Śrītattvanidhi).
8.6 Mudrā

The ten mudrās taught in the Ṣaṭkārṇavaśāpadadhāti are named śakticālana, vajroli, mahāmudrā, mahābandha, mahāvedha, mūlabandha, uḍḍiyāna, jālandhara, khecari, and viparītakaraṇi. The Ṣaṭkārṇavaśāpadadhāti's teachings on these mudrās are largely consistent with those of the Ṣaṭkārṇavaśāpadadhāti. The exceptions are śakticālana, which has been simplified, and khecari and vajroli insofar as both are described in greater detail. In fact, the account of vajrolimudrā is the most extraordinary of its kind in any premodern yoga text.

According to the Ṣaṭkārṇavaśāpadadhāti, the practice of khecarmudrā should begin when the nose, ears, and eyes have been cleaned with probes. Over a dozen different blades (ṣastra) are enumerated for cutting the fraenum, such as the 'sun blade' (sūryaṣastra) made from the black pepper shrub, the 'moon blade' (candraṣastra) from rock salt, Dhanvantari’s blade from yellow myrobalan, Rudra’s blade in the form of a spike (śūla), Gaṇapati’s blade in the form of a hatchet (paraśa), and so on. Also, finger nails (nākha) and hair (roma) can be used for this purpose. Making the blade and cutting the fraenum are explained, as well as the techniques of stretching (ākāraṇa), moving (cālana), milking (dohana), and reverse rubbing of the tongue (viparītāgharṣaṇa). When

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71 Haṭṭhabhyāṣapaddhati f. 25v, ll. 6-9: ‘When the channels are purified because of the [practice of] the āsanas, the śaṭkārṇava, and the eight kumbhakas,[the yogin] should draw in the breath by way of the downward moving vitality (apāna), take it as far as Brahma’s aperture (at the top of the head), do a kumbhaka, and exhale by way of apāna. If the whole practice is done in this way, everything is accomplished. This is śakticālana’ (śaṭkārṇavaśāpadadhāti - Codex).

72 For a comprehensive overview of premodern teachings on vajroli, see Mallinson 2018.

73 Haṭṭhabhyāṣapaddhati f. 29r, ll. 6-7 (sālākābhiḥ nāṣikākārṇaṇetaranandhrāṇī saṃsādhyā khecaryārmbhāḥ kāryāḥ || khecaryārmbhāḥ ) emend. : khecaryārmbhāḥ (Codex).

74 Haṭṭhabhyāṣapaddhati f. 29r, ll. 7-11 (sālākābhiḥ nāṣikākārṇaṇetaranandhrāṇī saṃsādhyā khecaryārmbhāḥ kāryāḥ || khecaryārmbhāḥ ) emend. : khecaryārmbhāḥ (Codex). A manuscript of the Khecārvidāya (W1 in Mallinson 2007, 44) lists sixteen different names of blades for cutting the fraenum and some of them are the same as those in the Haṭṭhabhyāṣapaddhati.
the tongue has been inserted in the nasopharyngeal cavity, a breathing practice, which begins with śakticālana, is performed.76

The section on vajrolimudrā begins with a definition of vajroli as ‘having drawn air through the opening of the penis, one should take it up to the cranial aperture (brahmārāndhra).’77 Various preparatory practices are given for this mudrā, beginning with the insertion of stalks of distinct vine plants and probes made of various substances into the urethra as deep as ten finger-breathths for up to three hours, which causes the yogin acute discomfort, disorientation, and a sharp pain in the bladder. The yogin is advised to sing the names of god to endure this.78 He then inserts a stalk as deep as twenty-four finger-breathths into the urethra. This causes further acute pain, burning fever, and fear of death. He is helped by attendants (samrakṣaka) and the text prescribes several remedies for the fever, such as lying on a bed of purified ashes,79 taking a herbal brew,80 and embracing a woman, so long as he does not get aroused.81

‘Churning the hole’ (chidramanthana) refers to inserting a probe into the urethra and moving it around. Then, a hollow tube (nalikā) is inserted. Much detail is given about

76 Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapaddhati f. 30r, ll. 1-5: ‘Having rubbed the tongue with the tip of the thumb, it should be placed in the cavity [above the uvula]. [When] the breath has reached as far as the throat because of [practices,] such as śakticālana, he should take it through the cavity into the aperture between the eyebrows and fix it [there]. However, he should exhale the breath through the anus, when it has turned [downwards]. [Then,] he should take it in again’ (angūṭhāgrena gharītā kuhahe jihvā śhāpayaśayā | śakticālanaścina kaṭapaparyantaṁ vāyur āgato ’[isti sa vāyum kuhamārāṅgaṁ bhrāmāndhre naṁ saṁśayaṁ punah vipāritāṁ vāyum gudena recayet | punah gṛhyāṣṭāṁ gharītā ) emend. : gharītā Codex. śhāpayaśayā ] emend. : śhāpayaśayā Codex. vipāritāṁ ] emend. : vipāritāṁ Codex. vāyum ] emend. : vāyuh Codex. gudena ] emend. : gudana Codex).

77 Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapaddhati f. 25v, ll. 9-10 (atha vajroliḥ || meḥdrāvāreṇa vāyum ākṛṣya brahmārāndhaparyantaṁ naṁ | vajroliḥ bhavati).


80 Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapaddhati f. 26r, ll. 9-12: ‘Having steeped washed rice in water, one should put one kāra of sandalwood and three palas of candied sugar in one prastha of this water. One should drink three handfuls. In the middle of the day one should drink it two or three times. One will urinate frequently’ (dhūtataṭṭhulapādhāṃ udakam kṛtvā prasūṭamānrodake cāndanaṁ kāraṁkaraṁ keśpvā palatrayamānām khaṇḍāsarkarṣāṃ keśpvā cāndanaṁ pībel || divasamadhye dvītrīvāram pībel || vārāṁ vārāṁ mātroyet || -tandula- ] corr. :-tandula- Codex. kāraṁ ] emend. : kārā Codex. -mitām ] emend. : -mitā Codex. vārāṁ vārāṁ ] emend. : vārāṁ Codex).

81 Haṭṭhaḥbhyāsapaddhati f. 26r, ll. 12-13: ‘For quelling fever, he should embrace a woman. If his penis is aroused, he should not embrace her’ (jvarasāntiṣṭhāṁ strīyām āṅγgayaḥ || līṅgasphurāṇe saṁti nāṅgayaḥ).
the length and substances out of which the tube can be made. The yogin moves air in and out of the tube thousands of times by contracting the lower abdominal muscles. It is supposed to give the yogin the strength of a lizard, which enables him to take air up into the bladder until it puffs out like a pigeon’s throat. Also, the nalikā can be used to draw herbal concoctions into the body. Recipes of several concoctions are given. One cures boils (visphoṭa) and the others strengthen or cleanse the urethra (antarnāḍi). However, the main aims of drawing air through the tube are to quell the yogin’s carnal desires and to prevent the loss of semen.

Many extraordinary details are provided in the description of the practice of vajroli itself. The yogin begins by simulating the movements of sex with his hips, moving them in space until he is close to ejaculating. Then, he inserts the nalikā, and draws air into

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83 Haṭṭabhūṣapaddhati f. 26v, ll. 7-8: ‘The strength of a lizard, being brought about, he should take [air] up into the bladder. It [puffs out] like the throat of a pigeon’ (sanaṃkukālam bhavaṇī || saraṇakulaṃ kṛtvā bastipaḍesām ārdhvam āṇeyat || pārvatakanyḥan bhavaṇī || āṇeyat ] emend. : ācyer Codex).

84 Haṭṭabhūṣapaddhati f. 26r, ll. 10-16: ‘The yogin should draw water into the tube. Having ground up a thorny leaf (i.e., Flacourtia sapida) and having put some turmeric in it, he should add fresh ghee and a dash of salt. Having filtered it through a cloth, he should heat a small amount of this water and suck it through the tube. The boils will ripen. Then, having taken some bark of the neem tree, ground it with water, filtered it through cloth, he should let it sit for up to a day. It becomes concentrated and very smelly. It should [then] be drawn through the tube. The boils are drained’ (nalikāyā uδakaṁrahaṇam kuryāt || kṣaṭpatraṇaḥ pāṣaṇīyaṁ tamadhīya kīṁ cit haridṛm kṣiṇtvā sadyaḥ-jaoghṛtyām leśamātraṃ sanidhavaṇāṃ kṣipet || vartṛnaṃ sansādhya jātajalam alpaṃ uṣṇīkṛtya nalikāyā gṛhyām || visphoṭiḥ pakviḥ bhavaṇī || pūcamandasya atāḥ tvaṃ anīya uδakaṣaḥitaṁ pāṣaṇīyaṁ vartṛnaṃ sansādhya ekadinaṁparyaṇaṁ śṭhāpayet || sarsaṭ atigandhir bhavaṇī || nalikāyā gṛhyāḥ || visphoṭiḥ viśeṣanaṁ prāṇāmanaḥ || sannidhavaṇāṃ ] emend. : sādhaṇavaṃ Codex. uṣṇīkṛtya ] emend. : uṣṇīkṛtya Codex. gṛhyāṃ ] emend. : gṛhyāḥ Codex. tvaṃ ] corr. : tvaṃ Codex. -paryaṇaṇaḥ ] corr. : -paryaṇa Codex).

85 Haṭṭabhūṣapaddhati f. 27r, ll. 1-5: ‘The decoction of lākṣā (see below) should be drawn in [through the tube. By taking it] the urethra is cleansed. Having ground the leaves of the medini plant, put some catechu in it. Having filtered it through cloth and drawn it in [through the tube], the urethra brings firm. Having made a decoction of 3senna’ and Terminalia chebula (chebulic myrobalan), [the yogin] should draw it in. It expels impurities from the urethra’ (lākṣaśaṭyāyaḥ gṛhyāḥ || antarnāḍīḥ śuddhīḥ bhavaṇī || medinipatrīvaiḥ pāṣaṇīyaṁ tamadhīye kīṁ cit khadiraṁ kṣiṇtvā vartṛnaṃ sansādhya gṛhītvā antarnāḍīḥ dr̥vāḥ bhavaṇī || tvisomuṣāhiḥ/haṭṭabhūṣapaddhī kṛtvā gṛhyāyaḥ || antarnāḍīḥ malaniṃkāśaṇaṁ bhavaṇī || medini ] emend. : medini Codex. cit ] emend. : ci Codex. antarnāḍīḥ ] emend. : antarpādaḥ Codex. haritaki ] emend. : haritaki Codex. gṛhyāyaḥ antarnāḍīyaḥ ] corr. : gṛhyāyaḥ antarnāḍīyaḥ Codex. malaniṃkāśaṇaṇaḥ ] emend. : malaniṃkāśaśaṁaṇaḥ Codex. bhavaṇī ] emend. : bhava Codex). The term lākṣā is defined by the Monier-Williams dictionary as ‘obtained from the cochineal or a similar insect as well as from the resin of a particular tree.’ In Hindi, lākṣā means lac, shellac, or the lac insect; lākṣāṭara/lākṣāśvrka is the flame of the forest tree (Butea frondosa), paraṇa in Sanskrit, which has strong associations with the soma concoction; lākṣāprāśadāna is the lodha tree (Symlocos racemosa). Thanks to Matthew Clark for this observation. The term sonāmukhi may be Hindi for the senna plant. Matthew Clark has suggested it may be related to sonāmakkhi (Hindi), meaning pyrites.
the bladder to prevent the loss of semen. Further on, he is instructed to think of the beautiful qualities of a woman, before looking, standing near, touching, embracing, and having sex with a real one. The yogin progresses through these stages so long as he is not aroused, in which case he must stop and insert the nalikā. He develops the capacity to stop the downward flow of semen with an exercise of repeatedly stopping and releasing the flow of urine and faeces when excreting. He then has consensual sex with a wild and lustful woman, progressing to the point where he can have sex with

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86 Haṭṭhābhūṣapadhatti f. 27r, ll. 5–10: ‘Having supported [himself] on both knees, having crossed both arms on the chest, [the yogin] should move the region of the hips as though at the time of sex, going up to the point just before ejaculation. This is the [practice] of sex in space. Having repeatedly drawn in air, he should extract the tube. This is the [practice of] taking out the tube. After practising with the tube, he should draw in air with a probe. By these techniques, the body becomes very thin. ([jñānābhīṣyam avanīm avastabhīyā bāhū paraparam ārdaye baddhāvā katipadesam ratisamayavad) viryacalanaṁ maryādikṛtya cālayet [++] ākāśamaithuṇam bhavati [++] vāyum gṛhitvā gṛhitvā nālikām nīkādayat [++] nālikāṇīkāsanāṁ bhavati [++] nālikā[-]jāhīyāsānāntaram ālākayā vāyur grāhyah [++] etair abhyāsair atikṛśam šarīram bhavati [++] viryacalanaṁ maryādikṛtya ] emend.: violet Codex.

