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THE AMARAUGHA AND AMARAUGHAPRABODHA OF GORAKṢANĀTHA

The Genesis of Haṭha and Rājayoga



A critical edition and annotated translation by

Jason BIRCH

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कायेनैव परीक्षेत वाक्पटुः किं करिष्यति ।
के चित्संवादमात्रेण किं भविष्यन्ति योगिनः ॥

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MY INTEREST IN THE AMARAUGHAPRABODHA arose in 2004 when I noticed one of its verses in a text on Rājayoga called the *Amanaska*, which I studied for my honours thesis at the University of Sydney under the supervision of Peter Oldmeadow. With the financial support of the Clarendon and Boden Funds at the University of Oxford (2008–2013), I undertook extensive fieldwork in India with Jacqueline Hargreaves and obtained copies of five manuscripts of the *Amaraughaprabodha*. I read the text with Alexis Sanderson and, with his guidance, edited and translated several of its verses for my doctoral thesis (Birch 2013). Having written about the historical importance of the *Amaraughaprabodha* in my thesis, I suggested to James Mallinson that we include it as one of the texts to be studied by the Haṭha Yoga Project.

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Introduction

The *Amaraugha*

THE AMARAUGHA IS THE NAME OF A SANSKRIT YOGA TEXT that manuscript colophons attribute to Gorakṣanātha, a reputed pioneer of a type of yoga called Haṭha and one of the founders of the Nātha order of ascetics. Emerging from the interplay of Śaiva and Vajrayāna *siddha* traditions at the beginning of the second millennium, the *Amaraugha* is likely the earliest surviving account of a fourfold system of yoga that established a basic relationship between Haṭha and Rājayoga. These two distinct methods of yoga originated independently but were combined to represent the basic dichotomy of physical and mental praxis that became a salient feature of medieval yoga traditions and is still something of a touchstone for many practitioners of modern yoga.

The *Amaraugha* contains one of the earliest definitions of Haṭhayoga, and it was a substantial source text of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, a mid-fifteenth century work that established an enduring paradigm for physical yoga. Therefore, the historical study of the *Amaraugha* provides the opportunity to investigate not only the genesis of Haṭhayoga but also the creation of its classic archetype.

A long recension of the text was first published under the title *Amaraugha-prabodha* by Kalyani Devi Mallik in 1954. Her title derives from the colophon of the one manuscript upon which she established her edition. Christian Bouy (1994: 18–19) proposed that the *Amaraughaprabodha* predates the fifteenth century on the basis that Svātmārāma, the author of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, borrowed verses from it. This book presents newly discovered manuscript evidence for two recensions: the longer one published by Mallik and a shorter one preserved by two palm leaf manuscripts. The shorter recension, which is called the *Amaraugha* by the manuscript colophons, has been unknown to modern scholarship until now.

An analysis of the differences between the recensions reveals that the *Amaraugha* was the original work and the one known to Svātmārāma. Owing to its rudimentary nature and the similarities of some of its content with an eleventh-century Vajrayāna work called the *Amṛtasiddhi*, the *Amaraugha* is an early work on Haṭha that reveals how its physical methods were repurposed for moving *kuṇḍalinī* and achieving Rājayoga, which was essentially a Śaiva interpretation of meditative absorption (*samādhi*).

This book contains an introduction, annotated translations and critical editions of the *Amaraugha* and *Amaraughaprabodha*. The introduction discusses the provenance, authorship and relationship of the recensions. The sections on the *Amaraugha*'s continuities and discontinuities with the *Amṛtasiddhi* and its four yogas within the broader history of yoga aim to elucidate the genesis of Haṭha and Rājayoga. The remainder of the introduction contains an overview of the manuscript evidence and the editorial policies underlying both editions. Some subsections of the introduction summarise and bring up to date discussions of the same topics published in Birch 2019, which has been cited in cases where further details and references are relevant.

