

**THE MOKṢOPĀYA, YOGAVĀSIṢṬHA
AND RELATED TEXTS**

EDITED BY
JÜRGEN HANNEDER

INDOLOGICA HALENSIS

GEISTESKULTUR INDIENS. TEXTE UND STUDIEN.



HERAUSGEGEBEN VON WALTER SLAJE
UNTER MITWIRKUNG VON
JÜRGEN HANNEDER UND ANDREAS POHLUS

BAND 7

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Editor's Preface

The *Yōgavāsiṣṭha* or – as it is called in its oldest version – *Mokṣopāya* is a monument of Sanskrit literature, not merely by its epic size – it is larger than the *Rāmāyaṇa* – but especially through its unique style and contents. Most scholars agreed that it can not be categorized easily, especially since its blend of narrative, poetry and philosophy escapes the traditional boundaries of the genres of Classical Sanskrit, but the work's philosophy has puzzled many. From its oldest version (“*Mokṣopāya*”), which is without the thin but persuasive layer of Advaita Vedānta, it now appears that the work propounds an idiosyncratic philosophy that is almost unique in the Indian sphere – by its contents, but also because it rejects the authority of any scripture or given philosophical framework. The fact that it nevertheless uses other doctrines in an inclusivistic way has tricked scholars into reading the most diverse philosophies into the text. In fact, the author of the *Mokṣopāya* seems to have conceived a non-dualistic system of his own – and elaborated it on an enormous scale. This is, however, only one aspect of the *Mokṣopāya*. Some readers more interested in Indian poetical theories have found it to be equally unique and interesting,¹ especially for its integration of philosophy and poetry.

The *Mokṣopāya Research Group* is a coordinated effort of several academic projects at a comprehensive investigation of the *Mokṣopāya*, ranging from a critical edition of the text as well as the fragments of the commentary of Bhāskaraṇṭha, an assessment of the abridged versions, to translations and topical studies. Two projects, funded by the *German Research Foundation*, are located in the Indological Institute at the University of Halle-Wittenberg,² the complete critical edition is under the patronage of the *Mainzer Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur*. A critical edition of the

¹ “The philosophical stories are replete with lyric descriptions of great beauty, and the very language itself gives evidence of a highly literary mind.” (MASSON and PATWARDHAN (1985), p. 30) “There is no finer example in world literature of a profound philosophical mind with a genius for artistic description, even though many of the verses betray a certain lack of traditional literary education (odd syntax, unorthodox similes etc.). There is a fullness and an overflowing of the creative spirit in this work such as we have never come across in any other Sanskrit text.” (MASSON and PATWARDHAN (1985), p. 30, fn. 3.)

² “Kritische Edition des *Utpattiprakaraṇa*” (PETER STEPHAN and JÜRGEN HANNEDER) and “Indo-Persische Übersetzungsliteratur aus der Mogulzeit (16./17. Jhd)” (HEIKE FRANKE and SUSANNE STINNER), the latter being a collaboration of the Indological and the Oriental Institute (Prof. WALTER SLAJE and Prof. JÜRGEN PAUL).

fragment of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's commentary on the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* is being prepared by BRUNO LO TURCO at the University of Rome, a translation of the *Utpatti prakaraṇa* has been recently started by MARTIN GANSTEN at the University of Lund and is funded by the *Swedish Research Council*.

The present volume is a collection of articles resulting from a panel on the *Mokṣopāya*, *Yogavāsiṣṭha* and related texts, which was held on the 24th of September at the 29th *Deutscher Orientalistentag* in Halle, where the international *Mokṣopāya Research Group* took the opportunity to present results of recent research as well as ongoing editorial and other projects to a wider Indological public. The publication has been made possible through a generous grant by the *Helmuth von Glasenapp-Stiftung*.

An introduction by the editor is followed by four articles that deal with the text of the *Mokṣopāya* and its philology. First WALTER SLAJE analyses the evidence for a localization of the text in Kashmir, then he presents a preliminary description of Delhi and Śrīnagar manuscripts, which have only recently become accessible. Another tour in search of manuscripts in Maharashtra and Gujarat has resulted in a further survey by PETER STEPHAN and SUSANNE STINNER, which has been included in this volume almost in the last minute. Next PETER STEPHAN introduces the critical edition of the third book of the *Mokṣopāya*, the *Utpatti prakaraṇa*, which will be completed in the near future. In the following three articles the focus is on abridged versions of the *Mokṣopāya* and *Yogavāsiṣṭha*. SUSANNE STINNER presents results of her studies on the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* as well as previous unknown versions, JÜRGEN HANNEDER presents a brief analysis of the *Mokṣopāyasamgraha*, whereas HEIKE FRANKE traces the history of the earliest Persian translations of the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* produced at the Mogul court. The volume is completed by BRUNO LO TURCO's study of the deep structure of the *Mokṣopāya*, namely its use of *ākhyānas* as an integral part of philosophical instruction.

At present the publications by the *Mokṣopāya Research Group* are often based on materials, mostly preliminary editions, that are shared among the group, but have not yet appeared in print. In quoting from the *Mokṣopāya* we therefore resort to the following guidelines: Where available, quotations from the *Mokṣopāya* are based on the preliminary version of the forthcoming critical edition, which applies only to the *Utpatti prakaraṇa*. In that case all readings are given in the apparatus. In the case of the *Vairāgya*-, *Mumukṣu*- and *Sthiti prakaraṇa* the text as contained in Bhāskarakaṇṭha's com-

mentary³ is quoted. In all other cases, notably that of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* the text is cited according to the manuscripts, which are then identified.⁴ Quotations from other versions, i.e. the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* and (*Yoga-*) *Vāsiṣṭhasāra* are based on the printed editions,⁵ the other abridged versions remain unedited and are therefore quoted from manuscript.

³ Published in HANNEDER and SLAJE (2002), SLAJE (1993) and SLAJE (2002).

⁴ See below, p. 139f., for a brief list of sources.

⁵ For this and other primary texts, see the bibliography on page 144.

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