

Chapter Eleven The *Haṭhapradīpikā*

Introduction

The *Haṭhapradīpikā*, also known as the *Hathayogapradīpikā*, is a very powerful ancient book which can be described as teaching what the Western world would call how to “gird your loins” or how to put on or gain a more powerful body and mind. Written in Sanskrit, the *Haṭhapradīpikā* uses the word *bandhas* instead of girding, but *bandhas* has the identical meaning of “binding together” or “putting something on”.

About five hundred years ago an Indian scholar calling himself Svātmārāma¹ assembled much earlier Sanskrit verses of undetermined age into a document he named the *Haṭhapradīpikā*. His document supplied the original verses, his rendition, and his commentaries.

That the *Haṭhapradīpikā* even exists is exciting, since the Western world has writings recommending girding, bracing, or steeling yourself but has no surviving writings describing how it is done. Nevertheless, despite the lack of information about girding, people seem to instinctively know something about the power of girding and can identify with it. For example, many people in facing life’s problems often describe the need for a strong resolve or dedication and then report the uncontrolled tightening and activating of something deep in the guts or the perineum to make it happen, which according to the *Haṭhapradīpikā*, is the beginning of girding the loins.

The *Haṭhapradīpikā* and other Sanskrit writings survived the book burnings of the West by what appears to be the deliberate addition of false translations and commentaries to the original documents to satisfy the ruling British colonists. The original technical Sanskrit used in describing the science of the body and mind is similar to modern concentrated scientific writings which almost everyone can read but only a few knowledgeable individuals can understand. Most of the technical Sanskrit writings include a requirement that their content must be kept secret. This is easily done in a technical manuscript by adding a false meaning of the critical terms which can misdirect the uninformed or uninspired reader. My guess is that the rendered translation of Verses 3:33–34, that a seeker of truth needs to slice the base of his tongue so that the tongue can reach up into the sinuses, was such a misdirection. Censors would surely not condemn such an idiotic statement, and in fact if they were of another culture, they would openly endorse such statements to prove the superiority of their culture (which was quite often done). However, if the censors had any scientific knowledge and the diligence to study a technical document, the original teachings could have been readily obtained by using this knowledge and accurately translating the Sanskrit.

Because of the socially conforming commentaries and translations, any existing concepts of the book or Hatha Yoga should be set aside. Instead of the title implying gentle exercises and stretches the literal

¹ *sva*: “one’s own,” *ātma*: soul, *ārāma*: “a place of pleasure”

meaning of the title is: *Haṭha*: “force,” *pradīpikā*: “a treatise on.” The literal translation is in dull support with this title.

The following text is given in the following format:

1. the verse number and a twentieth century rendition
2. the literal translation
3. the common popular interpretation
4. a list of the original Sanskrit words and roots
5. the transliterated verse
6. a comment to assist in further definition of the terms and concepts.

It should be noted that the Sanskrit of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* requires a basic understanding to “decode” the meaning since there are very few verb declensions or noun cases common in other types of Sanskrit documents. Further, some words are joined together with an alteration of both the beginning and ending letters² that allows the hiding of a meaning under a constructed word built upon words with different meanings. Fortunately, there is a very clever built-in guarantee that a translation is correct when complete correspondence can be found between the translation and the literal words, since there are no unessential or undefined words. This is also true for modern technical scientific writings. Historically, a dedicated individual would find an experienced “guru” to assist in translating the text and understanding the content, and thus the complexity of the Sanskrit would be of no concern. The technical nature of these verses has also served to carry the ancient knowledge to the modern world, much as the early scientific writings of the West are understandable centuries later for those who are dedicated to searching.

It might be useful to review the critical organs of the body described in earlier chapters. The location of the ancient heart is no doubt the sacrum which contains a large amount of grey cells and connective “horse hairs”. This bone is located, as claimed, in the center of the individual if the body is measured from the tips of the toes to the extended fingers. The sacrum is known to have large neural connections to the center of the perineum or *yoni*. The swollen bulb is obviously referring to the bulbospongiosus muscle (in both sexes). This name describes the swelling and sponge-like or moldable nature of the muscle. Although modern physiology is aware of these organs, there is remarkably little reference to them, even though as mentioned above, the atrophied perineal muscles found in aging bodies are now known to contribute to low vitality and incontinence.

