

Khechari Mudra ~ Yogi Mahesvara

Car = moving around, circulating or taking off.

Kha ≈ akasa = emptiness

abiding, flying or dancing...

Space



When the
Divine Goddess
Takes off in
Inner Space



A tantric practice
partaking in the
mystic Union
of **Siva** &
Sakti within
the yogi/
yogini.



Tantric goddess...
Her essence is "great passion"
free from selfishness & illusion.
Works for the well-being of others
and the destruction of ego-clinging.

KHECARI MUDRA

WHEN THE DIVINE GODDESS TAKES OFF IN INNER SPACE

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TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH BY YAMINI
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ॐ नमः शिवाय

*” O Déesse, Tu t’adonnes à la destruction de la parole qui va du Verbe à la parole ordinaire. Tu atteins la demeure de Śiva libre de tout voile et Tu te révèles comme celle qui vole dans le firmament de la Conscience et lui permet de s’épanouir.
O Mère ! Tu es cette kundalini qui s’envole comme l’éclair et qui dévore avidement l’éclat du feu, du soleil et de la lune. Lorsque Tu te fraies un chemin par la voie du milieu en KHA jusqu’au bindu du śambhava on Te connaît comme la khecari.”*

MAHARTHAMANJARI DE MAHESVARANANDA
Traduction de Lilian Silburn, 1968.

OM DUM DARGAYEI NAMAHA

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TO THE GODDESS...

योगी महेश्वर

खेचरी मुद्रा

This work is dedicated to the Divine *mudra* called nowadays *khecari*. It is first of all my witnessing and the detailed account of my personal experience of *khecari mudra*. I am using a certain number of technical terms belonging to the yoga lexicon that I will not define here, since this document is designed for committed yoga practitioners and for those who teach yoga in its traditional form. However it is possible that it will inspire some beginners, in that case they will have to search for more detailed explanations in works introducing to yoga or by contacting me personally, which is mostly welcome.

This work is divided in two parts. The first part gives the historical context of this practice via a bibliographic research which does not pretend to replace or even complete the works of the experts in this field. I am referring to a certain number of academic works that the interested reader might desire to consult.

The second part consist in the sharing of my *khecari* experience. I spend some pages to describe experiences that are not strictly of the *khecari* domain but that I regard as useful to establish some of the basis to enter *khecari*. Indeed, as Ramakrishna perfectly summarises, "When the divine goddess comes up, the tongue rolls back." Therefore I am quickly relating how the *Śakti*, the *Kundalini*, did ascend little by little to guide me to *khecari*. This sharing is illustrated by quotations mostly derived from traditional texts pointing to the experience. These quotes have been translated in english by different authors, and a few of them have been kept in french, in particular the words by Lilian Silburn.

I apologise for the incorrect transliteration of sanscrit words.

”There is only one mudra, khecari.¹”

”This mudra is called khecari and is the queen of all the mudra-kings.²”

”Among these mudras the most important is khecari whose essence is a deity.³”

”I have taught this khecari mudra out of affection for my devotees.
It brings perfections and is more dear to me than life.⁴”

”La khecari mudra est transcendante et appartient à la voie de Śiva;
l'énergie Divine entièrement libérée s'épanouit et vole dans la conscience infinie
sans rencontrer jamais d'obstacle.⁵”

The practice of *khecari mudra* is fundamentally *tantric*, in the sense that it partakes to the Mystic Union of *Śiva* and *Śakti* within the yogi/yogini. It is one path between others paths since the Union can be achieved in many ways. I describe this one since it is the one that has been offered to me to live through, to experience, and to be able to share.

It is therefore not surprising to notice that the most ancient scriptural references of a practice consisting of inserting the tongue over the soft palate⁶ seems to descend from Śiva tantras (Mallinson 2007, M07 hereafter⁷), and more precisely from the lineages called *cult of the yogini* and from the Kaula, Krama and Trika traditions (Sanderson 1988; White 1998, 2003; Hatley 2016). These lineages are rooted, as many traditions over the world, to shamanic traditions, to Earth Mother's cults.

¹*Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, III, 54.

²*Kularatnoddyota*, translation by M07. *Khecari* is described in the same fashion in the *Jayadrathayamala*.

³*Tantraloka*, translation by M07.

⁴*Śiva Samhita*, IV, 53, translation by J. Mallinson.

⁵*Maharthamanjari* de Mahesvarananda, traduction de Lilian Silburn, 1968.

⁶This practice is not called *khecari* by this time.

⁷James Mallinson is a british academic, professor in a London University who has edited and translated several Hatha Yoga texts from sanskrit to english. The *Khecarividya* edition and translation was performed during his PhD thesis. On top of that J. Mallinson belongs to a *Sadhus* sect, participating to the *Kumbh Melas* where he continues his ethnographic work by collecting yogis et yoginis experiences, which enrich his academic work.

In this kind of Śiva's cults, devotion goes towards feminine entities: *Śaktis* and *Yoginis*. These entities are rather wild, furious, blood drinkers with ornamented skulls as can be seen in tibetan tantrism⁸. Sanderson (1987) describes *Yoginis* as both "supernatural entities, as well as women temporarily possessed by the divine Mother. They were summoned as well as pacified by blood, meat, wine and sexual fluids offerings by the adept in search of power and esoteric teachings." In this context *Śiva* is no longer represented as the good looking, clean and ideal householder living in the Himalayas, but as a wild ascetic yogi "lingering and practicing on cremation grounds in the company of *preta*, *raksasa* and others night demons as well as with unpius, impure people such as drunkards, people rejecting the official religion rituals, men and women naked with long matted hairs, frilled with bone necklaces and human skulls and claiming insanities towards the Gods (Papin 2013).

The *yogini's cult* was therefore the apparatus of the ascetics living outside society, and particularly of those living on cremation grounds, walking around with a human skull to beg for food, adepts of the "left hand tantra". Later the *Kaula* tradition has planned differently these practices aiming for them to become accessible to the people living inside society (Sanderson 1988).

During these tantric rituals, the practitioner could obtain from these *Yoginis* an esoteric knowledge via a fusion, a connection, a direct meeting⁹ with such entities. Amongst these transmissions, the practitioner could be given the initiations for *khecari mudra*. In this rather tortuous context, *Khecari* represents a specific *Yogini* to be found at the summit in the hierarchy of these initiating entities (Sanderson 1987, 1988, M07).

I am very sensitive to this historical aspect since, when observed from a distance, and as I will argue in this document, it is clear to me that I am guided by *Śakti* in my *khecari* practice. Everything is happening as if the Goddess, and through her the Divine, was giving me the keys to evolve in *khecari*, on the yogic path, and more generally in this life I am offered to experience. Being aware of this "autopilot" mode implied a radical change, challenging the notion of decision, free will. Simply, a mouvement is proposed; simply I follow this mouvement, confident; active in the world, with a flavour of non-action, giving up to decide about anything, driven by faith.

In his introduction, M07 mentions several *tantras* in which can be found references to a practice which is close to *khecari mudra* the way is discussed in this work. These references point at this practice as a mean to make the *kundalini* ascend and allow the practitioner to

⁸see, e.g., Blofeld (1970). The cover page represents *Vajrayogini*, tantric Goddess from tibetan Buddhism.

⁹*melaka/melana*, I will develop later this essential notion of *melana*.

drink the *amrita*. The texts are the following: the *Kiranatantra*; the *Maitrayaniyopanisad*; the *Jayadrathayamala* (in which a *karana*¹⁰ called *antarjala* is described); the *Malinivijayottaratantra*; the *Kaulajnananirnaya*; the *Kubjikamatatantra* and the *Kularatnoddyota*. Several centuries after the quotations connected to the *yogini's cults*, the reference to *khecari* can to be found in the whole of the hatha Yoga texts that I had the chance to read, highlighting therefore the importance of this practice.

I will quote some passages from these texts in this manuscript, when I consider they are relevant to illustrate my experience.

The word *Khecari* comes from *kha* and *car*. *Kha* is synonym with *akaśa* which stands for emptiness, and points to the inner space. *Car* is translated with moving around, circulating or taking off. Hence the possible translation of *khecari* as "abiding, flying, dancing or taking off in inner space".

In certain texts references are brief (*e.g.* the *Dattatreya-yogasastra*, the *Śiva Samhita*); while in others they are detailed (*e.g.* the *Gheranda Samhita*, the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, the *Jogpradipika*). Last, the *Khecarividya* is fully dedicated to *khecari*.

The *Khecarividya* seems to be the more detailed work on the practice of *khecari mudra*. A fact well established by experts (Bouy 1994 ; M07) is that several Hatha Yoga texts have been quoting some verses from the *Khecarividya*, written before 1400. An exemple of this verse lending can be found in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. In the *Yoga-Kundaly-Upanisad*, the second chapter corresponds to the first chapter of the *Khecarividya*. The 4 *patalas*¹¹ constitutive of the *Khecarividya* seem to generate from a much vaster work as the *matsyendrasahmita* (M07, Kiss 2009).

Even if the *Khecarividya* is ment to be the most detailed and complete text on *khecari*, I have been surprised not to find any references to all the specific tastes that the yogi experiences into his mouth when he deepens seriously his practice. This practice's stage that I have experienced and that I detail into this work is however well analysed for exemple in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, the *Gerandha Samhita*, the *Malinivijayottaratantra*. For more details on the *Khecarividya*, the interested reader can consult the work by J. Mallinson that I strongly recommend for anybody interested in the practice of *khecari*. Beyond *khecari*, I also strongly recommend J. Mallinson's works to anybody interested in the scriptural references of yoga.

¹⁰In Śaivism tantric texts, this term refer to what will be called later *mudra* in Hatha Yoga text.

¹¹Chapters, books creating a text. Historically it represents a textile envelope aiming at keeping together several pages of a manuscript forming one chapter.

Into the compilation of the 108 Upanisads, 20 between them are devoted to yoga, and 7 point explicitly to *khecari*: *Dhyana Bindupanisad*; *Mandala-Brahmanopanisad* (during the description of *Shambavi mudra*); *Yoga-Kundaly-Upanisad*; *Yoga-Cudamany-Upanisad*; *Yoga-Tattvopanisad*; *Yoga-Sikhopanisad*; *Sandilyopanisad*.

All the works I have been mentioning are written in sanscrit. In the south of India, we find mentions to *khecari* in the *Tirumular* in Tamil Nadu language:

*”Where the eye, tongue and ear meet
There is the ancient power that creates the sound
Flashing a brilliance within the uvula
It saves us by controlling the mind from straying*

*Śakti is at the close of the sound
Purposive yoga is at the close of the sound
Our goal too is at the close of the sound
At the sound’s end is Śiva who drank the poison.¹²”*

Remaining in the Tamil Nadu tradition we find commentaries on *khecari* by *Siddha Maccamuni* in the *Karana Jnanam*.

*”entering the moon after crossing the six chakras
aproching the feet of the guru at the abode
reconciling the state of differences and entering,
finding the magnificent fire, sun and moon
the chosen plane is it not that has become the kehcari mudra
in the moment of affirmation the entire world has become a myth
positioning in deep sleep at that blessed state the body will turn gold
whatever is touched becomes gold; cherish and guard
observe kehcari touching sahasrara,
without mental bewilderment seeing the six cakras, adorn the self in the sun, moon and fire
gloriously remaining upwards in splendour
O son ! look; think firmly, that kehcari only
O ! O ! that is the glow, the glow of the void of attributes;
if one perceives that, he is the wise person
one who knows not the bliss will inly utter vain words*

¹² *Tirumular*.

*while looking into the sun, the moon and the fire,
by glimpsing the feet of jnana sakti which stands enjoying
while reflecting like a lamp not seen before
O son ! khecari will stand merged”*

The *Bahr al-hayat*, written in Persian during the sixteenth century by a Soufi, Muhammad Ghawth Gwaliyari, contains a chapter dedicated to Hatha Yoga, featuring a Muslim flavour. In chapter 4, verse 18 is dedicated to *khecari mudra*¹³.

Tibetan Buddhism establishes yoga as one of the more advanced practices. In the *Pali Canon*, which is a collection of Buddhist texts, we find three citations in which Buddha describes a practice consisting in pressing the tongue against the palate. However there is no mention of inserting the tongue *beyond* the soft palate.

In the *”Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines”*¹⁴, a classical work on Tibetan Yoga that openly describes those practices following the lineage of the six Yogas of Naropa, no mention of *khecari* can be found. However it would be surprising, see improbable, that tibetan yogis were not aware of *khecari*. It could be possible that the same practice was named differently ? It could be possible that tibetans did not write openly about advanced practices and that could be the reason for not finding written references ? It could be possible as well that tibetan yogis (as well as other yogis) practice a ”non physical” form of *khecari* based mostly on visualisations, freeing themselves from the physical intervention of the tongue.

However, without naming it, in the *”Lama Blanc”*¹⁵, a comic strip by Alejandro Jodorowsky and Georges Bess, can be found a clear allusion to *khecari*. In the third book, Gabriel, a tulku (reincarnation) of a high tibetan lama, finds his former disciples who are going to reteach him the dharma, or rather to help him recollect who he had been. They start by cutting his tongue’s frenum to achieve directly his third eye activation to enable him to ”see things as they really are”. I have not been able to contact Jodorowsky to find out more about his inspiration sources.

Another contemporary reference to *khecari*: Rai Bahadur Shrishia Chandra, in his *Gheranda Samhita* translation. He comments the verse III, 25 [Cut down the lower tendon of the tongue and move the tongue constantly: rub it with fresh butter, and draw it out to lengthen it with an iron instrument]:

¹³Traduction by Carl W. Ernst, <http://www.asia.si.edu/explore/yoga/chapter-4-bahr-al-hayat.asp#intro>.

¹⁴Evans Wentz, 1934.

¹⁵Le *Lama Blanc*, 1988, éditions Humanoïdes associés.

”This is the preliminary to Khecari Mudra. Its object is to lengthen the tongue, that when drawn out it may touch with its tip the space between the eye-brows. This can be done by cutting away the lower tendon. It takes about three years to cut away the whole tendon. I saw my Guru doing it in this wise. On every monday he used to cut the tendon one-twelfth of an inch deep and sprinkle salt over it, so that the cut portions might not join together. Then rubbing the tongue with butter he used to pull it out. Peculiar iron instruments are employed for this purpose; the painful process is repeated every week until the tongue can be stretched out to the requisite length.”

Bernard (1950) describes his Hatha Yoga and *khecari* experiences. He explained how he lengthened his tongue by pulling it (*dohan kriya*) and by progressively cutting the frenum by using a razor blade. Bernard reported also about the effects of his *khecari* practice like the quench of hunger and thirst, as well as the possibility to close the nostrils from the inside for *pranayama* practices.

Yogani, an internet teacher, has been writing a lesson about *khecari* (lesson 108 !). This has been very inspiring for me. I am grateful to Yogani as well as to Didier for the french translation¹⁶. In those teachings Yogani gives an overview of the practice by dividing it in four stages. I will use these stages in this book and I recommend strongly the interested reader to consult Yogani’s work. He does not precognise to force *khecari* on anyone, neither to get rid of the tongue’s frenum, but he gives valuable advices to those who will reach a stage in which they would feel the need of doing so.

OM NAMAH SHIVAYA !

ॐ नमः शिवाय

¹⁶<http://www.aypsite.org/108.html>.

*”I turn my tongue back, putting its inferior side against the palate,
the tip of the tongue pulling back...”*

It is with these few words that I propose to the practitioner to start settling into this essential *mudra*. This is the way that was proposed to me at the time of my first yoga lessons during the autumn 2010. I could not have dreamed at the time of the implications that this *mudra* would have taken into my life.

Many practitioners will be satisfied to keep the tongue turned against the palate, and this is very good. For others this might be the beginning of an intersideral journey. Might these few lines guide them in their experimentations !

In 2004, Yogani noticed that *khecari* is the subject of increasing discussion and debate:

*”This practice is coming out of the shadows of esoteric yoga to enter into the early morning
sunshine of this rising new age of enlightenment.”*

This work wishes to be the humble contribution in the establishment of this ”new age”; it wishes to be a vector of this *Divine Mudra*.

