

## Yogic Body in Ālāol's Padmābatī

Thursday 23 May 2024 09:45 (30 minutes)

Malik Muḥammad Jāyasī's poem *Padumāvat*, composed in Old Awadhi in 1540, is the most famous Sufi composition of the *premākhyān* genre. Due to its popularity, it has been adapted into Persian and several South Asian languages. The Middle Bengali version, called *Padmābatī*, was produced by the excellent poet Ālāol in 1651. He not only retained most of the yogic elements from Jāyasī's work, but added a number of others, such as a rather extensive description of the yogic body, which has no counterpart in the Awadhi original.

In my presentation, I will first briefly compare the yoga material of the *Yogi-khaṇḍa* section in both works and then focus on Ālāol's additions, especially his description of the yogic body. I will try to answer two main questions. First, whether it is possible to identify the source of the Ālāol's concept of the yogic body. Second, and most importantly, why in fact this Muslim poet, educated in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic literature, kidnapped by Portuguese Christian pirates, sold into slavery in the Buddhist kingdom of Arakan, writing in its capital Mrauk U for a Muslim Bengali audience, felt the need to incorporate rather technical passages of tantric yoga into his adaptation of this famous Sufi romance. Does this have any significance for the history of yoga? In other words, what can we learn from this fact?

**Author:** ONDRAČKA, Lubomír (Charles University)

**Presenter:** ONDRAČKA, Lubomír (Charles University)

**Session Classification:** Inspiration