

Divine Dancing Celebration

The Cult of Yoginī / Ḍākinī in Ancient Hinduism and Buddhism

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Summary

Music and dance have long been a component of the celebrations of the people of all nations and on all continents. Music and dance are also used as a method to transcend the profane and to experience ecstasy and bliss. The objective of this research is to analyse the “Divine Dancing Celebration” as practised in India and Tibet by including heroic and ecstatic dances that are believed to grant immortality; also included are the sculptural dynamics of rapturous dance which symbolizes transformation and happiness. The paper also looks at the iconography of some Yoginī/ Ḍākinī who represented the dancing cult and the symbolic meaning buried inside the icon in an effort to make a connection between dance and the cult of Yoginī/ Ḍākinī. Yoginī / Ḍākinī exhibit their bodies and faces, radiating youth and beauty while advocating for freedom from all social restrictions. The Yoginī is dressed in charnel ground jewellery and performs a dance in a field of decaying corpses. Her body is vividly colored and gives the impression of being formed of light; its transparency reveals a sparkling yet hollow nature. The interior of her body is a vast, limitless domain, which may also contain visions. The female force, which can occasionally be evil and may result in destruction and beheadings, is shown as a component of each element existing in the cosmos in the iconographies of the Yoginī. The significance of this research is that it demonstrates the importance of the Yoginī/ Ḍākinī cult in ancient and early medieval India and Tibet. Although this cult is still practised in some manner in South East Asia but not in India, it has lost its relevance and no longer is known to anyone in India. This study is an initial step in educating the general population on this prominent cult of Hinduism and Buddhism and its significance.

Keywords: *Yoginī; Ḍākinī; ritual dance; Indian iconography; Tibetan iconography*

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Introduction

Dancing is a fundamental and timeless form of human expression. At its most basic level, it consists in simply letting the body express itself through rhythm. Movements and expressions speak to us on a level that neither reason nor force can decipher. It conveys something that words can never describe adequately. There was a time when art and religion were practically synonymous with one another. Dance was a religion, theatre was a celestial performance, and song was a prayer. All aspects of life are accompanied by and stimulated by dance (cf. Adams & Apostolos–Cappadona, 1993). Worship first took on the form of dance. It is the earliest and purest form of religious expression, and the process of achieving cosmic flow and unity with the divine depends on a rhythmic motion that is repeated. Dance was the mother of all arts since it was the primary form of expression used in religious rites, which is how other art forms began.

Ritual dance is intended to immerse us deeper and deeper into the world of emotion, to linger in the moment, keep granting us the permission to feel, and to allow the dance to refine and purify our emotional life. A ritual dance represents strong feelings of veneration which were exhibited in groups and individually by circling, spinning, dipping, jumping, stamping, shaking, arching, and contracting the body: feelings which were located in and which emanated from the body. In the modern era we may find it challenging to imagine the origins of the dance ritual since we are so used to viewing it as a type of entertainment; however, there was a time when dancing was more than mere entertainment, physical activity, or socializing. It was a crucial component of religious ritual and ceremonial expression. In fact, it represented the pinnacle of spirituality in the quest for communication between God and Man (Stewart, 2000).

1. Divine dance and women's history

In both South and Southeast Asia, especially in India and Tibet, women were typically portrayed as dancers in the temple sculptures. As we seek out our sacred dance tradition, we find that the goddess is a significant symbol of the woman: a woman we can relate to by knowing about her and understanding her. We discover that women were formerly at the center of spiritual and religious practices through the priestess and her sacred dances, and that they had unique rituals with their proper symbols and liturgies that were distinct from those of men.

The Yoginī pantheon comprises a wide range of deities. Some of them have animal heads, and they experiment with ideas that are not too dissimilar from shamanism. There are some Yoginī who favor an effortless connection while appearing to be kind (Bagchi, 1975). Others have a menacing presence because they impart their own power to triumph over negativity. Many Yoginī appear

edgy. The different types of Yoginī frequently hold tridents or skulls as weapons in their hands, while others are bestowing blessings. Devi, the greatest goddess of the cosmos, is regarded as a Maha Yoginī (the highest Yoginī) in the Shakta tradition, one of the principal schools of Hinduism.