Which is the technical function of this *mudra* ? To the beginner I describe *khecari* as a secure anchor to attend to the work developing along the axis of *sushumna nadi*. In the same way that I would firmly block a piece of wood or metal on which I desire to work by placing it in-between the screw joints, in that same way I would secure several points of anchorage to work along *sushumna nadi*. At the base of the spine I put into place *moola bhandha*; at the other extremity I put into place *khecari* and *shambavi mudra*. In so doing it is established a firm axis posture. Then one can begin to work on *sushumna nadi*, using *pranayama*, visualisations, *asanas*, *mantras*...

It is from 2010’s fall that I start to integrate in my practice different yogic tools and especially *khecari*. I experiment by pushing my tongue against the palate and I explore the effects. I realise that *khecari* helps the maintaining of *sushumna nadi* and adds to the quantity of *prana* circulating inside the body and more precisely all along the spine. This awareness becomes more and more refined with the cumulation of several months of regular praxis.

Until the summer 2011 I had been following one yoga lesson per week that was taught not far from my working place. My increased *prana* awareness pushed me to establish more individual sessions.

As a matter of fact it has been my developed *prana* sensitivity which pushed me towards yoga. I make a quick summary of that opening because it had been the cause of a quite fast ascension of "the steps along the spine", which had ultimately allowed *khecari* to become established. I will describe the fall into place of *khecari* few pages ahead, do not hesitate to go there directly if you wish stepping beyond these pre-*khecari* story.

2010: I often visit a certain place; I am going there to escort my wife for four days periods where she trains as therapist. A grand beautiful domain deep into nature. I am busy with my younger son still too small to be separated from his mother, chiefly from her nurturing breast. From the first stay I notice a substantial decrease of my interior dialogue, the mental is less agitated, the ping pong between thoughts recedes, while a contemplative, restful attitude abide spontaneously at times, not for too long; an attitude I did not previously know.

I spend quite some time in the kitchen, where I meet two women endowed with some clairvoyance. They seem to be aware of the potential that is starting to blossom in me and that is, as yet, largely unknown to me. My interactions with those women and that place are developing. I become more and more connected to this place that is defined as "one" by one of the women, the manager. As an evidence of this I have a premonitory dream a bit later: a small building of which I was following the construction is ending up in flames just after the end of the construction due to some electrical problem. That destruction appears clearly before it actually happens in a peculiar dream happening in three parts: a building grows out of earth, disappears, then serious looking people come to enquire.

One morning during summer 2010, I wake up in this place covered by small red spots; I place my hands one against the other and I feel a kind of "magnetic resistance". Everything happens as though I had a powerful magnet in each hand; my fingers feel as if they had extensions, something like having very long nails which tend to move toward the sky. In those days I did not practice yoga, an activity I was classifying as "something not for me", and I could not therefore think about *pranic* extensions. When passing my hands over some objects without touching them, like stones for exemple, I could "feel" their presence beyond their physical form.

Puzzled by these new sensations, I start experimenting as the scientist I am; I define experimental protocols, act my experiences, reach conclusions. In particular if I let my hands go, they are guided, like magnets following a field which I cannot qualify as invisible since I am aware of it with both the sense of touch and the sense of sight. Later on I will hear descriptions of *spontaneous chi gong*. That is exactly what it is: I simply follow *prana*'s mouvement. During a part of that summer I play on a daily basis with those "extensions" of my hands in the forest where I am starting to build our future abode. Often, not always, after such playing, I come in contact with all kind of emotions: joyful, painful, all kind of

things that were nearly unknown to me up to now (I thought I was going perfectly well !). At times totally different dimension opened up to me, unknown, but somehow endowed with a taste that recall to mind something already known: silence, a pacified mind, the end of fluctuations, unity...

With the lexicon I acquired since then I would now say that, in those days, the different *koshas* started to open. At a given moment I realise that if I turn my hands toward myself is produced a good influence on me. I start to experiment on consenting guinea pigs some energetic healing which did work but that I did not pursue feeling that it was not "my thing".


Fairylike experiences, magical ones but also very chaotic ones surface in me; in particular the opening of the emotional body, very charged, pulls me into a painful spiral at times, sometimes very close to desperation.

I start to do some brief researches, realising that there are several millenaries sciences explaining my experiences, in particular the science of yoga. At first I refused to read too much about the subject since I thought it might influence my experimental approach.

After three month since the opening of the *koshas*, I start to follow this yoga course I mentioned earlier. The teacher, a very good listener, shares his knowledge with me. He endures patiently my interrogations and questionings, and answers my mails. This kind of traditional yoga which I would classify with the name of hatha yoga or kundalini yoga, allows me to have a theoretical frame to interpret the results of my experiences, to contain that energy that spreads from all over me, to help channeling it. At the same time I start an emotional psychotherapy which is very complementary of my yoga practice and that helps in speeding up the cleaning process of the *samskaras*, those mental and psychological impressions/conditionings. At the time of writing, I continue this psychotherapy work.

Actually six month earlier (Christmas 2009), during a peculiar experience while staying in Chili, a Latin Land which I belong to, my unconscious did open for the first time. I did emotionally reconnect with some childhood traumas which I could not have expressed up to those days. I understand clearly at that moment that many emotional charges are weighting me down since the past twenty years, that they govern my life beyond my consciousness and that I am passing them over to my children. In the second part of this experience I perceive the appearance of a magnificent *Light*, pure, immaculate, infinitely well wishing; directly I do identify with that Light. The message is crystal clear, never have I been more sure about something in my whole life: "this is what you really are, clean up those traumas and you will again become what you truly are".

It has been that Light to empower me to stand up against the activation of plenty of those *samskaras*. I knew deep down that all those sufferings were necessary, that I could not

- The tongue is lengthened by regular stretching & the larynx tendon under the tongue may be cut.
 - The tongue is to be pushed against the soft palate.
 - And further up into the nasal cavity.
-  PRANA is the Sanskrit word for 'life force' in Hindu philosophy.

- A Kosha is a 'sheath' & there are 5 covering the Atman, or supreme self.



• "Clean up your traumas & you will again become what you truly are."

- Samskaras (in Indian philosophy) are mental impressions, recollections or psychological imprints. They explain karmic occurrences as the result of these deep imprints.

flee away from them, but that beyond all that was existing that clear light that was, for the time being, still largely screened.

Back at the campus at 2011's fall I find that the yoga teachings were cancelled. I decide to follow my teacher in a yoga school that he was attending and where teachings were given every day of the week. I get a subscription and follow the teachings several times a week, especially on Friday evenings when it is proposed teachings to students desiring to achieve a teacher's degree. This session that last two hours and a half was much more pushed than the "grand public" ones. They always ended up in cryings, shoutings, rolling on the floor, curling up in foetal position for many of the participants, including myself. All that was welcome by the teacher and was part of the yogic purification that these practices were producing on us. On Friday afternoons out of habit I went first to my psychotherapy session just before the yoga one, and that cocktail "psy-yoga" acted as a detonation on me, very well suited to my situation. I continue to use on this cocktail to this day when I write these lines and it is likely that this will remain my whole life through. I often highlight in my writings as well as orally the importance that psychotherapy has on my path. I advice it unconditionally to every one on the yoga path, and also to those who are not (yet) on the path.

Summer 2012 (northern hemisphere) had been rich of meaningful experiences in my practice that brought me to enter *khecari*.

During the past two years we were renovating an old ruin in a forest land that we had bought. It was not a full time job, we were doing what we could with what was available around us, lots of second hand materials or healthy and free of charge materials like clay and straw. An auto/eco reconstruction done piece by piece, helped by participatory construction workshops and pursued at the rhythmic entrance of cash. During those two years we had a "traditional" lodging whose rent was slowing our restoration. At the beginning of summer 2012 we started living full time in the forest, endowed of around thirty watts from forty years old solar panels and a water tank to recover the rare and precious provencal rain water. We were strongly motivated in this adventure which meant a lot to us. That also meant to go against all the advices of our family and friends, against the so called "common sense" which establish that "living in the forest without water and electricity with young children" was not a "serious" behaviour; even more so because this kind of lodging was not "legally existing" in the local jurisdiction (and is not aimed to become legal at any moment). "Your home does not exist" I was told at the town hall. It was at the same time marvelous and difficult to throw ourselves against the wind, to follow our aspirations, to break away from our socio/familial and cultural conditioning, to concretise the dream of living fully into nature. The technical changes that this new habitat was imposing on us produced some radical changes in our way of living. For example, the fridge absence was preventing us to

eat the way we used to which was a welcomed change. We had to reduce plenty of our needs some of which we never missed. I was then redirected towards a more simple way of life, less artificial and that sounded more authentic to me, with less superfluous needs which had being just burdens stealing space for other more essential things that could be now activated.

In short those life changes plus the continual contact with nature have had important repercussions on my practice. This new way of living has impressed on me a large range of new informations which ended up transforming me.

”With practice the apana is separated from prana, and its flow is reversed to bring about the awakening of manipura chakra. Whereas the apana normally descends from manipura during expiration, the flow is reversed so that prana and apana both enter the navel centre simultaneously from above and below, and are joined. This is the union of prana and apana. The awakening of kundalini in manipura takes place like a blast, as the prana and the redirected apana meet in the navel centre. It is like two great forces colliding with each other and then fusing together at this pranic junction, manipura kshetram. As they fuse together they create heat and an energy or force which awakens manipura chakra. This causes a total reorganisation of the pranic flow in the body, so that mooladhara is transcended and the new base of kundalini is manipura chakra.¹⁷”

”Le yogin commence par remplir son corps de souffles qu’il brasse puis retient; tirant le prana qui tend naturellement vers le haut hors des conduits où il se meut à l’ordinaire, il le fait ensuite pénétrer dans le canal médian et provoque l’ascension de l’apana dont le cours est naturellement descendant. Enfin prana et apana s’élèvent à travers le conduit central.¹⁸”

¹⁷Satyananda, 1984.

¹⁸Ksemaraja, *Pratyabhijnahrdaya*, traduction de Lilian Silburn, 1983.

• **Apana** is what governs eliminative functions,
 the exhale and the downward & outward
 flow of energy.

By reversing the flow of
 apana so that it rises
 towards the navel during
 exhalation as the prana
 descends to the navel,
 one may awaken the

★ MANIPURA CHAKRA (Solar Plexus)

- **Anantara Kumbhaka** ~ Pause at a completed inhale
- **Bayha Kumbhaka** ~ Pause at a completed exhale

root → Mula Bandha

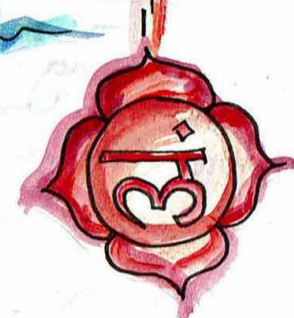
throat → Jalandhara Bandha

abdominal → Uddiyana Bandha

may be engaged during these pauses,
 as well as the use of **vijayi** (ocean)

breathing.

★ It is the awakening of **Kundalini**
 (Muladhara) in Manipura



During that same summer a new pranic circulation was established inside of me. Until that moment I had been steering my breath as I had been taught: during inhalation breath ascends inside the spine, during exhalation it descends. This is also the way I propose to seekers while animating yoga sessions, remembering them however to follow any spontaneous visualisation taking place, and to thank *Śakti* for any precious transmission of teachings.

All of a sudden, spontaneously, while breathing in sitting posture and being open to anything manifesting, I observe two currents: one between the base of the spine and the abdomen, the other between the abdomen and the throat. During inhalation, simultaneously, the higher stream ascends from the abdomen to the throat and the lower stream descends from the abdomen to the base of the spine. During exhalation the streams movements is inverted: the higher stream descends from the throat to the abdomen and the lower one ascends from the base to the abdomen. I observe this new phenomena with serenity, I go along with it, I experiment with it, I literally dive into it. I add pauses at full and at empty lungs (*antara* and *baya kumbaka* respectively) that increase the power of the process. Next day I experiment once more, again those streams that ascend and descend at the same time manifest in the practice. Feeling confident, I decide to push it further; I increase the length of *kumbakas*. In particular, during *baya kumbaka*, all my attention is brought towards the abdomen, into the *manipura* region. The longer I breathe out the smaller that lotus tends to become and the thicker its associated *prana* density. The longer I remain in *baya kumbaka*, the thicker that ball of energy becomes; I remain for a while titillating *manipura* through *baya kumbaka*. That energetical knot, that *pranic* plinth that I usually perceive in *mooladhara* is literally elevated into *manipura*; it is there that can be found the denser *pranic* point. That knot, that point, starts radiating in isotropic way; a kind of disc settle in there, it starts to turn as if I had a record player in my abdomen; it turns and turns faster and faster and denser and denser until it reaches a point of explosion in which *prana vayu* and *apana vayu* unite and *manipura* awakens. Later on I will fall on Satyananda's words that I have been quoting earlier.

Maybe my intensive *uddhyana bandha* practice has something to do with this experience. I advice strongly beginners to practice intensively *uddhyana bandha* until they will experience it with ease. Once *manipura* wakes up is *navuli kriya* that spontaneously takes place instead of *uddhyana bandha*. It will take me some time to master *navuli kriya* but the click that will lead me to the mastering of this funny kriya had taken place.

”When the consciousness evolves to manipura, the sadhaka acquires a spiritual perspective. He gets a glimpse of the higher lokas or planes of existence. All his views are completely changed. As long as the evolution is in the planes of mooladhara and svadhista, one has mental and emotional problems and sees the whole world correspondingly, but as soon as one transcends these places and goes to manipura, all the bliss, noble views, perfect ideas and greater possibilities of human consciousness are seen. Then, naturally, whatever one thinks and does will be influenced by this higher vision.”¹⁹

Thanks to the relationship with my wife that used to be quite chaotic in those days,²⁰ I realise that I do not function any longer in the same way. In those days my emotional patterns used to unfold in sharp waves: at times wonderful at times terrible; I used to fall into a painful hopelessness, the kind of hopelessness that hurts all over and that does not see any way out. After the waking up of *manipura* I realise that while living difficult situations, my positioning is no longer the same; the difficult situations were still there and a part of me was preparing itself to fall into the hopelessness, that was my usual role; however now things were not automatically working anymore. The first time this was happening I remained prudent and thought to myself that nothing was gained yet. However after six month of not falling into hopelessness I understood; Satyananda’s words helped me to integrate that new behavioural pattern leaving for good the old one behind me...

For the first time in my life I felt *guided* and no longer ”alone”. I did not know as yet where I was heading to but I was starting to feel a complete trust; the fading away of hopelessness had left enough space to activate something else.

Finally during that same period I had a dream pushing me not to cut my hairs any longer neither to brush them. It had been two years that I had not cut my hairs but they did not grow, and a lot of them were falling. However after that dream my hairs started to grow and mingle.

A bit more than a year that I was following yoga classes several times a week, and that I did practice what I learned and that I tried experimenting with techniques produced by my own intuition, I let myself be guided by what I do not recognise yet as the *Divine Śakti*.

At the beginning of 2013 I start a two years cursus proposed by the yoga school; I start something systematic; every month we learn new practices; the class is structured skillfully

¹⁹Satyananda, 1984.

²⁰My wife started therapy before me. Reasonably a period building a new balance in the relationship had to be chaotic.

and scientifically by the teacher. All my gratitude to that "energy's superior technician" ! When I felt it was necessary, lead by my intuition and my feelings, I modify the techniques with the imprint of my personal needs. Several times during those teachings I have been taught techniques that I had already found by myself. At the beginning I say to myself that I have discovered a technique, however later on I realise that I have just re-discovered a practice, just like the yogis that codified that same technique. Nowadays I tend to consider that the practice manifested itself of its own will, or just that I have been following the *prana's* movements, or that *Śakti* guided me.

" To be established in the endeavour is abhyasa. It becomes firmly grounded by being continued for a long time with reverence, without interruption.²¹ "

The course is demanding and fascinating, I practice at least between six to ten hours a week. Slowly it happens what should happen: *Śakti*, fed by the Hata Yoga "violent effort" starts to ascend inside the spine. Her desire develops and get stronger following her progression. Experiences, realisations, gifts, a stronger and finally total gratitude accompany the progression. These experiences are beyond the scope of this work where I stay focuss as much as possible on *khecari*.

