

THE GODDESS MAHĀCĪNAKRAMA-TĀRĀ (UGRA-TĀRĀ) IN BUDDHIST AND HINDU TANTRISM¹

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It is well known that some goddesses are worshipped in both the Buddhist and Hindu Tantric traditions. A form of the Buddhist Vajrayoginī, accompanied by Vajravārāṇī and Vajravairocaṇī, is the prototype of the Hindu Chinnamastā accompanied by Dākinī and Varninī. Forms of Ekajātā and Mañjuḥṣa were adopted from the Buddhist pantheon into the Hindu and worshipped by the same name. Usually it is not easy to trace how and when these adaptations took place. In the case of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā, a special form of Tārā, it has long been suspected that the goddess was imported from the Buddhist Tantric pantheon into the Hindu pantheon.² In this paper I demonstrate, on the basis of clear textual evidence, how the goddess's description in a Buddhist *sādhana* was incorporated into the Hindu *Phetkārīṅṭānttra*, which was then quoted as an authoritative source regarding the goddess by later Hindu Tantras. I further examine representations of the goddess in art, and provide a new edition and translation of two *sādhanas* of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā.

The Tārā in the tradition of Mahācīna³ belongs to the varieties of dark Tārās. She is described in two Buddhist *sādhanas*, which form part of the three major *sādhana* collections in Sanskrit and Tibetan:

1. the unedited **Sādhanasataka*, which contains only the second *sādhana*, 65 (= PTT 4194), translated into Tibetan by Don yod rdo rje and Rin chen grags of Ba ri in the eleventh century;
2. the unedited **Sādhanasatapañcāśikā* 54 (= PTT 4020) and 55 (= PTT 4021–22), translated into Tibetan by Tshul khriṃs rgyal mtshan of the Pa tshab clan in collaboration with Abhayākara Gupta, who lived from the second half of the eleventh century to the first quarter of the twelfth century; and
3. the *Sādhanamālā/Sādhanasamuccaya* 100 (= PTT 4315) and 101 (= PTT 4316), translated into Tibetan by Grags pa rgyal mtshan in 1286.

The first *sādhana* is rather short and, except for one verse (probably a quote), written in prose. We do not know the author. The second one, composed in *anuṣṭubh* metre, is attributed to Śāśvatavajra, who is identified with Prajñārakṣita, a disciple of Nāropa, in the Tibetan tradition. It must have been composed some time in the eleventh century.

The goddess Mahācīnakrama-Tārā, also called Ugra-Tārā, the fierce Tārā, is described as standing on a corpse in the *pratyāliḍha* stance, with the left leg

¹ A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the 204th Meeting of the American Oriental Society, Madison, Wisconsin, on 21 March 1994.

² e.g., Bhattacharyya (1932: 184–57). But van Kooij (1974: 170) argued that 'It is not necessary to think that Ekajātā came first to be adopted in Buddhism and from there in Hinduism.'

³ Cīna and Mahācīna are usually regarded as identical. Tucci (1971: 549–50) identified Cīna with Kanawar in the upper Sutlej valley. Bharati (1965: 61, 79) held it to be included in the entire region to the north of the Himālayas, Tibet and at least parts of Mongolia and western China. Bagchi (1939: 46–7) thought it to refer to Mongolia, while Lévi (1905–1908, I, 347 and cf. also Shastri, 1922: 11 and Weller, 1927: 446) held that it refers to China. Sircar (1971: 103–4), interpreting *Saktisamgamatantra* 3.7.48–9, identified Cīna with Tibet and Mahācīna with China.

stretched out and the right retracted.⁴ She holds in her right hands the sword and the cutter (*kartri*) and in her left hands the blue lotus and skull (cup). She is of dark (*kṛṣṇa/nīla*) complexion and short, with a protruding belly; her face has terrible fangs, three eyes and a lolling tongue. The goddess has a single tawny-coloured knot of hair with Akṣobhya, one of the five Tathāgatas, on her hand. She wears a tiger hide as her garment, is adorned with the eight snakes, has a garland of severed heads around her neck and wears the five (bone) ornaments ('seals'), called the *pañcamudrā*.⁵ She utters extremely loud, frightening laughter.