The ancient world, however, was well aware of the bulbospongiosus muscle. The best example is obtained from the artifacts of the very advanced civilization of the Indus Valley. Even though they left no writings, they did leave what is now called the *Shiva*³ *Linga* Icon (see Illustration page seventy-nine) which depicts the swollen middle section of the bulbospongiosus muscle protruding from a pudendum⁴ symbolizing creative power. The swollen protrusion⁵ of the bulbospongiosus muscle is described often in the *Haṭhapradīpikā* and other Indian writings, and its stimulation from changing

² Rules of *Sandhi*

³ *Shiva* is a later name for *Indra*, a name used for the inner creative power or soul.

⁴ The protrusion is also falsely explained as a “prolapsed uterus”.

⁵ Called variously: *jal gula*, *kanda*, *khaṇḍa*, *svayambhu*, *yonyarśas*. Also listed as the garden of *Indra*, *kanda sāra*.

pressure, squeezing or inner movement is a beginning *bandha*.⁶ It can also be perceived to be the “phallus” in the Greek *liknon* of the early Greek Dionysians (Verse 3:8). The sponge-like nature of the bulbospongiosus muscle explains why it is sometimes depicted as a pillar-like protrusion and other times like a swollen bulb depending upon the nature of the pressure placed upon it and its excitation. It is not doubt the ability of the bulbospongiosus muscle to swell and move in different sections that it was compared to a tongue in a lower mouth.

It is helpful to read the ancient text as the early descriptions of the feelings and reactions of controlled hormone production. The ancient Indians called the flow of hormones *soma* or *amrita*. It is interesting that the rains of *Indra* or tears have only recently been explainable as releasing and balancing the inner hormones of the body.⁷ Similarly, the inner feelings of a rising tongue of fire or energy known as the tongue of *Agni* is the release of serotonin and the adrenal hormones which is described as a rising, intoxicating flow or similar to a “drug rush”.

The excerpts from the book do not include those from the final section of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* which describes the *nādam* or the inner sounds or vibrations of the inner energy. Although most children sense the *nādam* in their activities, it is suppressed with aging and considered to be an illness called tinnitus or “ringing in the ears” by modern medicine. Although no one knows the source, nature or function of tinnitus, it is being “treated” with sedatives, which suppress its source or vitality. The *Haṭhapradīpikā* states that ringing in the ears is associated with beginning *bandhas* and further mastery brings awareness to its source in the belly. This final section is descriptive only and will be experienced by those who are able to effectively gird their bodies and minds, and hence I deemed it not necessary for this book.

Text of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* Book I

1.27 Severe diseases are destroyed with proper sitting while pressing the swelling bulb of the perineum and then churning. Enlightenment and spiritual gifts are obtained with regular and constant practice.

Literal: Severe diseases are destroyed by means of churning with proper sitting, the stimulated cavity and the small protuberance of the bulb. Regular and constant practice pressing the bulb awakens, illuminates, and brings forth spiritual gifts

Popular: *This matsyendrasana (which increases appetite by) fanning the gastric fire, is a weapon which destroys all the terrible diseases of the body: with (daily) practice it arouses the kundalini and makes the moon steady in men.*

matsyendrapīṭhaṃ jaṭharapradīptiṃ pracaṇḍarug maṇḍala khaṇḍa nāstram /
abhyāsataḥ kuṇḍalinī prabodhaṃ candrasthiratvaṃ ca dadāti puṃsām // 1:27

matsyendrapīṭhaṃ: the posture for churning by means of inner powers. matsya: math: to churn. sya: by means of. indra: inner god of fluids. pīṭhaṃ: a particular posture of sitting. jaṭhara: interior of anything, cavity. pradīptiṃ: radiant, stimulated. pracaṇḍa: terrible. rug: illness. maṇḍala: maṇ: maṇi: jewel, protuberance. dala: a small shoot, expel. khaṇḍa: bulb, protrusion. nastra: destruction./ abhyāsataḥ: constant practice. kuṇḍalinī: kuṇḍa: pot, bowl shaped container. kanda:

⁶ See *RigVeda* 1:28, in Chapter 9 herein.