87 Haṭṭhābhūṣapadhatti f. 27r, ll. 12 – 27v, l. 3: ‘[The yogin] should himself recite a description of the beautiful qualities of women, that has been composed by a sensual poet. This is the [practice] of describing the beautiful qualities of women. When [reciting] this description does not stimulate him, he should look at a woman. When he [can do this and] remain cool, he should stand near a woman. Then, when that has no effect, he should touch her hand, etc. Then, when that becomes futile, he should embrace her. Then, when that has no effect, he should hug her so that heat arises excessively. When embracing has no effect, he should touch [her body], including her breasts. When that has no effect, he should penetrate her. This is the [practice of] looking at a woman, etc.’ (visāyaśaktakavinā kṛtaṁ stṛyugnavarāṇāṁ svatā mukhiṇa kartavyam [++] stṛyugnavarāṇāṁ bhavati [++] varnane nisteyaske jāte sryavaloṅkāraṁ bhavati [++] jac chitelī strīsāmipe sthātyavam [++] tat tucche jāte hastādīsparṣaṁ kartavyam [++] tad vitathibhitē ālīṅṇānaṁ kāryaṁ [++] tad vitathe jāte gāḍhaṁ gharma yathā bhavati tathā āśleṣaṁ kāryaṁ [++] āśleṣe vyaarthāte sattī ākrodasthānē sparṣaṁ kāryaṁ [++] tadbhavyatibhitē praveśaṁ kāryaṁ [++] sryavaloṅkāraṁ[-]jāhīyāśah [++] sryavaloṅkāraṁ ] emend.: sryavaloṅkāraṁ Codex. tacchitē ] emend.: tacchitē Codex. tat tucche ] emend.: tachitē Codex. tat tucche ] emend.: tachitē Codex. tadbhavyatīte ] emend.: dvitathījāte Codex. gharma ] emend.: gharma Codex. āśleṣa ] emend.: āśleṣa Codex. kārya ] emend.: kāyaḥ Codex. āśleṣe ] emend.: āśleṣe Codex. tadbhavyatibhitē ] emend.: tadbhavyatibhitē Codex).

88 Haṭṭhābhūṣapadhatti f. 27v, ll. 10-13: ‘Drawing up of semen is [now] taught. At the time of defecation, [the yogin] should stop defecating and emit urine. At the time of urination, he should stop urinating and defecate. [In this manner] he should release his urine little by little and his faeces little by little’ (ārdhvaṁ bindor ākāraṇaṁ kathya te hadanasaṁaye hadanam nirudhya mātrotānaṁ kāryaḥ [++] mātrotanamayē mātram nirudhya hadet [++] kīṁ cī kīṁ cī mātraṁ tyajey [++] kīṁ cī kīṁ cī gāḍhaṁ tyajey [++] bindor ] emend.: bindor Codex. kīṁcit kīṁcid ] emend.: kīṁcitakīṁcita Codex. kīṁcid ] emend.: kīcit Codex).
sixteen women a day without losing his semen. If this overexertion causes an imbalance in his system, he is advised to drink urine through his nostrils. If he does lose some semen during sex, he is instructed to rub it into his body along with the perspiration. On the whole, the main aim of the practice is to cultivate complete detachment (vairāgya) towards women and steadfast celibacy by retaining semen (and not, it seems, in regard to abstaining from sex).

9. The Śrītattvanidhi in Relation to the Ṣaṭhābhyāṣapaddhati

As noted above, it is certain that the Śrītattvanidhi was composed sometime between 1810 and 1868, and most probably after 1850. It is a textual and pictorial compendium of divine iconography and iconometry illustrated with 1,888 painted miniatures and 458 drawings. It contains technical instructions for artists on painting gods, goddesses, and mythological figures, and is divided into nine nidhis (‘treasures’) entitled 1) Śaṅkinidhi, 2) Viṣṇunidhi, 3) Śīvanidhi, 4) Brahmāṇidhi, 5) Grahanidhi, 6) Vaishnavanidhi, 7) Śaivaṇidhi, 8) Āgamanidhi, and 9) Kautukanidhi. As mentioned, it is in the seventh nidhi, the Śaivaṇidhi, that we find descriptions of āsanas identical to those of the Ṣaṭhābhyāṣapaddhati. We

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89 Ṣaṭhābhyāṣapaddhati f. 28r, ll. 1-9: ‘Then, he should have sex with a lustful woman. He should not lose his semen. He should draw back semen that is moving out. If it does not go upwards by drawing it [thus], then he should insert the tube and draw in air. Then, he should have sex with a lustful, excited, and beautiful woman and lead his semen upwards. He should avoid a woman without sexual desire and choose one who has it. In regard to sex with women, he should never do it by force. When the practice has become steady, he should have sex with sixteen women a day without losing his semen. If this overexertion causes an imbalance in his system, he is advised to drink urine through his nostrils. He becomes free of all diseases.

91 Śaṭhābhyāṣapaddhati f. 28r, ll. 11-12: ‘During the practice, semen should never be lost. If it is lost, [the yogin] should rub it into his body along with the sweat.’

92 See footnote 89.

93 Sjoman (1999, 41) notes that ‘The manuscript is a compilation of dhyānaslokas, meditation verses, probably compiled from the Purāṇas, describing the iconographic details of deities that are worshipped or meditated upon. In addition, it contains sections on games, animals, music, ragas, yoga and so on.’
have consulted two versions of the Śrītattvanidhi’s Śaivanidhi: a photographed copy of the illustrated manuscript from the Mysore Palace reproduced in Sjoman 1996, and a transcript of a manuscript held at the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, made by the Institute’s staff in the 1970s. We were not permitted to consult the original manuscripts of either copy. There are significant differences between the introductions of the Palace Śrītattvanidhi and the transcript of the ORI manuscript, some of which will be noted below. Two independent reports confirm that a third manuscript of the Śrītattvanidhi was stolen from the Palace’s collection and sold to a private art collector in the United States.\textsuperscript{94}

Sjoman notes the ‘curious’ divisions of the Śrītattvanidhi’s āsana descriptions and the ‘confusions in the text’, such as āsanas being referred to anaphorically before they are described and illustrated (1996, 57). Pointing out the terse, mnemonic character of earlier textual āsana descriptions, he also notes that ‘there appear to be even greater defects in the text here that would lead one to assume that the scribe might not be familiar with the āsana practices’ (1999, 58). Based on the manuscript(s) of the Śrītattvanidhi alone, or indeed the presumption that the āsana section in the Śrītattvanidhi represents an original, unique text, it would be impossible to account fully for these ‘defects’ and ‘confusions’. However, they can be convincingly accounted for by one of two hypotheses:

1. The Śrītattvanidhi is a redaction of the āsanas in the Haṭhābhyāsa-paddhati, plus other āsanas from one or more unknown sources. The descriptions of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati’s āsanas remain largely unchanged in the Śrītattvanidhi, but the process of redaction significantly changes the order of the postures.

2. This work of reordering (and subsequent ‘confusion’) occurred during the composition of an earlier, intermediate source text, which provided an exemplar for the Śrītattvanidhi.

Given the existence of a manuscript of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati in the Mysore Palace archives, the first hypothesis is more likely. Nonetheless, the rationale for the reordering of the postures of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati remains a mystery, especially because the Śrītattvanidhi does not arrange its āsanas as groups and sequences in the way that the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati does. Given that we know of no other lists of premodern āsanas that are sequential, this is perhaps not overly surprising. It may be

\textsuperscript{94} These sources wish to remain anonymous. Apparently, it was reported at the time in the local newspapers of Bangalore.
that the sequential nature of the original was of little importance to the compiler of the āsana section in the Śrītattvanidhi (or intermediate source text) or indeed, as Sjoman surmises, that the scribe was simply not familiar with the āsana practices as described in the source text.\textsuperscript{95}

Another possibility we have considered to account for the rearrangement of the āsanas in the Śrītattvanidhi is that the original folios of the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati (or another, similar source text) somehow got jumbled by the artist or scribe, and copied out in their new, and thereafter non-sequential, order. However, as we shall see, it is clear that the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi (or possibly an intermediate source text) in fact made a conscious, deliberate rearrangement of the source text’s āsanas, which was probably based on either a text (or texts) other than the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati or, perhaps, on his own prior knowledge of yoga, or that of close informants. It is unlikely that the reordering evident in the Śrītattvanidhi is either accidental or a result of a compiler’s ignorance of āsana practice.

In the introduction to the ORI transcript of the Śrītattvanidhi, the first eighty āsanas of the Śrītattvanidhi are said to be ‘principal’ (mukhya), because they are ‘appropriate for yoga’ (yogayoga). Those after eighty are said to be ‘additional’ or ‘secondary’ (adhika).\textsuperscript{96} The Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati has only one hundred and twelve postures while the Śrītattvanidhi has one hundred and twenty-two postures. Seven postures in the Śrītattvanidhi’s ‘principal’ āsana list (Śrītattvanidhi 64, 75-80) are common, seated poses that, unlike many of the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati’s postures, are well attested and appear in

\textsuperscript{95} However, it is also clear at times that the artist(s) of the Śrītattvanidhi had more information on (what he believed to be) the execution of the pose than is revealed by the Sanskrit description. In many instances, the artist(s) added small details to the postures that are not mentioned in the descriptions of the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati, such as the hands pointing forward in mayūrāsana (39), the hands placed beside the head on the ground in headstand (kapālāsana 45), the upward position of the head in śāśāsana (28), and so on. However, perhaps, the most striking example is viratāsana (20) in which, according to the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati, the yogin is supposed to lift his torso up and down while sitting on the heels. This repetitive movement is almost impossible to do by oneself. The artist(s) of the Śrītattvanidhi depicted a second person, who is not mentioned in the Ḫathābhhyāsapaddhati, assisting the yogin by holding his knees down, which would enable the yogin to perform the prescribed movement. We wish to thank Jacqueline Hargreaves for bringing this to our attention.

\textsuperscript{96} Śrītattvanidhi (ORI transcript, pp. 227-229): ‘[…] the others are virāsana, padmāsana and siddhāsana. [These] āsanas, which number eighty and are suitable for yoga, are principal. After that, vrṣapādākeśpāsana, […] and the other is kuṭānatrayāsana. [These] forty-two āsanas, taught thus in this text, are additional. For, all of the yoṣāanas have been arranged in a grid of pairs’ ([…] anyad virāsanaṃ padmāsanaṃ siddhāsanaṃ tv iti | mukhyaṃ aṣṭisankhyāni yogayogyāsanāni hi || atah paramā cāpi vrṣapādākeśpāsanaṃ tathā || […] || trikūṭānāsanaṃ cānyād ity evam adhikānā api || pradarśitāyā āsanāni dvivatvārāṇāmi hi). We have assumed that trikūṭānāsanaṃ is an incorrect spelling of trikūṭānāsanaṃ.
many premodern yoga texts. These postures do not appear in the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati, and have either been 1) added to the Śrītattvanidhi from a different yoga text, or 2) added to an exemplar from which the Śrītattvanidhi was more or less exactly copied. If the first proposition is true, the addition of these particular postures strongly suggests that the reordering of the original text’s postures was a conscious and intentional choice by the redactor of the Śrītattvanidhi, who perhaps knew of another yoga text (or texts) in which these yogāsanaś were given primacy and who thought it important to include them. The introduction to the Śrītattvanidhi from the Mysore Palace declares that these eighty ‘principal’ postures are all found in scripture on yoga (yogaśāstra). As we demonstrate in the next section, it is probable that this choice has a precedent in an intermediary text known to the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi and identified in a related work called the Sānkhyāraṇamālā as the Haṭhayogapradīpikā.