The Hindu Tantric compendium *Mantramahodadhi* (4.39–40), composed by Mahīdhara at Varanasi in 1589, gives a similar description of Ugra-Tārā. She is visualized on a white lotus in the water covering the universe at the time of the Great Dissolution (*mahāpralaya*).

*viśvavyāpakavārimadhyavilasacchvetāmbujanmasthitām
kartrīkhadgakapālanīlanalīnai rājatkarām nīlabhām /
kāñcīkūṇḍalahāraṅkanalāsātke yūramañjīratām
āptair nāgavarair vibhūsitatanūm āraktanetratrayām // 4.39*

*piṅgograikajaṭām lasatsurasanām damṣṭrākārālananām
carma dvaipi varam kṛtau vidadhātīm śvetāsthīpatthālikām /
akṣobhyena virājamānaśīrasam smerānanāmbhoruhām
tārām śāvahrāsānām dr̥dhakucām ambām trilokyāḥ smaret // 4.40*

'One should recall Tārā, who stays on a white lotus which manifests itself in the middle of the water covering the universe, whose hands are shining with the cutter, sword, skull (and) blue lotus, whose colour is dark, whose body is adorned by friendly excellent snakes that have become (her) girdle, ear-rings, necklace, bracelets, shining armlets and anklets, who has three reddish eyes, who has a single tawny-coloured fierce knot of hair, whose beautiful tongue flashes, whose face is terrible because of fangs, who wears at (her) hips an excellent tiger-skin, whose forehead has a diadem of white bone, whose head is shining with Akṣobhya, whose lotus face is smiling, who has the heart (= chest) of a corpse as seat, whose breasts are firm (and) who is the mother of the three worlds.'

Ugra-Tārā described here also has Akṣobhya on her head, but wears a diadem of white bone (*śvetāsthīpatta*) as opposed to the five (bone) ornaments. Akṣobhya is specified as the seer (*ṛṣi*) of her *mantra*. The surrounding deities, such as Vairocana and Amitābha, worshipped in her *yantra* and the *mantras* used in her worship, such as *yathāgatā* (for: *tathāgatā*) *bhīṣekasūmagrī me huṃṃ phaḥ*⁶ or *akṣobhya vajrapuṣpaṃ prañccha svāhā*,⁷ leave no doubt that the goddess is an adaptation from the Buddhist Tantric pantheon.

About a century later, c. 1670,⁸ the Tantric encyclopedia *Tantrasāra* by Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgīśa (p. 269. 1–8), very popular in eastern India, gave a similar description, quoted from the 'Phetkārīya'.

While searching the passage from the 'Phetkārīya' quoted in the *Tantrasāra* in the edition of the *Phetkārīnūtantra* (*PhT*), I discovered that Śāśvatavajra's

⁴ cf. the descriptions in the Tibetan translations of the *sādhana*s, *PTT* 4020–21, 4194, 4315–16. In the *āṭṭha* stance the right leg is stretched out and the left retracted.

⁵ These are the diadem (*cakrī*), ear-rings (*kūṇḍala*), necklace (*kañṭhī*), bracelets (*rucaka*) and belt (*mekhalā*) (cf. *SM*, p. 447.10–13; 461.4).

⁶ This *mantra* is given in Mahīdhara's autocommentary on *Mantramahodadhi* 4.66.

⁷ For this *mantra*, cf. Mahīdhara's autocommentary on *Mantramahodadhi* 4.93.

⁸ For this date, cf. Sircar (1972/1973: 187).

mahācīnakramatārāsādhana (SM 101) is quoted almost in full in the beginning of chapter 11 of the Tantra. The chapter is written in the form of a dialogue between Śiva and Pārvatī. After some introductory verses we find the following parallels:

<i>SM</i>	<i>PhT</i>
No. 101, verses 1–2	chapter 11, verse 9
101.3	11.10cd–11ab
101.4	11.24
101.5	11.26
101.6–7c	—
101.7d	11.27b
101.8ab	—
101.8cd–11c	11.28–31a
101.11d–13a	—
101.13b–d	11.31b–d
101.14–15ab	cf. 11.32cd–33
101.15cd–20	11.36cd–41
101.21	—
101.22	11.42
101.23–24	—

The *PhT* has been assigned to the thirteenth century by Bharati (1965: 60), for unknown reasons. The earlier Tantric compendiums, such as the *Prapañcasāra* (before the latter part of the eleventh century)⁹ and the *Śāradātīlaka* based on it, do not describe Tārā at all.