⁷ See Chapter 3.

bulb. linī: lina: pressed together, resting on. prabodham: opening, awakening. candra: illumination. sthiratvam: firmness, constancy. ca: and. dadāti: gift. puṃsām: spirit.//1:27

Comment: This verse follows Verse 1:22 (not printed) in which the anus is pressed while sitting on the heel as a starting practice, since initially the perineum is largely unresponsive. This verse then adds churning and the pressure (from the heel) against the small protuberance of the perineum which becomes a bulb. This is then a restatement of Verses 1:28:1–4 of the *RigVeda* (Chapter Twelve). Churning requires initially both an upward pressure from the heel and a downward pressure from the lower abdominal and sexual muscles which can be initially physically tightened and loosened so that a rising and falling motion like a churn is obtained. The following verses describe how the bulb evolves and the churning becomes automatic with the usage of the churning rods.

The Sanskrit uses the word “foot” or “heel” in a generic way, since any object capable of providing pleasurable pressure against the *yoni* can be used. There is an advantage, however, if the pressure can be changed during a practice to continually increase the pleasure.

The word *kuṇḍalinī* is used in two different ways in the book. The first is as a compound word describing the pressing of the *kanda* or bulb, and the other is as the resulting reactions from that pressing. Thus, the term *kuṇḍalinī* names the cause as well as the effect of churning.

This verse’s reference to enlightenment can be related to an experience of intense insight or intuitive knowledge that follows a major threat or danger. This is generally associated with unusual feelings and motions in the lower abdomen and sexual region as well as the pressing or clenching of the center of the swollen perineum. Another example is the experience of special or creative insights produced during some vivid or REM dreams. During this type of dream there is considerable motion in the lower abdomen and stimulation and noticeable swelling of the perineum with labored breathing. Children use the natural restoring sitting position with intense sobbing with the legs pulled tightly against the body to bring pressure to the lower abdomen.

The ancient world generally described the individual as having two different sources of intelligence and control, the brain and the gut. The head and brain was associated with heated action or the physical doing and was related to the sun. The lower source of intelligence was hidden coming up as feelings from the darkness and hence was associated with the indirectly lit moon or glow.

The following verse gives the basic concept of how the inner hollow in the perineum is to be pressed and a little more about the inner power called *Indra*.

1:35 Sit with pressure on the *yoni* or the active center of the perineum, exhale strongly, shake, churn and pound against the source of pressure. This can be used to explore the source of carnal feelings which can open the door to obtain enlightenment by means of the released inner power.

Literal: Take the position of steadily pounding and churning the *yoni* vigorously with the foot placed in different places. Fixed and bound with the power of *Indra* using the liberating exhalation and the appearance of shaking, the conquering enjoyable carnal feeling is observed and maintained which opens the door to breaking through and producing enlightenment.

Popular: *The siddhasana (is now described). Press the perineum with the base of the (left) heel and the (other) foot firmly above the penis (or pubis). Keep the chin steadily on the breast. Remain motionless with the sense organs under control and with steady vision look at the spot between the eyebrows. This is called siddhasana; it throws open the door to emancipation.*

yonisthānakamaṅghrimūlaghaṭitaṃ kṛtvā dṛḍham vinyaset meḍhre pādamaṭhaikameva
 hṛdayekṛtvā hanuṃ susthiram /
 sthāṇuḥ saṃyamitendriyo’ caladṛśā paśyedbhruvorantaraṃ hyetanmokṣa kapāṭabhedajanakaṃ
 siddhāsaṇaṃ procyate // 1:35