Regardless of whether hypothesis one or two (stated above) is the case, we know that seventy-three of the eighty ‘principal’ āsanas of the Śrītattvanidhi were originally extracted from the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati, and the ‘additional’ āsanas placed together at the end without significant reordering. As we shall see, the numbers corresponding to the ordering of the postures in the Śrītattvanidhi have been written in the left and right margins of the Mysore Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati (see section 2.3, above, and section 11, below), which supports the case that it was the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi who did the work of extraction and reordering of the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati, rather than the compiler of an earlier text that became the exemplar for the Śrītattvanidhi. Furthermore, by identifying which of the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati’s āsanas correspond to the ‘additional’ āsanas of the Śrītattvanidhi, as shown in Table 1, we can see clearly how the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi has constructed his text. The substantially successive order of the secondary āsanas proves that the source text is in roughly the same order

97 These postures are: 64. yogāsana, 75. sukhāsana, 76. śīnḥāsana, 77. bhadrāsana, 78. virāsana, 79. padmāsana, and 80. siddhāsana. Padmāsana is in the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati, but it is part of the description of uttānakārmaśana (19) and is not a separate pose. The Śrītattvanidhi’s seated postures 75-80 are listed in Patañjalayoṣaśāstra 1.46 and described in Śaṅkara’s commentary, the Patañjalayoṣaśāstra. In Haṭhayopadīpikā 1.34, siddhāsana, padmāsana, śīnḥāsana, and bhadrāsana are said to be the best four āsanas. Apart from padmāsana, descriptions of these postures may vary from one text to another. The other postures in the Śrītattvanidhi which are not in the Haṭhābhīṣṣa-paddhati are: 120. kuṭṭanatrayāsana, 121. yogapāṭṭāsana, and 122. añjaliṅkāsana. For a discussion of kuṭṭanatrayāsana, see footnote 8.

98 Śrītattvanidhi (Sjoman 1999, plate 1) (yogāsananum yogāśramatrām jīvam aṣṭīdhal).

99 The names of the postures included among the Śrītattvanidhi’s principal āsanas can be seen in Table 2.

100 It is noteworthy that that the Palace Śrītattvanidhi omits the ‘additional’ āsanas from the list in its introduction, while the list in the introduction to the transcript of the ORI manuscript includes them.
as the *Hathābhūyāśapaddhati* (which would not be obvious simply from the fact that the āsana descriptions are the same in both texts).

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<tr>
<th>HAP</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>2-6</td>
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<td>11, 16, 1, 3, 2</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>8-9</td>
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<td>10, 21</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>7, 8, 17, 5, 9, 6</td>
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<td>19-20</td>
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<td>21-29</td>
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<td>21, 20, 12, 14, 13, 15, 18, 24, 23</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>31-36</td>
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<td>62-64</td>
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<td>48</td>
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For example, the first of the non-principal āsanas in the Śrītattvanidhi is vrṣapādakṣepāsana (81), which is the first āsana in the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati. Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati 2-6 are classed as ‘principal’ in the Śrītattvanidhi. The second non-principal āsana, māṛjārottānāsana (82), is number 7 in the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati. Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati 8-9 correspond to ‘principal’ āsanas in the Śrītattvanidhi, and Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati 10 (markaṭāsana) is the third principal āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi (83). This pattern holds for Śrītattvanidhi postures 81-89. Śrītattvanidhi 90-105 follow the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati’s sequence (i.e., the numbers never run backwards), but they are

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<td>96-98</td>
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<td>99-104</td>
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<td>49, 71, 60, 72, 67, 66</td>
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<td>105-106</td>
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<td>107-108</td>
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<td>59, 68</td>
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<td>109-110</td>
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<td>111-112</td>
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<td>70, 74</td>
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**Table 1:** Śrītattvanidhi’s ordering and division of āsanas compared to the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati.
interspersed with other postures, not all of which exactly follow the Haṭhābhyaṣapaddhati’s order.

This gives us an insight into how the compiler of the Śrīttattvanidhi used the Haṭhābhyaṣapaddhati as a ‘donor’ for his manuscript, extracting seventy-three postures from it, adding seven from elsewhere, and designating them as ‘principal,’ but substantially reordering them according to either another śāstra or his own lights (and therein losing the sequential nature of the Haṭhābhyaṣapaddhati). In contrast to this considered process of reordering, he seems to have mechanically extracted the remainder from this text and placed them at the end as ‘additional āsanas,’ thus (perhaps unwittingly) preserving the order of some poses as they appear in the Haṭhābhyaṣapaddhati.

10. The Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā and the Haṭhayogaprādīpikā

The Śrīttattvanidhi’s notion that there are eighty ‘principal’ postures is reflected in another text called the Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā, which was completed in Mysore on Thursday, 29th March, 1849 CE, according to a note in the descriptive catalogue of the Mysore Oriental Research Institute. The Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā is a lexicon whose lists are arranged numerically according to the total number of items that they contain. For example, the auxiliaries (āṅga) of aṣṭāṅgayoga are listed under the number 8. The Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā is reportedly cited in the Grahanidhi, which is the fifth nidhi of the Śrīttattvanidhi. This would mean that it predates the seventh nidhi (i.e., the Saivanidhi), in which the āsanas appear. If this is true, the Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā is therefore not derived from the Śrīttattvanidhi.

In the Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā’s manuscript, the first forty-four āsana names are listed in two columns on folio 356b, while the remainder are on folio 357a. Thirty of the āsanas on folio 357a are listed in two columns and the last six in one. This unusual layout is

101 Column 14 of Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts by Malleddevaru et al. (1987, 462-63) states saumya, caitra, śu 5 guruvāra, which can be understood as ‘Thursday, on the 5th lunar day, in the bright half of the month caitra in the year, saumya [in the 60 years’ cycle of Jupiter].’ As far as we know, only one copy of this work was made, so we assume this date refers to the date of its composition. It is likely that the last nidhi of at least one of the Śrīttattvanidhis has similar information, but we have not been permitted to view the original work by those institutions which hold them.

102 This information has been provided by the Mysore Oriental Research Institute, but we have not been able to verify this ourselves by viewing the manuscript.

103 Furthermore, in instances where the text of the Haṭhābhyaṣapaddhati has omitted the name of a posture, the artist of the Śrīttattvanidhi has supplied a name in red ink. If the compiler of the Saṅkhyaṛatnamālā had copied from the Śrīttattvanidhi, one would expect these supplied names also to occur there, which they do not.
reproduced below in Table 2. The postures in the Sankhyāratnamālā’s manuscript are not numbered. However, we have added in square brackets the corresponding āsana numbers in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati and the Śrītattvanidhi.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio 356b, Columns 1 &amp; 2</th>
<th>yogurtanāgaḥ hāṭhayogapradipikāyām</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>parighāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 2] [ŚTN 11] dhvajāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parasvadhāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 3] [ŚTN 6] vṛkāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anantāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 4] [ŚTN 1] naukāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aṅkuśāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 5] [ŚTN 3] vakrāsanam (cakrāsanā)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uttānāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 6] [ŚTN 2] matsyāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trikūṭāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 9] [ŚTN 21] gajāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narakāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 14] [ŚTN 8] ṛkṣāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lanḍalāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 86] [ŚTN 17] rathāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paryankāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 16] [ŚTN 5] śaśāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kandukāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 18] [ŚTN 6] ajāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dṛṣadāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 21] [ŚTN 19] kākāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lunṭhanāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 22] [ŚTN 20] bakāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saraṭāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 23] [ŚTN 12] khaḍgāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taraṅgaśanam</td>
<td>[HAP 26] [ŚTN 15] śūlāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cāṭākāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 32] [ŚTN 26] śyenāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tittirīyāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 34] [ŚTN 29] sarpāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhāradvājāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 36] [ŚTN 28] cakrāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mayārāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 39] [ŚTN 32] mālāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kapālāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 45] [ŚTN 31] haṃśāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baddhapadmāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 52] [ŚTN 33] pāśāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kukkuṭāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 53] [ŚTN 36] grahāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vānarāsanam</td>
<td>[HAP 59] [ŚTN 37] kubjāsanam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folio 357a, Columns 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>pādukāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 67]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utpiḍāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 75]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vimalāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 76 – called vimāṇāsana]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kapotāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 77]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tāṇḍavāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 80]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musalāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 88]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garuḍāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 93]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paraṇyāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 94]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varāhāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 104]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svastikāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 107]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhanurāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 51 – unnamed]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siddhāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP -]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aśvasādhānasanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 70]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ucchirṣakāsana</td>
<td>[HAP 65]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ūrṇanābhyāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 99]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tṛṇajalākāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 101]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uttānāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 112]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trivikramāsanaṃ</td>
<td>[HAP 81]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2:** Saṅkhya-ratnamālā’s āsana list on folios 356b and 357a compared with the Pune Haṭṭhābhyāsapaddhati (HAP) and the Śrītaṭtvanidhi (ŚTN).
Under the number 80 in the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*, there is a list of eighty āsanas. Why the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā* should consider the āsanas to be eighty in number, instead of the more common eighty-four, is not entirely clear. However, it cites the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* as the source for this list. If a text by the name ‘*Haṭhayogapradīpikā*’ was indeed the source of this group of eighty postures, then its section on āsana must have been substantially different to the fifteenth-century *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, sometimes erroneously referred to as the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, which contains only fifteen āsanas. As seen in Table 2, the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*’s list includes the common seated postures that are in the Śrītattvanidhi (64, 75-80), with the exception of padmāsana (*Śrītattvanidhi* 79). These postures are not in the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai*. Their inclusion in the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā* may indicate, then, that the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*’s section on āsanas is at least a partial redaction of the postures in the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai* in so far as seventy-three of its eighty postures have the same names as those in the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai*, many of which are unique among yogaśāstras. It may be 1) that the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* had only eighty āsanas (as opposed to the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai*’s one hundred and twelve); 2) that the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* foregrounded eighty of a larger collection; or 3) that the compiler of the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā* extracted seventy-four postures from the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai* and added six seated postures from another source. The last proposition is only possible if the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*’s claim that its eighty postures all come from the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* is not true. Whichever of these three possibilities is in fact the case, and at whichever stage the work of redaction took place, the important point is that the ultimate principal source of the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*’s āsanas, with the

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104 *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*, f. 356b (80 yoṅāsanaśāalu haṭhayogapradīpikāyām).

105 Three of the four colophons of the *Jyotsnā* (a nineteenth-century commentary on the fifteenth-century *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*) refer to the root text as the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* (*Ayanag 1972, 72, 121, 181, 185*). Also, there are many catalogue entries under the name *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, which may reflect the colophons of the manuscripts being reported (Kaivalyadhama Research Department 2005, 531-543). In modern English print publications, the title *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* probably occurs for the first time with C.R.S. Ayangar’s translation for the Theosophical Society of 1893. Panacham Sinh’s translation for the Sacred Books edition of 1915 continues this trend, as do many later print publications, with the exception of Kaivalyadhama’s 1970 critical edition. Subsequently, this title becomes standard in popular yoga instruction, including in perhaps the most influential of modern postural yoga manuals, B.K.S. Iyengar’s *Light on Yoga* (1966).

106 It is possible that the compiler of the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* intended eighty-four āsanas but only included eighty in a list, which is not an uncommon problem with lists in Sanskrit works. Another simple, if rather unsatisfying, explanation of why there are eighty āsanas in the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā* is that the idiosyncratic number system of the dictionary meant that the entry 84 was already taken (by the 84 siddhas) and that therefore another position had to be found for the āsanas. If such simple pragmatism is the explanation, it would strengthen the argument that it was the *Sānkhyāyānatnamālā*’s compiler who made the redaction of the eighty postures from a text (i.e., the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*) that is similar or identical to the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhatai*. 
exception of seven seated postures, can be shown to be the Haṭhäuserasapaddhati (as we shall show in more detail below).