"When the divine goddess comes up, the tongue rolls back.²² "

"When prana is awakened in the body, the tongue will move into that position spontaneously.²³ "

It is little by little that my tongue starts to pull towards the back without any conscient intervention from my side. That helps keeping *khecari* because the tongue can have a tendance to slip at the beginning and the effort to put it back into the needed place can tax on the concentration. The tension into my tongue increases with time and practice; it actually starts to hurt, more and more, especially at its base. The tongue seems to beg me: "let me get higher, I have things to do higher, please set me free..." During a long time I thought it was my tongue talking to me; later I understood something evident: it was *Śakti* expressing herself.

²¹Patanjali, Yoga Sutra, I, 13-14, translation by Satyananda.

²²Ramakrishna.

²³Muktibodhananda, 1985.

”When the nervous system is ready, it just happens. The tongue wants to go back.”²⁴”

At that point something dawn on me spontaneously, it is not a mental choice, a certainty imposes itself: my tongue must be freed of her frenum. I knew where I was heading to, without worries and just knowing that everything would unfold perfectly. At that point the only traditional text on hata yoga I possessed was the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. This text gives details that used to be unclear to me in the past years but that were by now perfectly clear. In a more contemporary scene the blessed 108th lesson by Yogani on *khecari* had been greatly helping me.

*”In the manner described by his guru, every day for seven days the knower of atman should rub the base of the palate and clean away all impurity.²⁵ He should take a very sharp, well-oiled and clean blade resembling a leaf of the *Snuhi*²⁶ and then cut away a hair’s breadth of the frenum with it. After cutting he should rub the cut with a powder of rock-salt and *pathya*.²⁷ After seven days he should again cut away a hair’s breadth. The yogin, constantly applying himself, should thus practise for six months. After six months the binding tendon at the base of the tongue is destroyed.”²⁸”*

Traditionally it is advised to cut the frenum’s tongue progressively of an hair’s thickness every time. Before going to buy a sterilised blade I decided to go to see which solutions an hospital could propose. I went to see a stomatology service first, before deciding how I will free my tongue. Whatever I would decide I had the absolute determination to go all the way.

My meeting with the doctor established the direction of my decision: she was very sweet, calm, used to deal with children (this kind of intervention is usually performed on children whose elocution is obstructed by the frenum). I felt totally at ease and explained my situation sincerely to her. She had never heard of such a yogic situation however she listened

²⁴Yogani, 2004.

²⁵It is referring to a preliminary technique in which you rub the palate surface with your thumb to prepare it for *khecari* as commented by M07 and as described by Bernard (1950) who used a small spoon for the same purpose. I did not use this technique since my palate was already very soft.

²⁶*Euphorbia antiquorum*, a kind of cactus with sharp cutting leaves used in Ayurveda.

²⁷To make sure that the cut will not refill the space obtained. *Pathya* is yellow myrobolan.

²⁸*Khecarividya*, I, 45-47, translated by M07. These verses are very close to the one found in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* (III, 34-36), which suggests that the latter draws on the *Khecarividya*, which seems to have been written one century before the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*.

to me without any judgement. She looked at my tongue and my frenum and declared that there would be no problem to perform what I was asking for, all this offered by the social security. One more time in my story the Goddess manifests and takes me along the path; this time armed with a scalpel ! We settle for a date. During spring 2014 I discover the romanticism of a great hospital. Everything is done fast and well, little blood, the tongue slightly numbed after anaesthetic, a bit difficult to speak for the rest of the day. During the next few days I nourished myself very little. I did not feel any desire to put food inside my mouth. I drank only liquids (fruit juices, white almonds pasta). One month is needed for cicatrization, I respect the delay. I substitute *khecari* with *jiva bandha*. At the end of the month all is cured, I obtain the doctor's permission to continue with the "tongue's stretching" as she calls it.

The day after the doctor's permission I start again *khecari* practice, I go for it joyously and intensively; freed from the frenum my tongue slips behind the soft palate and I discover there the floor of the nasal cavity²⁹, the posterior edge of the nasal septum called nasal pharynx. In the following I will call this the *nasal floor* and I will refer to it as the first *level* of *khecari*. Yogani refers to this step as being the second *stage* of *khecari*. In my view it is from this first level that we can say that a serious practice of *khecari* is actually taking place. To this nasal floor corresponds *lalana chakra*³⁰. When *amrita* starts to percolate from *bindu*, it is first passing through *lalana* before reaching *vishuddhi* and continuing its way to be consumed in *manipura*.

The sensation I am experiencing is striking and subjugating. I can feel a bony floor covered by a very thin and sensitive sort of skin, a kind I never met before in my body. The tongue pushes then against some skin tissues having a semi circular form. That sensation is highly sensual: that sweetness, that sensitivity remember me of the vaginal entrance, a little bit under the clitoris where can be found a bony plane covered by a very thin quality of skin that seems to be extremely sensitive. However the nasal floor is something different and first of all it is inside me and not into someone else. Union can happen: the nasal floor is similar to the feminine sexual organ and the tongue is related to the male sexual organ. They join together and *Śakti* can pass: one small step but an essential one towards the Union of *Śiva* and *Śakti*.

²⁹See the anatomical charts in annex for an illustration of the different parts of the body which are mentioned in the text.

³⁰The correspondance between *anamaya kosha*, the physical body and *pranamaya kosha*, the pranic body can be useful to find out the different components, but can also bring some confusions. In fact the pranic dimension is not limited to its physical counterpart.

"The sensation is highly
Sensual: that sweetness,
that sensitivity remind
me of the vaginal
entrance, a little
bit under the clitoris..."

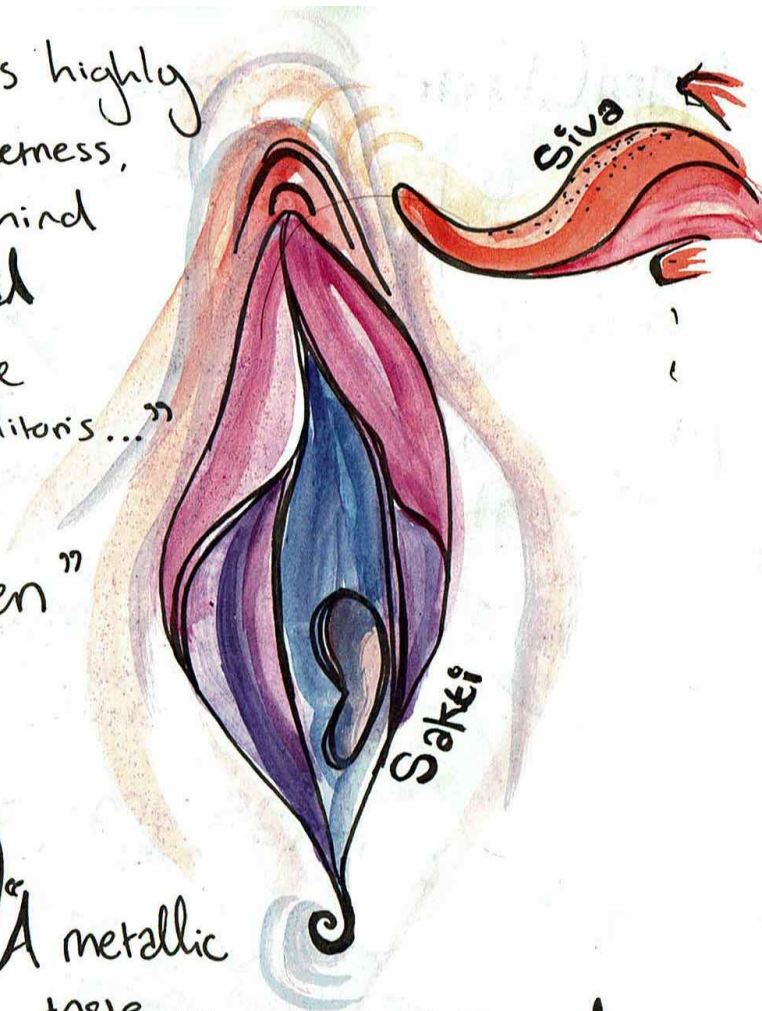
"Union can happen"



"A metallic
taste..."

"a taste I experienced with Mescaline,
psilocybine & LSD"

"I am experiencing the effects of a powerful
psychoactive substance secreted by
my own organism & catalysed by
the Divine mudra!"



From a technical point of view, anatomically speaking, something becomes evident to me: the shape of my nasal floor is *perfectly* corresponding to that of my tongue that can drop into it naturally as if tailored just for that purpose. This is the way nature works: this place is done to welcome my tongue; we are naturally programmed to enter *khecari*. The tongue naturally abides on the "altar of bliss"³¹. The *khecari* practice becomes much more stable with the tongue no longer slipping; no effort is now needed to pull it towards the back; it is actually as if a "pranic magnetisation" has been produced: the energetic flux passing through the tongue is so strong that it literally glues it towards the nasal floor³². In other words to be able to pull back the tongue from the nasal floor it is now needed some small effort. It is like when one does a *mudra* with the fingers: the contact between two given fingers close an energetical circuit and is needed a little effort to undo the circuit.

I do not leave the nasal floor during the whole day, a day spent alone at home, which gives me the chance not to have to talk. I devote myself totally to *khecari*. Very soon the effect can be perceived. Actually it can be felt from that same night after about ten hours of continual practice. I go to sleep outside, on the terrace, in the middle of the forest ready to rest in view of a next long day to come.

However that night I will *not* sleep; impossible to fall asleep; I remain in full alertness the whole night, in pure euphoria, without worries about what will be my performance next day. A rich cocktail of sensations flows all through the night. On the physical level I feel at times a slight headache, the impression of some fever as well. On the level of *pranamaya kosha* I experience a very strong awareness at the level of *ajna* few centimeters in front of the forehead. Many different and varying activities appear one after the other. In particular the knot of *Rudra Granthi* is very active, it turns, it works its way. I have the impression to integrate plenty of things which fall into place just like if I had been deeply reprogrammed. I welcome everything with serenity, I simply become open to anything manifesting, bathing in full trust. I contact a whole series of sound's vibrations, of "unstuck sounds". Obviously the silence's vibration is present as well and on top of it many subtle melodies are joining in. Beyond that I rest in a state of well being, of euphoria, of complete bliss.

³¹Yogani, 2004.

³²See Fig. 1 and associated discussion on *khecari* acting as a switch and establishing a junction between the inferior and the superior part of *sushumna nadi*, allowing *Śakti* to cross over and join her cosmic lover.

• **Nauli Kriya** ~ Abdominal undulations

• After cutting the frenum the tongue can slip behind the soft palate to rest on the floor of the nasal cavity.

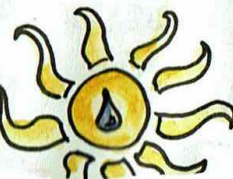
• "When the nervous system is ready, it just happens. The tongue wants to go back."

Vishuddhi Chakra
(The Throat Chakra)



Nectar of immortality

"When **Amrita** starts to percolate from bindu, it is first passing through labna before reaching vishuddhi and continuing its way to be consumed in manipura."



Bindu Chakra
(falling of the drop)

(a mirror chakra associated with the throat chakra)

Flowing from the aborts of the moon.

”When the tongue constantly presses the cavity, the moon’s nectar flows and has a saline, pungent and acidic flavour. It is like the consistency of milk, ghee, honey.³³”

”When it comes into contact with the aperture of the skull, the tongue reaches a liquid. Each day a blissful sensation arises from the various flavours. At first the fluid on the tongue is salty and brackish, then bitter and sharp, then like fresh butter, ghee, milk, curd, buttermilk, honey, grape juice, and nectar.³⁴”

”The yogin should point his tongue upwards and insert his mind in there. With a sweet taste, o great goddess, there is the removal of wrinkles and grey hair. With a milky taste, o wise one, a man becomes immortal. When there is a taste like ghee, o goddess, then autonomy arises.³⁵”

During that night I experience a very pronounced taste into my mouth or rather a collection of ineffable peculiar tastes. I remember particularly a metallic taste which was present during the whole night or at least during a big part of the night, a taste that I recollected as a taste I experienced (rarely) with mescaline (cactus san Pedro of Chili), with psilocybine (mexican mushrooms) and with LSD.³⁶

No doubts, I am experiencing the effects of a powerful psychoactive substance secreted by my own organism and catalysed by the Divine *mudra* ! Would I be experiencing the integration of *amrita* descending from the moon and being directly collected while passing through *lalana chakra* ? This is the most probable interpretation. Next morning that metallic taste has disappeared, leaving a very sweet, agreeable, ineffable taste that escorts me ever since.

Amrita, also called by the name of *ambrosia* or *nectar of immortality* has been described in many traditions. In Judeo Christians traditions it is represented by wine. In texts connected with *yogini’s cults* and hata yoga, it is made allusion to this Divine Nectar.

³³*Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, III, 50, translation by Muktibodhananda.

³⁴*Gheranda Samhita*, III, 26-28, translation by James Mallinson.

³⁵*Kaulajnananirmaya*, translation by M07. No reference to these tastes in the *Khengarividya*.

³⁶My experiences with psychedelics have been very rare. Despite this, I clearly remember this metallic characteristic taste.

”The wise yogin should then lead his tongue to the uvula and insert it there. He should visualise the white heavenly amrita, flowing from the orb of the moon.³⁷”

” Stretching the uvula until he can reach the aperture of Brahma, the wise man also extracts the best of amritas with the tip of his tongue.”

” The yogin should recognise that which is in the middle of the uvula in the form of a drop to be amrita, which destroys wrinkles and grey hair.³⁸”

”The yogin should open up the uvula after rubbing and pressing it. Satiated by the amrita from the uvula he is sure to conquer death.³⁹”

The link between *amrita* and *kundalini* ascent is also suggested:

”That which has the form of consciousness,⁴⁰ assuredly moves upwards. This conjunction of Śiva & Śakti is the uprooting of the Key goddess.⁴¹”

In short, after such a psychedelic night, I rise and shine in full strength, rush to my laboratory ready for a very dense work day (had some visiting foreigners, a conference at the laboratory to which I do participate and all the usuals routines).

”Neither disease, nor death, nor sleep, nor hunger, nor fainting arise for he who knows khecari.⁴²”

As in my habits I put water to boil for my usual black tea but now it becomes impossible to drink it; too strong, no desire whatsoever for tea, a glass of water is enough. Later on I try to eat an apricot; cannot finish it, I feel like having eaten a ”cassoulet” (heavy winter french dish), nothing seems to pass through. I spend around ten days without food. It is not a fast, I am feeling satisfied, the reservoir is full, nothing at all can fit in. During those days

³⁷ *Malinivijayottaratantra*, translation by M07.

³⁸ *Kaulajnananirnaya*, translation by M07.

³⁹ *Kubjikamatatantra*, translation by M07.

⁴⁰ *Kundalini*.

⁴¹ *Jayadrathayamala*, translation by M07.

⁴² *Vivekamartanda*, 48, translation by J. Mallinson & M. Singleton, in *Roots of Yoga*.

my family is traveling and I am alone. I watch the unmoving stove, my exile from our dry toilets, and I finally begin to consider that ingestion of food is against nature. Several times I try to feed myself but simply it does not pass. I sleep minimally during that period but I feel bursting with energy; I remember starting building works under mid day heat of the provencal summer sun. After ten days I start again to feed myself physically with pleasure.

”If his mouth fills with a slightly salty liquid that smells of iron then he should not drink it but spit it out. He should practise thus until the liquid becomes sweet-tasting.”⁴³”

I will have some digestives disorders till the end of the year. After a few months I consult a doctor that will announce me that part of my digestive system is blocked. I do not remember a lot of the technical details but the problem is soon overcome. Could it be that those digestive problems were caused by having swallowed the metallic tasting liquid ?