yonī: yoni. sthāna: position. kam: to strive after. aṅghrim: aṅgh: set about. mūla: firmly fixed root. ghaṭitaṃ: attempting, produced. kṛtvā: causing dṛḍham: firm. vinyaset: to place in different places. meḍhre: medhya: full of sap or pith, vigorous. pāda: foot, pillar, support. math: to churn. aika: related to one. mev: to serve. hṛdaye: seat of feelings. kṛtvā: causing. hanuṃ: han: to strike, pound. susthiram: firm, steady./ sthāṇuḥ: fixed. saṃyamita: bound. indriyo: power of Indra. cala: moving, shaking. dṛśā: to become visible. paśyed: paśya: beholding. bhruv: bhṛ: to maintain. rantaraṃ: ranta: to enjoy carnally. ram: enjoy carnally. tara: surpassing, conquering. hy: hi: to assist. etan: breathing out. mokṣa: liberation. kapāṭa: door. bheda: opening breaking through. janaka: producing. siddha: perfected, enlightened. asana: posture. procyate: pracyu: to move proceed.//1:35

Comment: This verse follows 1:22 and 1:27 and the development of the perineum for both sexes from a sensitive anus to a swelling perineum and now to the development of the *yoni* in the center of the perineum.

The *yoni* is within the center of the perineum for both sexes and requires considerable effort and time to develop its full potential, particularly since it is normally suppressed with constant tension. Stimulating the *yoni* is for the release of *soma* or the generation of an energy or food called *soma* to be ready to respond to the needs of the body. This generation is often described as vitalizing the body by getting the guts excited, churned or in an uproar.

The awakening of the carnal feeling associated with the *yoni* is no doubt found by women massaging a sensitive spot called the G Spot⁸ with a finger. This spot is initially found as existing between the vagina and the pubic bone. This spot can be found by men by inserting their fingers into the same location by starting from the scrotum. The following verses describe how the *yoni* can be directly stimulated and the bulbospongiosus muscles developed to become swollen, soft, compliant and supportive of the inner swelling such that the swelling extends well beyond the perineum as the bulb or *linga*. (See Illustration page seventy-nine.) The process takes weeks if not months to produce significant swelling, but is always rewarded with ever increasing carnal feelings. The usage of the word carnal also includes how the *yonis* of lovers can be coupled in a mutual *bandha*.

1:56 Sitting and breathing in different ways allows the manifesting of some desired image or *mudra* of the self, and as a result of the inner union of forces, a sound rises from the belly called the *namam*.

Literal: Thus, sitting and restraining the breath in different ways causes the manifesting of a desired self image or *mudra*. Then because of the force, an inner sound of uniting rises from the belly.

Popular: *Asanas, varieties of kumbhaka, the positions called mudra, the concentration upon the inner sound comprise the sequence of hatha yoga.*

⁸ Ladas et al., *The G Spot*

āsanam kumbhakaṃ
citraṃ mudrākhyam karaṇam tathā /
atha nādānusandhānamabhyāsānukramo hathe // 1:56

āsanam: asana, sitting posture. kumbhakaṃ: water pot, nonbreathing. citraṃ: different ways. mudrā: sign, image. khyam: make known. karaṇam: doing, causing. tathā: thus./ atha: then, now. nāda: loud inner sound. ānu: to sound. sandhāna: uniting. mabhya: nābhya: sprung from navel. as: to take place. ānu: to sound. kramo: to advance. hathe: in hatha, in the force, violence.//1:56

Comment: This verse reminds us that body language and the force of the breath project an image of the self. As an example, the depth of breathing and the lowering of the pitch of the voice are characteristic of someone assuming authority. The sound rising from the belly is an introduction to inner sounds which are increasingly heard as the awareness shifts from what one thinks to what one feels. The control of what one wants to be or the *mudra* is discussed in detail in Chapter Thirteen.

The rising sound, called tinnitus or ringing in the ears, has no physiological explanation and is generally first experienced during a demand on the body such as in an illness or intense muscular effort. A survey of children has yet to find any child who does not hear the sound. The sound is “treated” by physicians with a sedative which reduces the energy of the body. (As a note: I tried to study the *nadam* with electronic equipment and could not find any measureable sound nor any correlation between an outside pitch and the inner pitch.)

Book III

3:8 The secret of the winnowing basket must be found with perseverance which is like the removal of chaff during winnowing or like the motions of a female body during coitus.

