

On the Kriya-Shakti, or “Nine Powers of Action”

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The *Kriya-Shakti*, or Nine Powers of Action, are the most potent magical powers, or siddhis, at the command of the tantric adept, and, as such, elude the best of Orientalists in detail sufficient for explication, as befitting occult lore of this extraordinary level of attainment. Although most authors list only eight of the *mahasiddhis* or great powers, Danielou believed that any list of the 'miraculous' powers would have to include that most godlike of talents, omniscience. The Nine Powers are believed dormant in us all. By re-remembering them, we too, might be as gods, *aishvarya*. Hence, it is to be presumed that only the highest adepts—yogins—can master them.



This, in turn, in keeping with the tripartite Shaivite tantric conception of evolution, from the *pashu* (or animal type), to the *vira* (or heroic type), to the *divya* (or deified being). Legend has it that precisely 84 Nath Siddhas have attained to immortality. Their praises were sung by the medieval Sahajiyan poets, in their tantric works, such as the *Caryas* and the *Doha-Kosas*, 84, of course, being a magic or mystical number in Hinduism (“...chiefly important in Buddhism”, says Crowley in “An Essay on Number,” in the Weiser edition of *Liber 777 and Other Qabalistic Writings*).

We find fascinating parallels between the 84 Siddhas and legends of such immortals as the Comte de Saint-Germaine and the “Ascended Masters” of theosophical fame. That a College of Adepts exists in Shambhala or some other hermitage in the Himalayas, occluded by clouds, is even a part of the popular culture. (It is time Hollywood remade James Hilton’s *Lost Horizon* and did it “right” this time. i.e. with all of the Shambhala symbolism intact.)

Lama Govinda has shown us that once we have done the meditation and other work to achieve the status of an adept, we no longer see much use for magical powers, since we begin to associate them with our ego and what it takes to “feed” it. We have also



learned to reintegrate those shadow parts of ourselves, unwanted elements we tend to project onto others, so that we may approach that evolutionary state of the *jivanmukti* or the *avadhut*.

Those who have undergone diksha, initiation, into a *Kula*, or clan of tantric adepts, probably know that the Nine Powers of Action are techniques of high magic(k) that can be employed to one effect or another in their own Work. The following discussion of the Nine Powers will delve less into the praxis and more into the theoretical basis and, by definition, the ontological implications of Nath-Siddha magic(k) itself. Where appropriate the author will offer insight into how the theory is brought to fruition, though he would be hard put to claim success with most of the siddhis except on a limited, mostly metaphorical, basis.

Emphasis also will be placed on illustrating, whenever possible how each of the Kriya-Shaktis found its way into western ceremonial magic(k), which has adapted the Nine Powers of Action to its own uses. (Including witchcraft, it might be observed, and especially the authentic witches among gypsy and (Italian) *strega*, (for that matter, there was more good craft being practiced in the Balkans in times of old than in any other part of the world, and almost all of it deriving from Oriental sources.) We have assumed that an ontological basis underlies the operational energies of each *siddhi*. Studies with the I-Ching have convinced us beyond peradventure that works of magic(k) are “willed synchronicities” and that it is imagination, not will, that is the most powerful weapon in the sorcerer’s arsenal. We are well aware of the principles of Chaos Magic(k), which has become all the rage, but “coincident” by definition is chaotic.

We hope to show that the Nath-Siddhas, by their intuitive grasp of such New Physical paradigms as the mutual interpenetration of matter, found the means to manipulate the “information picture” inside the reality hologram and practical applications of the ancient Hindu (and especially tantric) notion that, to paraphrase Gopi Krishna, it is consciousness, not matter, that is the ultimate reality in the universe.

We know that the Kriya-Shaktis are by nature *rajasic*, which is to say, they partake of the organizational power of the Divine which includes gravitation, activity, and motion; as such they are related to Brahma more than Shiva or Vishnu. However, the *sattvic* nature of Nath-Siddha Magick is such that the forces of concentration are brought to bear on the wielded powers, the magician presumably having the wisdom to employ the siddhis only for the sake of love. It has been argued that the term, “willed synchronicity” is oxymoronic, will being the application of *intentionality* to “acausally-connected” events. But the adept slips in and out of the holes in Indra's Net; she or he is empowered with a Tricksterish, 'phantom-ability of space-time manipulation. The Nath



Siddha also hurls his or her thunderbolts from a dispassionate stance, having no lust of result, as both Crowley and Gopi Krishna taught.