Two Recensions, Two Names

THE SIX AVAILABLE MANUSCRIPTS contain two recensions and, judging from the colophons of the manuscripts, each recension has its own name.¹ The short recension has forty-six verses and the colophons of its two manuscripts refer to the work as the *Amaraugha*. The long recension has seventy-four verses and the colophons of its four manuscripts call it the *Amaraughaprabodha*.² In accordance with the colophons, the names *Amaraugha* and *Amaraughaprabodha* will be used throughout this book to refer to the short and long recensions, respectively.

A sixteenth-century compendium called the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha* contains a citation which indicates that the short recension was known at that time as the *Amaraugha*. The author of this compendium cited the *Amaraugha* by name when quoting a passage on the 'great piercing' (*mahāvedha*). The cited passage

¹ I am using the word 'recension' as defined by West (1973: 16), 'When the rewriting becomes more than superficial, or when rearrangement is involved, one must speak of a new recension of the work [...]. The rewriting and rearrangement of the *Amaraugha* that resulted in the *Amaraughaprabodha* are discussed in the next section.

² The edited colophon of the *Amaraugha* is, 'Thus, the *Amaraugha* taught by Gorakṣa is complete' (*ity amaraughaṃ gorakṣaviracitaṃ saṃpūrṇam*), and the *Amaraughaprabodha*, 'Thus, the *Amaraughaprabodha* taught by Gorakṣanātha is complete' (*śrīgorakṣanāthaviracito 'marauḡhaprabodhaḥ saṃpūrṇaḥ*). Transcriptions of the colophons of the available manuscripts can be found at the end of the editions of the *Amaraugha* and *Amaraughaprabodha* in this book.

is the same as that of the short recension and does not contain a verse that was added to this passage in the long recension.³

The meaning of the term *amaraugha* is multivalent. The author of the *Amaraugha* (14) states that *amaraugha* has the name Rājayoga, which is the highest of the four yogas taught in the text. In *Amaraugha* 3, Rājayoga is defined as a meditative state free from mental activity (*cittavṛttirahita*), a statement that is redolent of the definition of *yoga* as *samādhi* in *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* 1–2 (*yogaḥ samādhiḥ [...] yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ*). The meaning of *rājayoga* as both the best yoga (literally, ‘the yoga that is king [of all yogas]’) and a non-dual meditative state was clearly expressed in another Śaiva work, called the *Amanaska*, that probably predates the *Amaraugha* by a century or so.⁴ Therefore, Śaiva communities appear to have known the import of Rājayoga by the time the *Amaraugha* was composed, and the equivalence of *amaraugha* with Rājayoga is the most obvious meaning behind the name of the text. This meaning of *amaraugha* was accepted by Svātmārāma, who included it in a list of synonyms of the term *rājayoga* in the *Haṭhapradīpikā*.⁵

In an important passage of the *Amaraugha* (13–14), where the internal processes leading up to the union of Śiva and Śakti are described, the author appears to use the term *amaraugha* in the sense of a divine stream of teachings, a connotation that is similar to that of the term *divyaugha* (‘the divine stream’) in earlier Kaula scriptures (Birch 2019: 970). This is related to the more literal meaning of *amaraugha* as ‘a stream (*ogha*) of immortals (*amara*)’, which can be understood as referring to the lineage of immortal *siddhas* that began with Matsyendranātha and Gorakṣanātha, the putative pioneers of Haṭhayoga and founders of the ascetic order known in more recent times as the Nātha

³ For more information on the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha*, see Bouy 1994: 89–92. On the reference to the *Amaraugha* in the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha*, see footnote 17. On the *Amaraugha-prabodha*’s additional verse on *mahāvedha*, see footnote 230.

⁴ On the eleventh century date of the *Amanaska* and the meaning of *rājayoga*, see Birch 2014: 406 n. 21.

⁵ The term *amaraugha* appears, usually in a misspelt form, in the list of synonyms of *rājayoga* in witnesses of old versions of the *Haṭhapradīpikā*; e.g., 29899 (*amarogho ’pi cādvaitam*) and 2241 (*araughaughatvīṃdrī ca*).

sampradāya. In fact, one of the lineages (*ovallī*) descending from Matsyendra-nātha was associated with his son Amaranātha, whose initiates were given names ending in *bodhi* (*Tantrāloka* on 4.265ab).⁶ In a thirteenth-century Marathi work, the *Līlācaritra*,⁷ Gorakṣa is said to have converted Virūpākṣa from a Vajra lineage (*vajraolī*) to the Śaiva Amara lineage (*amaraolī*), which may allude to the Buddhist influence on the Haṭhayoga of the *Amaraugha* (Mallinson 2019: 5).