Literal: Endeavor and persevere to obtain the valuable secret of the wicker basket. In such a manner a small winnowing basket separates chaff in the same manner as a female body in coitus.

Popular: *This should be kept secret like a casket of precious gems. It should not be spoken to anybody, as in the case of intercourse with a well-born woman.*

gopaniyam prayatnena yathā ratnakaraṇḍakam /
kasyacinnava vaktavyam kulastrīsuratam yathā // 3:8

gopaniyam: secret. prayatnena: persevering effort. yathā: in such a manner as follows. ratna: anything valuable. karaṇḍ: a basket of bamboo wicker-work. akam: to endeavour to obtain. / kasya: Greek *Liknon*. ka: kad: to remove the chaff or husk of grain. sya: winnowing basket. (or ka: little. sya: winnowing basket.) cinna: chinna: taken away or out of. iva: in the same manner. vaktavyam: responsible for. kula: abode, body. strī: female. surata: coition, amorous. yathā: in such a manner as follows.// 3:8

Comment: The meaning of this verse is supported by the Greek *liknon* (see Frontispiece) which is a small winnowing basket the same size as the lower body which contains a cloth-covered mound which must have the same origin as this verse (see Chapter Six). The comparison to the female sexual motion is similar to the rocking motion like a female described in the *RigVeda* Verse 1:28:3 which stimulates the lower bulb. I also like the Chinese description that the inner motion is like the mating of a dragon and a tiger in the belly.

This verse describes the basic motion of girding the loins or the gut reactions during intense emotions as the guts churn and generate hormones or vitality. The relationship to the elimination of chaff during winnowing is obvious as the negative aspects of emotions are “tossed away” in the wind of deep exhalations leaving only the cleansed soul and body energized to do what the heart decrees.

3:9 With pressure against the *yonī* and with effort, the center is squeezed for the most pleasure. The source of pressure is held firm against the swollen active protuberance.

Literal: By means of a root support and striving, the *yonī* is squeezed for pleasure. The support is placed against the controlling swelling and held firm.

Popular: *Pressing the perineum with the left heel and stretching out the right leg and grabbing the toes.*

pādamūlena vāmena yoniṃ saṃpīḍya dakṣiṇam /
prasāritaṃ padam kṛtvā karabhyāṃ dhārayeddr̥ḍham // 3:9

pādamūlena: pāda: the foot, base. mula: root. vāma: striving after. yoniṃ: center of procreative energy. saṃ : together. pīḍya: pīḍ: to be squeezed or pressed out. dakṣiṇam: that which is right, pleasure./ prasāritaṃ : expanded, swollen. padam kṛtvā: to set foot in or on. kara: doer, creator. abhya: within the self. dhāraya: holding. dr̥ḍha: firm, strong.//3:9

Comment: This verse and the next two verses describe what was no doubt known as “girding the loins” in the ancient West. The *Haṭhapradīpikā* describes the girding as the *Mahabandha*, or Great *Bandha*.

The verse uses the word “foot” in its general sense as a “support” or “foundation”. Experience teaches that an object such as a rolled cloth can be used for a source of perineal pressure if its size is adjusted not to give too much or too little support.

3:10 Take on the form of becoming a churning vessel, which produces a change in its contents by means of an inner churning rod moving up and down.

Literal: The binding in the churning vessel intensifies and holds the upper flowing energy like the sliding motion of a churning rod as a rich source of attaining generative power.

Popular: *Contract the throat (In the Jalamdharma-bandha) and hold the breath in the upper part (i.e. in the Susumna). Then the kundalini force becomes at once straight just as a (coiled) snake when struck by a rod straightens itself out like a stick.*

kaṅṭhe bandham samāropya dhārayed vāyumūrdvataḥ /
yathā daṇḍahataḥ sarpo daṇḍākāraḥ prajāyate // 3:10

kaṅṭhe: a narrow opening tube as: kaṅṭhīla: a churning vessel (īla: flow). bandham: bind round, put on, uniting. samāropya: transferring to, making it grow, placing in or upon. dhārayed: holding, possessing. vāyu: wind. mūrdvataḥ: mu: to bind. urdvat: upwards./ yathā: in such a manner as follows. daṇḍahataḥ: struck by a churning rod. daṇḍa: rod, churning stick. hataḥ: forced, struck, bereft of loss whirled up. sarpo: slides, (moves like a snake): daṇḍa: a rod, churning stick. akāraḥ: distributes abundantly, rich source. prajāyate: prajān: procreation, generative power. āyat: to attain, reaching.//3:10