Julius Evola (*The Yoga of Power*) reminds us that 'siddhis' also mean "perfections'. The most potent Magic(k) —the kind most likely to succeed — is that done in the name of love:

Shyam Sundar Goswami, in *Layayoga: An Advanced Method of Concentration* refers to the siddhis as "super powers" and, indeed, with an arsenal such as the nine Kriya-Shaktis at one's disposal, it is hard to imagine a wonder one could not perform. Briefly, the Nine Powers are: *Anima* (atomization); *Mahima* (immensity); *Garima* (gravity); *Laghima* (lightness); *Prapti* (attainment); *Prakamyā* (at will-ness); *Ishitva* (domination); *Vashitva* (holding in one's power); *Yatrankamavasayitva* (transformation at will). One finds manifestations of these powers in the shamanic, sorcery, or magical traditions of all peoples. For example, what is *Yatrankamavasayitva* if not 'shape-shifting' commonly claimed as an ability of certain Native American shamans? But each of the Nine Powers has application in the magic(k) of the west, as I shall demonstrate.

Anima:

The ability to perceive the infinitely small, including subatomic particles was claimed by the Nath Siddhas who had progressed to such a stage in their meditation that they realized, as Gopi Krishna has put it, that "it is not matter but consciousness that is the ultimate reality of the universe." (*Hidden Secrets of Kundalini* (in Panchastavi).) When the tantric adept has progressed to a certain stage, he can see the adult in a child and vice-versa, which is to say, he can watch another being born, living, and dying, with one and the same glance at the same moment in eternity.

Those who have studied themselves in a mirror while under the influence of LSD and certain other psychotropic substances may have experienced a similar phenomenon, which is to say the death of the physical body.

It is precisely as the opium-smoking Jean Cocteau expressed it: "Mirrors are the doors through which Death comes and goes." (This thought is personified in his film of Orpheus, which is recommended to you, and of which Steven H. Scheuer has remarked, in his *Movies on TV*, "Defies anything else in cinema." — A magical work.")

The Nath Siddha can "see microscopically" because he has advanced to the state where he can reduce all of Nature to its starting point: nothing, zilch, zero, *nada*. Only self-organizing principles and a holographic universe could bring such order into being.

An understanding of the tantric-alchemical-hermetic formulae of "As above, so below", will help. It is only necessary to take to its logical conclusions the concept of the



linga-sharira to make sense of such numinosities. The *Linga-Sharira* is the equivalent of DNA. How can something like left-handedness, to use a rather obvious example, be passed on from parents to children? But this is only a physical characteristic! It is *a fortiori*, all the more marvelous that certain ethical precepts and tendencies of mind can be passed genetically as well. As Danielou points out (While the Gods play. Shaiva Oracles and Predictions on the Cycles of History and the Destiny of Mankind), the *Linga-Sbarira* helps produce an individual who:

“...carries out the role that nature has given him [and who] degrades himself if he abandons that role. The perfect man, the harmonious man, the useful man, is the man who, like an actor, plays to perfection the role assigned to him.”

It seems to me I have heard this elsewhere — perhaps *Liber AL vel Legis* (or The Book of the Law). In the comment to Chapter One of that work, Crowley states that once the individual becomes conscious “of his true, inmost will, of his essential nature,” any act, which expresses the soul, that act and no other is right.”

Both this siddhi and, to some extent, the next, are governed by the *Ajna-chakra*

Here is a true story from an initiated Nath, whom we shall call Vimalanatha, a criminal defense lawyer by profession, who applied this and other siddhis in an eclectic working recently and sent us a letter describing the results:

“I recently handled a criminal defense in which the charge was aggravated sexual assault, which is the legal ‘umbrella’ term for several varieties of rape. I did not think the State could prove its case, as the complainant lied repeatedly in her statement to police, and if she changed any part of her story on the stand. I would have the earlier statement to impeach her. I knew some things that the prosecutor probably did not, for example, that the complainant now worked as a waitress in a beer bar where a lot of drugs were being sold.

“I had had excellent results in prior workings using the voodoo rituals formulated by the Semi-legendary Anna Riva and other New Orleans practitioners, and I knew that, where legal matters are concerned, one only has to call upon one of the loas, Agwé, to work one’s will. I drew the loa’s veve on a piece of parchment and meditated—or, rather, concentrated—on it, using that state of meditation known as dharana, or single-pointed fixation of mind, during which time I visualized the complainant’s purse. I found that I was able to make myself extremely small. I was thus able to climb down into the purse, where I found a packet of cocaine.”