Furthermore, in the context of uniting Śiva and Śakti after the yogi's moon has melted and the body has been filled with nectar, the use of the term *amaraugha* evokes the sense of 'a stream of divine [nectar],' a phenomenon of the yogic body that is connoted in other Śaiva texts by similar terms, such as 'the immortal's liquor' (*amaravāruṇī*) and 'stream of nectar' (*amṛtaugha*).⁸ This more esoteric connotation of the term *amaraugha* is redolent of the nectar of immortality (*amṛta*) in the *Amṛtasiddhi*, a Vajrayāna work which contains some teachings that are similar to those on Haṭhayoga in the *Amaraugha*. In the *Amṛtasiddhi*, nectar refers primarily to generative fluid (*bindu*), which must be retained within the yogi's head to bring about immortality. Although tantric Śaiva yogis may have been more interested in flooding the body with nectar rather than retaining generative fluids and celibacy, the term *amaraugha* would have signalled to both esoteric Buddhists and Śaivas a system of yoga that affects the flow of nectar in the body.⁹

⁶ I offer my thanks to Alexis Sanderson for this reference, which is discussed in his forthcoming work on the first *ābhiṣeka* of the *Tantrāloka*.

⁷ There does not seem to be a consensus about the date of the *Līlācaritra*, but some scholars ascribe it to the thirteenth century; e.g., 1278 CE Novetzke (2017: 107), 1286 CE Bankar (2019: 2), etc.

⁸ *Amaravāruṇī* occurs in *Haṭhāpradīpikā* 3.46 and 3.48, the latter of which defines the term, 'Amaravāruṇī is that essence which flows from the moon' (*candrāt sravati yaḥ sārāḥ sā syād amaravāruṇī*). The term *amṛtaugha* occurs in at least two Śaiva works that predate the *Amaraugha*, namely the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* (3.17 and 19.43) and *Amanaska* (2.58). It also occurs in the chapter on yoga of *Śāradātilakatantra* (25.61). On the importance of this Tantra, see Sanderson 2009: 252 and Bühnemann 2011.

⁹ On Haṭhayoga and generative fluids in the *Amaraugha*, see the subsection 'From Raising Generative Fluids to Raising *Kuṇḍalinī*'.

It is likely that the name *Amaraughaprabodha*, which means ‘awakening by means of *amaraugha* (i.e., Rājayoga),’ was created by the long recension’s redactor, who changed the text in two places to foreground the concept of awakening. In the first instance, the opening verse of the *Amaraughaprabodha* declares that its author teaches the ‘awakening’ (*prabodha*) of Gorakṣanātha whereas the first verse of the *Amaraugha* announces a teaching on the ‘nature’ (*svabhāva*) of Gorakṣanātha. In the second instance, the *Amaraughaprabodha* has an additional verse (65) stating that Gorakṣanātha taught this ‘awakening’ in the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*, a work whose name I have not found in other primary or secondary literature. The redactor of the *Amaraughaprabodha* summarised or borrowed content from the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*. However, the name of this work and the awakening of Gorakṣanātha are not mentioned in the *Amaraugha*. Therefore, it is likely that the long recension was named the *Amaraughaprabodha* by its redactor, and this name may have been inspired by content of the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*.

Synopsis of Content

THE MAIN TOPIC OF BOTH RECENSIONS is a system of four yogas, namely, Mantra, Laya, Haṭha and Rājayoga. The text contains early definitions of the four yogas, and its discussion of them is terse and instructional. In fact, it is fair to say that its author was more intent on explaining the praxis of these yogas and how they relate to one another rather than the underlying doctrines and ideas.