Comment: Everyone is familiar with the inner churning sensations felt while responding to threats or demands or striving to create. Normally, the demand or desire is so strong that the body becomes like

the above churn and no effort is required to put on its nature. The strong inner churning does, in fact, create a new nature of the self just as cream is converted to butter during churning. A modern endocrinologist would describe the inner churning as stimulating the production first of the tension hormones and then the production of many other hormones necessary to create the desired new form.

In the ancient writings direct referral to the nipples is avoided. Perhaps this was due to the fears of the sensuous powers of the body that are still common today. The usage of the term “churning rod” can have no other meaning, however, than to the connection between the nipples and the *yoni* (see Chapter Nine). This connection increases the response of both and may be necessary to initiate the sensitivity of each of them. Once the *yoni* and the nipples become fully activated, the connection becomes obvious as the tensions in the *yoni* or perineum respond nearly instantaneously to the stimulation of the nipples.

Due to the neglect of the nipples, it can take considerable time to re-sensitize them back to their childhood sensitivity, but again working with them as churning rods produces pleasure with a few weeks and then produces an ever increasing response apparently without end.

3:11 To obtain creative inner power, forcibly press down on the center of the perineum together with bending over and resting on the lower belly conquering the inner deadness.

Literal: To obtain the existence of great power, forcibly press the *kuṇḍa*. Then together with conquering the deadness of the belly by bending over to rest on.

Popular: *The kundalini shakti becomes straightened and the two nadis become lifeless.*

ṛjvībhūtā tathā śaktiḥ kuṇḍalī sahasā bhavet /
tadā sā maraṇāvastā jāyate dvipuṭāśrayā // 3:11

ṛj: to obtain, acquire. vibhūtā: great power. tathā: in that manner. śaktiḥ: creative power. kuṇḍa: hole, pitcher, bowl. lī: press. sahasā: forcibly. bhavet: being./ tadā: then. sā: sa: together with. maraṇā: deadness. vastā: vasti: pelvis, the lower belly. jāyate: jaya: by conquering. dvipuṭā: folded double. śrayā: śri: to rest on.//3:11

Comment: At this stage of progress, the *RigVeda* needs to be consulted for the nature and production of *soma* or hormones as well as the powerful addition to the above *bandha* with the nipple stimulation produced by the ten daughters. This text states that a guru needs to be found to instruct these higher practices. This suggests that five hundred years ago, just like today, the concept of touching the nipples was politically incorrect.

Normally the lower muscles of the belly cannot be consciously controlled, however; everyone encounters their strong contractions during vomiting, deep laughter, crying, sneezing and coughing as well as with intense emotions. At such times, the downward pressure is sometimes felt with the forced excretion of a small amount of urine out of the urethra.

This *bandha* uses the pressure gained by pressing the lower belly against the thighs such as done in the fetal pose. This pressure can serve to awaken the churning muscles similar to how pressure against the *yoni* awakens the normal sleeping bulbospongiosus muscle.

3:32 In the depths of the belly, the tongue of fire becomes active and is perceived as roaming around in the depths which indicates a change in the state of being.

Literal: In the covered cavity the tongue of fire appears to become reversed. Described as roaming around in the middle and perceived as a sign of the state of being as moving in a cavity.

