

# Mudra by Hatha Yoga Pradipika

Dr Rajni Bali

Kurukshetra University

# Mudra

- Maha Mudra, Maha Bandha, Maha Vedha, Khechari, Uddiyana Bandha, Mula Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha. 7. Viparita Karani, Vijroli, and Sakti Chalana. These are the ten Mudras which annihilate old age and death.

- As the chief of the snakes is the support of the earth with all the mountains and forests on it, so all the Tantras (Yoga practices) rest on the Kundalini. (The Vertebral column.)<sup>2</sup>. When the sleeping Kundalini awakens by favor of a *guru*, then all the lotuses (in the six chakras or centers) and all the knots are pierced through.
- 3. Susumna (Sunya Padavi) becomes a main road for the passage of Prana, and the mind then becomes free from all connections (with its objects of enjoyments) and Death is then evaded.
- 4. Susumna, Sunya, Padavi, Brahma Randhra, Maha Patha, Smasana, Sambhavi, Madhya Marga, are names of one and the same thing.
- 5. In order, therefore, to awaken this goddess, who is sleeping at the entrance of Brahma Dwara (the great door), mudras should be practiced well.

# *The Mudras*

- 6. Maha Mudra, Maha Bandha, Maha Vedha, Khechari, Uddiyana Bandha, Mula Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha.
- 7. Viparita Karani, Vijroli, and Sakti Chalana. These are the ten Mudras which annihilate old age and death.
- 8. They have been explained by Adi Natha (Siva) and give eight kinds of divine wealth. They are loved by all the Siddhas and are hard to attain even by the Marutas.
- **Note.**--The eight *Aiswarikis* are: Anima (becoming small, like an atom), Mahima (becoming great, like akas, by drawing in atoms of prakriti), Garima (light things, like cotton becoming very heavy like mountains).
- Prapti (coming within easy reach of everything; as touching the moon with the little finger, while standing on the earth).
- Prakamya (non-resistance to the desires, as entering the earth like water).
- Isata (mastery over matter and objects made of it).
- Vasiṭwa (controlling the animate and inanimate objects).
- 9. These Mudras should be kept secret by every means, as one keeps one's box of jewelry, and should, on no account be told to any one, just as husband and wife keep their dealings secret.

# *The Maha Mudra*

- 10. Pressing the Yoni (perineum) with the heel of the left foot, and stretching forth the right foot, its toes should be grasped by the thumb and first finger.
- 11-12. By stopping the throat (by Jalandhara Bandha) the air is drawn in from outside and carried down. Just as a snake struck with a stick becomes straight like a stick, in the same way, *sakti* (susumna) becomes straight at once. Then the Kundalini becoming as it were dead, and, leaving both the Ida and the Pingala, enters the susumna (the middle passage).
- 13. It should be expelled then, slowly only and not violently. For this very reason, the best of wise men call it the Maha Mudra. This Maha Mudra has been propounded by great masters.
- 14. Great evils and pains, like death, are destroyed by it, and for this reason wise men call it the Maha Mudra.
- 15. Having practiced with the left nostril, it should be practiced with the right one; and, when the number on both sides becomes equal, then the mudra should be discontinued.
- 16. There is nothing wholesome or injurious; for the practice of this mudra destroys the injurious effects of all the rasas (chemicals). Even the deadliest of poisons, if taken, acts like nectar.
- 17. Consumption, leprosy, prolapsus anii, colic, and the diseases due to indigestion,-- all these irregularities are removed by the practice of this Maha Mudra.
- 18. This Maha Mudra has been described as the giver of great success (Siddhi) to men. It should be kept secret by every effort, and not revealed to any and everyone.

# The Maha Bandha

- 19. Pressing the left heel to the perineum and place the right foot on the left thigh.
- 20. Fill in the air, keeping the chin firm against the chest, and, having pressed the air, and the mind should be fixed on the middle of the eyebrows or in the susumna (the spine).
- 21. Having kept it confined so long as possible, it should be expelled slowly. Having practiced on the left side, it should be practiced on the right side.
- 22. Some are of opinion that the closing of throat is not necessary here, for keeping the tongue pressed against the roots of the upper teeth makes a good bandha (stop).
- 23. This stops the upward motion of all the nadis. Verily this Maha Bandha is the giver of great Siddhis.
- 24. This Maha Bandha is the most skillful means for cutting away the snares of death. It brings about the conjunction of the Triveni (Ida, Pingala and Susumna) and carries the mind to Kedar (the space between the eyebrows, which is the seat of Siva).
- 25. As beauty and loveliness, do not avail a woman without a husband, so the Maha Mudra and the Maha-Bandha are useless without the Maha Vedha.