As seen in Table 1, the structure of the *Amaraugha* can be succinctly summarised as consisting of an introductory passage, discrete teachings on each of the four yogas, and a conclusion. As I have argued elsewhere (Birch 2019: 953–958), the structure and content of the *Amaraughaprabodha* are not as coherent because of the insertion of additional verses at various places. The redactor of the *Amaraughaprabodha* added two verses to the introductory section, one from the eleventh-century *Amanaska* and another from an unknown work that is cited as the *Śrīsamputa*. Also, a large block of verses on the four types of practitioner was inserted before the teachings on the four

yogas. This block appears to be a redaction that combined material from the eleventh-century *Amṛtasiddhi* and the fifteenth-century *Śivasamhitā* or a source text of the latter.¹⁰

The largest additional block (verses 56–72) was affixed to the section on Rājayoga. The content of this block is quite discursive. It begins with a practice that aims at retaining the five elements of the body in order to prolong life. Then follows a summary of the yoga of the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*, four verses on the efficacy of yoga and the signs of success, and a passage on liberation-in-life, which includes a verse from the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*, a circa thirteenth-century Vaiṣṇava yoga text. The efforts of the redactor of the *Amaraughaprabodha* to enlarge the *Amaraugha* by adding material from elsewhere, without always integrating it carefully, can be seen in several places (Birch 2019: 954). For example, a block of verses on the four types of practitioner in the *Amaraughaprabodha* (18–24) has been inserted after a question on the four types of yoga in the *Amaraugha* (14). Also, the redactor of the *Amaraughaprabodha* borrowed a verse from the *Amṛtasiddhi* and added it to the *Amaraugha*'s discussion of the haṭhayogic practice called the great piercing (*mahāvedha*). However, in the *Amṛtasiddhi*, this verse is describing the yogi's posture in another practice known as the great seal (*mahāmudrā*).¹¹

Furthermore, the relevance of some of the miscellaneous topics that were added to the section on Rājayoga in the *Amaraughaprabodha* (57–72) is not always apparent. For example, the passage on the five elements (*pañcabhūta*) does not seem to be connected to any of the four yogas. The contrived and compilatory nature of this section is revealed by the redactor's borrowing of a verse from the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* and the mention of the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*, which may have contained material adapted from Buddhist works (Birch 2019: 954–957).¹²

¹⁰ Some terms and compounds in the *Amaraughaprabodha*'s discussion on the four practitioners are unique to the *Amṛtasiddhi* and others to the *Śivasamhitā*. For references, see Birch 2019: 949, n. 4.

¹¹ See Birch 2019: 957 and footnote 230 below.

¹² For a discussion of the verse in the *Amaraughaprabodha* that is similar to one in the *Sekoddeśa*, see footnote 242.

Table 1: Content of the *Amaraugha* and *Amaraughaprabodha*

Topics	<i>Amaraugha</i>	Additional Topics	<i>Amaraugha-prabodha</i>
Introduction			
		Salutations	1
Four Yogas	1-4		2-5
Rājayoga	5-9		6-7, 9
		<i>Amanaska</i> verse	8
		<i>Śrīsampuṭa</i> verse	10
Guru	10-12		13-15
Śiva/Śakti	13		16
Four Yogas	14		17
		Four types of practitioner	18-24
Mantrayoga	15-16		25-26
Layayoga	17-18		27-28
Hāṭhayoga			
Great Seal	19-22		29-32
Great Lock	23-25		33-35
Great Piercing	26-36		41
Three Seals	31-33		42-44
Four Stages	34		45
Beginning Stage	35-36		46-47
Unified Stage	37-38		48-49
Accumulation Stage	39-40		50-51
Perfection Stage	41		52
Rājayoga	42-44		53-55
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Authorship

AMONG THE EARLIEST MODERN PUBLICATIONS that mention the *Amaraugha-prabodha* in any detail are the first volume of Madras University's New Catalogus Catalogorum (1949) and Mallik's edition (1954). Both attribute the *Amaraughaprabodha* to Gorakṣanātha. Before these publications, the *Amaraughaprabodha* is absent in lists of Gorakṣanātha's works by modern scholars (e.g., Briggs 1938: 251-257 and Dvivedi 1950: 98-100) and in studies on the Nāths (e.g., Dasgupta 1946: 219-294). However, it has been included in more recent lists (e.g., Banerjea 1962: 26-28, Gonda 1977: 222 n. 28, etc.) and studies (e.g., Bouy 1994: 18-19, White 1996: 141, etc.).