Male centrism and gender biases have often been a part of popular historical narratives. History has often been a biased perception of the past through selective retelling for the purpose of promoting personal interests. This has significant consequences for the study of divine dance and women’s history, two fields in which women’s voices have historically been underrepresented. Female–dominant religions are typically described as fertility cults in various prehistoric texts because they help the tribe’s population grow, which benefits the crops and herds as a result.

In India the focus shifts to sixty–four Yoginī when the negative aspect of Tantrism is discussed. There are two types of tantra “the right hand” (Dakṣiṇācāra) and “the left hand” (Vāmācāra). Dakṣiṇācāra, often known as “white tantra”, which incorporates a number of conventional practices, including abishekam (ritual focused on a statue), yoga, meditation, mantra recitation, yagnam (ritual of fire), and yantras (geometric figures, graphic meditation aids). The Vāmācāra, often known as the “red tantra”, which has a number of practices classified as “impure” or “black magic”, including drinking wine, sacrificing animals, and “maithuna” (sexual union). The worship of the sixty–four Yoginī is a component of the red tantra because it is linked to the Kapalika and Kaula tantras.

The eighth century saw the greatest amplification of the Tantric cult. It seems as though sixty–four Yoginī are engrossed in a manic trance with Lord Shiva. Here, the music is odd, the rhythms are extremely different, and the atmosphere is strange (Das, 1981). Alongside the Lord and the goddesses, there is life, pleasure, and warmth here as well. It inspires awe and a sense of something sacred and enigmatic. The main attraction in the Chausaṭha Yoginī temple in Ranipur (Orissa, India) is Bhairava (a ferocious form of Lord Shiva). He performs a fierce, fiery dance while standing inside his mandapa (a pillared hall or pavilion for public rituals), showing the reality of birth and death. Sixty–four nearly naked maidens dance the Odissi, like Kanyas, around Bhairava in the crackling flames that light up the empty temple. Sixty–four dancing damsels create life with the Lord as the smoke rises and transforms this temple with no roof into a theatre (*Figure 1*).



Image 1. Sixty–four Yoginī Temple Ranipur Jharial (Orissa) (Dupuis, 2018, p. 20). Shiva Gajasurasamhara is in the central shrine surrounded by the dancing Yoginī.

Slika 1. Hram šezdeset i četiri joginija Ranipur Jharial (Orissa) (Dupuis, 2018, p. 20). Šiva Pokoritelj Demonskoga Slona u središnjem je svetištu okružen plešućim joginijima.



Image 2. Dancing Yoginī of Ranipur Jharial temple (Rai, 2020, p. 999)

Slika 2. Plešuća jogini hrama Ranipur Jharial (Rai, 2020, 999)

This is the distinct realm of the living when sentience is in the air and red bangles cling to one another while making music which is wild, fierce, and powerful. It is somewhat beyond our conditioned imagination, but this is the wild world of Shiva Leela. As human blood once poured through as an offering, these powers came to life. The idea that all Yoginī are performing the divine dance around the

Lord Shiva is conveyed in their representations. They could be seen as Divine or Shakti. The images are all carved of stone and are roughly the same height (*Figure 2*). The Chausaṭha Yoginī temple consists of a total of 64 niches (Dehejia, 1986).

2. *Dance in the sky*

The word Yoginī or Ḍākinī can mean either women who dance in the sky or women who enjoy the solitude of emptiness. As a result, their bodies are always portrayed curving in sinuous dance positions. The Ḍākinī maintains her energetic dance in the void or emptiness symbolized by the sky after having thus enlightened us. Her hands were stretched out while she did this and were making a variety of frantic dance moves (Roy, 2015). By doing this, she creates her own sacred Maṇḍalā and marks out her own territory (*Figure 3*). The blazing fires behind her, which are constantly prepared to consume the enemies of the Dharma, are a declaration that even though she acknowledges her identification with the male of the species, she is not to be taken for granted or imposed upon.