It can thus be established that Śāsvatavajra's *mahācīnakramatārāsādhana* was incorporated in the Hindu *PhT*, which was then quoted as authoritative on the description and worship of this form of dark Tārā, called Mahācīnakrama-Tārā or Ugra-Tārā in a number of Hindu Tantric texts, such as the *Tārābhaktisudhārnava*¹⁰ (second part of the seventeenth century),¹¹ the previously mentioned *Tantrasāra*,¹² *Bṛhannīlātānta*,¹³ *Śrīvidyārnava-tānta* (c. seventeenth century)¹⁴ attributed to Vidyāraṇya Yati¹⁵ and *Puraścaryārnava*.¹⁶ The description of Ugra-Tārā in *PhT* 11.9 even appears in *Śrītattvanidhi* 1.69, compiled by Mummadi Kṛṣṇarāja Wodeyar III, King of Mysore, who ruled from 1799 to 1868, quoted from the 'āmnāya'. Similar descriptions of the goddess also appear in Brahmānandagiri's *Tārārahasya* (beginning of the sixteenth century) 3.134–36 and *Merutaṅtra* 23.738–40. *Kālikā-Purāṇa* 63.64–8 differs in that it describes her as standing with one foot on a corpse and the other on a lion; there is no mention of Akṣobhya.¹⁷

⁹ For this date, cf. V. Dviveda, introduction to his edition of the *Nityāsodaśikārnava*, Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya (1968: 41), and the discussion by Goudriaan in Goudriaan and Gupta (1981: 131).

¹⁰ cf. pp. 201.29–202.3–*PhT* 11.9; 4.7–11–*PhT* 11.39cd–40; 139.28–9–*PhT* 11.24.

¹¹ For this date, cf. P. Bhattācārya, introduction to his edition of the *Tārābhaktisudhārnava*, 3.

¹² cf. p. 269.1–8–*PhT* 11.30–35ab.

¹³ cf. p. 2.43–50–*PhT* 11.27cd–34.

¹⁴ The lower limit for the composition of the work is the year 1589, i.e., the date of composition of the *Mantramahodadhī*, which is quoted in it, and the lower limit is the year 1726, i.e., the date of a manuscript.

¹⁵ cf. vol. 2, p. 267.8–11–*PhT* 11.30–33.

¹⁶ cf. p. 780.10–21–*PhT* 11.1–7ab; 781.2–6–*PhT* 11.39cd–41; 781.25–6–*PhT* 11.38; 788.18–21–*PhT* 11.9.

¹⁷ For a discussion of this form, cf. van Kooij (1974).

The Buddhist Mahācīnakrama-Tārā is iconographically identical to one of several existing forms of Ekajaṭā/Ekajaṭī, described in *sādhanas*, such as *SM* 124 to 126.¹⁸ The same mantra is employed for both goddesses. A white Ekajaṭā who is *not identical* to Mahācīnakrama-Tārā is described in *SM* 127. The colophon of this *sādhana* in Bhattacharyya's edition states that Nāgārjuna took the tradition of the goddess from the inhabitants of Bhoṭa (*bhoṭeṣu uddhṛtam*). Bhattacharya¹⁹ identified Bhoṭa (Tibet) with Mahācīna and concluded that the goddess Ekajaṭā or Mahācīnakrama-Tārā, worshipped by native inhabitants of Tibet probably professing the Bon religion of Tibet, entered the Buddhist pantheon with the Tantric Nāgārjuna in the seventh century. Against this it can be argued that *SM* 127 refers only to the white Ekajaṭā, not to the dark Mahācīnakrama-Tārā. Also, *SM* 127 is not part of the earlier *sādhana* collections **Sādhanaśataka* and **Sādhanaśatapañcāśikā* and that—as Kane²⁰ has already pointed out—not all manuscripts of the *Sādhanamālā/Sādhanusamuccaya* contain this part of the colophon. It is, however, part of the Tibetan translation of the collection, which was completed in 1268.