” All of our advanced yoga practices and experiences begin to function on a much higher level. When khecari is entered naturally, we come on to the fast track of yoga. It is the major league of yoga, if you will.”⁴⁴”

To be able to install myself comfortably at this ”first level of *khecari*” has been a determining step. Before this moment the energetical reservoir, the starting place of the *pranic* ascension had clearly been the base. From this *khecari* degree onward the energetical reservoir express itself from the *lalana chakra* region. *Sushumna nadi* seems to be caught in a vice in between *mooladhara* and *lalana* region however slowly but surely is the *lalana* region that becomes prominent that vacuum up the energy towards higher regions; my practice of *moolabhandha* becomes redundant, becomes less relevant since there is no longer energetical downward haemorrhage to prevent: energy now cannot descend any more, the only way is up. For sometimes I slowly abandon *moolabhandha* unless I feel it to be necessary. All along several years I was often keeping *moolabhandha*, now it is *khecari* that I am constantly keeping.

”Standing, awake, asleep, moving, eating or delighting in sexual intercourse, he should curl back his tongue constantly, joining it with its own mouth.”⁴⁵”

⁴³ *Malinivijayottaratantra*, translation by M07.

⁴⁴ Yogani, 2004.

⁴⁵ *Kaulajnananirmaya*, translation by M07.

It is from this new found energetical plinth that I continue my ascension. It is at this moment that my yoga cursus proposes *kapalabhati kriya*, a powerful breathing technique axed on *ajna*. Following my intuition I adapt the proposed practice to my own situation and I establish it in my daily schedule. We are proposed a *ghatika*⁴⁶ practice with only full vase retentions; I add empty vase retentions and lengthen the practice's time of several *ghatikas*. I dive totally into this practice for over one month. Slowly during this time, or shall I say all of a sudden, the *Shivalingam* appears in *ajna chakra*, the two petals activate, magnificently; the lotus blossom, retentions get longer, become more and more comfortable, until the moment that, for the first time, I perceive a new *nadi*: a *pranic* flow having its source in *ajna* (the point between the eyebrows perceived now a few centimeters outside the physical body) then enters towards the middle of the skull and again modifying its flow further on towards the top of the skull. For the first time I can feel the thousand petals opening and closing: *sahasrara chakra*. I am constantly attracted to the top of the skull. Prudently I abide there with my attention for several minutes, waiting to see if any undesirable effects manifest. I observe a small security time even if I know that no risks are involved, that it is just the logical unfolding. I am filled with an unending gratitude... Very fast I dive into *sahasrara*, I turn the whole of my senses towards that awesome manifestation, I rest into that immersion longer and longer, there where time becomes irrelevant. The access to *sahasrara* allows me to approach the very first degrees of meditative states, *dhyana*. Actually no conscious effort is necessary now as into *dharanas*; I simply observe the lotus activity, at times that observing disappears...

"All the days of his vow of separation there shall no razor come upon his head; Until the days be fulfilled, in which he separated himself into the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."⁴⁷

"There are a lot of reasons why a yogi would grow his hairs long, let me think about it... Yes, there are a lot of reasons... Just forget about that, speaking of that would be misleading."⁴⁸

⁴⁶Division of time used in yoga, corresponding to 24 minutes.

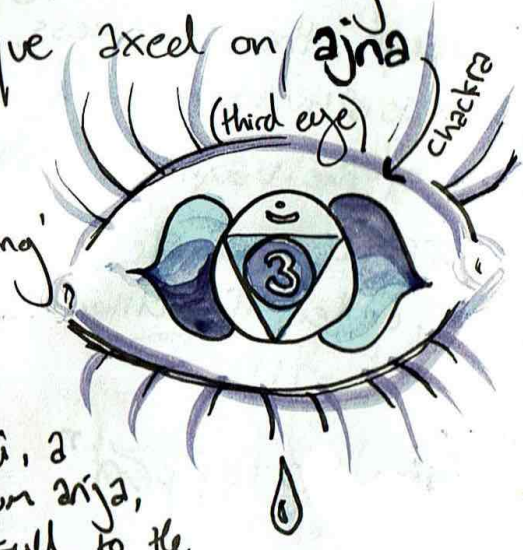
⁴⁷Nombres, VI-5.

⁴⁸Drubwang Konchok Norbu Rinpoche, *The Yogis of Tibet*, Jeffrey M. Pill, 2002, Jehm Films, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFSjxc2Vg14>.

Kapalabhati ~ a powerful breathing technique based on



axcel on ajna (third eye) chakra



A new nadi, a pranic flow from ajna, to middle of skull, to the top of the skull.

Sahasrara (crown) Chakra



can feel the thousand petals opening & closing

"... there where time becomes irrelevant."

It is at that time that I become aware of another "anchoring point": I observe that if I position my hairs on top of the skull it is helping the energetic flux to go that way. The hair knot share informations with *moolabhandha*, *khecari* and *shambavi*. It is one of the reasons to use hair conductivity in yogic pursuits. I had already observed since some time that hairs define some specific *nadis*. I had realised that the more the hair locks and get mingled and thickens, the bigger is going to be the quantity of *prana* that pass through them. If I pick up a lock between my fingers I can clearly feel that that lock brings energy from my hand to my skull. I then understand why two years earlier my hairs started to grow and to mingle: a device was starting to set up ! From that time my head knot pulls *sushumna nadi* towards the crown. About two years later, my beard begins to grow; I welcome this and investigate its *pranic* dimension. This appears clear to me: hairs of the beard are also defining *nadis*. The image of the Pharaohs of Egypt comes to my mind, with their false beard, considered as a Divine attribute. I can observe that the beard generates kind of a descending *pranic* flow; this flow then in turn generates an ascending flow, *sushumna nadi* rises. To summarise, the hair knot and the beard appears to me as tools for my verticality. I experience then why many yogis have long hairs dressed in top head knots and long beards. On the other hand many shave their heads and beard regularly with yogic purposes. Once more there are several ways to follow depending on our sensitivity and inclinations. Different and equivalent ways, no one is superior to another.

Again on those days I realise that if I walk barefoot on Earth I can feel the telluric energy entering me through my feet and circulating inside my body. That circulation answers to that energy which tend to exit from the top of my head. Everything takes place as if I was supposed to transform myself into a tube connecting Sky and Earth. In fact I feel as if I am falling back into my real place, not just a human being deposited mysteriously on earth, but as someone entirely belonging with its own environment just like a tree or a plant. I feel more and more to be settling where I belong.

*"Vijnanamaya kosha is the link between the individual and universal mind. Inner knowledge comes to the conscious mind from this level. When this sheath is awakened, one begins to experience life at an intuitive level, to see the underlying reality behind outer appearances. This leads to wisdom."*⁴⁹

A new practice impose itself to me. I wake up very early well before dawn, no matter how late did I go to sleep the night before. I act just like a programmed robot. Little by little the practice settles in by itself: the clarity of the instructions is stupefying; they manifest

⁴⁹Niranjanananda, 2009.

-Another 'anchoring point': Hair ~ "I observe that if I position my hairs on top of the skull it is helping the energetic flux to go that way."

The hair knot
Shares information
with moolabhandha,
kecani & shambavi.



The more the hair
locks & gets mingled
and thickens, the bigger
the quantity of prana
that is going to pass
through it.



• "if I walk barefoot on Earth I can feel the telluric energy entering me through my feet & circulating inside my body."

• "Everything takes place as if I was supposed to transform myself into a tube connecting Sky & Earth."

directly from the intuitive channel, from *vijnanamaya kosha*. Another way of putting it would be to say that the Goddess is generously instructing me on what am I supposed to do.

In one or two weeks the practice has settled; I know exactly what I must do, I do it automatically, minimum five days a week. It is a *dharana* which consists in watering one's garden by coming to breath in every lotus, one after the other. A practice tailored for my progression and that I share in the annex. That practice will accompany me for around six month Logically, following the steps of *Ashtanga yoga* as codified by *Patanjali*, this *dharana* brings me to the very first stage of *dhyana*: my attention focusses on a lotus and now there is no longer any conscious effort required. Consciousness becomes more subtle and intense, like a laser beam. Contrary to *dharana*, mind is no longer engaged, its circuitry is out of service. Object and subject subsist but without a relation between them.

At some point I experiment a second degree of *pratyara* when senses, at first turned inwards and concentrated on inner awareness (for example the sensation of the opening and closing of the lotus petals) end up detaching themselves from those wonderful inner sensations whose subjugating beauty could slow the yogi's ascension. In other words there is a moment when those sensations disappear.

At that moment the separation between subject and object is extinguished: only remains that which *is*, that which "has been", that which "will be", nothing more; just like some emptiness that has been fully filled up, nothing exists anymore but at the same time everything is there. There are no longer questions, nor answers, no knowledge, no seeker trying to understand the workings of what is there. It is restful, peaceful without being disconcerting even for a researcher in hard sciences payed to produce knowledge !

The *fundamental equation* appears in its original simplicity: there is *no* equation, no variables, no parameters and neither unknowns; nothing else but what IT IS; it is largely sufficient, it fills up everything, no room for anything else. An important demystification of such a state; like a *déjà vu* taste, my whole body recognise the original signal: it is just natural, every constituent of my being includes that primordial information. It has been there ever since, and forever: simply it is often screened by the mistaken identifications produced by mental fluctuations.

The installation of this *dharana* does not allow me to continue the yoga cursus that I had nearly finished, I decide to end it.

• Vijnanamaya Kosha is the link between the individual & universal mind. Inner knowledge comes to the conscious mind from this level... one begins to experience life at an intuitive level, to see the underlying reality behind outer appearances. This leads to wisdom.



“Just like some emptiness that has been fully filled up, nothing exists anymore but at the same time everything is there.”

“Like a déjà vu my body recognises the original signal.”



The abiding of my tongue on the nasal floor has been a decisive step in my *sadhana*. That said *khecari* is meant to bring the tip of the tongue much higher than that. During two years my *khecari* practice has been focused on the nasal floor. Shyly I was moving to search a bit higher, aware that this was not the end of the story, but I could not find a way through. I had tried to massage my tongue to make it longer (*dohan kriya*) but without any enthusiasm; it was not yet the right moment. I was already boundlessly grateful for all those experiences. To remain at this stage of the practice was fine for me. I was trusting *Śakti*, the Divine Inspirer; when she thought the moment right to continue the ascension she will find the way, I simply will have to follow the process. After those two years the moment to continue the ascension was triggered.

*When the desire of Śakti goes beyond a threshold,
the Divine Goddess takes off in inner space.*

Why does she takes off ? It is simple, the same story, she wants to reach her cosmic lover, *Śiva*.

Spring 2016, on a bulgarian beach, with a group of very inspired friends with whom I just shared a superb ceremony: the Black Sea, a fire, devotional singing; I am with my mouth shut practicing *khecari*. At a given moment, there we are, my tongue finds the passage, a sensation of something powerfully unfastening, leaving for an intersideral journey, the image of Vulcain's motors⁵⁰ cross my mind; they impulse a movement, Taking Off ! I understand at that moment the meaning of *flying through inner space*. My tongue climbs along the nasopharynx, its tip touches a bone structure, it is the sella turcica that shelters the pituitary gland. This is part of the sphenoid bone (see annex). It is interesting to note that the sphenoid has a butterfly shape, a good help to *fly through inner space* !

Technically and physically all conditions were ready since a long time; in particular my tongue was long enough. Where did the triggering come from ? Why was it happening at that given moment ? I resume in two words before further elaborations: *Śakti* desired continuing her ascension of Mount *Meru* and it has been the *bhakti* to give enough power to the taking off. After nourishing *Śakti* for many years through the "violent effort" of Hata Yoga I have been discovering a new fuel, a new nourishment: *bhakti*, the Divine Goddess adores it !

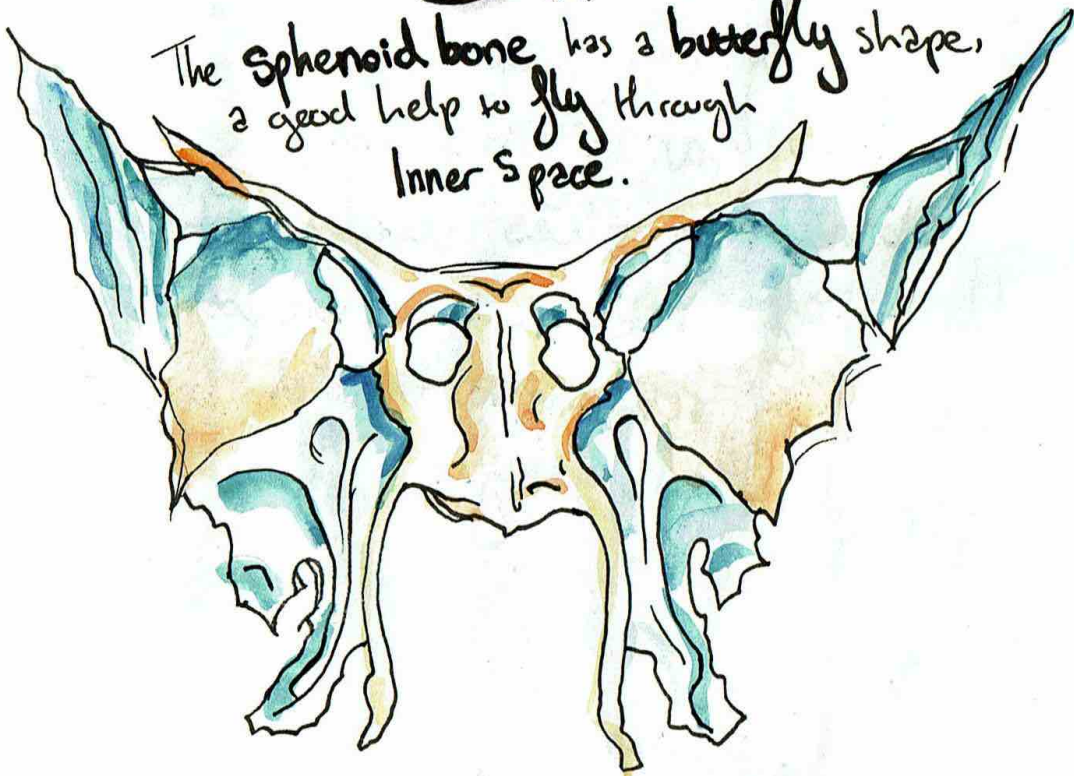
⁵⁰Ariane rocket motors.

Khecari Mudra ~ continued...

Why does Shakti take off (in inner space?)

~ She wants to reach her cosmic lover
Siva.

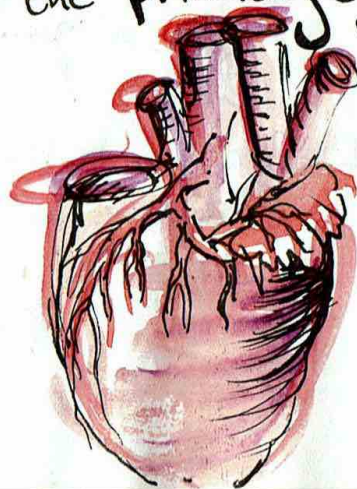
The sphenoid bone has a butterfly shape,
a good help to fly through
Inner Space.



The tongue climbs to touch the sella
turcica that shelters the pituitary gland

A new fuel, a
new nourishment:

Bhakti



: Love &

: Devotion

”The seed of bhakti lies in the heart of every person. Each person is potentially a bhakta. Generally, however, this bhakti is not able to blossom, for it is hidden and covered with mental misconceptions, problems, dogmas and unhappiness. Each person should be an ecstatic bhakta, because everyone has the potential to tune in with the inner world beyond the limitations of individuality.