The attribution of authorship to Gorakṣanātha is supported by the final colophon of the manuscript used by Mallik that states, 'the *Amaraugha-prabodha*, which was composed by the glorious Gorakṣanātha, is complete.'¹³ In fact, all colophons of the available manuscripts of both the *Amaraugha* and *Amaraughaprabodha* contain this scribal attribution, which was probably inspired by the mention of Gorakṣanātha in two verses of the *Amaraugha* (1 and 45) and three of the *Amaraughaprabodha* (2, 65 and 74).¹⁴ In both recensions, these verses declare that Gorakṣanātha taught the four yogas. Although such statements within the text itself may have prompted scribes to compose colophons attributing the text's authorship to Gorakṣanātha, it is probable that the work was composed by someone within a *siddha* lineage who believed that Gorakṣanātha was the first to teach the four yogas. Be this as it may, the sectarian milieu in which the text was composed is undoubtedly a Śaiva *siddha* tradition. In addition to the mention of Gorakṣanātha, both recensions contain an opening salutation to Cauraṅginātha and Siddhabuddha, as well as several references to Śiva, his consort and *liṅga* in the text itself.¹⁵

¹³ Mallik 1954: 55 (*iti śrīmadgorakṣanāthaviracitaṃ amaraughaprabodhaṃ sampūrṇam*).

¹⁴ The colophons of each manuscript have been transcribed in the apparatus of both editions in this book.

¹⁵ On the hagiography, epigraphy and art depicting Cauraṅginātha, see Bankar 2019. On the identity of Siddhabuddha, see footnote 141. In the *Amaraugha*, Śiva is mentioned in verses 13, 15 (as *śambhu*) and 17 (as *śītaṃ devaṃ*); his consort Śivā in 13 and his *liṅga* in 17 and 44.

Date of Composition

Previous Attempts to Date the Text

IN HIS BOOK ON THE YOGA UPANIṢADS compiled from yoga texts of the Nātha lineage, Christian Bouy (1994: 19) examined Mallik's edition of the *Amaraughaprabodha* and identified twenty-two and half of its verses in the *Haṭhāpradīpikā*.¹⁶ In spite of the fact that the *Haṭhāpradīpikā* does not cite the names of its sources, Bouy proposed that it is an anthology of many earlier works on yoga, including the *Amaraughaprabodha* (1994: 80–86). If one accepts the logic behind the direction of borrowing, the *Amaraughaprabodha* was composed before the mid-fifteenth century. Bouy (1994: 19) also noted that the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha*, which he dated from the sixteenth to seventeenth century (1994: 91), cites the *Amaraughaprabodha* by name. This provides a certain, albeit more recent, *terminus ad quem*.¹⁷

James Mallinson (2016) identified verses of the *Amaraughaprabodha* in the eleventh-century *Amṛtasiddhi*.¹⁸ Furthermore, the *Amaraughaprabodha* has a

In the *Amaraughaprabodha*, Śiva is mentioned in verses 16, 25, 27 and 64, his consort Śivā in 16 and his *liṅga* in 27 and 55.

¹⁶ Mallinson (2014: 239) has estimated that the *Haṭhāpradīpikā* borrowed twenty and a half verses from the *Amaraughaprabodha*. The discrepancy occurs because Bouy includes *Amaraughaprabodha* 9, which is very similar to *Haṭhāpradīpikā* 4.14, and *Amaraughaprabodha* 38b–39a, which may have been heavily redacted to create *Haṭhāpradīpikā* 3.25c–26a. I estimate that there are twenty-two and a half parallel verses in the *Amaraugha* and *Haṭhāpradīpikā* (see footnote 22).