The Buddhist Mahācīnakrama-Tārā bears the Tathāgata Akṣobhya on her head. This is because the deities of the Vajrayāna pantheon are considered emanations of one of the five *Tathāgatas*, viz., Amitābha, Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Amoghasiddhi and Ratnasambhava. In Hindu icons, however, the mention of Akṣobhya on Ugra-Tārā's head is unusual and requires explanation. 'Akṣobhya' was interpreted as an epithet of Śiva. The *Toḍalatantra* 1.5–6²¹ explains that Śiva is called 'unshakeable' (*akṣobhya*), because he drank the deadly *Hālāhala* poison without agitation (*a-kṣobha*). Kṛṣṇānanda stated in his *Tantrasāra* (p. 269.8) that Akṣobhya on the goddess's head has three shapes and the form of a snake;²² perhaps he had a three-headed snake in mind. This explanation reiterates remarks from earlier texts, such as the *Bhāvacūḍāmaṇi*,²³ *Mantracūḍāmaṇi*²⁴ and *Brahmasaṃhitā*,²⁵ which describe Akṣobhya as having the form of a snake. Accordingly, images of the Hindu goddess show either a snake on Ugra-Tārā's head (cf. fig. 3) or Akṣobhya sitting on a snake on Tārā's head (cf. figs. 4, 5), while the snake is absent from the Buddhist images (cf. figs. 1, 2). In the Hindu tradition Akṣobhya also figures as the seer (*rṣi*) of Ugra-Tārā's mantra. According to the *Saktisaṃgamatantra* (last part of the sixteenth century or first half of the seventeenth century),²⁷ Ugra-Tārā was

¹⁸ cf. *SM* 124 (p. 260.16–261.10); *SM* 125 (p. 263.15–20) and *SM* 126 (p. 265.4–9).

¹⁹ cf. the introduction to vol. 2 of his edition of the *SM*, CXI.

²⁰ cf. Kane (1968–77, v: 1033. n. 1665).

²¹ *samudramathane devi kālakūṭam samutthitam / sarve devāḥ sadārās ca mahākṣobham avāpnuyuh // 1.5*
ksobhādirāhitam yasmāt pītam hālāhalam viṣam /
ata eva mahēśāni akṣobhyaḥ parikīrtitāḥ // 1.6

²² *akṣobhyo devīmūrdhanyaḥ trimūrtir nāgarūpadhrk*

²³ Quoted in *Puraścaryānava*, p. 789.3–5: *atrākṣobhyo nāgarūpaḥ / akṣobhyo devīmūrdhanyaḥ trimūrtir nāgarūpadhrk iti (bhāvacūḍāmaṇi)-vacanāt*; similarly, cf. *Tārābhaktisudhānava*, p. 202.9–10.

²⁴ Quoted in *Tārābhaktisudhānava*, p. 201.10 and *Puraścaryānava*, p. 787.5: *akṣobhyānāgasambaddhajaṭājūtām varāpradām /*

²⁵ Quoted in *Puraścaryānava*, p. 715.19: *akṣobhyo devatā proktaḥ trimūrtir nāgarūpadhrk //*

²⁶ Figure 1, which shows Akṣobhya on Ugra-Tārā's crown, is from a Nepalese book containing images of Hindu deities. However, the surrounding deities are the four *Tathāgatas* and their consorts (*prañā*), suggesting that the image is Buddhist.