The Ḍākinī expresses herself in a deeply intimate way while symbolizing a more expansive and profound view of reality. She manifests in a variety of both wrathful and tranquil forms in dreams, meditations, and visions. She is terrifying because she embodies a world which is beyond one's capacity to control and because of the immense power she wields (*Figure 5*). She is referred to as holding the keys to transformation because, if acknowledged, she has the power to change a person in ways that promote a greater awakening.

In iconographic portrayals, the Ḍākinī of Tibet and Yoginī of India is typically portrayed as a youthful, naked woman in dance position holding a curved knife in one hand and a skull cup, frequently filled with menstrual blood or the elixir of life, in the other. She might be holding a three-pronged spear against her shoulder and sporting a garland made of human skulls. Her hair is usually untamed, hanging down her back, and wrath is written on her face. She dances on top of a corpse to symbolize her ultimate victory over ego and ignorance (Simmer-Brown, 2002). Practitioners of the ritual frequently report hearing the Ḍākinī' bone ornaments clacking as they move ferociously. Indeed, these uninhibited damsels seem to relish all forms of freedom. A viewer may experience some uneasiness when watching a woman move her body freely and energetically. The aim of the dance is to create patterns which direct and contain energy and are fluid. The design may be permanent or transient and may be used inside or outside. It might be made of sand by designing a circle with entrances and exits.



Image 3. Dancing Dākinī (Shaw, 1994, p. 115)

Slika 3. Plešuče dakiniji (Shaw, 1994, 115)

Anyone who reads Tantric literature or visits a Tantric temple is immediately met with a dazzling variety of powerful feminine imagery. One finds a multitude of female enlighteners known as the Dākinī and a pantheon of female Buddhas. Unrestrained by clothing, enveloped by flowing hair, with their bodies curled in sinuous dance positions, the Dākinī leap and fly. Their eyes burn with furious intensity, passion and delight. As they soar through the Tantric Buddhist environment, one can practically hear the delicate clacking of their complex bone jewelry and feel the wind agitated by their rainbow-colored scarves. These liberated damsels seem to enjoy all forms of freedom. Tantric literature uses this pattern to depict magical Yoginī, strong enchantresses who can change their shape at will, and enlightened women who may cause a direct experience of reality with a carefully placed word or gesture. These female figures convey a sense of mastery and spiritual power with their exuberant air of passion and liberation (Rawson, 1991).

The Yoginī/Dākinī cult propagates that in order for a seeker to experience joy, the Shakti must be awakened by a variety of methods because it sleeps inside the human body like a coiled serpent. Kuṇḍalinī is pictured as a coiling serpent at the base of the spine in the hatha yoga. Kuṇḍalinī yoga in both the Natha Sampradaya and Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism have their roots in the Mahāsiddhas, who lived and practised it in India from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. These Mahāsiddhas referred to Kuṇḍalinī yoga as Cāṇḍālī yoga. Buddhists view meditation as a way to better oneself and reach nirvana, whereas Hindus use it for a variety of reasons, including improving their physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

3. *The strong and positive force and spiritual development*

A *Ḍākinī* is a divine feminine entity that is typically associated with Tantra and has attained a certain level and type of spiritual growth, wisdom and clarity. In a philosophical sense, a *Ḍākinī* is someone who has the ability to see the endless false illusion of *Maya* and ignorance. The *Kartarī* or *Kārtika* (knife of the *Ḍākinī*), is the primary emblem of the *Ḍākinī*. According to legend, the blade is used to cut through duality and self-deception, while a hook is used to pull out from the ocean of suffering. They adore engaging in physical action and movement to express themselves, including flying, playing, kicking and dancing ecstatically. *Yoginī*/ *Ḍākinī* have undergone rigorous *Sādhanā* (spiritual practices) to get *siddhis*. These “super women” are believed to have possessed supernatural abilities, including the capacity to float or leave their bodies at will, after achieving complete mastery over both their body and mind (see *Figure 4*) (Shaw, 1994).