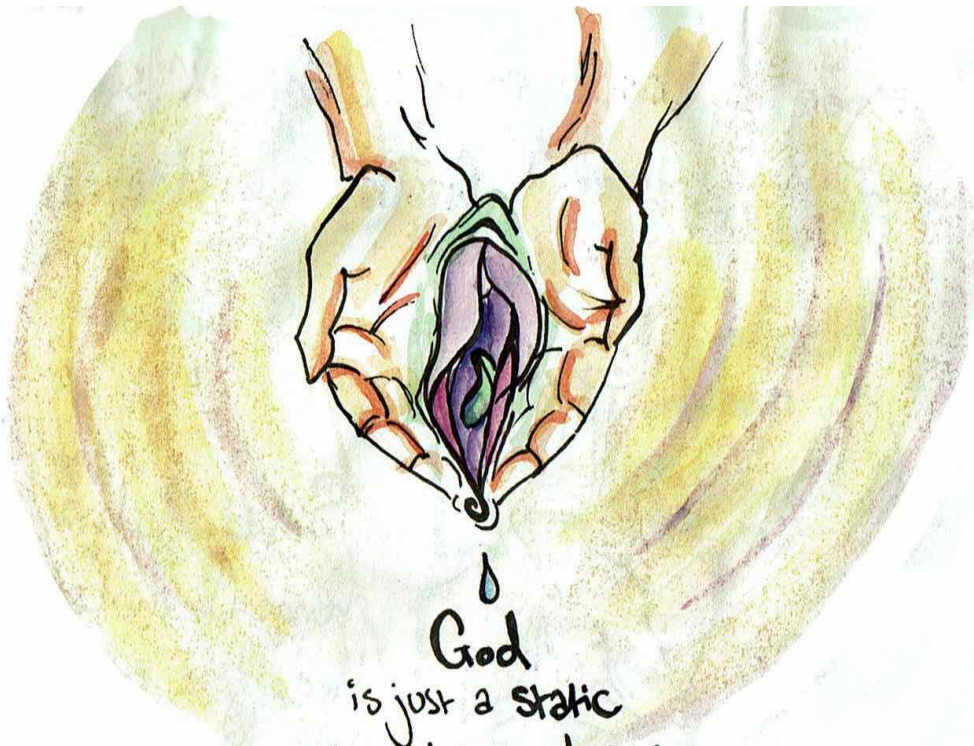
If one is devotionally inclined, then one can follow the path of bhakti yoga, which can be the express train to expanded awareness. If one is not devotionally inclined, then the other paths of yoga can be followed instead. These other paths will eventually lead to spiritual experience. This in turn will automatically lead to bhakti.⁵¹”

I was not favourably disposed toward *bhakti*, toward devotion when I first started yoga lessons, it did not belong at all to my previous way of thinking. If I had fallen on yoga lessons emphasising that aspect I would not have been hooked at all. I shall confess that even an OM chanting was difficult to tolerate for me ! At some times while practising advanced difficult practices (in particular *kumbakas*), I was shyly asking a bit of help to *Śiva*, represented by an image on the wall of the yoga studio, nothing more.

My *bhakti* discovery has been tightly connected to that of the Kriya Yoga of *Babaji*, the atemporal himalayan yogi becoming famous thanks to Yogananda book *Autobiography of a Yogi*. I have been initiated to Kriya Yoga by my friend Sita in the spring of 2015. The two days initiation started with a *puja* in *Babaji*'s honour. That ceremony was something new for me, I did not feel very comfortable with all that. I was finding that time was passing slowly during that initiation's weekend; the practices proposed seemed to me very soft compared to the ones I was used to. In particular no retentions, no unending *pranayamas*. I had the wrong feeling in those days of the necessity of pretty strong ways of practicing. With Kriya Yoga I will learn in between other things that the strong ways are not always necessary. I had the need of strong practices at a certain moment in time but that is not everyone's rule.

At the end of the initiation the last practice is dedicated to *Babaji*. While the practice has not even begun *Babaji's mantra*, that I did not know yet the previous day, becomes active, it starts to resonate in me. Everything happens as if I was hearing someone reciting the *mantra* close to my ear, strongly, much faster that I could master consciously... *Babaji* is appearing to me, he opens his arms and shelters me in there in a cascade of benevolent grace; the connection with that lineage of yogis and yoginis is sealed.

⁵¹Satyananda, 1981.



God
is just a static
principle and it is
only through his Sakti that
he can manifest his power. She is
the one bringing the power
and capacity for
action.



OM KRIYA BABAJI NAMAH AUM !
OM KRIYA MATAJI NAMAH AUM ! ⁵²

What does it mean meeting *Babaji* ? How many people sincerely declare to have met the virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, Krishna or any divinity of any given pantheon ? The Divine being everywhere and in everything it can be met in thousands of different ways, even in petrol refining factories or in a politician. However certain representations are more favorable than others, it is the case of divinities. A divinity help us to connect with the Divine. Some people question their *reality*⁵³. Adopting a pragmatic stance I think that their reality rests in their capacity to connect us with the Divine: the important thing is that it works⁵⁴. The impressive number of divinities corresponds to the people's diversity: every one will discover specific affinities with one or the other divinity.

It exists many ways to call the Divine. To illustrate what I am talking about I will describe two of these ways I use in my daily life. The principal ingredient from my point of view is the *bhakti* intensity we have achieved. I think that we must lower all our defense, to abandon ourselves sincerely, without saving nets, without leaving the possibility to return to our old ways.

J'offre ce que j'ai de plus précieux, cette vie, au Divin.

*Non ! Plutôt, je prends conscience que cette vie ne m'appartient pas;
Je sors des fausses identifications qui nourrissent Ahamkara, l'ego.*

*Simplement je remets les choses à leur place,
Je rends au Divin ce qui appartient déjà au Divin.*

*Cette croyance que j'existe en tant que personne individuelle, individualisée, que je suis
acteur de ma vie, que je maîtrise quelque chose, que j'ai du libre arbitre;
Tout cela je le dépose aux pieds du Divin, je m'en remets au Divin, je lâche tout.*

Dès lors, inspiré par le Dharma, je redeviens l'instrument du Divin.

⁵²*Mataji* is *Babaji's Śakti*. In hinduism the male divinity is inseparable from his feminine counterpart. God is just a static principle, and it is only through his *Śakti* that he can manifest his power. She is the one bringing the power and the action capacity.

⁵³Regarding our perception of what we usually call reality, see the movie "What the Bleep do we know!?", 2004, Samuel Glodwyn Films, <http://www.whatthebleep.com>.

⁵⁴When I was a student I was thinking to do my PhD thesis on theoretical physics. I had met a cosmologist that told me concerning quantum physics and its devious way to describe reality: "Quantum physics, we do not understand anything about it, but it works!".

- Pragmatically, the reality of divinities rests in their capacity to connect us to the Divine: the important thing is that it works. The large number of divinities corresponds to the people's diversity

We must leave
all of our defenses and
abandon ourselves sincerely, without
a safety net & without the possibility
of returning to our old
ways.

Samadhi

A state of intense concentration
achieved through meditation;
Regarded in Hindu yoga as the
final stage, at which union with
the divine is reached.

As Satyananda clearly explains: if you are inclined to devotion then *bhakti* is the best way. If you are not inclined towards it, as it used to be my case, then practice any kind of yoga knowing that sooner or later a passage through the *bhakti* stage seems unavoidable, and is mostly welcome since it is a fuel, a yogic tool extremely powerful. In short we all are potentially "extatic bhaktas", the only thing we need is a revelation of this potentiality; then why not ?

As a matter of fact Patanjali mentions it in the *Yoga Sutra*. He recommends to *apply to the practice with great passion*. That said, Patanjali mentions several times how a total surrender to the Divine, *Ishvara pranidhanadva*⁵⁵ can make you reach *samadhi*. In short Patanjali describe the possibility to shortcut the laborious steps and reach directly *samadhi*.

*"In one's heart, with supreme delight and utmost devotion, one should think of the form of one's ishta deva or deity. With this comes tears of sheer bliss, the body is thrilled, the mind becomes free of sensations, is one-pointed and experiences samadhi and manonmanee.*⁵⁶"

The *Gheranda Samhita*, dealing with *Hatha Yoga*, in its last chapter dedicated to practices aiming to reach *samadhi*, also make reference to *bhakti*.

*"Only by loving devotion to me does one come to know who I am in truth. Then, having come to know me, my devotee enters into full consciousness of me. Always think of me, be devoted to me, worship me, and offer obeisance to me. Doing so, you will certainly come to me. This is my pledge to you, for you are very dear to me. Abandon all varieties of dharmas and simply surrender unto me alone.*⁵⁷"

Besides, the *Baghavat Gita* simply declares the superiority of *bhakti yoga* compared to other styles of yoga, and presents it as the path which is best suited for human kind.

⁵⁵ *Yoga Sutra*, II, 1; 32; 45. This is also one of the five *Niyamas* (I, 23).

⁵⁶ *Gheranda Samhita*, VII, 14-15, translation by Niranjanananda.

⁵⁷ *Baghavat Gita*, XVIII, 55; 65-66.

”From the first he was the Word, and the Word was in relation with God and was God.
All things came into existence through him, and without him nothing was.”⁵⁸”

One way to call the Divine happens through sound, in particular *mantra* recitation. Sound precedes creation and manifestation; utilising sound I position myself on the *potentiality*’s side, and that is why, in my opinion, *mantra* is so powerful and has the potentiality of *manifesting* and of summoning. In general a *mantra* belongs to a Deity and has the purpose of calling the given Divinity. If that call is sincere, uninterested, without other expectations than celebrating, enjoying, living, existing; if the Divinity corresponds to us, then the answer will be heard, the connection to the Divine falls into place, the ineffable takes place, anything can happen but often what happens is what the devotee needs in that specific moment. If that celebration is done by a group then the results will be multiplied manifold as I explain further on with the aid of my friend Michel Chauvet’s poetry.

Another powerful way to summon and to be heard is the *asana* practice that developed in me in an unusual turn. During many years I thought of *asana* as a specific step to be able to work on certain *nadis* and to allow the practitioner to remain a long time in sitting posture to work through the Patanjali’s steps leading to meditation. Little by little, in a parallel pattern with the *bhakti* stabilisation a new way of living the *asana* took place. I started to consider the *asana* as an exteriorisation of the *Śakti*. The divine Goddess, awakened by the power of hata yoga and by the *bhakti* of the practitioner, filled with desire, externalise herself through the *asana*. *Śakti* feels at home and mix herself in the whole body with the aim of seducing her cosmic lover, *Śiva*. That is why the body will spontaneously finds itself in unusual positions, at the same time awkward, but somehow very natural ! I say spontaneously because one does not need any longer to spend months or years to work on one *asana* that might seem to need increased suppleness; something triggers the sudden success of the *asana* spontaneously, *Śakti* imposes herself and the physical body has no choice but to bow at all her wishes.

I consider *asana*, and more generally any yoga practice, to be a Divine gift: the yogi can desire to enter an *asana* but his will and his physical capabilities, even if necessaries, are not sufficient. He does not have the last word. *Asana* is given to the yogi to be able to celebrate the Divine into himself through the transformation of the body into a temple, for himself and for others, to share, to celebrate to witness ”what Is”. The mental attitude in which we take the *asana* is decisive. The mental attitude will decide if we are in a contortionist physical performance or in a sincere call to the Divine. The same is happening with *mantra*. When the *asana*’s call is sincere, the Divine answers, at times I have the impression that it

⁵⁸Jean, 1-3.

A deity or the Divine may be called / summoned through the practice of Asanas or Mantras.



"I started to consider the asana as an exteriorisation of the Sakti."

Sakti feels at home & mixes herself in the whole body with the aim of seducing her cosmic lover, Siva.

The physical body has no choice but to bow to all her wishes

The divine call is bound to come to everyone for Siva, the eternal spirit, has resdeed himself into jivas, transient beings, and every creature has to become reconvered



again into Siva.

Just as water freezes

into ice, and ice melts into

water, so this play of

transformation of Siva

into jiva and jiva

into Siva

goes on

and on

through

Infinity

Yagna:

A sacred

fire



Lotus

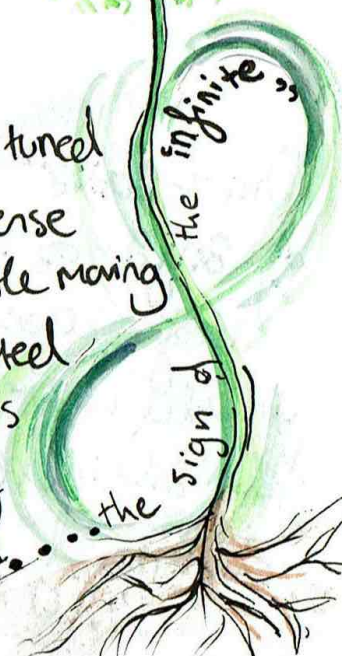
position = Padmasana



"... I realize that my body sways tuned to the sound (of the mantra), in the sense that movements get coordinated with the moving of the **spatial energetical flux** generated by the sound... My torso starts to design circles in shape of a horizontal eight. I then 'see' the... mantra moving as well as an eight."

"the infinite"

the sign of



rush to me ! *Mantra* and *asanas* are both divine languages. It is clear that in yoga all blows are allowed it is therefore judicious to associate the two things that will make them more powerful than the sum of the two taken separately. To conclude on this notion of "call", I would say that once the connection has taken place, the call is not necessary any more, as expressed perfectly by Sri Anandamayi Ma, of whom I am a devotee:

"Essentially there is only one inner Call, but the different religions have devised different methods to make man aware of it. Once a man awakens to it there is no more need to cry out again and again. Truly speaking it is not you who call Him, but He who calls you. Just as in the hushed silence of night the sound of distant temple bells and conches can be clearly heard, even so, when through intense and undivided devotion to Him the hunger of the senses is stilled, His call will find response from your inmost depths and reverberate through your whole being. Then and then only will true prayer spontaneously flow from your heart. This divine Call is bound to come to everyone for Śiva, the Eternal Spirit, has resolved Himself into jivas, transient beings, and every creature has to become reconverted again into Śiva. Just as water freezes into ice, and ice melts into water, so this play of transformation of Śiva into jiva and jiva into Śiva goes on and on through eternity."

After making myself clear about what contacting a Divinity means to me, I come back to my encounter with *Babaji* that had been determinant. I had the impression to be accepted as a disciple. From that experience a suite of vertiginous realisations take place; as it happened to me several times, they might have pushed through a bit too strong, thing that will be testified by a pain in the lower back that will last six months and that will disappear by itself once that I will find myself on the shores of the Holy Ganges where I travelled to on *Babaji's* advice. After that meeting *bhakti* has installed in me slowly.

"Dans le Tantrisme existe également de manière originale, la notion de groupe qui, cumulant diverses énergies, diverses vibrations, forme alors comme un nouveau véhicule énergétique impersonnel et efficient. L'on raconte qu'il existe un "miracle" qui peut survenir dans les grandes fêtes ou dans les grandes assemblées, à condition qu'elles soient vouées au seul plaisir, et à la pure gratuité. A ce moment-là, si le carburant constitué par le mélange des convives s'enflamme d'une étincelle, le véhicule fusionne et transporte, de par son énergie propre, tous les participants dans un même élan. Il se produit une faille dans l'espace-temps, qui manifeste alors le don parfait de la conscience; les énergies relatives au karma et liées à l'égoïsme disparaissent comme par enchantement, et les individus se mettent à aimer leur prochain, en toute simplicité.⁵⁹"

⁵⁹Michel Chauvet, 2014.

After one year from *Babaji's* encounter I went to a retreat in Bulgaria with some very inspired Kriya yogis, in a certain place baptised "conscience elevator" from its own bulgarian creator. That retreat, for a fortuitous case⁶⁰, happens to be on the precise time of the *Navaratri* festival, the hindu celebration of the feminine Divine energy, that same energy that exists in both women and men. It is said that *Navaratri* is favourable to receive *Śakti's* teachings; I must confirm !

That retreat starts with a two days ceremony, intense practices, silence periods, fast, chanting, very little sleep, esoterical initiation to a *mantra*... This ritual for *Babaji* ends with a *yagna*, a sacred fire. All this make me think at group therapy, as well as to shamanistic rituals, without drums and psychoactive plants⁶¹. All the group receive depending on its achievements: everyone comes out deeply transformed, everyone receive something that was needed at that precise moment. We have created a therapeutic tool very performant; every participant sincerely erase himself because the group has become a single individuality, the group let its place to something nourishing us divinely.

An interesting experience happens when we chant the *mantra* around the fire. Every one direct the mantra singing as long as one desire before leaving the lead to someone else. Around the end of five hours of *mantra* chanting I get back the lead. At that moment on top of hearing the *mantra* I also "see it", in the sense that I become sentient of the *mantra* with my sight. It was not the first time that I "saw" a sound, however this experience was peculiar. Sitting in *padmasana* I realise that my body sways tuned to the sound, in the sense that movements get coordinated with the moving of the spatial energetical flux generated by the sound. Letting things happen my torso starts to design circles in the shape of an horizontal eight. I then "see" the *mantra* moving as well as an eight, the sign of infinite ∞ . The centre of the eight corresponds to the *yagna* and the buckles of the eight submerge all the participants installed around the sacred fire.