It is likely that a manuscript of the Haṭhayogapradīpikā still exists in the Mysore Palace archives, because Sjoman (1999, 57) states that he viewed a work by this name which is 'a compilation of yoga texts in an illustrated manuscript in the Palace Library,' and which contains the one hundred and twenty-one āsanas found in the Śrītattvanidhi as well as others.’ He states, ‘It is not possible to determine whether [the Haṭhayogapradīpikā] is earlier or later than the Śrītattvanidhi (1999, 63 n. 23).’ However, given that the Saṅkhāratramalā definitely predates the Śrītattvanidhi, and that its source is the Haṭhayogapradīpikā, we can in fact be certain that the Haṭhayogapradīpikā predates the Śrītattvanidhi. Sjoman’s assertion also lends support to the view that the Haṭhayogapradīpikā contains more than eighty postures.

As shown in Table 2, all of the Saṅkhāratramalā’s āsanas occur in the Śrītattvanidhi and seventy-three of these are in the Haṭhäuserasapaddhati. Furthermore, almost all of the Śrītattvanidhi’s ‘principal’ āsanas correspond to the Saṅkhāratramalā’s list of eighty, which is explicitly attributed to the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. If this attribution is true, then it is more probable that the Śrītattvanidhi’s compiler knew and drew from a yoga text, such as the Haṭhayogapradīpikā, rather than a dictionary (kośa), like the Saṅkhāratramalā, because the Śrītattvanidhi’s principal āsanas are said to derive from scripture on yoga (yogasāstra). Whether one reads the columns of Saṅkhāratramalā’s list horizontally or vertically, the order of its āsanas does not correspond to that of the principal postures in the Śrītattvanidhi. The significance of this difference is uncertain because there is nothing to suggest that the compilers of the Saṅkhāratramalā or Śrītattvanidhi intended to record a particular sequence of the postures. Nonetheless, it does suggest that each list was created by different compilers. We will now discuss why these different compilers are likely to have used the same source text, namely the Haṭhayogapradīpikā.

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107 This is the Sarasvati Bhandar Library, which Sjoman refers to as ‘the private library of His Late Highness Sri Jayachamrajendra Wodeyar’ (1996, 40).

108 However, since it was written in the Kannada script, Sjoman was unable to read the manuscript, but was told that its name was the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. He did not make any copies or reproductions of it (p.c. 5th December, 2017).

109 Posture 71 of the Saṅkhāratramalā, dhanurāsana, corresponds to posture 109 of the Śrītattvanidhi, and is the only one of the Saṅkhāratramalā’s list of eighty postures that is relegated to the non-primary, ‘additional’ group by the Śrītattvanidhi.

110 See footnote 98 for the reference in the Śrītattvanidhi.
As we can see from Table 2, with the exception of only one posture, śāṅkvasana (Śrītattvanidhi 22; Sānkhyāratnamālā 11), the first thirty-seven of the Sānkhyāratnamālā’s āsanas in columns 1 and 2 on folio 356b are the same (albeit in a different order) as the first thirty-eight of the Śrītattvanidhi. In fact, only four āsanas on the next folio (i.e., 357a) of the Sānkhyāratnamālā figure among the Śrītattvanidhi’s first forty-four postures.111 These correspondences suggest that the compilers of the Sānkhyāratnamālā and Śrītattvanidhi used the same source text. However, it could not have solely been the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati because this work does not include the seated postures (e.g., siddhāsana, virāsana, bhadrāsana, etc.) that are common to the Sānkhyāratnamālā and Śrītattvanidhi. Therefore, it seems most likely that the eighty principal postures of the Śrītattvanidhi and those of the Sānkhyāratnamālā were taken from the same source, which was identified by the latter as the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā.

To summarise our analysis so far, we can conclude that there were two different compilers for the Śrītattvanidhi and the Sānkhyāratnamālā, that they both used the same source (i.e., the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā) but for some reason arranged the āsanas in a different order. Furthermore, given 1) the direct textual correspondence between the āsana descriptions of the Śrītattvanidhi and the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati, 2) the explicit, declared borrowing of the Sānkhyāratnamālā from the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā, 3) the fact that the eighty postures of the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā are (with noted exceptions) drawn from a text similar to the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati, and 4) the Śrītattvanidhi compiler’s evident familiarity with the declared source text of the Sānkhyāratnamālā (i.e., the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā), it may well be that the Hāṭhāyogaprādipikā’s section on āsana is in fact similar to the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati’s; has seven more seated āsanas than the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati; is the source of the Sānkhyāratnamālā’s selection of eighty-āsanas; and is one of the source texts, if not the exemplar, for the Śrītattvanidhi.

11. The Mysore Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati and the Śrītattvanidhi

Important in building our understanding of the relationship between the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati, Sānkhyāratnamālā, and Śrītattvanidhi has been the recent discovery of an illustrated manuscript of the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati in the Mysore Palace archives, described in section 2.3. The discovery of this manuscript enables us to postulate with a high degree of probability that the redactor of the Śrītattvanidhi used the Hāṭhābhyāṣapaddhati as a source text. As noted in section 2.3, each āsana in the Mysore

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111 These four postures are śāṅkvasana (Śrītattvanidhi 22; Sānkhyāratnamālā 46), gāruḍāsana (Śrītattvanidhi 39; Sānkhyāratnamālā 63), pāḍukāsana (Śrītattvanidhi 41; Sānkhyāratnamālā 47), and parvatāsana (Śrītattvanidhi 43; Sānkhyāratnamālā 45).
manuscript has at least three different sets of numbers. The first set of numbers corresponds exactly with the numbering of the Pune manuscript, until the scribe of the Mysore manuscript repeats numbers 86 and 87.

The second set enumerates the illustrations in ascending order up to 114, which is two more than the number of āsanas in the Pune manuscript. In fact, the last posture called sukhāsana is not in the text of the Pune manuscript and its description is identical to that of the Śrītattvanidhi (āsana no. 75). Therefore, sukhāsana may have been added to the Mysore Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati manuscript before it was incorporated into the Śrītattvanidhi. Although we have not had access to the folios containing āsana no. 1-52, it seems likely that another posture, which may also be in the Śrītattvanidhi, was added before āsana no. 53 (see footnote 8).

The third set of numbers in the Mysore Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati has been written in the left and right margins by a different hand in larger numerals than those of the first two sets. The third set corresponds to the number of each āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi, the order of which, as noted, is different to that of the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati. Given their position, these numbers were probably added after the manuscript was scribed, perhaps by a person who was involved in compiling the Śrītattvanidhi’s chapter on āsana. Up to this point, we have been unable to say with any certainty whether the Śrītattvanidhi’s redaction of the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati’s āsanas into ‘primary’ and ‘additional’ occurred at the time of the Śrītattvanidhi’s composition or at the time of the composition of an exemplar from which the Śrītattvanidhi copied, and which we are proposing is the Haṭhayogaprādipikā (because this is the stated source of the Śrītattvanidhi, and the Śrītattvanidhi clearly follows the same source). The existence of these marginal numbers suggests, however, that this work of redaction occurred during the composition of the Śrītattvanidhi. This does not, unfortunately, conclusively resolve the conundrum of the identity of the Haṭhayogaprādipikā and Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati, since the marginal numbers may reflect the order of the already redacted Haṭhayogaprādipikā, with the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati serving as a secondary reference for the Śrītattvanidhi’s compiler. Also, it may have been the case that the Haṭhayogaprādipikā had only eighty postures and the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi used the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati to add another forty-two. While these last two possibilities seem

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112 It is also possible that sukhāsana already appears in the unknown hyperarchetype from which the Mysore manuscript is copied. However, this is unlikely because the number of the descriptions of the āsanas in the Mysore manuscript (i.e., the first set noted above) ends at 112. Also, given that the Śrītattvanidhi has 122 āsanas and one of the additional āsanas in the Mysore manuscript has the same name and description as that in the Śrītattvanidhi (viz. sukhāsana), it seems more likely that two āsanas were added to the Mysore manuscript from a source also used for the Śrītattvanidhi, rather than sukhāsana being omitted from the Pune manuscript.
less likely, they should be kept in mind until more information on these manuscripts is brought to light.

The Pune and Mysore manuscripts have different scribal errors and enough significant divergences in their readings to indicate that both descend from slightly different hyparchetypes of the text. For example, chatrāsana and vimānāsana in the Pune manuscript are called cakrāsana and vimalāsana respectively in the Mysore manuscript. As mentioned above, the Mysore manuscript may have two āsanas which are not in the Pune manuscript, which indicates that the content of the former was redacted in ways not seen in the latter. In nearly all cases, errors in the readings of the Mysore manuscript are replicated in the Śrītattvanidhi. However, there are a few instances where the redactor of the Śrītattvanidhi has corrected poor readings and conjectured the names of missing postures in the Pune and Mysore manuscripts. This reveals that the compilers of the Śrītattvanidhi attempted to fix some of the textual problems that had occurred earlier in the transmission of the Haṭḥābhyāsapaddhati. Therefore, the Śrītattvanidhi’s compiler appears to have taken a more proactive, editorial role in compiling the chapter on āsana, which may support the argument that he was not simply copying from an exemplar.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the Mysore Haṭḥābhyāsapaddhati manuscript was the source, or more precisely one of the direct sources, for the Śrītattvanidhi. Lending further support to this is the likelihood that the artistically sophisticated illustrations of the Mysore Haṭḥābhyāsapaddhati provided a model for the very similar illustrations of the Śrītattvanidhi. If, as we concluded in section 10, the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā had at least seven seated āsanas that are not in the Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati, then the Śrītattvanidhi was probably created by supplementing the contents of the Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati with material from the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā, and deferring to the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā for foregrounding the group of eighty principal āsanas.

If the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā’s section on āsana was substantially similar to the Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati’s, one might ask whether the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā was in fact the Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati, with the additional content in the Saṅkhya-ratnamāla’s list being borrowed surreptitiously from elsewhere? If this were so, then one would have to assume one of the following: 1) the Mysore manuscript of the Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati has a colophon or an additional statement that names the work as the Haṭṭhayogaprādipīkā; or 2) the Mysore manuscript was wrongly labelled and catalogued in the archive (as also happens to be the case with the Pune Haṭṭābhyāsapaddhati manuscript), under the title

113 See footnotes 9 and 28.
Haṭhayogapradīpikā. The second possibility seems less likely in this instance because the redactors of the Sankhyaśratnamālā and Śrītattvanidhi were clearly familiar with the content of the sources they were using. Moreover, if the Mysore Haṭhayāśapaddhati was in fact the Haṭhayogapradīpikā cited in the Sankhyaśratnamālā, then the compiler of the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s attribution is not entirely true because at least seven of its āsanas were derived from elsewhere.

As a conclusion to sections 9, 10, and 11, let us summarise our observations on the role of the Haṭhayāśapaddhati in compiling the Sankhyaśratnamālā and Śrītattvanidhi, and its likely relation to the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. Firstly, the Sankhyaśratnamālā identifies its source as the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. Seventy-three of the āsana names in the Sankhyaśratnamālā correspond to the Haṭhayāśapaddhati, and the order of the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s āsanas appears to have been derived from a source text that was similar to the Haṭhayāśapaddhati. Therefore, both the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s list and the Haṭhayogapradīpikā’s section on āsana are substantially similar to the Haṭhayāśapaddhati. Nonetheless, if the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s attribution is true, the Sankhyaśratnamālā and Haṭhayogapradīpikā have at least seven additional seated postures, which indicates that the Haṭhayāśapaddhati was not the only source used for the Haṭhayogapradīpikā.

Secondly, the Śrītattvanidhi states that its eighty primary āsanas are drawn from a yogaśāstra. This primary group is almost exactly the same (though not in the same order) as the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s list. Therefore, the śāstra to which the Śrītattvanidhi refers can reasonably be identified as the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. The order of the Śrītattvanidhi’s primary and additional āsanas shows clear traces of redaction from the Haṭhayāśapaddhati. Furthermore, the marginal numbering in the Mysore Haṭhayāśapaddhati suggests that the compiler of the Śrītattvanidhi worked with the Haṭhayāśapaddhati.