When one thinks about the *Ḍākinī* emblem, one becomes aware that their primary quality is dynamism. This imagery must also be taken metaphorically, as is the case with all Buddhist iconography. The *Ḍākinī*'s ferocious restlessness is nothing more than Mother Nature's own rhythmic and cyclical liveliness (Dowman, 1984). Iris Stewart (2000), noted scholar of feminine spirituality, observes: »The rhythms that make up a woman's body are the same rhythms that make up the dance of the Universe; when we feel the two as one, we know we are a part of nature.«

A woman, the ultimate microcosm of the creative side of the universe, renews herself through her monthly menstrual cycle, just as the seasons change and the cosmos vibrates with resounding resonance, giving rise to the energetic and active intensity that characterizes the harmonies making up our existence. The *Ḍākinī* is holding the skull cup filled with menstrual blood in the same setting. Frequently, she holds this cup up to her mouth as if she were about to drink from it.

This imagery jolts us into understanding the gravity of the *Ḍākinī*'s message, which is to reject the antiquated practices that view this menstrual fluid as impure and prohibited. She has a curved knife in her other hand which she will use to abolish these extremely onerous traditions. Through physical functions that are only inherent to her, what should serve as an enduring reminder of the association of the feminine with the divine has been reduced to a subordinate position (Gyatso, 1991). Therefore, it is important to grasp and comprehend this primordial female figure's fury not as a punishment that motivates fear and subordination but rather as a strong and positive force, a catalyst for learning and change.



Image 4. Severed-Headed Vajra Yoginī (Shaw, 1994, p. 112)
 Slika 4. Vajra jogini odrubljene glave (Shaw, 1994, 112)



Image 5. Wrathful dancing Dākinī (Simmer-Brown, 2002, p. 138)
 Slika 5. Gnjevna plešuća dakini (Simmer-Brown, 2002, 138)

It also refers to a feminine energy being who aids in or even initiates one's spiritual development. The Dākinī in Buddhist tantra were raised beyond particular beings into a higher principle where the feminine signifies wisdom itself (Simmer-Brown, 2002). In this context, wisdom is defined as insight into emptiness or as a constant awareness of the interconnectedness and transience of all occurrences. The Dākinī, who is commonly pictured dancing in iconography, glides effortlessly through the limitless void. Indeed, because dance exemplifies characteristics such as dynamism, fluidity, stability, ferocious energy, and equipoise, it is common to find dancing metaphors in Buddhist archetypes of enlightenment in both art and writing.

The term “Emptiness” or “Voidness” is largely employed in Buddhist thought to distinguish between how things appear to be and how they actually are, along with accompanying attitudes that are believed to be spiritually advantageous. It implies that appearance and reality are distinct. The female enlightened, represented by *Ḍākinī*, is extremely “elusive and playful”, much like true wisdom. *Ḍākinī* understand that only deep thought and reflection through meditation may produce true insight. The ultimate wisdom of Emptiness is the illusive wisdom of *Ḍākinī*. Typically, *Ḍākinī* is seen as the manifestation of the “Enlightened Mind” that comprehends Emptiness. Bliss, or the state of blissful knowledge of emptiness, is another idea that is frequently associated with *Ḍākinī* practice. It is a great experience to recognize emptiness for a brief period of time and experience joy and bliss rather than “nothingness”. For this reason, *Ḍākinī* are frequently represented as being vivacious, dancing, joyous or fierce and unburdened (Gyatso, 1991).

The dances are performed while wearing complex bone jewellery like belts, aprons, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and crowns with five golden lobes. The six perfections, or paramitas, are stimulated by wearing these accessories. Wearing the necklace encourages charity. The female practitioner’s body represents knowledge, while the armlets and bracelets stimulate ethics, the earrings cultivate patience, the headpieces inspire happy endeavor, the belt and apron foster focus. With their right hands, the dancers beat a double-headed damaru drum to symbolize compassion, while their left hands ring a bell to symbolize emptiness. In order to demonstrate the equality of these two states of enlightened consciousness, they play these instruments with each dancing step.

