

## Yoga as magic

*Friday 24 May 2024 10:15 (30 minutes)*

My name is Nikolai Suvorov, and I am a Ph.D. student at Universität Hamburg. In the recent past, I worked as a student assistant with Dr. Peter Pasedach. I worked on the creation of TEI (XML) transcript files of the two mahākāvyas surviving from 9th-century Kashmir, the Haravijaya and the Kapphiṇābhyudaya, and their commentaries, from digital images of the different witnesses represented in Devanāgarī and Śāradā writing systems. While being an MA student at the same university, I, among other things, worked on my thesis *Quasi-historical part of the Yoginī Tantra*: chapters 12-14 dedicated to a part of the medieval treatise, which may be considered quasi-historical because it contains some dates related to historical events that are not always easy to identify with what happened in the actual past.

Before Universität Hamburg, I worked as an Arabic-English-Russian interpreter and translator and studied Indology at Saint Petersburg State University (Russia) (BA and MA).

One of the possible meaning of term yoga is magic, and this is broadly illustrated in the rituals part of the Yoginī Tantra that provides the practitioners with such kavacas as vajraśṛṅkala (against calamities caused by war and fever) and jaganmohakara that allows an adept to bewitch the world (the treatise states that naked (digambarā) Kālī bewitches the universe). Following that, different magical rites leading to power, son birth, knowledge, wealth, glory, and everything are depicted, referring to Phetkārīṇī Tantra and Nīla Tantra. Then, the literary work dives into ṣaṭkarma but stresses that only vīras are eligible for it. After that, Śiva introduces a special vīrayoga that lies in the contemplation of three bindus in the image of a sixteen-year-old girl (Kāmakaḷā). Finally, in its ritual part, the Yoginī Tantra deals with vidyās, which are mantras that refer to female deities possessing particular names and bearing their functions.

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