Finally, our research suggests that the Haṭhayāśapaddhati’s section on āsana was the main source for the Śrītattvanidhi and Sankhyaśratnamālā. If the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s claim to derive all eighty of its postures from the Haṭhayogapradīpikā is true, then the names of postures that are unique to the Haṭhayāśapaddhati entered the Sankhyaśratnamālā via the Haṭhayogapradīpikā. The Haṭhayogapradīpikā may be the source of the Sankhyaśratnamālā’s and Śrītattvanidhi’s seated āsanas, which are not in the Haṭhayāśapaddhati, and it may be responsible for the Śrītattvanidhi’s foregrounding of eighty āsanas. Therefore, the chapter on āsana in the Śrītattvanidhi is the result of combining the content of the Haṭhayāśapaddhati with another text which might be called the Haṭhayogapradīpikā.
Figure 5: Relationship between the Hatha Yoga Saptadhahati, Śrītattvanidhi and Saṃkhyāratnamālā. Image by Jacqueline Hargreaves (2018).
The above observations are depicted in Figure 5.

Until we are able to consult the Mysore Ṣrītattvanidhi in its entirety, and the other illustrated sources we know to exist in the Mysore Palace archives, our concluding observations remain provisional.

In section 13.1, we present one further piece of evidence for the existence of a secondary source from which the Śrītattvanidhi is redacted and which may support our above observations on the Ṣrīhayogapradīpīkā.

12. The Vyāyamādīpikē

The Vyāyamādīpikē, Elements of Gymnastic Exercises, Indian System (hereafter Vyāyamādīpikē), written in Mysore by S.R. Bharadwaj and published in 1896, is a Kannada-language manual of physical education aiming at a ‘revival of the Indian gymnastics’ among school children (1896 [English preface], 1). The author proposes that the eighty-four exercises ‘may be found to be superior to the modern or western method’ because they require no apparatus.114 The eighty-four exercises are divided into sections which include running, walking, hopping, and jumping exercises; types of staff (daṇḍa) postures; standing exercises for the legs; sitting exercises; exercises (called līvi) which help to build the body and make it flexible and stable; further jumping exercises; and exercises for the joints and blood circulation. Although Bharadwaj states that he draws on Indian, English, and American authorities (1896, 2), the text may help us to discern some elements of older traditions of wrestling, gymnastics, and exercise that comprise his ‘revival.’ Sjoman identifies the Vyāyamādīpikē as a record of ‘the Mysore Palace Gymnastics Tradition’ insofar as Bharadwaj’s teacher, Veeranna, was likely also the teacher of the Mahārāja Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar from 1892 to 1901 (1996, 53). Sjoman’s analysis of the text focusses on similarities between the Vyāyamādīpikē and the āsanas taught in the Krishnamacharya tradition (on which see section 13.2), as represented in B.K.S. Iyengar’s 1966 publication Light on Yoga. However, several of the Vyāyamādīpikē’s exercises are also similar to some of the more unusual āsanas in the Ṣrīhāthābhyaśapaddhati that do not feature in the Krishnamacharya systems, which may point to a synthesis of gymnastics and yoga postures that predates the twentieth-century postural yoga revival.

114 As noted by Singleton (2010, 85-86), the purported superiority of apparatus-free gymnastics exercises (such as those of P.H. Ling) over equipment-based systems (such as that of Archibald Maclaren) is a rhetorical trope widely found in physical culture writing of this period, particularly in India, and is echoed in later modern yoga manuals (for example, Iyengar 1966, 10).
For example, the Vyāyāmadipike’s ‘rolling on the wall’ exercise (1896, 35-36, no. 20), in which the student leans forward from a standing position and touches his chest against the wall, is very similar to the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati’s ‘embracing [the wall] posture’ (āliṅgānāsana), with the difference that in the Vyāyāmadipike the chest is rolled from left to right. The Vyāyāmadipike’s kiluputa, or ‘low jump’ exercise (1896, 44, no. 30), in which the student jumps up and touches the heels to the buttocks is the same as the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati’s ‘deer posture’ (hariṇāsana). Other postures, such as the jumping exercises known as meluputa are suggestive of, if not identical to, the other jumping exercises of the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati’s standing sequence. The Vyāyāmadipike’s ‘second gardam’ (1896, 55, no. 43) in which the student stands on his hands and touches his nose to the ground is similar to the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati’s ‘hawk posture’ (śyenāsana). The Vyāyāmadipike also teaches mayūrāsana (1896, 56, no. 44) and notes that this is the name of the posture in yoga texts (yogaśāstra). It is the only exercise that corresponds in name and form to an āsana from the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati, and the only one explicitly associated with yoga, which should perhaps not be overly surprising given the prominence of mayūrāsana in many premodern yoga texts.

The appearance of these exercises in a gymnastics manual of the late nineteenth century from Mysore may indicate either that Bharadwaj (or his teacher Veeranna) was familiar with the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati or, more likely, that the āsanas and exercises common to both were part of a wider tradition of yoga that included conditioning exercises of a ‘gymnastic’ nature. If this is the case, yoga’s association with exercise (vyāyāma) was well established by the time of the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati’s composition. And, as we shall see, the Mysore Palace yoga teacher of the 1930s, T. Krishnamacharya, inherited and developed this tradition, probably with direct reference to both the Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati and the Vyāyāmadipike.

115 Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati 83; Śrītattvanidhi 96.
116 Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati 87; Śrītattvanidhi 69.
117 Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati 44; Śrītattvanidhi 38. The main difference is that the second gardam is done against a wall, whereas śyenāsana is done from free-standing handstand.
118 Hāṭhābhīṣāpaddhati 39; Śrītattvanidhi 32.
119 We propose this with the caveat that the terms ‘gymnastics’ and ‘conditioning exercises’ are anachronistic and may not reflect any comparable and distinct categories within Indian traditions. The Vyāyāmadipike’s use of these terms reflects the modern, western vocabulary of physical culture.
13. The Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati’s Place in the Modern History of Haṭhayoga

13.1 T. Krishnamacharya

The Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati may have a particular significance in the history of transnational yoga in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries insofar as it is one of the sources of the āsana section of the Śrītattvanidhi, a text which itself appears as one of twenty-seven source texts of the 1934 book Yoga Makaranda by the famed yoga teacher T. Krishnamacharya (?1888-1989). As we shall see, there may also be reasons to suppose that Krishnamacharya was familiar with the Mysore manuscript of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati examined above, as well as the other sources associated with the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati, such as the Hathayogaprādīpikā.

Krishnamacharya’s students have been highly influential in shaping the development of contemporary postural yoga practices around the world. During the 1930s and 1940s, Krishnamacharya was employed by the Mahārāja of Mysore to teach yoga classes for the youth of the royal family, as well as evening classes for the general public at the Jaganmohan Palace. It was during this period of Krishnamacharya’s long teaching career that he developed a method of linking postures into groups of dynamic sequences. This dynamic sequencing is also evident in the early work of his student and brother-in-law B.K.S. Iyengar (1918-2014, founder of Iyengar Yoga), and especially in the groups of sequences taught by his student K. Pattabhi Jois (1915-2009) which have come to be known as Ashtanga Yoga, or Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga. These systems and their offshoots have been second to none in providing a contemporary, global vocabulary for postural yoga orthopraxis (Singleton 2010).

As well as the evident familiarity of Krishnamacharya with the Śrītattvanidhi, we know of the existence of an album of āsana drawings in the possession of Krishnamacharya’s family which are strikingly similar to the illustrations in the Mysore Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati and the Śrītattvanidhi. Krishnamacharya’s grandson Kausthub Desikachar (2005, 65) states that the drawings were done by the daughter of Krishnamacharya’s guru, Rammohan Brahmachari, with whom, according to his own

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120 Srivatsa Ramaswami, a senior student of Krishnamacharya, states that Krishnamacharya was in fact born in 1892 (Ramaswami c.1978).


account, Krishnamacharya studied for seven and a half years in a cave near Muktikṣetra (also known as Muktiṇāth) in Nepal, possibly between about 1914 and 1922. Some images from this album appear in K. Desikachar’s 2005 book on Krishnamacharya, The Yoga of the Yogi, as well as in the 1989 film Cent ans de bêtitudes, made on the occasion of Krishnamacharya’s one-hundredth birthday (see footnote 122).

Given the close similarity of the drawings in Krishnamacharya’s album to the illustrations in the Mysore Hathaḥbhyāsapaddhati and the Mysore Śrītatvatvanidhi, it seems impossible that they could have been made by Rammohan’s daughter in Nepal, or for that matter by anyone who did not have access to the Mysore Palace archives. Sjoman suggests that Rammohan Brahmachari may in fact have lived in an ashram on the banks of the Gandaki river in Northern Karnataka, rather than near the river of the same name in Nepal as is suggested in Krishnamacharya’s biographies (1996, 66), in which case it is not inconceivable that Rammohan Brahmachari himself (and/or his daughter) may have copied the drawings from the Palace Śrītatvanidhi. It is also possible that Krishnamacharya (and/or perhaps his own daughter), whom we know had access to the Palace Śrītatvanidhi, copied the drawings and later attributed them—like so much else—to his time with his guru.

However, as Jacqueline Hargreaves (forthcoming 2020) argues in her comparative study of these drawings with the Mysore Hathaḥbhyāsapaddhati and the Śrītatvanidhi, it is more likely that this album represents an artist’s preliminary sketches based on the Mysore Hathaḥbhyāsapaddhati, for use in the preparation of the Śrītatvanidhi. She also notes that Krishnamacharya’s album contains āsanas that are not found in the Hathaḥbhyāsapaddhati or the Śrītatvanidhi, and surmises that there may be another, additional source that can account for the extra drawings in the Krishnamacharya album, as well as for the extra drawings in the Śrītatvanidhi that do not feature in the Mysore Hathaḥbhyāsapaddhati. Although this is speculative, it may support the hypothesis that an additional illustrated source, perhaps called the Hathaḥyogaprātipikā (or perhaps a different source altogether), was used to compile the Śrītatvanidhi.

123 David Gordon White has called into doubt this chronology, as well as other important aspects of Krishnamacharya’s sanctioned biographies (White 2014, chapter 12).

13.2 The ‘Yoga Kuruṇṭa’

Another suggestive link between Krishnamacharya’s postural yoga systems and the Hathābhijyāsapaṭṭhāti is the apparently lost text known as the Yogakuruṇṭa or Yogakuranṭi, frequently mentioned by Krishnamacharya, as well as by his student K. Pattabhi Jois, as an important source for their teaching (see Singleton 2010, 184–186). In Krishnamacharya’s book, Yoḡaṇaṇaṭṭha (‘Yoga Postures,’ 1941), which contains postural sequences similar to modern Ashtanga (Vinyasa) Yoga, a Yoḡakuranṭi is in fact named as the fourth of six sources, which also include (1) the Pāṭaṅjaḷayogaśūtra, (2) the Haṭhayogapraṭīpiṅkā, (3) the Rājyaogaratnaṅkara, (5) Upaniṣads related to yoga, and (6) things learned from his guru(s) and his own experience (guropaḍesaḥ mattu svāruṇbhāva). It is noteworthy that in the Yoḡaṇaṇaṭṭha the Śrītattvaniḍhi is no longer listed as a source, as it was in the Yoḍamakaranda of 1934. Among these six sources, it is only the fourth, the Yoḡakuranṭi itself, and the sixth (things learned from his guru(s) and his own experience) that can provide a credible source for the teachings on āsana included in the book. None of the others works are convincing sources for the postural component of Krishnamacharya’s book. Therefore, the Yoḡakuranṭi takes on a unique importance as the only potentially significant textual source for the āsana groupings in Krishnamacharya’s book.