Skulls were frequently used to build the damaru (drums), and ritual skull cups and little bones were converted into exquisite decorations to wear, as tantric practitioners traditionally practised on cremation grounds and recycled the remains found there. The *Yoginī* costume’s components serve as reminders of how the practitioner meets situations and events that frighten us, like death, but can also use these interactions to further their spiritual practice. The use of sound, especially the drumbeat, together with the casting of spells and rhythmic rituals involving dancing and an “altered consciousness” (Roy, 2015).

4. The movement’s symbolic expression

Philosopher, psycholinguist and cultural theorist Irigaray (1992) has taken up this idea of feminine movement in a different context of Buddhist teachings, when she examined how female subjectivity developed. This idea is also seen in her iconographic depictions, which typically show her dancing or soaring. She claims that one method through which a woman »may construct a territory of her own in regard to the mother« is through dance. The female’s relationship with the mother is more intimate than the male’s since the daughter can never be totally different from the mother due to their shared bodily essence, unlike the male who must create a separation from the mother in order to establish his

identity as a man. Irigaray contends that the girl uses dance or the movement of her own body to map out, by defining her own boundaries, her own unique relationship with the mother, as opposed to the boy who may use objects and rituals that he manipulates in an effort to achieve not only his own sense of subjectivity, but also mastery over the mother's absence at certain points in his life (Irigaray, 1992).

The feminine version of the word, *khandroma*, which is most literally translated as “she who goes through the sky”, is most common since it is the form that frequently appears. The entire name in Tibetan is *khekham su khyappar droma*, which is properly translated as “she who soars everywhere in (the unlimited limits of) the realm of space”. This is a condensed version of the complete name (Simmer–Brown, 2002). Given that the *Ḍākinī* is frequently represented in iconography as dancing, which suggests constant mobility in space, it is possible that this is best interpreted as “sky–dancer”. Although in Tibetan art she is not often depicted as flying, her ability to fly was important from the moment she first appeared in Indian pantheons. This is why we need to look at the meaning of “sky” and “dancer” in more depth.

Her name's second component, *dro*, denotes motion and life itself. Instead of being merely blank, emptiness is a way of being that allows manifestation to occur freely without ever weakening its strength. In fact, the *Ḍākinī*'s manifestation helps the practitioner because she draws attention to the dynamic of emptiness in phenomena by virtue of her mere presence (*dro*). One of her most enduring characteristics is her ability to move, which encompasses not only the movement of her physical form but also her capacity to transform into different forms and to appear and vanish at command (Simmer–Brown, 2002). The iconographic representations of her dancing, moving forward, or soaring are examples of the movement's symbolic expression.

5. Language of the text and its secret

Tantric Buddhist texts are typically written in Tibetan or Sanskrit, both of which are widely used and accessible. However, a certain category of literature purportedly written by the *Ḍākinī* was held in extreme secrecy. Written disclaimers on the materials made sure that only those who could comprehend their meaning and maintain the necessary level of discretion regarding their contents could have access to these kinds of teachings. In truth, works purportedly revealed by *Ḍākinī* were revered for their esotericism and thought to have been composed in the “*Ḍākinī* spirit”, a form of hidden language.

The name given to this language was twilight language. Twilight, which represents the ambiguous period between two states, is now used as a threshold sign. We can be certain that there was a purpose for linking this language to the *Ḍākinī*. According to the majority of academics, the use of such mystical and secret language is comparable to the connection of women with the natural unknown and her body as a metaphor for the world's mysteries. They believe that women are

the principal carriers of spiritual and creative force. Man must “penetrate” into this mystery’s core essence in order to unravel it (Bucknell & Stuart–Fox, 1993).¹

These ideas are applied profoundly in literature produced in the twilight language, which only has one syllable in each sentence. Only through the assistance of a guru (teacher) versed in the lineage of that particular system could practitioners understand such books. From the guru’s mouth to the disciple’s ear, the secret if the text was communicated (Gimbutas, 2001). The basic idea was that this was symbolic language, the musical sound of which could not only be perceived mystically by experienced meditators, but the complex meaning of which could be reduced to a single, mystic hieroglyph. It was believed that the Guru himself received the sacred scriptures from the *Ḍākinī* through her warm breath, also known as the *Ḍākinī*’s whispered utterances.