Those bulgarian Kriya yogis know little postures, few breathing techniques, they simply do not need it ! What a magistral teaching for me: I realise that Ashtanga Yoga is not the only path, and that some accomplished yogis do not practice postures or breathings. Testimonials of that can be found in *Krishna's* devotees whose single practice is "simply" chanting. Their strength is *bhakti*, devotion, love of the Divine.

⁶⁰There was a moment when I exchanged the idea of hazard with the fact that the Universe is assembled with an infinite precision. We speak of "fine tuning" in science, a notion that at times disturb some physicists.

⁶¹I have never been in any formal shamanic rituals, it is only the idea I have of such rituals. When I have been experiencing with shamanic plants I never had the chance to be guided by a shaman, only plants have been my guides.

It is during this retreat that *bhakti* touches me, contaminates me. I literally dive into it without a saving net, without no possibility or desire of a return to my previous being. I become a *Bhakta* and even more improbable I start to sing that Bhakti, in the simple impossibility to restrain it... Since then I sing; I follow or lead seances of devotional chanting, with a ceremonial *bhakti* yoga mind.

"The shortest path to reach the Divine is through bhakti.⁶²"

Since this "fall" into *bhakti*, I have kind of "abandoned" *pranayama* practices. Up to the time I am writing these lines, it is extremely rare that I would spend time practicing *pranayama* more than a few minutes. This mostly happens when I am following yoga lessons proposing breathing techniques, and each time I realise that I still do like these techniques. It is as if using *bhakti* I was able to reach a contemplative state much faster and much easier than using *pranayama* techniques. I am pretty confident that at some point I will come back to *pranayama*.

"bhakti is like a fire which burns us from inside, which burns our ego in order to allow the Divine to settle.⁶³"

Just like Hata Yoga, *bhakti* is nourishment; *Śakti* is extremely fond of it, she drinks it to full satisfaction, her desire to reach her cosmic lover overflows, the tongue finds the passage to ascend higher, it is just as simple as that. The passage was already there, technically speaking my tongue could already have gone further. But I was not yet ready till then, and that is why it did not happen. To ascend the tongue assume a particular position that acts like a suction device to have sufficient strength to climb the nasopharynx.

"The yogi should milk the tongue with fresh butter and pull it with iron tongs.⁶⁴"

"One squeezes the tongue with both hands and lengthens it, as one soaks a garment and wrings it out.⁶⁵"

⁶²Sri Anandamayi Ma.

⁶³Sita.

⁶⁴*Gheranda Samhita*, III, 21, translation by J. Mallinson.

⁶⁵*Bahr al-hayat*, 4, 18, translation by Carl W. Ernst.

Much less physical resistance subsists: my tongue gladly agree to the *dohan kriya* practice. I start little by little to pull and massage the tongue just like milking a goat. I take my tongue with my fingers; when the contact between the tongue and the fingers dries up and the tongue does not slide anymore I can pull it gently downward, upward and sideways, stopping when a pain starts to be felt at the base of the tongue, no hurry...

Little by little the tongue gets longer; to the point that I am now able to close the air passages in a given nostrils by blocking the nasal cavity with the tip of my tongue. I did not practice alternative nostril breathing since some time, but I can observe that being able to block the nostrils from the interior, "without hands", gives a new perspective to the practice: I explore. Most of all the reaching and the power of those *pranayama* is increased tenfolds.

Let's go back to the analogy of the electric circuit in which *khecari* is the switch that allows the electric flux to reach from the lower to the upper part of *sushumna*. To understand the felt difference between the first level of *khecari* and this new flight, I would say that the energetic flux here is more abundant, like if the amperage or the tension of the circuit had been augmented. Obviously *Śakti* has been establishing herself inside my body even more comfortably than before. As a consequence my perception of the "lotuses", more specifically those of *ajna* and *sahasrara*, is developing. I fall more easily into *asanas*, especially those that seem to need physical flexibility. Again I can feel that my *aura* becomes bigger, more affirmative, more stable.

Another element of comparison is that now the activation of *ajna* is direct while at the first level this was happening by rebound. One of the first time that my tongue reached stage 3 the tongue started to beat against the sella turcica, a part of the sphenoid bone housing the pituitary gland. At that moment I felt a *pranic* extension of that tongue. Everything happens as if my tongue was entering, plugged, into a very peculiar *nadi*: its section is quite large permitting an important flux of *prana* to flow. What is questioning me is the *pranic* density of that *nadi*, much superior to what I had experienced up to that moment. In short what I am maneuvering now is a very long tongue, an hybrid one, with a physical part and a *pranic* one. That hybrid tongue goes directly to *ajna*, the part resting in the interior of the skull, not the (*kshetram*) part felt on the forehead as described earlier. The *ajna* activation is much more direct than on the first stage of *khecari*; it pulses very strongly.

" When the door of Brahma is entered the yogin should duly begin churning. Some wise yogins achieve siddhi without churning. For the yogin who has perfected the Khecari mantra success is achieved without churning. By doing both mantra-recitation and churning however, the yogin quickly obtains the result.

By means of a strong and smooth thread, the yogin should insert a small probe of either gold, silver or iron into the nasal cavity. Fixing the breath in the heart and sitting in a

steady pose, he should gently perform churning with his eyes focussed between his eyebrows. By doing just this much the state of churning arises after six months. For the yogin who has completely restrained his jiva and who has become identical with the object of contemplation, the state of churning arises as easily as does the deep sleep of children. Churning is not meant to be done constantly; the yogin practise it every month. But the yogin should always move his tongue around the pathway, O Goddess. By practising in this way complete success arises at the end of twelve years, O Great Goddess. In his body he sees the entire universe as undifferentiated from himself.⁶⁶”

Nectar churning, energy churning. At times, not continually, only when it feels right my tongue glued at the level of the sella turcica ”churns the nectar”. What does it mean churning to me ? An analogy will help. To drill a well in the earth several machineries are needed. A cylindrical tube is placed where it is needed to drill. At the base of the tube there is a hammer that will break through the soil by banging on it. At the other end of the tube there is compressed air that sends enough power to make the hammer bang the soil producing that way the desired well (hole). Little by little more cylindrical tubes are joined together to the first one allowing the hammer to descend into the earth to find water.

Here the tongue acts as the cylindrical tube, the tip of the tongue acts as the hammer banging about, giving impulsions that starts from the tongue’s tip and travel to *ajna*. What gives the needed energy for that movement ? The Divine *Śakti* ! The churning is targeting the *ajna*’s region. As a matter of fact the hammering from the tip of the tongue is leading to *ajna*. Three different pathways can be used by the hammering.

”Having turned the tongue back, the three channels of ida, pingala and sushumna are controlled. This is khecari mudra and it is called the centre of ether.⁶⁷”

”The yogin should know the great pathway in the skull in the region above the uvula between the eyebrows to be the Three-peaked Mountain. He should fix his mind there licking with his tongue the supreme amrita flowing there and progressing gradually on the path of the practice, the yogin should drink amrita for four years, my dear.⁶⁸”

If the tip of the tongue is glued to the sella turcica the churning movement is transmitted from the tongue’s tip to *ajna* passing through the ”middle”. If the tip of the tongue is glued

⁶⁶ *Khecarividya*, I, 57-64, translation by M07.

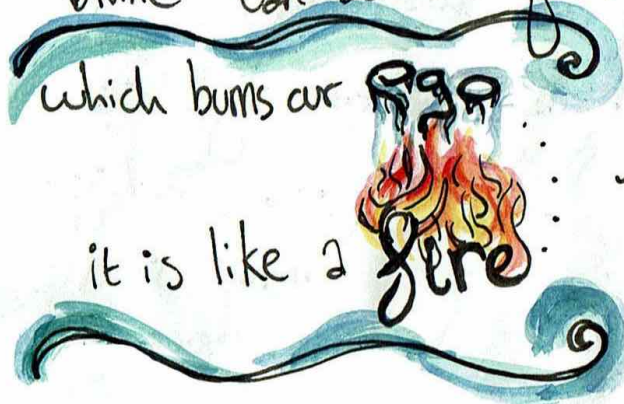
⁶⁷ *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, III, 37, translation by Muktibodhananda.

⁶⁸ *Khecharividya*, I, 65, translation by M07.

to one of the nasal cavities the churning is transmitted from the tip of the tongue to *ajna* through *ida* or *pingala*.

The effect of this churning is to "charge" *ajna*. The churning is accompanied by breath suspension, at times the buckle of *Rudra Granthi* is activated. Once I stop the churning tension by, for example, bringing back the tongue on the nasal floor, the charge that has been accumulated into *ajna* is freed, it spreads all over the upper part of the skull and even much further on. Silence, emptiness, fullness of bliss, accompany that relaxation.

Postures & breathing techniques are not necessary,
 Simply chanting in devotion & love of the
 Divine can be enough. Bhakti.

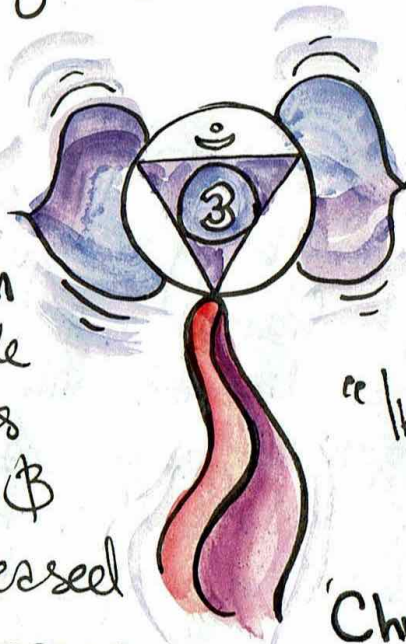


Dahan Kriya



Milking the tongue
 for stretching

"I am now able to close
 the air passages in a
 given nostril by blocking
 the nasal cavity with
 the tip of my tongue."



Direct activation
 of ajna as the
 tongue goes
 directly to it &
 feels an increased
 density of prana.

"It pulses very
 strongly"
 'Churning' changes
 ajna

HOW DID I LEARNED KHECARI ? MELAKA

Often I have the feeling that I do not control my tongue; everything happens as if she had her own will that allows her to ascend there where it makes sense to go, while myself I just witness and escort the process (and for sure participate !). By remembering the context of the *yogini's cult* of which I spoke in the introduction, it is like if *Śakti* was taking over and was teaching me the different degrees of the practice. As if *Śakti* was allowing my tongue to extend, to become longer and to start churning.

The context of the *cult of the yogini* is echoing inside of me. I did not learn *khecari* by a yoga teacher. Even if I did not participate in cremation grounds to tantric rituals, it is clear that *khecari* teachings are coming to me in a direct way, that I consider Divine. I tend to believe that is not possible to teach *khecari* to someone, except for the physical side of it. Even with all of his will and efforts, which are important and necessities, the yogi has not the last word, it is not him deciding, it is not himself knowing which kind of practice suits him best.

My study of the *Khecarividya* confirms to me this intuition. The traditional writings can be read and translated in different ways. The enlightened commentary by M07 mentions that in the *Khecarividya* it is, of course, question of the *khecari* practice (*abhyasa*) but it is also question of *melana* or *melaka* (*patala I*). In the historical manuscripts of the *Khecarividya* consulted by M07, both of these two words can be found. Interestingly enough, both of them seem to be meaning *encounter*. Here is spoken of the encounters with the *Khecaris*, these famous wrathful and lovely yoginis I spoke about in the introduction, those same ones that grant *siddhis* to practitioners. M07 translates this by "the results of practices" which seems to coincide with *Ballala's* commentary.

My interpretation is the following one: at a given moment, depending on the yogi's progression, his personal path, the Divine, through the Goddess, or no matter what else, is offering the keys to advance into *khecari*. In other words I would say that the practice's fruits are granted by the Divine, it is as simple as that !

In general for what concerns yoga I have the impression that a practice or a technique are Divine gifts, and that because of their nature they cannot be taught uniquely by a teacher. The teacher can bring the student to become as available as possible to empower the Divinity to manifest spontaneously; but he himself has to disappear as much as possible to let through whatever must come. Texts refer to the *guru's* importance, for the transmission and the initiation. I agree about that, it is via a teacher that I have been initiated to Kriya Yoga. That said for what concerns *khecari* I did not have the opportunity to be guided or initiated by a teacher yet. Maybe one day this will be offered to me, at times I wish I

could find a qualified *guru* for me, at other time I feel that my connection with the Divine is sufficient... I cannot say. Some declare that, when the disciple is ready, the *guru* appears by itself; obviously I may not be ready yet...

I sincerely believe that it is the *bhakti* strength that allows the activation of such instructions. That might take some time, the *Khecarividya* tells us that a yogi starting *khecari* might be waiting several lives before reaching *melaka*. This is not mentioned in th *Khecarividya* but seeing that my practice evolves step by step it might be as well that *melaka* functions step by step.

I have an experience to relate to back my idea: I know several persons, yoga teachers, that had their frenum cut to evolve into *khecari*; technically speaking their tongue should now be able to reach the second stage of *khecari*. However nothing had happened after the freeing of the tongue... Something is missing... *melaka* ? Same thing for me; I spent two years at the second stage of *khecari* even if, technically speaking my tongue was ready to reach a further ascension, but she did not.

Patience, persevering, gratitude and most of all total and full surrender and confidence in the Divine are the ingredients of success.

"Having obtained this secret text one should not proclaim it to others. After due consideration, it is to be taught to those who live on this path. He who makes this supreme text public to all and sundry will be quickly eaten by Yoginis, O Goddess, at the order of Śiva.⁶⁹"

"It is not given even to him who is as dear as one's own life. This mudra which is worshipped by the gods is to be guarded with great care.⁷⁰"

My sharing might be going against the recommended behaviour to be found in traditional texts and might be considered as breaking a kind of imposed silence's law. I assume responsibility for this. My intuition pushed me to share and what happened in my life was very favourable to the writing of this story. Up to now my words have been inspiring some persons to progress in *khecari*; some people very little, others quite a lot; some kind of transmission, initiation, is acting on some level. I believe that these words will resound in the practitioner "ready" to enter in *khecari*, and that they will be of no consequence for those

⁶⁹*Khecarividya*, I, 21-22, translation by M07.

⁷⁰Śiva Samhita, IV, 59, translation by J. Mallinson.

not ready for this adventure. Furthermore is only "after due consideration" that I decided to testify about my experience, and this witnessing is addressed "to those who live on this path". I agree about the historical recommendations, in the sense that the public divulgation of some of the Yoga practices might create confusion in some non initiated people and harm the credibility of yoga in general.

I do not master *khecari*, and I have wrinkles and grey hairs⁷¹; it is possible that I will not master it in this life time, I do not know and this bear no importance to me. At the time of writing these words (2016) I think to have just completed the third stage of *khecari*, and I am aware that this is not the end of the story. To continue the ascension I have to pull further my tongue by *dohan kriya*. Once the tongue is long enough and the tip is thinned enough to be able to enter the nasal cavities it will be possible to reach the top of the nasopharynx at the bottom of the nasal cavity. In that case one will be higher than the sella turcica and will arrive at the level of the cribliform plate of the ethmoid through which is passing the olfactive nerve. It is interesting to note that the olfactive nerve has several peculiar characteristics, between other things its neurones are able to regenerate themselves. It is the only nerve connecting directly the exterior of the body (air in the nasal cavity) to the encephalon, and in particular to one specific part of the brain. My friend Danielle, yogini osteopath, explained me this but I cannot say more on the subject because they are realities I did not experience personally.

I continue this work with some technical considerations. Then I will expose some anatomical plates showing the physical side of *khecari*, as well as the photos of a skull's puzzle showing where the tongue is meant to go during the different phases of *khecari*. Then I will share the *dharana* that settled down in me and that I followed during six months. I will also propose some variants that could agree better with different kind of practitioner. It is up to those that will be inspired to appropriate themselves of this *dharana*, to adopt it depending on their sensitivity and their intuition.

I am just the instrument of *khecari mudra*, of yoga at large and more fundamentally of the Divine.

⁷¹In *many* traditional texts, I have read that a *khecara* should be free from wrinkles and grey hairs !