# *The Maha Vedha*

- 26. Sitting with Maha Bandha, the Yogi should fill the air and keep his mind collected. The movements of the Vayus (Prana and Apana) should be stopped by closing the throat.
- 27. Resting both the hands equally on the ground, he should raise himself a little and strike his buttocks against the ground gently. The air, leaving both the passages (Ida and Pingala), starts into the middle one.
- 28. The union of the Ida and Pingala is effected, in order to bring about immortality. When the air becomes as it were dead (by leaving its course through the Ida and the Pingala) (*i.e.*, when it has been kept confined), then it should be expelled.
- 29. The practice of this Maha Vedha, giver of great Siddhis, destroys old age, grey hair, and shaking of the body, and therefore it is practiced by the best masters.
- 30. These three are the great secrets. They are the destroyers of old age and death, increase the appetite, confer the accomplishments of Anima, etc.
- 31. They should be practiced in 8 ways, daily and hourly. They increase collection of good actions and lesson the evil ones. People, instructed well, should begin their practice, little by little, first.

# *Kechari Mudra*

- 32. The Kechari Mudra is accomplished by thrusting the tongue into the gullet, by turning it over itself, and keeping the eyesight in the middle
- 33. To accomplish this, the tongue is lengthened by cutting the fraenum linguae, moving, and pulling it. When it can touch the space between the eyebrows, then the Kechari can be accomplished.
- 34. Taking a sharp, smooth and clean instrument, of the shape of a cactus leaf, the frenulum of the tongue should be cut a little (as much as a hairs thickness), at a time.
- 35. Then rock salt and yellow myrobalan (both powdered) should be rubbed in. On the 7th day, it should again be cut a hair's breadth.
- 36. One should go on doing thus, regularly for six months. At the end of six months, the freanum of the tongue will be completely cut.
- 37. Turning the tongue upwards, it is fixed on three ways (esophagus, windpipe and palate). Thus it makes the Khachari Mudra, and is called the Vyoma Chakra.
- 38. The Yogi who sits for a minute turning his tongue upwards, is saved from poisons, diseases, death, old age, etc.



- 39. He who knows the Kechari Mudra is not afflicted with disease, death, sloth, sleep, hunger, thirst, and swooning.
- 40. He who knows the Kechari Mudra, is not troubled by diseases, is not stained with karmas, and is not snared by time.
- 41. The Siddhas have devised this Kechari Mudra from the fact that the mind and the tongue reach akasa by its practice.
- 42. If the hole behind the palate be stopped with Kechari by turning the tongue upwards, then bindu cannot leave its place even if a woman were embraced.
- 43. If the Yogi drinks Somarasa (juice) by sitting with the tongue turned backwards and mind concentrated, there is no doubt he conquers death within 15 days.
- 44. If the Yogi, whose body is full of Somarasa, were bitten by Takshaka (snake), its poison cannot permeate his body.
- 45. As fire is inseparably connected with the wood and light is connected with the wick and oil, so does the soul not leave the body full of nectar exuding from the Soma.
- **(Note.**--Soma (Chandra) is described later on located in the thousand-petalled lotus in the human brain, and is the same as is seen on Sivas' head in pictures, and from which a sort of juice exudes. It is the restraining of this exudation which makes one immortal.)
- 46. Those who eat the flesh of the cow and drink the immortal liquor daily, are regarded by me men of noble family. Others are but a disgrace to their families.
- **(Note.** Translation: Fortunate are the parents and blessed is the country and the family where a Yogi is born. Anything given to such a Yogi, becomes immortal. One, who discriminates between Purusa and Prakriti, purges the sins of a million incarnations, by seeing, speaking, and touching such men (*i.e.* Yogi).

