

# Purpose and Text-Image-Relationship of Illustrated Yoga Manuscripts

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Christina's research focusses on the History of Yoga, especially text-image-relationship of Illustrated Yoga Manuscripts bringing together her art historical competence as well as her knowledge of the History of Yoga Practice.

Prior to coming to Hamburg, Christina was Head of the Photographic Collection at the Max Planck Institute for Art History, Rome. She was also Postdoctoral Fellow at Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, held a Research Project of Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and was assistant professor at the Department of History of Art, University of Tübingen

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In this paper illustrated Yoga manuscripts showing Yogis in practice will be approached from an art historical as well as yogic perspective, putting the focus on the purpose and on the text-image-relationship of the material in question.

The analysis covers the development in various traditions from around 1600 to the end of the 19th century, from being precious objects in palace collections to gradually acquiring a more and more didactic purpose. Since the early texts were not meant to be instructions for practitioners, the associated illustrations may help to clarify where the texts are not sufficiently concrete or univocal. It will be shown that the visual, non-verbal medium often supplies valuable information not given by the text.

The two aspects treated here are connected and result in the question: How reliable is the image? The critical analysis of the text-image-relationship helps to evaluate images as historical sources in their own right.

In this way the mutual elucidation of text and illustrations can deepen our understanding of the role of Yoga in Indian Society.

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