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Technical Considerations

Bandhamrityur, the death link In sanskrit the tongue’s frenum is called *bandhamrityur*, literally the bond (*bandham*) of death (*mrityur*)⁷². Interesting: the frenum would be existing to bond us with death ? getting rid of the frenum, entering *khecari*, would make us able to free ourselves from death ? Is it necessary to get rid of the frenum to enter *khecari* ? Is this practice, between others, one of the ways to exit *samsara* ? Reading the *Khecarividya* can help us finding some of these answers.

Some of the texts (*e.g. Khecarividya, Hathayogapradipika, Gheranda Samita, Hatharatnavali, Jogpradipika*) state clearly about the importance of this step that in my case has been decisive. That said it seems to be possible to get rid of the frenum in a softer way; by constantly pulling and massaging the tongue, by practicing *khecari* and leaving to the momentum of *Śakti* the pulling of the tongue. Gradually the softening of the frenum may have the same effect as its cutting. It is also possible to strongly pull the tongue towards the exterior so that the frenum comes to rub against the lower teeth. This may result, in the long run, to get rid of the frenum. Informers consulted by M07 declare not being necessary to cut the frenum, even those who actually did it. Jim Mallinson declares to never have met any yogi encountering problems in cutting their frenum, even if two of the ones he met ”have very pronounced lisps”. However he heard about two yogis having both serious problems in both feeding themselves as well as in elocution after the cutting (M07, note 230).

The *Jogpradipika* (verse 882) teach us that if the operation is not properly done it can result in the loss of elocution (M07, note 230). Niranjanda (2012) warns strongly against practicing this *mudra* for those people whose life is very socially active since it hinders speech. He also warns about some possible alimentary problems since some food will not be chewed properly any longer. These kind of problems do not correspond to my personal experience: my job demands me to be able to express myself orally, in different languages, in front of people, for example during conferences, and I can eat basically anything (and even literally ”anything” during those conferences and professional trips). However those kind of problems are an existing possibility and is important to be aware of them.

Yogani, without pushing towards acting out this delicate phase, is giving all the elements to progressively cut the frenum. I did not search in the forum of *Advanced Yoga Practice* to collect testimonies of people who did the cutting but there it can be found discussions on this subject, as mentioned at the end of 108th lesson.

Why are we born with a frenum ? Well, some people have a long frenum, some none.

⁷²Vigne 2013; M07, note 230.

"Patience, perseverance, gratitude &
most of all total and full

Surrender & Confidence in the Divine
are the ingredients of success."

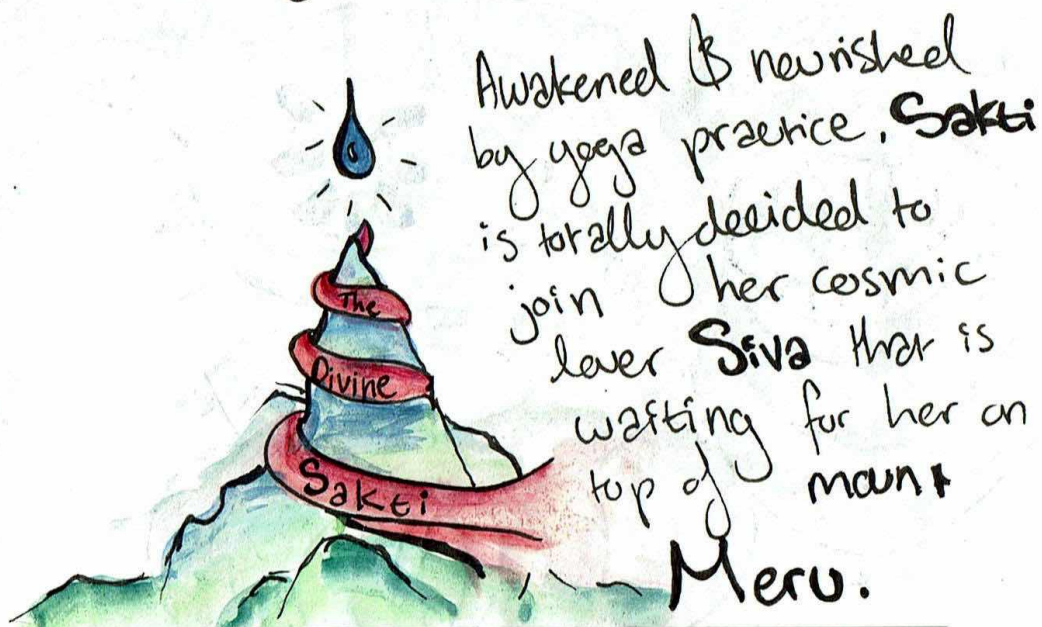


In Sanskrit the Jrenum is
called:

Bandhamritiyur : 'the death link'

the bond of death

"The reason for us to be here is to realise
the **Mystic Union** within ourselves."



Awakened & nourished
by yoga practice, **Sakti**
is totally decided to
join her cosmic
lover **Siva** that is
waiting for her on
top of mount

Meru.

Let us say that for a "standard" person the frenum's presence will stop that person to reach the first stage of *khecari* and to taste the *amrita*. Maybe the presence of the frenum wards the unprepared person to taste a psychoactive substance that will bring great changes in its nervous system. However it is not sure since some people I know did cut the frenum but did not managed to enter *khecari*.

It is clear that we could discuss to no end of the necessity to cut or not the frenum. In fact, I think it is a wrongly formulated question, and that the practitioner should *not* trouble itself with that "small technical detail". Actually when the *Śakti* is full of life and full of desire to the point that the tongue will pull towards the back and push towards a further ascension of its own volition, then that is the time that, divinely guided, the yogi will have no difficulty to acknowledge what must be done with the frenum of the tongue. It will not be few centigrams of flesh stopping *Śakti* to take her flight towards *Śiva* ! It is possible that the complications previously reported were created by practitioners focusing on this step while not yet ready for it. When guided by the Goddess I believe all sort of obstacles will disappear.

I therefore do *not* advise anyone to cut the frenum of the tongue or to worry about this step that seems to be optional. I have been able to give advices on this question to some individuals, on a case by case basis only. Bring your efforts on the *Śakti*'s ascension, nourish her by hatha yoga, bhakti yoga or other kind of practices and wait to see what happens. If the Divine *Śakti* manifests and knocks on your door, open yourself to Her, it is a blessing, the moment has come ! May this script accompany those in that situation.

"The rare privilege which represents a human body was given to you to the only end to put in place a practice leading to realise your Divinity.

You attracted this body onto the material plane in order to be able to do what you have to do, evolve spiritually.⁷³"

"Having obtained this human body, free, healthy and so difficult to get, it would be a cause of regret to die as an irreligious person invaded by mundane worries.

This human life in Kali-Yuga being so short and uncertain, it would be a cause of regret to spend it chasing mundane goals.⁷⁴"

⁷³Sri Anandamayi Ma.

⁷⁴Evans-Wentz, 1934, The ten causes of regrets.

I tend to think that sooner or later this is going to happen; this being the reason for us to be here: to realise the Mystic Union within ourselves, with the help of *khecari* or by other different means, during this life or the next one (if any !). This does not really matter, time not always being a relevant variable to describe this kind of reality. I have been describing here my *khecari* experience being aware at the same time that other people will reach that Union by other means. It is possible that others will establish *khecari* by non physical means, that is without using the tongue, thanks to visualisations instead of the physical practice. Recently I shared my experience with a friend that told me of his reaching the state of Union through sound, through *mantras*.

Finally I want to highlight the importance of this *mudra* in the whole of the Hatha Yoga texts that I came across: some practices are not appearing in each and every text but it is clear that "*Khecari is an essential mudra*"⁷⁵. Once again Hatha Yoga is just one path in between others and fortunately enough the Mystic Union can happen without *khecari*.

The switch of *sushumna nadi*

*"When this happens, it is like a master switch is closed in our nervous system, and all of our advanced yoga practices and experiences begin to function on a much higher level."*⁷⁶

The Divine Mudra, *khecari*, enables to establish the junction in between the inferior and the superior part of *sushumna nadi*. *Khecari* allows the crossing (Fig. 1). It is like an electrical system: it is established a switch in between the energy source and the lamp. To allow the carriers of electricity to come to feed the lamp it is necessary to turn on the switch. The magnificent quotation of Ramakrishna "*When the Divine Goddess comes up, the tongue rolls back*" takes on all its meaning in this context: the Divine Goddess, the Divine *Śakti*, once awakened and nourished by yoga practice, is totally decided to join her cosmic lover *Śiva* that is waiting for her on top of mount *Meru*. The path can be shorter or longer... at a given moment a chasm stops the beauty's ascension, titillating her desire; it does not take long now to be able to cross the abyss, just few centimeters; but still she cannot cross it. A woman in love is ready to do anything: and this is the moment when the tongue starts to roll back and to push higher and higher, lengthening itself progressively to allow the junction between the inferior and the superior part of *sushumna*, to be able to cross over. In my view it is one of the principal targets of *khecari*. Other targets are described in the texts: (i)

⁷⁵Tara Michaël, private communication.

⁷⁶Yogani, 2004.

going to get the nectar (*amrita*) in which to bath the whole body; (ii) being able to stop the trickling of the nectar not to let it be consumed in the *manipura*'s fire. These two targets might seem mutually opposed. Personally I do not see any contradiction: if it is the moment to bath with *amrita* then *khecari* allows it; if it is the moment to stop the flow also that is done thanks to *khecari*. I have the feeling, based on my experience, that when we start to practice the second stage of *khecari* the body needs to receive the *amrita*'s flow, and that once the practice is well established, *khecari* is rather pushing to seal the passage.

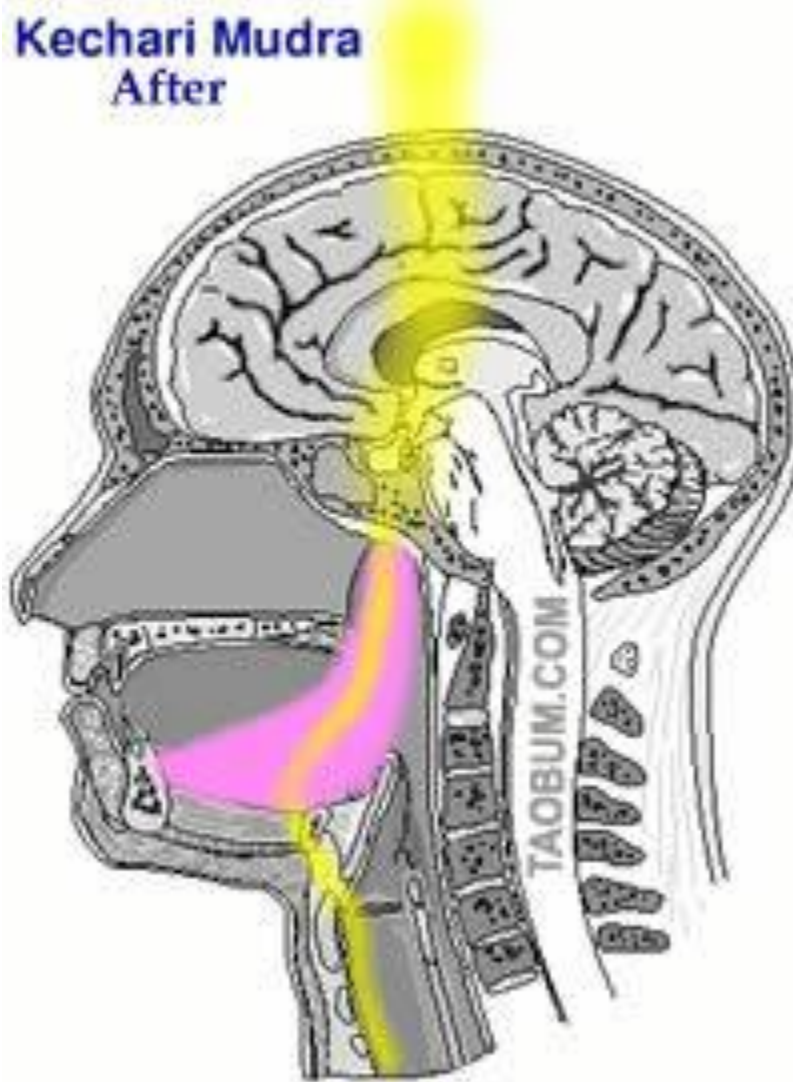


Fig. 1.— Illustration of the *pranic* circulation (yellow) made possible thanks to *khechari*, here performed in its third stage.

***Khecari*, beyond an Indian practice ?** I tend to think that *khecari* does not belong only to Hatha Yoga as it has been elaborated in India. *Khecari* belongs to the public domain, it is Universal. It is clear that hatha yoga has reached a refinement never seen elsewhere. That said, similar practices could have been developed in other contexts of which we might have lost all traces. In that hypothetical tradition *khecari* might have developed under a different name. The point I am making is not one to debase the indian yogic culture that I made my own. Actually this culture "imposed" itself on me which, in my view, is a sign confirming the evidence of the Universality of both yoga and *khecari*. The *kundalini* phenomenon is universal: every human being possessing a spine is endowed of a *kundalini* aiming to awake. She can wake up spontaneously without practicing any yoga; in other cultures the intaking of plants can start the awakening. In other people will be an extreme or shoking experience (for example the hunter finding himself nose to nose with a cheeta, skipping death for an hair breadth, puff: and the snake unfolds ! Why not ?) At times the element starting the unfolding can be visiting a place or meeting a person... There are surely a thousand way to wake the "*energy of the depth*"⁷⁷, let's not forget that this is the reason for us to be on Earth. Once that power has been awaken, it will naturally try to climb inside the spine and at a given moment the tongue will roll towards the back; the researcher will find himself/herself practicing *khecari* without having a name or an indian yogic reference for it. It is possible that such events have been happening all over the globe long before India ever existed.

Khecari & Shambavi

*"These siddhis, O Goddess, only arise between the eyebrow."*⁷⁸

*"Daddy, when I put my tongue backward, then my eyes go up,
as if this was the same thing !"*⁷⁹

Several Hatha Yoga texts explain that during *khecari*, it is relevant to position the eyes in *shambavi mudra*. In the *Mandala Brahmanopanishad*, *khecari* is described as consisting in bringing both eyes to converge into the point between the eyebrows, without any reference to the tongue. It is clear that *khecari* and *shambavi* move together and that these two practices are perfectly attuned to support an ascendent *pranic* movement: one is calling the other in

⁷⁷Lilian Silburn.

⁷⁸*Khecarividya*, I, 73.

⁷⁹My oldest son, at 10 years old.

Initially the body needs to receive the amrita's flow, but once the practice is well established Hecari is rather pushing to seal the passage.

"The Kundalini phenomenon is universal: every human being possessing a spine is endowed of a Kundalini aiming to awaken."

The Kundalini: latent female energy lying coiled at the base of the spine.

Sanskrit: 'snake'



reciprocity. I advise practitioners to establish *khecari* and *shambavi* as an anchorage tool answering to *moola bhandas*.

Khecari & pranayama *Khecari*, on top of imposing nasal breathing, has a beneficial influence on the breathing process, in the sense that the absorbed quantity of *prana* is tenfold superior to the average when *khecari* is active. I have been witnessing that *khecari* has an influence on both the fullness and the fluidity of the breathing process. In particular, *ujain* is more powerful and the breathing length is easily stretched. All this shows that the reaching out of *pranayama* practices is increased by *khecari*. As a conditioned reflex *khecari* is also having a positive influence on *asana*.

From the third stage of *khecari*, the tip of the tongue encounters the nasal cavities. I observe that this contact helps the unblocking of the nostrils: the tip of the tongue seems to liquefy the boogers inside the nose that will then fall inside the throat and can be easily expectorate. *Khecari* allows to clean the nose from the inside ! This kind of contact is also powerfully activating the extremities of *ida* and *pingala* passing in the nasal cavities region.