²⁷ cf. *Saktisaṃgamatantra* 4, also called *Akṣobhyatārāsaṃvāda*, ch. 5. For a discussion of the date, cf. Goudriaan and Gupta (1981: 69).

born in a lake named Cola²⁸ to the Western side of Mt. Meru. Śiva in the form of a sage at the northern side of the lake was the first to repeat her *mantra* and became the *mantra*'s seer. Ugra-Tārā is visualized in the water covering the universe (*viśvavyāpakatoya*) in the region of Cīna (cf. 4.5.142–7). In fig. 3 from the Punjab Hills, the dead body on which the goddess is standing is that of Śiva, who can be identified by the crescent moon²⁹ on his head and his three eyes. This accords with the belief that Śiva is a corpse (*śava*) without the power of Śakti. Kālī is depicted on Śiva in a similar fashion and Tripurasundarī uses Śiva as her mattress while four deities function as supporting legs of her throne.

Kṛṣṇānanda (p. 269.9–10) further explained the five bone ornaments ('five seals', *pañcamudrā*) adorning Tārā, which originally belonged to the Kāpālika tradition, as five skulls having four plates of white bone between them (i.e., one plate between any of them)³⁰ on the authority of the *Tantracūdāmaṇi*, which states that the goddess is adorned with five skulls connected with plates of white bone,³¹ and the authority of the Śaṅkarācārya of Gauḍa (North Bengal) (p. 269.8–13).³² Apparently the *pañcamudrā* ornaments have been taken as the *pañcakapāla* (five skull) ornament adorning the forehead of some deities. The explanation accounts only for the diadem (*cakrī*), one of the five bone ornaments (*mudrā*).

The Hindu Tantras stress that the worship of this form of Tārā follows not the established 'Vedic' pattern, but the left-hand (*vāma*) Tantric path. *PhT* 11.11 f. states that no restrictions apply as to the place or time of the goddess's worship. The practitioner, sitting on a corpse, recites the *mantra* in a ritually impure state without having bathed, after eating substances such as meat and fish, and seeing, touching and enjoying women. References to such practices are absent from the Buddhist *sādhanas* of Mahācīna-Tārā. Through the name Mahācīna (cf. *PhT* 11.10ab), Tārā was linked with the practice (*ācāra*) of Mahācīna, which is expounded in chapters 9 to 10 of the *Nīlatantra* and mainly in the *Mahācīnācāratantra* (*Ācārasāratantra*, c. 1700).³³ These texts, however, do not provide us with an iconographical description of the goddess. References such as the following in Hindu Tantras to Vaiśiṣṭha receiving the *mahācīnācāra* tradition in Mahācīna from Buddha in the form of Viṣṇu are additional indications that the Hindus imported Mahācīna-Tārā from the Buddhists.

The *Rudrayāmala* 17.106 ff.³⁴ narrates that Brahmā's son Vaiśiṣṭha, who worshipped the goddess with austerities unsuccessfully for a long time, is advised by the goddess herself to go to the Buddhist country Mahācīna and follow the 'Atharvaveda' practice. In Cīna he encounters the Buddha surrounded by women, drinking wine, eating meat and engaging in sexual acts,

²⁸ In a similar passage from the unpublished *Svatantratantra* the lake is called Colana/Colanā. cf. the quote in N. N. Vasu: *The archaeological survey of Mayurabhanja* 1 (Calcutta, 1912: rep. Delhi: Rare Reprints, 1981), LVII: *meroh paścimakūle tu colanākhya hrado mahān / tatra jajñe svayam tārā devī nīlasarasvatī* //.

²⁹ i.e., the sixteenth lunar digit (*indukalā*), containing nectar and symbolizing divine power.

³⁰ *lalāṭe śvetāsthīpaṭīkākācatustayānvitakapālapañcakabhūsitām ity arthaḥ.*

³¹ *śvetāsthīpaṭīkākācatustayānvitakapālapañcakabhūsitām itī tantracūdāmanau.* The following line from the *Mantracūdāmaṇi* is quoted in *Tārābhaktisudhārnava*, p. 200.18: *vicitrāsthīmālām lalāṭe karālām kapālam ca pañcānvītan dhārayantīm itī* //.

³² The quote is from the *Tārāhasyavṛttikā*°*vārtikā* by Śaṅkara Āgamācārya of Bengal, written before 1630. For this date, cf. Goudriaan in Goudriaan and Gupta (1981: 153).