¹⁷ Bouy (1994: 19) does not provide a reference in the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha* to its citation of the *Amaraughaprabodha*. Instead, he says that the reference would be included in a forthcoming article (Bouy 1994: 9 n. 5, 19 n. 55). However, it seems that this article was never published. I can confirm that *Amaraughaprabodha* 38–41 is quoted, with attribution to the *Amaraugha*, in the seventh chapter of the *Upāsanāsārasaṅgraha* (IFP T1095, p. 48).

¹⁸ Six verses of the *Amaraughaprabodha* are similar to verses in the *Amṛtasiddhi*. These are *Amaraughaprabodha* 20, 32cd, 37ab, 37cd, 38, 39cd, 40ab, 45, 51ab ~ *Amṛtasiddhi* 16.1cd–16.2ab, 11.9cd, 11.3cd, 14.5cd, 14.6, 13.5cd, 13.7cd, 19.2, 22.2cd. Other sections of the *Amaraughaprabodha* appear to have been inspired by the *Amṛtasiddhi*. For example, a passage on the four types of practitioner (*Amaraughaprabodha* 18–24), in particular the last called *adhimātrata*, is close to *Amṛtasiddhi* 15.1, 15.3, 16.1cd–17.1, 18.1–5 and a sequence of piercing knots (*granthi*) that causes various sounds to arise (*Amaraughaprabodha* 46–52).

verse from the second chapter of the *Amanaska* (Birch 2011: 528), which can be dated to the eleventh or early twelfth century (Birch 2014: 406 n. 21), and another from the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*, circa thirteenth century.¹⁹ There is also a verse cited and attributed to the *Śrīsamputa*, and a short passage attributed to the *Amaraughasamsiddhi*. These borrowings indicate that the *Amaraughaprabodha* is a compilation that was created sometime after the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*. This *terminus a quo* is only a tentative hypothesis because the *Śrīsamputa* and *Amaraughasamsiddhi* are currently unknown works.

In an earlier publication (Birch 2011: 528), these observations led me to propose that the *Amaraughaprabodha* was probably composed in the fourteenth century, because it must have appeared after the earliest Haṭha and Rājayoga texts and before the *Haṭhpradīpikā*. The discovery of the *Amaraugha* changes the most likely date of the *Amaraughaprabodha*'s composition.

The Date based on New Evidence

The *Amaraugha* does not contain verses from the *Amanaska* and *Dattātreyayogaśāstra*, nor citations of the *Śrīsamputa* and *Amaraughasamsiddhi*. For reasons stated below, it is improbable that the author of the *Amaraugha* borrowed

has some similarities to *Amṛtasiddhi* 13.10–11, 20.1ab, 20.7, 22.2cd, 25.1c, 31.1ab. The connection between the *Amaraughaprabodha* and the *Śivasamhitā* is less certain, despite the fact that they share a similar verse (*Amaraughaprabodha* 3 ~ *Śivasamhitā* 5.12) and have some identical compounds in the passage on the four types of practitioner (e.g., *Amaraughaprabodha* 19, 21, 22 ~ *Śivasamhitā* 5.14, 5.21, 5.24). The *Śivasamhitā* is a compilation, which borrowed a large number of verses from the *Amṛtasiddhi* (Mallinson 2016: 127–128, n. 36). The similarities between the *Amaraughaprabodha* and *Śivasamhitā* are largely explained by the fact that both borrow from the *Amṛtasiddhi*. In the few instances where the *Amaraughaprabodha* and *Śivasamhitā* have something in common that is not in the *Amṛtasiddhi*, the direction of borrowing and the sources involved is not certain. The contradictions between the *Śivasamhitā*'s chapters (Birch 2018: 107 n. 13) suggest that it has been crudely cobbled together from various sources, an unknown one of which might be responsible for *Amaraughaprabodha* 3 and the similar compounds in the section on the four types of practitioner.

¹⁹ *Amanaska* 2.32 = *Amaraughaprabodha* 8. This verse fits the *Amanaska*'s polemic theme of dismissing other methods of perfecting the body whereas it is somewhat out of place in the *Amaraughaprabodha*, hence my assertion that the latter is the borrower. *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* 161 = *Amaraughaprabodha* 71. As far as I am aware, the short passage on Rājayoga in the *Dattātreyayogaśāstra* is not a compilation.