The name ‘Kuruṇṭa’ or ‘Kuraṇṭi’ is, of course, suggestive of the author of the Hathābhijyāsapaṭṭhāti, Kapalakuraṇṭaka. One of Krishnamacharya’s late students, A.G. Mohan, implies that Krishnamacharya told him the Yoḡakuranṭi was authored by the Koraṇṭaka mentioned in Haṭhapraṭīpiṅkā 1.6. Similarly, as Jason Birch has speculated

125 We might speculate that in the interim between the two books Krishnamacharya had recognised that the text he refers to as the ‘Yoga Kuraṇṭi’ was in fact the source of the Śrītattvaniḍhi’s rearranged āsana section, and therefore no longer felt it necessary to acknowledge the Śrītattvaniḍhi. If we are to take seriously the proposition that such a text was the inspiration for the postural sequences that Krishnamacharya was developing during the 1930s and 40s, it would make sense that this was a text such as the Hathābhijyāsapaṭṭhāti in which the sequence-like structure is intact, rather than the Śrītattvaniḍhi itself, in which no such sequences are discernible.

126 Krishnamacharya may have known a chapter (no. 24) describing complex āsanas in the Rudrayāmala Uttaratattva. This would only be possible if the Rudrayāmala cited by Krishnamacharya in his Yoḍamakaranda is the same work as the Rudrayāmala Uttaratattva (1999), which may or may not be the case.

127 We have already noted the ambiguity of the title ‘Hathayogapraṭīpiṅkā’ in the context of Mysore yoga traditions, insofar as it may refer either to the fifteenth century Haṭhapraṭīpiṅkā or to an illustrated manuscript similar to or identical with the Haṭābhijyāsapaṭṭhāti in the Mysore Palace archives. However, when Krishnamacharya refers to and quotes from the Haṭhayogapraṭīpiṅkā in the Yoḡaṇaṇaṭṭha (as indeed elsewhere in his work), it is clear that he intends the Haṭhayogapraṭīpiṅkā. Therefore, we can discount this text as the primary source for the āsana he presents.

128 [Krishnamacharya] mentioned the Yoga Kuranta [sic] on occasion during my studies. The Yoga Kuranta was apparently authored by the yogi named Korantaka, who is mentioned in the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpiṅkā’ (Mohan 2010, 45).
(Birch 2018 [2013], 141-142), it is possible that the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati could be the Yoga Kurunṭa—or a truncated version of it—cited by Krishnamacharya and Pattabhi Jois. More recently, in response to the 2016 Kaivalyadhama edition of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati, others (such as the scholar of yoga Manmath Gharote) have expressed similar views. In order to gauge the validity of such a view, it would be necessary to consider the degree of correspondence between the āsana sequences taught by Krishnamacharya in Mysore in the 1930s and subsequently by Pattabhi Jois (said to derive from the Yoga Kurunṭa) with the postural sequences of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati. First, however, let us review what we know of the Yoga Kurunṭa.

According to one of Krishnamacharya’s biographers, Krishnamacharya was advised by the famous Varanasi-based scholar Gaṅgānāth Jhā that in order ‘to master yoga’ he should travel ‘beyond Nepal’ to meet his future guru (Srivatsan 1997, 27):

> In the Gurkha language there is a book called Yoga Kurunṭam [sic]. The book has practical information on yoga and health. If you go to Rāma Mohana Brahmacāri you can learn the complete meaning of the Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali. [...] The various stages of Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtra were dealt with in that book. Various kinds of yoga practices were also described with great clarity. Only with the help of the ‘Yoga Kurunṭam [sic]’ could he understand the inner meanings and science of the Yoga Sūtra.

During the seven-and-a-half years that Krishnamacharya purportedly spent with his guru, he was made to memorise the entire Yoga Kurunṭam in the original language (ibid). Several elements in this statement would suggest that the Yogakurunṭi should

\[129\] We might also consider the possibility that Krishnamacharya amended the full title of the text (Kapalakurunṭakahaṭhābhyāsapaddhati) to distance it from the tantric associations of the name Kapalakuruṇṭaka (kapāla meaning ‘skull’).

\[130\] Birch (2013): ‘It could be possible that the Yogakuruṇṭa is another name for the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati or the original work from which the incomplete manuscript of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati was extracted.’ In a personal communication to James Russell, Gharote writes: ‘It is possible to say that the text “Korunta” is actually “Kapala Kuaranta Hathabhyasa-Paddhati” because until now we have never came [sic] across any other text related to “Kuranta” term rather than this text. So unless and until we have any other evidences, we have to accept that “Korunta” is actually “Kapala Kuaranta Hathabhyasa-Paddhati” (Comment on the blogpost “Yoga Korunta - unearthing an Ashtanga legend” in James Russell Yoga, 2015). Retrieved from: http://jamesrussellyoga.co.uk/blog-james-russell_files/Yoga%20Korunta%20-%20unearthing%20an%20Ashtanga%20legend.html. Accessed: December, 2019.

\[131\] Frederick Smith and Dominik Wujastyk have suggested that the word kuruntam (variously spelled korunta, korunta, kuranta, gurunda) is likely a Tamil (or other Dravidian) variant of the Sanskrit word grantha (which means “book”), rather than a Gurkhali term (see Singleton and Fraser 2013).
not be identified with the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati*. Firstly, the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati* is written in Sanskrit and not Gurkhali. Secondly, the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati* does not have the kind of practical instructions for modifying āsana and prāṇāyāma for individual healing, sometimes using props, that Krishnamacharya’s grandson Kausthub Desikachar has declared are in the *Yogakuranta* (2005, 60), and that are characteristic of Krishnamacharya’s teaching (although health is arguably a concern in the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati*’s śaṭkarma section and in the references to some medicines in the vajroliṇudrā section). Nor, beyond the use of ropes and a wall (see below) are props employed in the āsana section of the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati*. That said, it is worth remembering that in the absence of a concluding section, as well as a colophon, to the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati* we have to assume that the text is not complete, and that other sections may have existed, some of which may have treated these topics. However, this is very unlikely because the āsana section of the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati* is a complete, discrete unit in the text as we have it, and were such instruction to be found in the text, one would expect to find it there. Finally, the *Haṭhābhīyāsapaddhati* does not give any commentary on the *Pāṇḍjīlayogaśāstra*, nor does it even mention it.

The ‘*Yoga Korunta*’ was said by Krishnamacharya’s student K. Pattabhi Jois to be authored not by Koraṇṭaka but by the ‘rishi [ṛṣi]’ Vāmana, and to be the basis for the system that Jois popularised around the world under the name ‘Ashtanga Yoga’ (sometimes referred to as ‘Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga’ with reference to the system’s distinctive linking of breath and movement, known as ‘vinyāsa’). As Jois’s institute’s website puts it:

> Ashtanga Yoga is an ancient system of Yoga that was taught by Vamana Rishi in the *Yoga Korunta*. This text was imparted to Sri T. Krishnamacharya in the early 1900’s by his Guru Rama Mohan Brahmachari, and was later passed down to Pattabhi Jois during the duration of [sic] his studies with Krishnamacharya, beginning in 1927.

We are not aware of any reference to Vāmana as the author of the *Yogakuranta* in Krishnamacharya’s work, but it is nonetheless possible that Krishnamacharya (himself a

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132 In Ashtanga Yoga teaching, the term vinyāsa is also colloquially used to refer to the dynamic series of movements that links one posture to the next (e.g., ‘sequential movement that interlinks postures to form a continuous flow’ (Maehle 2006, 294)), based on the movement of Ashtanga Yoga’s two distinctive versions of sūryanamaskāra, with which the practice begins (see Singleton 2010, 182). Krishnamacharya claimed that the principle of vinyāsa originates in Patañjali: ‘While practicing yogābhyāsa, the variations of inhalation and exhalations are known as vinyāsa. This is explained in *Pāṇḍjīlayogaśāstra* 2: 47-48’ (Yoṣaṇaṅgaḷu, 103). In later teachings of Krishnamacharya, the term vinyāsa is used in different ways.

Srivaśña) told Pattabhi Jois that this was the case. The Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati clearly states that its author is Kapāla-kuruntaka, and contains no reference to Vāmana, which may weaken the case that the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati is in fact a version of the Yogakurunti (notwithstanding that, as we have seen, at other times Krishnamacharya attributed the Yogakurunti to Koraṇtaka). The statement suggests that Krishnamacharya knew the text by heart at the end of his apprenticeship with Rammohan Brahmacari and certainly by the time he began instructing Pattabhi Jois in Mysore around 1927, in which case the Yogakurunti could almost certainly not be identified with the source manuscript of the Śrītattvanidhi contained in the Mysore Palace archives (i.e., the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati). In an account by Eddie Stern, one of Pattabhi Jois’s senior American students, Krishnamacharya—having already memorised the text during his apprenticeship with his guru—was told he could find the Yogakurunti in a library in Calcutta and spent some time there researching it between about 1924 and 1927 (Stern 2010: xvii). Therefore, it is possible that another text, which is comparable to the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati, exists (or used to exist) in Calcutta. Again, however, the fact that the Yogakurunti does not appear in the extensive source list of Krishnamacharya’s Yoga Makaranda of 1934 suggests that Krishnamacharya was not aware of a text of that name until later.

Stern (in Jois 2010, xiii) has also stated:

Korunta means “groups,” and the text was said to contain lists of many different groupings of asanas, as well as highly original teachings on vinyasa, drishti, bandhas, mudras, and philosophy [...] When Guruji [Pattabhi Jois] began his studies with Krishnamacharya in 1927, it was the methods from the Yoga Korunta that he was taught. Although the authenticity of the book would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to validate today, it is generally accepted that this is the source of ashtanga yoga as taught by Pattabhi Jois.

Stern’s statement regarding the etymology of ‘korunta’ is interesting insofar as the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati is distinctive, if not unique, among premodern yoga texts in its grouping of āsanas (prone, supine, and so on). Furthermore, just as there are six āsana groups in the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati, there are six series in some taxonomies of Ashtanga Yoga.134 It is therefore feasible that the arrangement of a text similar to the Haṭhāḥbhyyāsapaddhati was at least an inspiration for the āsana groupings of Ashtanga Yoga, if not its source. However, making this less likely is the fact that the series of

134 However, the ‘original’ Ashtanga Yoga syllabus as taught by Pattabhi Jois to his first American students in 1974 only had four series. (See https://grimmly2007.blogspot.com/p/asana-lists.html. Accessed: March, 2017.) We therefore should not make too much of this correspondence.
Ashtanga Yoga do not at all match, or even approximate, the particular āsana groupings of the Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati. Moreover, while the Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati contains probable sequences of āsanas, the text does not mention the term vinyāsa, nor does it describe the kind of postural transitions or linked movement and breath that are associated with Krishnamacharya’s concept of vinyāsa. Again, it may be that Krishnamacharya simply took initial or partial inspiration from it—in particular its use of positions that link postures—and, crucially, used it as a textual precedent to sanction his own, original vinyāsa method.\(^{135}\) The Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati does indeed contain original teachings on mudrā (in particular vajrolimudrā), as well as instruction on bandha, though there is no systematic instruction on drṣṭi as a gaze-point within āsanas, nor is there any ‘philosophy’ per se. Again, this could possibly be accounted for by the incomplete nature of the Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati.

While K. Pattabhi Jois does not refer by name to the Yogakurāṇṭi in his book Yoga Mala (first published in Kannada in 1962 and in English translation in 1999), he does cite its purported author, Vāmana, on several occasions. In the first instance, with reference to paścimatānāśana, Vāmana—along with the authors of the Haṭhapradīpikā and the Gheranḍasamhitā—is said to state that when the union of apānāvāyu and prāṇāvāyu occurs the ‘aspirant has nothing to fear from old age and death’ (Jois 2010, 30). No direct quotation is given. However, the practice of sarvāvycālanā, unique to the Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati and said to give the yogin the capacity to practise the eight kumbhakas (beginning with sūryabhedana), is performed in paścimatānāśana. The pelvic floor is contracted, and the air is moved into the chest by contracting the throat: that is to say, the apāna air is relocated to the site of prāṇāvāyu. There is no statement in the Haṭhaḥyāśapaddhati regarding fear of old age and death, but it is nonetheless striking that a similar procedure should be identified by Pattabhi Jois as deriving from the Yogakurāṇṭi. We might speculate that Krishnamacharya singled out this practice as deriving from the Yogakurāṇṭi, insofar as it was unique among the texts of yoga that he was familiar with, and conveyed it to Pattabhi Jois.