³³ For this date, cf. Meisig (1988: 12).

³⁴ A similar story appears in the *Brahmayāmala* (cf. Woodroffe, 1927: 127–8 and Bharati, 1955: 69–70).

and is initiated in the *kula* path. Although the word *cīnācāra* is not used here, references to it appear elsewhere in the text.³⁵

A place named Vaśiṣṭhāśrama, Vaśiṣṭha's hermitage, where it is claimed that Vaśiṣṭha performed austerities, is located about 10 miles east of Gauhati/Assam.³⁶ According to another tradition, Vaśiṣṭha, after meeting the Buddha in Cina, had a vision of Tārā in Tārāpīṭh and made his residence there.³⁷ Tārāpīṭh (previously Chandipur), a village in Bhirbhūm district, c. 290 miles north of Calcutta, claims the status of one of the 51 'seats of śakti' (*śaktipīṭha*). Satī's eye is said to have dropped here. Another 'seat' (*pīṭha*) of the goddess Ugra-Tārā is her temple on the banks of the Sugandhā (Sunandanā) river in the village Śikārpur, 13 miles north of Barisāl, Bākarganj district, West Bengal.³⁸ It is said that Satī's nose dropped down here.³⁹ Representations of the goddess in painting and sculpture give further evidence of the goddess's popularity in northern India, Nepal and Tibet.

1. Icons from the Punjab

Ugra-Tārā was a goddess popular in the Punjab Hills, as appears from Pahādī paintings in which she is often included in the group of goddesses called the Mahāvīdyās.⁴⁰ The illustrations which came to my notice date from the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries:

1.1. painting of the goddess from Guler (c. 1745–60), first published in Lentz (1986, no. 5);

1.2. Pahādī painting of Ugra-Tārā, preserved in the National Museum Delhi 82.463 (Ajit Mookerjee Collection) (cf. fig. 3);

1.3. painting showing Raja Pratap Chand (1827–1864) of Lambagraon (Kangra) worshipping the goddess. Nahan, c. 1850; published in Archer (1973, vol. II: 331, no. 12; from the ancestral collection of a Raj family, Sirmur, Nahan);

1.4. painting of the Mandi School, c. eighteenth century, labelled as Kālī, published in Mookerjee (1988: 107);

1.5. painting from the series of Mahāvīdyās by the poet-painter Mola Ram (1760–1833) of Srinagar/Garhwal, showing Mola Ram worshipping Tārā, Garhwal, dated 1811; preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, no. 113129 (cf. fig. 4).

Illustrations 1.1–1.3 are very similar in detail and style and show the following distribution of attributes, which agrees with the description in the Buddhist *sādhana*s and the *PhT*, *right*: sword, pair of scissors; *left*: lotus, skull cup.

The goddess is ornamented by a snake on her head and is shown standing on the body of Śiva. The scenery is a burning ground with jackals. Painting 1.4 shows the attributes, *right*: lotus, skull cup; *left*: sword, knife (?). The goddess has a snake on her head and is standing on two corpses (possibly the body of Mahākāla that rests in turn on that of Niṣkala-Śiva).

³⁵ cf. 16.25a, 64.55–65 and 64.113.

³⁶ cf. Kakati (1984: 32, 34).

³⁷ cf. Morinis (1984: 166–7).

³⁸ cf. Bhattasali (1929: 205–6 and plate LXXI (a)); and Bakarganj Gazetteer, 161 (J. C. Jack, 1918. Bengal District Gazetteers, Bakarganj. Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot).

³⁹ cf. Kalyān 31 (= *Tirthāṅk*), (1957: 189.)

⁴⁰ *Mundamālātāntra*, part 1, 6.152cd–154ab lists the ten Mahāvīdyā goddesses as Kālī, Tārā, Śoḍaśī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Bhairavī, Chinnamastā, Dhūmāvātī, Bagalā, Mātāṅgī and Kamalātūmikā.