- A Yogi far exceeds a thousand householders, a hundred vanapraasthas, and a thousand Brahmacharis.
- Who can know the reality of the Raja Yoga? That country is very sacred where resides a man who knows it. By seeing and honoring him, generations of ignorant men get moksha, what to speak of those who are actually engaged in it. He knows internal and external yoga, deserves adoration from you and me, what if he is adored by the rest of mankind!
- Those who engage in the great yoga, once or thrice daily, are to be known as masters of great wealth (maheshwaras) or Lords.)
- 47. The word (rasana[?]) means tongue; eating it is thrusting it in the gullet which destroys great sins.
- 48. Immortal liquor is the nectar exuding from the moon (Chandra situated on the left side of the space between the eyebrows). It is produced by the fire which is generated by thrusting the tongue.
- 49. If the tongue can touch with its end the hole from which falls the rasa (juice) which is saltish, bitter, sour, milky and similar to ghee and honey, one can drive away disease, destroy old age, can evade an attack of arms, become immortal in eight ways and can attract fairies.

- 50. He who drinks the clear stream of liquor of the moon (soma) falling from the brain to the sixteen-petalled lotus (in the heart), obtained by means of Prana by applying the tongue to the hole of the pendant in the palate, and by meditating on the great power (Kundalini), becomes free from disease and tender in body, like the stalk of a lotus, and the Yogi lives a very long life.
- 51. On the top of the Meru (vertebral column), concealed in a hole, is the Somarasa (nectar of Chandra); the wise, whose intellect is not over-powered by Raja and Tamas gunas, but in whom Satwa guna is predominant, say there is the (universal spirit) atma in it. It is the source of the down-going Ida, Pingala and Susumna Nadis, which are the Ganges, the Yamuna and the Sarasvati. From that Chandra is shed the essence of the body which causes death of men. It should, therefore, be stopped from shedding. This (Khechari Mudra) is a very good instrument for this purpose. There is no other means of achieving this end.
- 52. This hole is the generator of knowledge and is the source of the five streams (Ida, Pingala, &c.). In that colorless vacuum, Khechari Mudra should be established.
- 53. There is only one seed germinating the whole universe from it; and there is only one Mudra, called Khachari. There is only one deva (god) without any one's support, and there is one condition called Manonmani.

# ***The Uddiyana Bandha***

- 54. Uddiyana is so called by the Yogis, because by its practice the Prana (vayu), flies (flows) in the Susumna.
- 55. Uddiyana is so called, because the great bird, Prana, tied to it, flies without being fatigued. It is explained below.
- 56. The belly above the navel is pressed backwards towards the spine. This Uddiyana Bandha is like a lion for the elephant of death.
- 57. Uddiyana is always very easy, when learnt from a guru. The practiser of this, if old, becomes young again.
- 58. The portions above and below the navel, should be drawn backwards towards the spine. By practicing this for six months one can undoubtedly conquer death.
- 59. Of all the Bandhas, Uddiyana is the best; for by binding it firmly liberation comes spontaneously.

# ***The Mula Bandha***

- 60. Pressing Yoni (perineum) with the heel, contract up the anus. By drawing the Apana thus, Mula Bandha is made.
- 61. The Apana, naturally inclining downward, is made to go up by force. This Mula Bandha is spoken of by Yogis as done by contracting the anus.
- 62. Pressing the heel well against the anus, draw up the air by force, again and again till it (air) goes up.
- 63. Prana, Apana, Nada and Bindu uniting into one in this way, give success in Yoga, undoubtedly.
- 64. By the purification of Prana, and Apana, urine and excrements decrease. Even an old man becomes young by constantly practicing Mula Bandha.
- 65. Going up the Apana enters the zone of fire, *i.e.*, the stomach. The flame of fire struck by the air is thereby lengthened.

- (**Note** In the center of the body is the seat of fire, like heated gold. In men it is triangular, in quadrupeds square, in birds circular. There is a long thin flame in this fire. It is gastric fire.)
- 66. These, fire and Apana, go to the naturally hot Prana, which, becoming inflamed thereby, causes burning sensation in the body.
- 67. The Kundalini, which has been sleeping all this time, becomes well heated by this means and awakens well. It becomes straight like a serpent, struck dead with a stick.
- 68. It enters the Brahma Nadi, just like a serpent enters its hole. Therefore, the Yogi should always practice this Mula Bandha.