Popular: *To accomplish the khechari mudra, reverse the tongue and thrust it up the back of the throat and turn the eyes toward the eyebrows.*

kapālakuhara jihvā praviṣṭā viparītāgā /
bhruvorantargatā dṛṣṭirmudrā bhavati khecarī // 3:32

kapāla: cover. kuhara: cavity. jihvā: tongue (of fire). praviṣṭā: appears. viparīta: reversed. gā: obtained./ bhru: bham: to roam around. antar: in the middle. gat: going. dṛṣṭir: perceived as: mudrā: a sign. bhavati: state of being. khecarī: movement inside the body (as a large cavity): khe: in the cavity, air (kha: cavity, organ of generation). cari: motion, travel//3:32

Comment: The stimulation of the perineal area, sensed as a cavity or space in which motion can take place, initiates a sensation that feels like an inner tongue of fire as it is felt to move within the lower abdominal and perineal cavity. This experience is often found during intense worry when the effects are often described as the guts being on fire and alive or writhing deep within the belly. Similarly, during or following this experience there is often the experiencing of something flowing upward from the guts into the upper body and head. Modern physiology explains this as the flow of hormones and their capture by receptors which in turn cause changes in reactive organs.

Almost everyone is aware how the state of mind and body changes with the inner movement in the guts. For instance, a strange or threatening sound at night can induce the belly activity which in turn increases the sensitivity of the sense organs and mental awareness. If the emotion is strong enough, the emotions “take over” and control the individual to meet the impending threat.

The text is surprisingly accurate in describing the interior of the belly as a cavity since it is experienced in that manner. The Sanskrit word *khecarī*, which means “the movement through space,” certainly seems applicable.

3:33 Because of the inner changes a small part of the power is loosened and carried up as high as the eyebrows.

Literal: Because of this increasing attainment it causes the increase in the loosening and separation of a small part, causing the conveyance of the power of perfection through the inner space to between the eyebrows.

Popular: *This requires lengthening the tongue, by cutting the frenum of the tongue, moving and pulling it until it can reach the eyebrows.*

chedanacālanadohaiḥ kalām krameṇa vardhayettāvat /
sā yāvadbhrūmadhyaṃ spr̥ṣati tadā khecarī siddhiḥ // 3:33

chedana: disturbance, removing. cālana: loosening. doha: yielding. kalā: a small part. krameṇa: by means of a step, attainment. vardhayitr: one who causes to increase./ sa: causing. yāvad: as far as. bhrūmadhya: between eye brows. spr̥ṣ: to convey to. tadā: then. khecarī: khe: air. carī: moving. siddhi: powers of perfection.//3:33

Comment: An example of this verse is given with some recent studies of laughter and crying. It is noted that when the belly is involved tears secrete hormones which are not present at lesser levels of crying or laughing.⁹ Similarly, we speak of being “blinded by emotions” often with the sense of something in the guts rising up into the head.

As the flames of *Agni* separate in rising up, an increasing inner strength, mental acuity and physical awareness are obtained rendering the body and mind more capable of responding to outer needs or demands. The changes in the body are felt to rise up to the middle of the head where it is noted as a feeling of pressure and heat behind the eyes and a vibration or ringing in the ears.

3:34 A dominating pleasure rising from the cavity is instrumental in the emission of a pungent, slippery, viscous but pure liquid. Similarly with mental guidance, sensual pleasure is obtained.

Literal: Because of a dominating pleasure, a fluid is emitted from an instrument which emits a hot, slippery, viscous but pure liquid. Similarly taking from that place in that manner mental sensual pleasure herein along with guided pleasure.

Popular: *Use a sharp, lubricated knife in the shape of a cactus plant, cut the frenum a hair's breadth.*

snuhīpatranibhaṃ śāstraṃ suṭīkṣṇaṃ snigdhanirmalam /
samādāya tatastena romamātraṃ samucchinet // 3:34

snu: emit fluid. hī: because of. patra: pat: to rule. ran: pleasure. nibha: resembling. śāstraṃ: tool, an instrument. su: to extract or press out. ūkṣṇaṃ: fiery, pungent, hot. snigdha: slippery, viscous. nirmala: pure./ samādāya: sama: similar. ādāya: taking. tatas: from that place. tena: in that manner. roma: sensual pleasure. mātraṃ: mā: manas mind. ātra: here in. samucchinet: sam: along with. uc: pleasure. chin: mind. net: nit: guided//3:34

Comment: This is the verse that is generally falsely translated as giving directions for starting the cutting of the frenum of the tongue a hair's breadth everyday until the tongue can extend up into the sinuses.