The nature of this enigmatic and sacred language is still an open topic. There are many ways to interpret the idea of a language that is connected to the sacred feminine in this way and that is both symbolic and unintelligible by conventional standards. Scholar June Campbell’s project, which contends that this language is one that a child experiences while still in the womb, is rational and cohesive. The growth of a child is significantly influenced by sound, particularly the mother’s voice, according to contemporary studies. The proximity of the newborn to the mother’s heart during the first year of life, when the sound of the heartbeat is similar to the sound of the drum, an instrument strongly linked to the *Ḍākinī*, also has an impact on the baby’s experience of sound. In the same passage, Campbell claims that, beyond our unique experiences as men and women, there is a universal human experience that disregards sexuality. While floating in the mother’s womb, we are in this primal state: it is not until after our psychological separation from the mother that we are introduced into the dualistic world. In other words, this is the twilight stage (Campbell, 2002).

Conclusion

The image of the dance seems to have been used to accomplish intellectual emancipation across many cultures. It is undeniably true that the use of gesture, dance, painting and music in ceremonies of devotion in many ancient traditions dates back to a time before the development of science and the polarization of culture and nature. It can be argued that these symbols still have the potential to be valuable to both men and women. However, within this tradition, it is possible to observe that the possibility for positive, recognizable representations of women is discernible in some aspects of the symbolism, but very frequently it has been subsumed by the dominant needs of the male, who has either objectified the female or incorporated her image for his own purposes. Men and women both share equally in the feminine and masculine components of the subtle body

1 In other words, pay attention to what the female body is saying.

patterns, which are viewed as a constant dance or interchange of the feminine and masculine principles. Buddhist meditation is the finest way to comprehend this dance.

An important component of Tantric–Shaktism worship is the Yoginī/Dākinī. One such branch of Hinduism that draws attention to the female principle is Shaktism. The gods and goddesses are all just Shakti (energy), which is the foundation of a big portion of the cult (energy). The combination of this energy is essential for obtaining the highest level of understanding. According to the Shakta doctrine, The Devi is the supreme entity charged with playing the parts of creator, sustainer and destroyer. The seven Mother Goddesses, are the foundation of the philosophy underlying the concept of the Yoginī. Sixty–four Yoginī represent the multiplicity of these values. The symbolism includes allusions to the mind, five gross elements, and ten sense organs, which together make up the sixteen kalas or phases. The moon goes through sixteen phases, fifteen of which are visible and one which is not. There are sixteen abiding goddesses in this group. There are sixteen siddhis or supernatural abilities. The continuous life is symbolized by the circle of sixty–four Yoginī. It is a spiritual symbol called a Maṇḍalā, which is an endless circle. For this reason the Yoginī Temples are always built in a circular shape. The Yoginī/Dākinī cult celebrated the strength of the female form and they honored fertility and sensuality. Fierce deities serve as a reminder that even anger consists of pure energy. The practitioner of meditation must stop viewing hostile and frightful appearances as threats to the ego and understand that they are actually patterns of positive–charged pure energy.

The logic of life versus death, gain versus loss, and pain versus pleasure is incomprehensible to the Yoginī. This thinking underpins the never–ending cycle of pain in which we are imprisoned, and when we follow it, we find ourselves in a saṃsāric jail. The Yoginī depicts the landscape in which this futile logic breaks down, and we experience a direct encounter with the intense, powerful, and real world. In this wasteland, ugliness is no match for beauty. The opposites have broken down, and the worst destruction brings out the greatest delight. This is the power of the dancing Yoginī.