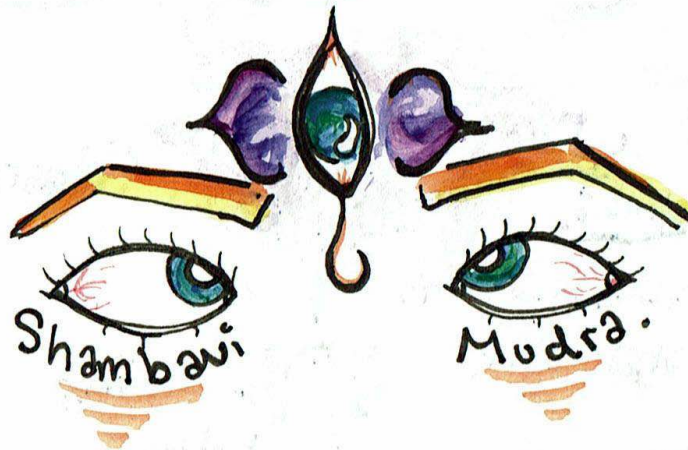
At this point it is possible to block one of the nostrils from the inside to practice alternative nostrils breathing. That offers a practical advantage: the right hand can be used for something else than closing one nostril. If one needs to practice alternative nostril breathing for a long time it can be done with the right arm at rest. Furthermore, closing from inside the nasal cavities with the tip of the tongue is much more performant than doing it with a finger. On the level of the intensity of practice is totally different. I have noticed that the quantity of air inhaled is thinner and therefore the rhythm of the breath's length is longer (inhaling and exhaling lengths are longer); *ujain* amplifies; the felt *prana* in *ida* and *pingala* is more powerful: both the senses of sight and touch are more present; I can *see* and *touch* better those nadis⁸⁰.

Khecari as thermo regulator To keep the tongue in *khecari* allows to regulate the body heat, to adapt to external conditions. If the outer air is warm, then the contact with the nasopharynx, a cooler one, gives a refreshing sensation. It is the opposite when the air is cold, the nasopharynx behaves as a supplier of heat.

Khecari in the Yoga Sutras ? Jacques Vigne (2013) noticed that one of the *siddhis* connected to *khecari* is the possibility for the yogi of no longer needing to feed himself or

⁸⁰In between the five senses are mostly sight and touch that act on my felt impression of *pranamaya kosha*.

Kecari and Shambavi move together and



Perfectly attuned to support ascending pranic movement.



It is possible to practice alternate nostril breathing by using the tongue to block one nostril from the inside.

to need drinking. This corresponds to what is stated in the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali (III, 29). This is obtained by *samyama* on the throat *chakra*, *vishudha*, and no reference is done here to any technique like *khecari*. It is possible that via *samyama*, Patanjali points to a non physical *khecari*, implying only visualisations instead of the tongue.

What I have been witnessing is that during hot days *khecari* helps erasing the thirst sensation since the internal source is everlasting: the nasopharynx is always humid and that quenches the thirst.

Physiological Considerations These considerations are clearly beyond the scope of this work; they could be the object of a long discussion see of a research work, because the practice of *khecari* is followed by a deep mutation on every level, including the physiological level. As a matter of fact *khecari* jostles all the different *koshas* in the human being, in particular *annamaya kosha*. *khecari* intervenes in the endorphines regulation, and more generally into the body's chemistry via its action on the pituitary gland. In fact the pituitary gland has a major role on the body's different glands orchestration.

ॐ नमः शिवाय

Anatomy of *khecari*

Yogani divides the practice in four stages, as can be seen on Figure 2 which shows different plans sections. I decided to keep this classification in this work. Figure 3 proposes a three dimensional representation of the four stages starting from a skull puzzle.

Pre-*khecari* corresponds to the tongue at rest.

In the first stage, which I personally tend to include in the pre-*khecari*, the lower part of the tongue is positioned against the palate. One then reach the so called soft palate.

In the second stage the tongue push behind the soft palate and reach to the rear hind of the nasal septum (which is vertical and separate the two nostrils, in green on Fig. 3) on the floor of the nasal cavities "It is a short trip, but a momentous one" (Yogani). It is the stage that I call the "first level of *khecari*" and that I associate with *lalana chakra*.

In the third stage, the tongue climbs behind the rear hind of the nasal septum into the nasal pharynx, and reach the level of the sella turcica, a part of the sphenoid bone housing the pituitary gland. In this stage "we expose the full length of the edge of the septum to our tongue" (Yogani).

In the fourth stage, the tongue, once reached the needed length, and possessing a sufficiently thinned tip enters now the nose passages from the interior and climb to the summit of the nasopharynx towards the point between the eyebrows. We have reached now a point higher than the sella turcica and we reach the level of the cribliform plate of the ethmoid (green on Fig. 3).

In the third stage of
Kecari the tongue
climbs behind the nasal
Septum into the nasal
pharynx to reach the
Stella turcica.



In the fourth stage the
thinned tip of the tongue
enters the nasal passages internally
to climb the summit of the nasopharynx
towards A:ja

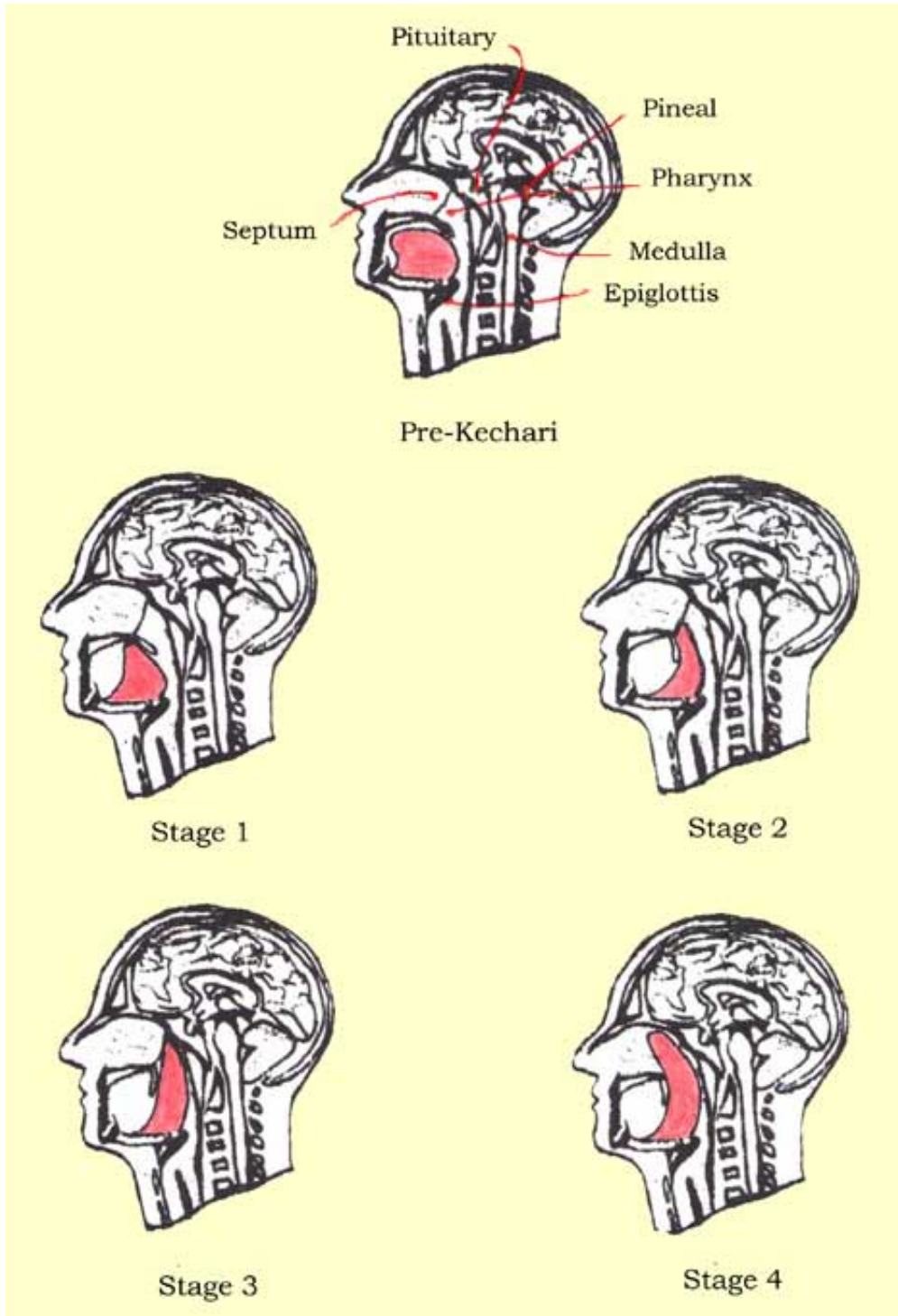


Fig. 2.— Anatomic plates describing the different stages of *khechari*.
Credits: Yogani, Advanced Yoga Practice.



Fig. 3.— From top to bottom, from left to right.

Front view: the nasal septum in green, vertical, separating the nostrils. *Seen from above:* the sphenoid bone in blue shaped like a butterfly; *Seen from above:* the sphenoid and the ethmoid in green. *Seen sideways:* the tongue's position through the different stages; *Seen from below:* the sella turcica, part of the sphenoid bone housing the pituitary gland; *Seen from below:* towards stage 4 the tip of the tongue enters the nose passages.

Udyanapalaka mudra: The Gardener's mudra

I describe here the practice that took place spontaneously not long after I entered in the second stage of *khecari*. I start to describe the *dharana* that I have been practising plus some variants that could better correspond to other individuals.

I have called this practice the *gardener's mudra*. It actually consist in watering our inner garden composed of eight flowers. These eight flowers correspond to the eight *chakras*; the principal seven *chakras* plus *lalana chakra*, the *chakra* associated with the nasal floor. From now on I will use the word lotus rather than *chakra*. In fact the word lotus describes better my inner feeling: a flower with opening and closing petals following or not following the breathing rhythm. Usually I would spend around one hour to warm up my body to be able to sit comfortably during the *dharana*, even more so that I used to practice very early in the morning, and I would remain one *ghatika* to simply listen to silence, to get prepared for the practice.

This *dharana* consists to work on each *chakra* one after the other, starting from *mooladhara* up to *sahasrara*. By doing that the yogi waters each lotus, takes care of his own garden...

Details as follow:

- *asana*: sitting posture.
- *anchoring points*: *moola bandha*; *shambavi*; *khecari*; hairs in top knot. These anchoring points are established all through the practice.
- *pranayama*: square breathing in *samavritti*: one time inspiring, one time full retention, one time expire, one time empty retention.
- *visualisation*: while breathing in the lotus petals of the *chakra* visualised open up. During the full retention petals open and close; the lotus is breathing. While breathing out the petals open up. These visualisations coordinate between themselves: for example, when the lotus is breathing on an empty pause "I wait" (in fact this is happening spontaneously) that the lotus is in the closed position to open it again on the next breath in.
- *mantra*: *bija mantras* associated to each lotus.

Once attained inner concentration, sitting comfortably, I bring my whole attention on space and silence, letting my breath come and go. At the right moment I put my awareness to

The Gardener's Mudra

• Asana: Sitting posture

• Anchoring points:
moola bandha, shambhu,
khecari & hair knot.

• Pranayama: Square
breathing in sama vritti:
inhale, retain, exhale,
retain, repeat...

Visualisation:
Inhale - lotus petals of
select chakra open
Retention - Petals open
& close.
Exhale - Petals open up

Mantra: bija mantra
for each lotus.

Watering our
inner garden.



Sahasrara



Ajna



Lalana



Vishuddhi



Anahata



Manipura



Swadhisthana



Muladhara



mooladhara. The square breath takes place centred in *mooladhara*, *mantra* and visualisations included. I remain there as long as I desire then I move to the next lotus, slowly moving upward into *sushumna*. The time spent on each lotus will be decided by each individual practitioner. Usually the *Meru* climbing would last for me one to two hours. I realised that one hour was the minimum necessary for me those days for the practice to be leading me to the very first stage of *dhyana*.

Variants: I have been describing a basic technique connected through personal intuition which was perfectly corresponding to what I needed at that given moment. It is clear that other people will develop their own more pertinent version. This *dharana* is therefore open to be adapted by each practitioner since they are the ones knowing better than anyone else what will work with them. This will lead to some variants of the practice. I describe here some possibilities.

- On the visualisations level, when breathing out it is possible to visualise the petals closing rather than opening.
- Once reached *sahasrara* it is possible to repeat the procedure this time descending to *mooladhara*.
- For my Kriya Yogis friends that prefer avoiding pausing in both full or empty retentions it is possible to establish a *visamavritti* breathing: one time inhale, two times exhale.

ॐ नमः शिवाय

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I would like to thank all the following people, plus all those that I forgot to mention. They are listed here more or less in chronological order. Because of confidentiality and for the fun of it I have been naming some persons after Divinities in which they will easily recognise themselves.

To Shambhu who initiated me into yoga back in fall 2010, the first to teach me *moola bhanda*, *khecari*, *shambavi* in between other things. To Shambala, a place helping to increase the consciousness level; for the initiations that I have received, and the dream team of those days: from the kitchen to the bread oven.

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To Santa Maria & San Peter.

To Amritanand Giri, that taught me some *asanas* during the *Kumbh Mela* at Hardwar in 1986. To Ira Cohen for having allowed those teachings to reach through time and space via his movie *Kings with Straw Mats*⁸¹.

To my family: my children, my wife, that are without any doubt my greatest Masters, always effectives to make me face my limitations, my difficulties and to push me to move forwards. It is easy to play yogi while sitting on the mat, the tongue glued to the sphenoid, a mala between the fingers, and the leg behind the head. Much more difficult in the family life !

I do not earn any money with yoga, I thank the CNRS (French National Centre for Scientific Research) for its unconditional and generous support in my research.

Sincere gratitude and total surrender to my guiding *Śakti*, leading me in between other things to practice *hecari*, the subject of this text. Through *Śakti*, the *Divine*...

”Ô BIEN AIMÉE, DE MÊME QUE, GRÂCE À LA LUMIÈRE D’UNE LAMPE OU AUX RAYONS
DU SOLEIL, ON PEUT DISCERNER LE MONDE,
C’EST GRÂCE À ŚAKTI QUE L’ON PEUT CONNAÎTRE ŚIVA⁸²”

⁸¹Ira Cohen, 1998, Mystic Fire Video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGvK_9ugecM.

⁸²*Vijnana Bhairava Tantra*, traduction de Lilian Silburn.

About the Author

Soon after a sudden and unexpected *Śakti* awakening during 2010, followed by the beginning of *koshas* opening, I met Hata Yoga and psychotherapy, two tools that I find complementary and that helped me to go through a fairy-like but very (very !) tormented and chaotic period .

The intensif and regular practice has slowly brought my consciousness in the *vijnana-maya kosha*, the intuitif body. Since then I have been able to intuit and install part of some practices that I needed at a given moment and perfectly fit them on me.

Provided with the appearance of autonomy I am on a permanent training; learning from everything; every sharing, every meeting is an occasion of learning, occasion to exchange; pretending, in a way, that there is really something to learn or to discover – let us do as if that was the case.

I am participating regularly to days, weekends and weeks of teachings. I have been initiated in 2015 to Kriya Yoga by my friend Sita. The meeting with *Babajī*, the connection with that lineage has been a determining factor in my life; so much so that I became a Kriya yogi.

Linked to this connection, I discovered *bhakti* and litterally felt into this dimension. After feeding *Śakti* with the Hata Yoga "violent effort", I have been adding *bhakti* food at the diet and *Śakti* is crazy about it. New horizons open up in front of me, I become a *bhakti* yogi thing that speed up many advances given the powerful fuel thus provided.

Looking back, I realise that I have received some subtle initiations from different yogic lineages.

I am not a yoga teacher, but I enjoy sharing, helping, interacting with people on the path. I sometimes lead devotional chanting and propose *satsangs* about *khecari*.

In the civil life I am a hard sciences researcher, in astrophysics. My research activities concern cosmology, galaxy clusters, large scale structures of the Universe. I am using the same scientific approach in my yogic experiences.

I am a family father and I often loose patient with my children and my wife, at times I suffer of headaches and of a pain in the right lower back. And also in the left knee.

Any feedback about this text, any further information, all sharing of similar experiences with or without *khecari* are mostly welcome, do not hesitate to contact me.
yogimaheshwar@gmail.com



Fig. 4.— Myself, spring 2017, YogaStival.