The second time that Vāmana is mentioned in Jois’s book (Jois 2010, 94), it is said that Vāmana ‘speaks of Baddha Konasana as the greatest of the āsanas’:

\[
\text{Baddhakonasane tishtan gudamakunchayet buddha [sic] gudarognivritthi [sic] syat satyam satyam bravimyaham [‘The wise one should retract the}
\]

\(^{135}\) Krishnamacharya’s son, T.K.V. Desikachar, states: ‘In the beginning of [Krishnamacharya’s] teaching, around 1932, he evolved a list of postures leading towards a particular posture, and coming away from it’ (Desikachar 1982, 33).
anus while in Baddha Konasana as it wards off anal disease, this I declare is true’].

A posture by the name of baddhakonasana does not occur in the Hathâbhyâsapaddhati or the Śrîtattvanidhi, nor is it found in any premodern yoga texts. However, the posture known as baddhakonasana in the Krishnamacharya lineage and elsewhere today is probably quite old, and commonly referred to as bhadrâsana. If indeed Vâmana refers to baddhakonasana as the greatest āsana, he may be referring to bhadrâsana (by the name baddhakonasana). We have been unable to trace this verse.

In the third instance—which is well known and frequently cited in Ashtanga Yoga circles—Vâmana is said to insist on the importance of vinyâsa in the practice of āsana:

If the asanas and the Surya Namaskara are to be practiced, they must be done so in accordance with the prescribed vinyasa method only. As the sage Vâmana says, “Vina vinyasa yogena asanadin na karayet [O yogi, do not do asana without vinyasa]” (Jois 2010, 30).

This (metrical) verse does not appear anywhere in the Hathâbhyâsapaddhati, nor (as noted) does the term vinyâsa. In fact, the term vinyâsa is yet to be found in any text in the sense in which it is understood in Ashtanga Yoga prior to Krishnamacharya. Neither is there mention of sūryanamaskāra in the Hathâbhyâsapaddhati. It may well be the case that a comparable verse exists in a text of which we are unaware. If so, it has probably been reinterpreted to fit with Krishnamacharya’s and/or Jois’s reallocation of the term vinyâsa within their systems of postural yoga, a reinterpretation that is reflected in the English translation of Jois’s Yoga Mālā. The term vinyâsa (like its synonym nyâsa) usually refers, especially in tantric texts, to the installation of mantras into the body of the practitioner, often as a rite that is preliminary to further sādhana. In this context, the verse would mean ‘one should not do āsana etc., (āsanâdîn) without the installation of the mantras (vînyâsayogena)’. Note that, pace Jois’s translation, the verse does not refer exclusively to āsana, but to ‘āsana etc.,’ indicating that mantric

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136 In more standard transliteration this verse is written as follows: baddhakonasane tishtan gudam âkuñcaayed budhab | guidaroganiytrith syât | satyaṁ satyaṁ braviny ahām |

137 In more standard transliteration this verse is written as follows: vīnã vinyâsa yogena āsanâdîn na karayet.

138 See Mallinson and Singleton 2017, 482 n.26, and Birch and Hargreaves 2016.

139 Note that ‘nyâsayogena’ is found in several premodern works. For example, Brahmâyamala 10.106 (saḍaṇâyanasyogena ekabjûditam kramât | namaskârântasanyuktam dâtinâm śaṭkam u ttâmam); Jñânârnavanâtra 14.141 and Svacchandâpaddhati p. 76 (anena nyâsayogena trailokyakobhako bhavet); and Nîsvâsaikârikâ (IFP transcript T150) 1797 (praṇavanyasyogena tritattvaṁ kārayed budhab).
vinyāsa should here be understood as prerequisite to (or perhaps a concomitant part of) a sādhana that begins with āsana. It seems clear that Krishnamacharya has borrowed a common term and reassigned it to describe a principle of his own syncretic āsana system, and that the verse attributed to Vāmana and cited by Pattabhi Jois (and subsequently his students) has been creatively construed to fit with the particularities of the āsana system that Jois learned from Krishnamacharya.

Krishnamacharya’s vinyāsa method is most likely derived from wrestling exercises like those described in the 1896 Mysore gymnastics manual, the Vyāyāmādipīke. As noted above, it is probable that Krishnamacharya was familiar with this book, or at least with the wrestling, gymnastics, and exercise traditions on which it is based. The book describes several variations of a dynamic transitional movement between positions known as jhoku, performed from standing or sitting, in which the weight of the body is borne on the hands as it moves from one position to the next. A jhoku (1896, 29-31; see Figure 6) is first described as a prone back-bend (similar to the posture known as ārdhvaṃukhaśvānāsana, ‘upward facing dog pose,’ in Krishnamacharya systems). It also seems to indicate a transitional movement between a crouching position with the arms extended and the face down (similar to a bent-legged variation of the posture known as adhomukhaśvānāsana, ‘downward facing dog pose,’ in Krishnamacharya systems), and the same prone back-bend (i.e., ārdhvaṃukhaśvānāsana). Similar positions (including the crouching adhomukhaśvānāsana as a prelude to the ‘jump forward’) are, as noted, the key postural components of a vinyāsa as it appears in Ashtanga Yoga.

A jhoku is also mentioned as a transition into and out of the position called ‘scissor varase’141 (1896, 56-57, no. 45; see Figure 7), which is similar to the posture called aṣṭavakraśāna in Krishnamacharya systems. The movement begins in the prone backbend earlier referred to as jhoku (i.e., ārdhvamukhaśvānāsana); the student is then instructed to ‘take a jhoku’ (viz. move to a caturaṅga daṇḍāsana position and a bent-legged adhomukhaśvānāsana position), before lifting the feet off the ground, throwing the legs forward, and assuming scissor varase. Thereafter, the student throws the legs back again. This movement is the same as the vinyāsa leading to and from aṣṭavakraśāna

140 The adhomukhaśvānāsana practised in Ashtanga Yoga is similar to gajāsana in the Ḥathābhyāsapadādhi (no. 25), insofar as the dṛṣṭi is at the navel and the legs are straight. Gajāsana also involves a repetitive dand-like movement which is similar in some respects to both the jhoku of the Vyāyāmādipīke and the vinyāsa of Ashtanga Yoga. This suggests that Krishnamacharya may have drawn on both versions.

141 ‘Varase’ is a common wrestling term used for the various ways in which a wrestler might take down an opponent (we thank Prithvi Chandra Shobhi for this information).
Figure 6: A jhoku as depicted in the Vyāyāmadipike (Bharadwaj 1896, 31).

Figure 7: Scissor varase depicted in the Vyāyāmadipike (Bharadwaj 1896, 57).
in Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, and is reminiscent of the jumping into and out of postures that is the defining characteristic of vinyāsa in Ashtanga Yoga more generally.

Other exercises in the Vyāyāmadipike present jhoku as a transitional movement from a standing position to a hand-balancing or hand-standing position, perhaps similar to the vinyāsa from standing—or ‘full vinyāsa’—of Ashtanga Vinyasa. The term jhoku, then, appears to indicate a dynamic transitional movement from standing or sitting in which the weight of the body is carried on the hands. As a final example, the Vyāyāmadipike’s jhula exercise (1896, 61, no. 51), although it does not mention a jhoku, is identical to the posture known as lolāsana in some Krishnamacharya systems (e.g., Iyengar 1995, 116), in which the student sits in lotus posture (padmāsana), supports the weight of the body on the arms and swings the body backwards and forwards, before throwing the body backwards, or lifting up into a handstand, or into mayūrāsana. Once again, such movements are reminiscent of vinyāsas of Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga. It may be the case, then, that Krishnamacharya’s vinyāsa method is in fact derived from techniques from the wrestling traditions such as jhoku and daṇḍ, and perhaps directly from the text of the Vyāyāmadipike (in combination with Ṣaṭṭhaḥyāsapaddhati itself).  

13.3 Rope Postures and Modern Yoga

As we have seen, one unusual and noteworthy feature of the Ṣaṭṭhaḥyāsapaddhati is the section on ropes (rajjvāsana), which contains ten postures. Ropes feature prominently in the teaching of Krishnamacharya’s student and brother-in-law B.K.S. Iyengar, who has had a perhaps unequalled influence on the way postural yoga is practised and understood globally today. In her book of 1983, Yoga: A Gem for Women, Iyengar’s daughter Geeta describes seven rope postures, referring to the technique as ‘Yoga Kuruntā,’ and translating kuruntā as ‘puppet’ (the practitioner resembling a puppet on a string). The use of this term to refer to rope poses is unusual, and is not, as far as we
know, used in this sense in the writings of Krishnamacharya and his other students, nor elsewhere prior to Geeta Iyengar.

The appearance of ropes in yoga texts is not unprecedented, but it only begins to appear in yoga texts of the seventeenth to eighteenth-century (Birch 2018 [2013], 134). Prior to that, ropes were probably used in the practice of some types of tapas, such as the ‘bat penance’ (valgu lif rata). However, as far as we know, the description of rope āsanas in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati is the most extensive in any text before the modern period, and therefore the identification of rope practices as ‘Yoga Kuruṇṭa’ is intriguing.

An image of Krishnamacharya’s yogaśālā at the Jaganmohan Palace from around 1933 (reproduced in Sjoman 1999, 110) shows the presence of ropes hanging from the ceiling (as well as dumbbells, a chest expander, a rowing machine, and mirror), indicating that Krishnamacharya employed them as part of his yoga practice and teaching, and/or inherited them from a former occupant. One might reasonably speculate that Krishnamacharya told the young Iyengar that the rope poses came from the text that Krishnamacharya called the Yoga Kuruṇṭa, but that the young Iyengar understood the name to refer to the technique itself, and passed this usage on to his daughter. However, none of the standard rope postures in Iyengar Yoga correspond to any of the rope poses in the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati. Therefore, the strongest argument we can make in this regard is that the rope poses in a text similar to the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati may have initially inspired and sanctioned Krishnamacharya’s use of ropes, providing a textual precedent for his own innovations.

13.4 The Relationship of the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati to Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga

The preceding examination puts us in a better position to reflect on the likelihood that the text that Krishnamacharya refers to as the Yogakuraṇṭi is related to the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati, and whether it can in any way be considered the source or blueprint for the postural sequences of Krishnamacharya and Pattabhi Jois. The strongest argument in favour of such an identification is that the Yogakuraṇṭi is said to describe groupings or sequences of postures, some of which require the use of rope, as does the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati. As noted, however, aside from the fact that both the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati and the modern sequences based on the Yogakuraṇṭi teach distinct groupings of sequential poses, the way the groups are categorised is not comparable, and this weakens the argument substantially. That said, however, a nine-fold taxonomy of yoga postures that appears in a work attributed to Krishnamacharya called ‘Salutation to the Teacher’ does have some overlaps with the Haṭhābhyāsapaddhati’s

147 See Diamond et al. (2013, 207) and the cover of Mallinson and Singleton 2017 for art historical examples.
groupings, and includes standing, sitting, supine, and prone. Similarly, a subdivision of postures sometimes seen in Iyengar Yoga, which also includes standing, sitting, supine, and prone, probably reflects Krishnamacharya’s scheme. These groupings may, then, represent a taxonomy inspired and sanctioned by a text like the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti* that was known to Krishnamacharya, but with his own significant additions.

The dynamic nature of Ashtanga (Vinyasa) Yoga is also reflected in the dynamic nature of many of the postures of the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti*. However, it is clear from a comparison of poses that the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti* cannot really be considered a direct source for the sequences of Krishnamacharya’s *Yogāsanaṇgaṇa* nor for the series of contemporary Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga as taught by Pattabhi Jois. Neither the Śrītattvanidhi nor the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti* (nor any known premodern yoga text for that matter) teach the forms known in Ashtanga Yoga as sūryanamaskāra A and B, with which the Ashtanga practice begins. Furthermore, the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti*’s nomenclature is, for the most part, distinct from Krishnamacharya’s. Only eight of the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti*’s one hundred and twelve postures are identical in name and form to postures in Krishnamacharya-derived systems. Five of those are, moreover, āsanas commonly found in other yoga texts. Nevertheless, the remaining three postures in which name and form are identical are much more unusual, suggesting that Krishnamacharya may have drawn on them in the formulation of his āsana system.