The iconographic representations in the Yoginī temples in various locations are not uniform and each temple’s architecture is completely unique, indicating that the temples were built at various times and under the influence of local elements. Given the variations in the Yoginī images, it is reasonable to believe that they were not constructed using either Agama or Silpasāstra. It has been discovered that the Yoginī’s imagery varies in style and portrayal depending on the locale. However, their similarity to Saktism and Saivism is also clear, signifying several regional traditions incorporated into a common tradition. The Yoginīs’ iconographies depict female energy as a component of each element present in the cosmos, which can occasionally be malicious and bring about destruction, and which is occasionally benevolent and can bring about creation. Their portrayal as typical women with graceful bodies and the various animals that ac-

company them could be interpreted as a reflection that women are in charge of various aspects of creation, such as fertility, battle, the domestic realm or death.

The Yoginī/ Dākinī cult emphasizes the importance of the mind in determining experience and gives expression to one of the core ideas of Yogācāra philosophy, according to which a woman's level of consciousness influences the caliber of her experiences. Sensory impressions take on a translucent, jewel-like quality when one is on the elevated level of Mahāmudrā awareness. The drama of sensory experience adorns the state of pure consciousness for an awakened lady (Bagchi, 1975). Such experiences cease to be a cause of pain and, instead, transform into a stunning spectacular performance that brings about happiness. Any attempt at conceptualization of this soaring aspect is futile since “a bird flying in the sky does not touch anything”. It demonstrates that a woman has an endless supply of energy within herself which she can choose to channel for her own emancipation and the liberation of her followers.

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*Slavlje božanskoga plesa**Kult Yoginī/ Dākinī u drevnom hinduizmu i budizmu**Preeti Sharma**, *Pushpraj Singh**, *Neeta Tripathi***Sažetak*

Ples i glazba oduvijek su bili sastavni dio ljudskih slavlja u svim narodima i na svim kontinentima, kao i način nadilaženja profanoga i iskustva božanske ekstaze i ushićenja. Cilj je ovoga istraživanja raščlaniti “Slavlje božanskoga plesa” kako se prakticira u Indiji i Tibetu na način da se u analizu uključuju herojski i ekstatični plesovi koji mogu donijeti besmrtnost, kao i skulpturalna dinamika zanosnoga plesa, što simbolizira preobrazbu i sreću. U ovom radu autori također razmatraju ikonografiju nekolicine joginija i dakinija koje su predstavljale kult plesa, a i simbolično značenje skriveno u ikoni s ciljem da se uspostavi veza između plesa i kulta jogini/dakini. Joginiji i dakiniji pokazuju se svojim tijelima i licima te zrače mladošću i ljepotom, a istovremeno zagovaraju slobodu od svih društvenih ograničenja. Jogini je odjevena u nakit od ljudskih kostiju te izvodi ples u polju raspadajućih leševa. Tijelo joj je živo obojeno te ostavlja dojam da je od svjetla oblikovano. Prozirnost tijela otkriva blistavu ali šuplju narav. Unutrašnjost tijela je nepregledni prostor bez granica koji može i u sebi nositi viđenja. Ženska sila, koja može katkada biti zla i može završiti razaranjem i odrubljivanjem glava, prikazana je kao sastavni dio svakoga kozmičkoga elementa koji je prisutan u jogini ikonografijama. Znakovitost ovoga istraživanja može se prepoznati u tom što pokazuje važnost jogini/dakini kulta u drevnoj i ranoj srednjovjekovnoj Indiji i Tibetu. Iako se kult još uvijek prakticira na neki način u jugoistočnoj Aziji, ali ne i u Indiji, izgubio je na važnosti i nije više nikomu u Indiji poznat. Ova studija predstavlja početni korak prema poučavanju opće populacije o pitanju ovoga istaknutoga kulta hinduizma i budizma te ističe njegovu važnost.

Ključne riječi: jogini; dakini; obredni ples; indijska ikonografija; tibetanska ikonografija

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