Obviously, the Sorcerer was putting both *anima* and, as we shall see, *prapti*, to good advantage. Voodoo makes use of many of the siddhis, and so it is not unusual to find modern Shaivite *sadhakas* becoming interested in such an Afro-American religion.



We can add only that it is characteristic of dharana that its masters are said to be in control of what Goswami calls —”Superconsciousness”:

“Superknowledge arises from concentration—not from perception and intellection. Superknowledge has two levels—inward and outward. At the outward level, Superknowledge reveals the supermatter field, and thus the range of knowledge is increased to a very high degree...

(Goswami. 1980.) This 'supermatter field' is the Net as well as the many-realities world on both sides of the “holes” in the fabric.

Mahima

Translated as “expanding” or as -immensity, this is the ability to assimilate the Macrocosm in the Microcosm, which is what occurs sometimes in *dhyana*, and which explains the famous “Star-Sponge Vision” of Crowley during his New Hampshire Working. This occurred during one of Old Crow's magickal retirements, to-wit, his trip to Lake Pasquaney (not even shown on new maps, we're told). The Master Therion experienced a form of samadhi in which his *Linga-Sharira* left the physical body and became 'pure information'. The adept in control of this siddhi can cross galaxies and shake up the information picture of anything anywhere anytime. To put it country simple, Crowley had a Bohm-blast; he became enlightened to the nature of the implicate order in all of its manifestations and with all of its ramifications.

Like Anima, this siddhi depends upon complete mastery of the equilibrating forces between the Microcosm and Macrocosm, a balance that is only possible by activation of the *Shushumna*. The language Crowley found to explain his Vision is strikingly similar to the description of this siddhi by Walker (1968): “...the power of becoming as vast as the cosmos and being able [*quoting from a hatha-yoga text*] ‘to watch the functioning of the galaxies as though an the worlds were laid out before one.’” This siddhi is associated with the seed mantra. “Lam” and with *Prithivi*. Evola (1992) says that this chakra associated with this siddhi, the *muladhara*, is associated with “the cohesiveness of physical matter.”

Garima

It is a common practice taught to students of occultism that one way to master “astral travel” is to project any large animal through the ajna chakra onto the astral plane, whence consciousness can be made to travel almost anywhere, the bigger the animal the better. In fact, I have seen such manuals suggest that one not only select giraffes, elephants, and such, but also to paint them, with polka-dots in loud colors, the better to



make them visually stimulating to discrete altered states. It is foolish to believe that the siddhis are meant to be taken literally, however exciting reports of Laghima, say, in the accounts of Alexandra David-Neel may seem.

Walker says that this *siddhi* is more related to the necessity of becoming immovable, “even as heavy as a mountain,” the texts put it.

Laghima

Actually, Mme. David-Neel did not just witness a “levitation,” as this siddhi implies, she saw adepts dart along a chosen path 'several feet off the ground', in the manner of one of those anti-gravitational vehicles in a sci-fi story. No problem. The adept merely disorganizes the information picture, reassembling it incrementally, rather like the figure in Duchamp's “Nude ascending a Staircase.” (And if you don't think the surrealists used art for magical purposes. I recommend to you the works of not only, Duchamp, but Carrington, Fini, Colquhoun, and Varo, an female adepti of extraordinary abilities.)

In Tibet, this siddhi is known as lung-gom. Lamas are said to be able to “move along the ground with extraordinary speed in a series of long bounding steps.” (Walker, 1982.)

Prapti

Strictly speaking, this is a psychic ability. The Dutch psychic, Peter Hurkos, was adept at it. He simply intuited *situs* from the vibrations of physical matter closely associated with the missing person. Like most psychic skills, *Prapti* depends upon the altering of the brainwave pattern. As has been shown, the quantum theoretical concept of “action at a distance- could very well explain this ability to “obtain an object wherever it might be. “ to quote Danielou.