# ***The Jalandhara Bandha***

- 69. Contract the throat and press the chin firmly against the chest. This is called Jalandhara Bandha, which destroys old age and death.
- 70. It stops the opening (hole) of the group of Nadis, through which the juice from the sky (from the Soma or Chandra in the brain) falls down. It is, therefore, called the Jalandhara Bandha -- the destroyer of a host of diseases of the throat.
- 71. In Jalandhara Bandha, the indications of a perfect contraction of throat are, that the nectar does not fall into the fire (the Surya situated in the navel), and the air is not disturbed.
- 72. The two Nadis should be stopped firmly by contracting the throat. This is called the middle circuit or center (Madhya Chakra), and it stops the 16 adharas (*i.e.*, vital parts).

- **(Note.**--The sixteen vital parts mentioned by renowned Yogis are the (1) thumbs, (2) ankles, (3) knees, (5) the prepuce, (6) organs of generation, (7) the navel, (8) the heart, (9) the neck, (10) the throat, (11) the palate, (12) the nose, (13) the middle of the eyebrows, (14) the forehead, (15) the head and (16) the Brahmarandra.)
- 73. By drawing up the mulasthana (anus), Uddiyana Bandha should be performed. The flow of the air should be directed to the Susumna, by closing the Ida and the Pingala.
- 74. The Prana becomes calm and latent by this means, and thus there is no death, old age, disease, etc.
- 75. These three Bandhas are the best of all and have been practiced by the masters. Of all the means of success in Hatha Yoga, they are known to the Yogis as the chief ones.
- 76. The whole of the nectar, possessing divine qualities, which exudes from the Soma (Chandra) is devoured by the Surya; and, owing to this, the body becomes old.
- 77. To remedy this, the opening of the Surya is avoided by excellent means. It is to be learnt best by instructions from a guru; but not by even a million discussions.



# *The Viparita Karani*

- 78. Above the navel and below the palate respectively, are the Surya and the Chandra. The exercise, called the Viparita Karani, is learnt from the guru's instructions.
- 79. This exercise increases the appetite; and, therefore, one who practices it, should obtain a good supply of food. If the food be scanty, it will burn him at once.
- 80. Place the head on the ground and the feet up into the sky, for a second only the first day, and increase this time daily.
- 81. After six months, the wrinkles and grey hair are not seen. He who practices it daily, even for two hours, conquers death.

# *The Vajroli.*

- 82. Even if one who lives a wayward life, without observing any rules of Yoga, but performs Vajroli, deserves success and is a Yogi.
- 83. Two things are necessary for this, and these are difficult to get for the ordinary people -- (1) milk and (2) a woman behaving, as desired.
- 84. By practicing to draw in the *bindu*, discharged during cohabitation, whether one be a man or a woman, one obtains success in the practice of Vajroli.
- 85. By means of a pipe, one should blow air slowly into the passage in the male organ. [Urethra.]
- 86. By practice, the discharged *bindu* is drawn out. One can draw back and preserve one's own discharged *bindu*.
- 87. The Yogi who can protect his *bindu* thus, overcomes death; because death comes by discharging *bindu*, and life is prolonged by its preservation.
- 88. By preserving *bindu*, the body of the Yogi emits a pleasing smell. There is no fear of death, so long as the *bindu* is well-established in the body.
- 89. The *bindu* of men is under control of the mind, and life is dependant on the *bindu*. Hence, mind and *bindu* should be protected by all means.

# *The Sahajoli*

- 90. Sahajoli and Amaroli are only the different kinds of Vajroli. Ashes from burnt up cow dung should be mixed with water.
- 91. Being free from the exercise of Vajroli, man and woman should both rub it on their bodies.
- 92. This is called Sahajoli, and should be relied on by Yogis. It does good and gives moksa.
- 93. This Yoga is achieved by courageous wise men, who are free from sloth, and cannot be accomplished by the slothful.