In addition, at least forty-one more of the *Hathābhyaśapaddhāti*’s poses are either the same as or closely related to postures taught in Krishnamacharya-derived yoga. Some of them are distinctive poses that we do not find elsewhere, and that are also characteristic of Ashtanga Yoga. Of particular note are vetrāsana (*Hathābhyaśapaddhāti* 17), an advanced posture which corresponds to the ‘catching the ankles’ phase of the...
standing backbend in the finishing sequence of Ashtanga Yoga,\textsuperscript{152} and to \textit{tiriang} [sic] \textit{mukhottānasana} in Iyengar Yoga;\textsuperscript{153} \textit{lathānāsana} (\textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} 22) which involves a backwards roll movement comparable to the distinctive, backwards-rolling \textit{cakrāsana} movement of Ashtanga Yoga;\textsuperscript{154} \textit{bhāradvājasana} (\textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} 36) in which the practitioner lifts from a seated \textit{padmāsana} into a handstand, tentatively comparable to a transitional move sometimes added after \textit{suptavājrāsana} in the Ashtanga Yoga intermediate series; the (repeated) movement in \textit{kukkuḍḍāsana} (\textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} 37), similar to the (unrepeated) lifting movement from \textit{utkataśāsana} in Ashtanga Yoga (the pose is not named and is usually accompanied by the simple instruction ‘up’);\textsuperscript{155} \textit{sūlasana} (\textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} 42) which corresponds to \textit{sāyanāsana}, the sixth pose of the current ‘Advanced B’ series of Ashtanga Yoga;\textsuperscript{156} and \textit{prēṅkhāsana} (\textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} 73), in which the body swings between the supporting hands (with legs straight), reminiscent of the characteristic ‘jump back’ and ‘jump through’ movements of Ashtanga Yoga.\textsuperscript{157} These poses are sufficiently distinctive and unique among yoga texts to suggest that Krishnamacharya may have derived them from the \textit{Śrīttattvanīdiḥ} and/or its source text(s). It is also striking that the final posture of the \textit{Śrīttattvanīdiḥ}, \textit{yogapaṭṭāsana}, is also the last of the (third and final) ‘proficient’ group of postures in Krishnamacharya’s \textit{Yogāsanagalu}.

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to suppose that the \textit{Śrīttattvanīdiḥ} and a source text (almost certainly the Mysore \textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} and, perhaps, the \textit{Haṭhayogaprādipikā}) provided some inspiration for Krishnamacharya’s experiments with the sequential ordering of yoga postures in the 1930s. If the Mysore \textit{Haṭhābhīṣāsapadhati} proves to be identical or closely similar to the \textit{Haṭhayogaprādipikā} in the Palace archives, it may be that Krishnamacharya chose the name ‘Yoga Kurunṭa/Kuranṛṭ’ (perhaps suggested by the text’s author) to disambiguate it from the \textit{Haṭhaprādipikā} of Svātmārāma, which by that time was also commonly referred to as the \textit{Haṭhayogaprādipikā} (including by Krishnamacharya himself). It also seems likely, given the distinctive, unusual nature of

\textsuperscript{152} An example of which can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jekZ6XiKAQ (3:00 to 3:20). Accessed: December, 2019. We are unaware of a specific name for this position used within Ashtanga Yoga.

\textsuperscript{153} See plate 586 in Iyengar 1995, 419. The usual spelling of \textit{tiriang}, meaning slanted, oblique, or crosswise, is \textit{tiryaka}, \textit{tiryaga}, or \textit{tiryañc}.

\textsuperscript{154} An example of which can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUgtMaAZzW0 (at 28:06). Accessed: December, 2019.

\textsuperscript{155} An example of which can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPHTZ7Hc7Hg (at 1:00:50). Accessed: December, 2019.

\textsuperscript{156} See, for example, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErAhlKSct6g (at 1:00:51). Accessed: December, 2019.
some of the *Hathābhīṣapaddhati*’s postures, that Krishnamacharya drew from one or both of these texts for some of the āsanas in his system, and that the prominence given to dynamic āsanas in these premodern works sanctioned some of Krishnamacharya’s own experiments with dynamic āsana practice by giving them textual authority.

Nonetheless—as Krishnamacharya himself seems to acknowledge in his list of sources in the *Yogāsanagālī*—it is also probable that he brought a significant portion of his own experience to bear on these formulations, as well as inspiration from other sources, notably the *Vyāyāmadipika*. Moreover, it is clear that a text similar to the *Hathābhīṣapaddhati* cannot have been the sole basis for the sequences taught by Krishnamacharya in Mysore in the 1930s and 1940s (at least as they are partially recorded in his books from that period), nor for the sequences which stem from them (with degrees of variation), taught today as Ashtanga Yoga. Nor can it be the case, if we are to believe the various statements made about it by Krishnamacharya, his family, and his students, that the *Yoga Koruṇṭa* is Krishnamacharya’s name for a text that is identical or nearly identical to the *Hathābhīṣapaddhati*.

Krishnamacharya was a complex figure who embodied, in many respects, the encounter of tradition with (colonial) modernity. As noted by Ikegame (2013), the political and social structures, education systems, and physical culture practices in Mysore at the time were deeply influenced (and indeed closely controlled) by the colonial powers, and Krishnamacharya himself, a traditionally trained Brahmin, was also part of this modern, western-oriented milieu, even enjoying playing polo with the British. The yoga he taught in Mysore, while rooted in the Indian yoga traditions, was composite, syncretic and constantly evolving. His son T.K.V Desikachar notes that he ‘developed’ and ‘discovered’ new postures and techniques (such as *vinyāsa*) throughout his

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158 Something that is not apparent in the more hagiographic accounts of his life, e.g., Srivatsan 1997; Desikachar 2005.

159 A similar point is made by Sjoman (1999, 52).

160 This information comes from a source close to Krishnamacharya who will remain anonymous here, but the veracity of whose account cannot reasonably be doubted.

161 As T.K.V. Desikachar states in 1982 with regard to āsanas, “He continues to discover new postures, in fact I am unable to keep track of his new discoveries” (32). Claude Maréchal similarly declares, “A large number of postures, notably most of the standing postures, no doubt come to us directly from Prof. Krishnamacharya, who developed them in response to the needs of the modern age” (1989, 47, author trans.). See Singleton and Fraser (2013, 128).

162 ‘In the beginning of [Krishnamacharya’s] teaching, around 1932, he evolved a list of postures leading towards a particular posture, and coming away from it’ (Desikachar 1982, 33).
teaching career. Innovation in practice was also sometimes encouraged in his students.\footnote{An early student of Krishnamacharya in Mysore, T.R.S. Sharma, states: “Krishnamacharya believed in a kind of innovating. He believed in innovation. There was nothing like a set, fixed kind of postures. He always thought of innovations, variations. And he also thought of the constitution of the student. So he would not insist that everyone has to follow the same regimen, the same series of āsanas. Only thing is, he was very particular about sūryanamaskār. You start your yoga with sūryanamaskār. And after that, the world is free. You are free to sort of innovate on the postures” (From an interview with Andrew Eppler in the 2018 film Mysore Yoga Traditions, An Intimate Glimpse Into the Origins of Modern Yoga, at 16:15).}

We also know that one of the core principles of his teaching was the adaptation of the practice to meet the needs of the student (taking into consideration time, place, age, constitution, etc.). Also characteristic of him is the attribution of apparent innovation to purportedly ancient texts, such as the Yoga Rahasya, said to be by the medieval sage Nāthamuni, but almost certainly composed by Krishnamacharya himself.\footnote{A grep search of an e-text of Krishnamacharya’s Yoga Rahasya reveals that (except where they are cited) very few verses have been tacitly borrowed from other texts, suggesting that the text is to a large degree Krishnamacharya’s own composition.} If the Yogakuruṇṭi was originally a text nearly identical to the Haṭhayogasāṇḍhatī and known to Krishnamacharya (either through the Mysore Palace archives or elsewhere), the contents that he attributed to that text may have changed as his teaching developed. Therefore, statements by Krishnamacharya and his students about the contents of the Yogakuruṇṭi may not be the best method for assessing whether it could be a text comparable to the Haṭhayogasāṇḍhatī.

14. Conclusion

The Haṭhayogasāṇḍhatī was composed at a time when the literature on Haṭhayoga was changing significantly. The early texts on Haṭhayoga (i.e., twelfth to fifteenth century) were short, pithy works that taught relatively few techniques and provided only basic practical details. However, after the Haṭhapradipikā was composed in the fifteenth century, larger works on Haṭhayoga were compiled that expounded on theory and praxis (Birch, forthcoming 2020). Some of these were more scholarly, such as the Haṭharaṇṇāvalī (seventeenth century), and others, like the Haṭhayogasaṁhitā (seventeenth century) and the Haṭhayogasāṇḍhatī, were more praxis-orientated. The Haṭhayogasāṇḍhatī represents one of the culminations of this period of Haṭhayoga’s flourishing insofar as it contains extensive instruction on practice, in particular, of the yama-niyamas, complex āsanas, and two mudrās, khecarī, and vajroli, as well as some previously undocumented practical details on the ṣaṭkarma, diet, and prāṇāyāma. In this
sense, it is a true paddhati. Nevertheless, like the early texts of Haṭhayoga, this paddhati does not discuss doctrine or metaphysics, which suggests that it was intended as a trans-sectarian manual for those wanting to practise Haṭhayoga.

In many respects, the discovery of the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati raises more questions about the history of yoga than it answers. How widespread in India was this particular system of yoga? Did it circulate among ascetics and householder practitioners as a practice notebook? And was this how it arrived in Mysore, where the Mahārāja of Mysore commissioned his best artists to produce an illustrated manuscript based on it for the royal court? Do its unprecedented details indicate that this system of yoga was a somewhat innovative development in the history of Haṭhayoga? Or does the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati provide a glimpse of a proliferation in physical yoga practices and techniques that, like Indian martial arts and wrestling, were rarely recorded in Sanskrit literature? Were the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati’s dynamic āsanas a yogic adaptation of some military training methods which were part of the culture of the akhāḍā, training centres which appear to have been widespread throughout South Asia before India was demilitarized by the British (O’Hanlon 2007)? And should we understand the opening lines of the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati as introducing a yoga that was suitable for all people, or do its strenuous āsanas and extreme exercises for maintaining celibacy make it the preserve of ascetics or life-long celibate Brahmins?

The text also represents a bridge between premodern and modern, transnational practices of yoga, in that the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati (and the Śrītattvanidhi, which drew upon it) informed the influential postural teachings of T. Krishnamacharya. These texts may have served as inspiration and śāstric precedent for Krishnamacharya’s innovative postural sequences, and are probably the only textual sources among those that he lists in his books of the period that can credibly be considered a source for the āsanas he taught to Mysore students like Pattabhi Jois and B.K.S. Iyengar. The Śrītattvanidhi was composed during a period of significant British involvement in the social and political life of Mysore; and after the death of Mahārāja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in 1869 this involvement only intensified, modernising many aspects of court life (Ikegame 2013, 57ff), including the physical practice of yoga. It is very likely that the evolution of Krishnamacharya’s āsana sequences during the 1930s also reflects elements of that modernisation (Singleton 2010). But the redaction of the postures of the Haṭābhīṣaṇapaddhati into the Śrītattvanidhi, and the assimilation of those same postures in the books and teachings of Krishnamacharya point to an ongoing process of innovation and adaptation similar to the way contemporary teachers of yoga adapt certain teachings of Krishnamacharya for a global audience. If the sources at the
disposal of the author of the Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati could be brought to light, an analysis of them might reveal an interesting prehistory to its remarkable postural practice.

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Abbreviations

Barois  Christèle Barois
Goodall  Dominic Goodall
HAP  Haṭhābhyaśapaddhati
HYP  Haṭhayogapradipikā
SRM  Śankhyāratnamālā
ŚTN  Śrītattvanidhi

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