The verse actually describes the outer secretion of a fluid from the head that is not commonly discussed but noted in times of stress, excitement or sexual stimulation. Children's noses, for instance, drain quite profusely with excitement. Adults can find drainage during tension as their eyes tear up or they “choke up” and have to clear their throats. The fluid is classified as being hot because many times sneezing is associated with the drainage or its initiation as if you were exposed to black pepper. Drainage is recognized to wash the eyes, lining of the nose and sinuses as well as being directly connected to catecholamine or adrenaline production which either is a cause or a result of it. There may also be a similar connection with serotonin and the view of the self and world and other inner neurotransmitters and hormones that respond to external threats to the individual.

Everyone is familiar with how the head “wells up” with danger or emotion, but the text describes this process as part of a total physiological and psychological response to releasing higher powers within the body. The usage of the word “wells” may be a residue of allegorizing the reaction to the falling nurturing rain or *rasanā* of the god Indra.

⁹ See Berk et al., *Modulation of Neuroimmune Responses*.

3:35 After procuring and obtaining the powers of Indra, the auspicious path can be approached and followed with repeated pounding, caressing and stroking to obtain increased collected quantity.

Literal: (As above.)

Popular: *Then rub rock salt over the tongue, after seven days, cut again.*

tataḥ saindhavapathyabhyāṃ cūrṇitābhyāṃ pragharṣayet /
punaḥ saptadine prāpte romamātraṃ samucchinat // 3:35

tataḥ: after. sa: procuring. indha: powers of Indra. va: strong. pathya: the auspicious path, abhyāṃ: to approach. cūrṇitā: pound. abhyāṃ: to approach. pragha: to go forwards, proceed. ṣayet to go./ punaḥ:repeated. sap: caress (also sexually). tadin: taḍit: stroke, lightning. prāpte: attained to, reached. roma: ruh: to increase. mātra: quantity. samucchinat: samucchi. to collect together.//3:35

Comment: The inner heat and fire has been allegorized as produced by the inner god *Agni* and now the wetness is ascribed as resulting from procuring the powers of the allegorical inner god *Indra*. The early model requires that these two gods be fed with a special fluid that was called *amrita* (immortalizing fluid) similar to the Greek *ambrosia* (immortalizing fluid) also called “food for the gods”. Later *amrita* became known as *soma*.

Today this process is referred to as “psyching up the body” or “stirring up the guts” in order to obtain maximum powers.

3:38 In less than half an instant of producing fluid in the head, there is a release from death and illness from food poisoning as well as illnesses resulting from growing old.

Literal: (As above.)

Popular: *The Yogi who remains with his tongue turned upwards even for half a ksana (short length of time) cannot be a victim to poisoning, disease, (premature) death, or old age.*

rasanāmūrdhvagāṃ kṛyā kṣaṇārdhamapi tiṣṭhati /
viṣairvimucyate yogī vyādhimṛtyujarādibhiḥ // 3:38

rasanā: fluid. mūrdhva: head. gā: going. kṛyā: kriyā: producing. kṣaṇā: instant. ardhham: half: api: even in. tiṣṭhati: producing./ viṣa: poison. air: relating to refreshment or food. vimuc: to be released from. yat: going, moving. yogī: of the yogi. vyādhi: illness. mṛty: death, disease. jara: aging. adi: becoming. bhiḥ: caused by.//3:38

Comment: The best example of this verse is given with the transformational sobbing of a child where a change occurs relatively instantaneously. Many times, crying is maintained after the transformation because it feels so good. The transformation is much faster than could be obtained from a swallowed pill and probably even faster than with a muscle injection of a drug. The recent discoveries of how hormones can increase the immune response as well as the sensitivity of the body can lend support to the protection against poisoning or age-related illnesses. The recent measured increase in response time certainly indicates that *bandhas* can have a major impact upon the health and response of a body.

Rasanā is the “rain” of *Indra*, or the power of *Indra*, which is not to be confused with normal sinus drainage, since its cause is the up-flowing fire of *Agni* rather than irritation of the linings of the sinuses.