# *The Amaro*

- 94. In the doctrine of the sect of the Kapalikas, the Amaro is the drinking of the mid stream; leaving the 1st, as it is a mixture of too much bile and the last, which is useless.
- 95. He who drinks Amari, snuff it daily, and practices Vajroli, is called practicing Amaro.
- 96. The *bindu* discharged in the practice of Vajroli should be mixed with ashes, and the rubbing it on the best parts of the body gives divine sight.

# *The Sakti chalana*

- 97. Kutilanga (crooked-bodied), Kundalini, Bhujangi (a she-serpent) Sakti, Ishwari, Kuundali, Arunddhati, -- all these words are synonymous.
- 98. As a door is opened with a key, so the Yogi opens the door of mukti by opening Kundalini by means of Hatha Yoga.
- 99. The Parameswari (Kundalini) sleeps, covering the hole of the passage by which one can go to the seat of Brahma which is free from pains.
- 100. Kundali Sakti sleeps on the bulb, for the purpose of giving moksa to Yogis and bondage to the ignorant. He who knows it, knows Yoga.
- 101. Kundali is of a bent shape, and has been described to be like a serpent. He who has moved that Sakti is no doubt Mukta (released from bondage).

- 102. Youngster Tapaswini (a she-ascetic), laying between the Ganges and the Yamuni, (Ida and Pingala) should be caught hold of by force, to get the highest position.
- 103. Ida is called the goddess Ganges, Pingala goddess Yamuna. In the middle of the Ida and the Pingala is the infant widow, Kundali.
- 104. This sleeping she-serpent should be awakened by catching hold of her tail. By the force of Hatha, the Sakti leaves her sleep, and starts upwards.
- 105. This she-serpent is situated in Muladhar. She should be caught and moved daily, morning and evening, for 1/2 a prahar (1 1/2 hours), by filling with air through Pingala by the Paridhana method.
- 106. The bulb is above the anus, a vitasti (12 angulas) long, and measures 4 angulas (3 inches) in extent and is soft and white, and appears as if a folded cloth.

- 107. Keeping the feet in Vajra-asana (Padma-asana), hold them firmly with the hands. The position of the bulb then will be near the ankle joint, where it should be pressed.
- 108. The Yogi, sitting with Vajra-asana and having moved Kundali, should perform Bhastrika to awaken the Kundali soon.
- 109. Bhanu (Surya, near the navel) should be contracted (by contracting the navel) which will move the Kundali. There is no fear for him who does so, even if he has entered the mouth of death.
- 110. By moving this, for two muhurtas, it is drawn up a little by entering the Susumna (spinal column).
- 111. By this Kundalini leaves the entrance of the Susumna at once, and the Prana enters it of itself.

- 112. Therefore, this comfortably sleeping Arundhati should always be moved; for by so doing the Yogi gets rid of diseases.
- 113. The Yogi, who has been able to move the Sakti deserves success. It is useless to say more, suffice it to say that he conquers death playfully.
- 114. The Yogi observing Brahmacharya (continence) and always eating sparingly, gets success within 40 days by practice with Kundali.
- 115. After moving the Kundali, plenty of Bhastra should be performed. By such practice, he has no fear from the god of death.
- 116. There is no other way, but the practice of the Kundali, for washing away the impurities of 72,000 Nadis.
- 117. This middle Nadi becomes straight by steady practice of postures; Pranayama and Mudras of Yogis.



- 118. Those whose sleep has decreased by practice and mind has become calm by samadhi, get beneficial accomplishments by Sambhavi and other Mudras.
- 119. Without Raja Yoga, this earth, the night, and the Mudras, be they howsoever wonderful, do not appear beautiful.

- (**Note.**--Raja Yoga=asana. Earth=steadiness, calmness. Night=Kumbhaka; cessations of the activity of the Prana, just as King's officials cease moving at night. Hence night means absence of motion, i.e., Kumbhaka.)
- 120. All the practices relating to air should be performed with concentrated mind. A wise man should not allow his mind to wander away.
- 121. These are the Mudras, as explained by Adinatha (Siva). Every one of them is the giver of great accomplishments to the practiser.
- 122. He is really the *guru* and not to be considered as Isvara in human form who teaches the Mudras as handed down from guru to guru.
- 123. Engaging in practice, by putting faith in his words, one gets the Siddhis of Anima, etc., as also evades death.