This is one of the more common siddhis, apparently. This “power of being transported anywhere” (Walker) is said to be a talent of the Nepalese shamans, or *bombos*, who maintain that they magically fly, ascending to heavens and underworlds where they encounter gods 'face to face' (Peters, 1987.) These Tamang shamans, who made their home in the mountains of the Kathmandu Valley, believe in a tripartite soul, and they initiate new recruits with techniques quite obviously equating to Kundalini arousal, beginning with a ritual of spirit-possession in which the neophyte becomes seized of a possessing spirit or tutelary guru. The four-stage process of initiation has as its ultimate goal activation and mastery of the 'third soul' or *che wa*, which —incredibly —Peters tell us is they describe as “a light located between the eyes”!



Prakamya

Walker refers to this as “the power of an irresistible will [or] to obtain anything merely by desiring it.” An intimate relationship with the Shakti principle is implied by the very name, *prakamya* and *prakriti* having the same Sanskrit root. This is the most abused siddhi by those who would view the powers only as means to various ends, and Walker says that both Patanjali and other great thinkers of India discourage its development by those who are motivated only by desire. This siddhi would appear to be related to another *manojavitva*, the power to act with the speed of thought. Technically, *prakamya* may be the most potent of the powers, some Nath-Siddhas even managing, by its abilities, to reduce to ashes those who oppose them.

Ishitva

Or “overlordship” (Walker, though Danielou translates it as 'dominion'). This is the power to control the forces of Nature, the *siddhi* most commonly found in the western magical tradition (e.g. legends of Merlin, Shakespeare’s, Prospero, et al.). The adept is said to be able to arrest the wind, provoke storms, and summon rain. The root, “ish,” implies God-like abilities and the word, 'Lord,' in a theological sense. Works of the nature of the homunculus also belong to this *siddhi*.

Vashitva

Or “holding in one’s power” —the ability to obtain power over any being. In the western tradition, this siddhi can be equated to 'bindings.' In *The Tempest*, Prospero is depicted as quite adept at it, Shakespeare showing him in an act of freezing, or making immobile, his treacherous brother and company. Voodoo and Wicca make extensive use of the power, the latter mainly because it has fewer karmic consequences than, say, a rite designed to physically harm the subject. The deity associated with this siddhi is Rama (Kakar, 1982), and, Thus, the *anahata chakra*.

To return again to the letter we received:

“ I began on a Friday preceding the Monday in court. I decided that the best way to rid ourselves of lying witnesses was to bind them in some fashion, which would indicate to me an earth working, in which case I would have done some Wicca, sort of ritual, or an air working for which Voodoo is best. I chose the latter, not only out of convenience, but because I had used such rites before to good effect.

Now it so happens that the Loa governing court cases and anything of a legal nature is Agwé, who is propitiated with seashells and such. I devised my ritual after one



given in the book by Pelton; that is, the one for Winning in court, employing a mantra read nine times over a poppet representing either the prosecutrix or her witness, as well as recitation nine times of Psalms 7, which happens to be beautifully tailored to the binding of enemies who bear false witness. "I also burned myrrh and frankincense, as they were called for, and lit a special sky-blue candle sold in all of the local curandero shops, called, simply, 'Court Case,' I lit this candle, bound the poppet with a clean white cotton cloth over which I had written the names of both the state's attorney and the witness. I fed incense to the charcoal 'punk' while reciting the mantra and the psalms, then wrapped the poppet in the clean white altar cloth. I hid it away in a secluded part of my house and went to bed.

"The following morning the prosecutrix informed the court she wanted to dismiss the indictment, as she was having witness trouble."

This is the power to transforming oneself at will into any form, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral. Almost every shamanic tradition known to man includes this power, usually known by the name, "shape-shifting," (The widespread prevalence of the phenomenon best explains the tales of werewolves from story-tellers the world over.) The 1981 film, *Wolfen*, was an admirable attempt to portray the siddhi as wielded by a mad Native American bent on reclaiming the slums of New York for his tribe. Shamans are famous for having their "power animals," usually wolves, eagles, bears, and others generally thought endowed with special abilities, usually of a hunting or tracking nature — animal allies or guides, who accompany the shaman on his vision quests.

It is interesting in this regard that although animals are associated with each of the chakras, e.g. elephant (Ganesh) for the *muladhara*, most authorities believe that they 'function primarily as symbolic meditation images.' (Metzner, 1987.) Even so, the practitioner can gain distinct advantages by incorporating the animals' strengths and qualities into consciousness. Johari (86) provides the mantram correspondences, and other information necessary for workings involving these powers. Good luck!