Painting 1.5 shows Ugra-Tārā bearing on her head Akṣobhya, who sits on a snake. The distribution of attributes is as in 1.1–1.3, except that the attributes in the left hands are interchanged. The goddess is shown with fangs and a lolling tongue. The rather peculiar kneeling pose of the goddess is probably due to the influence of the painting of Kālī in the Mahāvīdyā series by Mola Ram.

2. Icons from Nepal

The following six representations from Nepal all show the same distribution of attributes as in 1.1–1.3. The cutter (*kartri/kartri, kartrikā, kartarī*) appears as a kind of dagger with a diamond sceptre on its handle, in contrast to its representation as a pair of scissors in the paintings from the Punjab Hills. In modern Indian languages, such as Hindī and Marāṭhī, the word is also understood as a pair of scissors.

2.1. *Maṇḍala* of Ugra-Tārā (cf. fig. 1) from a book of pictures dated 1765. Since the remaining images show Hindu deities, one would assume the Hindu Ugra-Tārā to be shown. The surrounding deities in the *maṇḍala*, however, do not correspond to those prescribed by the Hindu Tantras. Ugra-Tārā, with Akṣobhya on her head, stands on a corpse in the pericarp of a lotus on a downward pointing triangle inside an eight-petalled lotus. The surrounding deities on the lotus petals are the four Tathāgatas in the four cardinal directions: Vairocana (W), Amoghasiddhi (N), Ratnasambhava (E) and Amitābha (S). Their consorts (*prajñā*) in the intermediate directions are Pāṇḍurī (for: Pāṇḍarā) (NW), Tārā (NE), Māmakī (SE) and probably Locanā (no inscription) (SW). It is peculiar that Vairocana's consort is Pāṇḍurā, who is usually assigned to Amitābha. The directional guardians on the periphery are Varuṇa (Western gate), Vāyu (NW), Kubera (Northern gate), Īśāna (NE), Indra (Eastern gate), Agni (SE), Yama (Southern gate) and Nairṛtya (SW); the zenith (*ūrdhva*) is indicated between SW and W and the nadir (*adhah*) between NE and E. The colours of the directions are white (W), green (N), yellow (E) and red (S);

2.2. the Hindu Ugra-Tārā, eighteenth century, paper, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, no. M. 81.206.8 (gift of Dr. and Mrs. Robert S. Coles); first published in Pal (1985: 266, P 33); figures of small snakes are visible on the head. The goddess stands over a dead body on the funeral pyre;

2.3. a sketch of Mahācīna-Tārā from the painter's model book, first published in Bhattacharyya (1958, pl. XXVII (a)); the figure of Akṣobhya is absent);

2.4. line drawing of Mahācīna-Tārā with Akṣobhya on her head, first published in Bhattacharyya (1958, pl. XXVII (b)); cf. fig. 2);

2.5. line drawing of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā from a painter's model book; first published in Chandra (1984, pl. 17; details of the goddess's topknot are unclear);

2.6. copper statue labelled as Mahācīna-Tārā, fifteenth century, Galerie Marco Polo, Paris, first published in Schroeder (1981, no. 99 E). The goddess stands on a dead body on a *yantra* consisting of a triangle inside a lotus. Details of her crown are unclear, as is the attribute (lotus?) held in her upper left hand.

Bhattacharyya (1958: 76) and Bharati (1965: 60–61) inform us that the

Vajrayoginī temple at Sāmkhu in Nepal contains a statue of Ugra-Tārā.⁴¹ It seems, however, that it is a two-armed benevolent statue holding a sword and a lotus.⁴²

3. Icon in the Tibetan tradition

A line drawing of Mahācīna-Tārā is preserved in the manuscript entitled *Zhu fo pusa sheng xiang zan*, ascribed to an unnamed Zhang Jia Hutuktu, preserved in the National Library of China, Beijing and published by Clark (1937, II, no. 229). The manuscript illustrates Buddhist deities based on Tibetan sources. The goddess is surrounded by a halo of fire and crushes a figure under her left foot. The attribute in the upper left hand, if any, is unclear and the figure of Akṣobhya is missing.

4. Icon from West Bengal

A sculpture of the Hindu Ugra-Tārā from the village Śikārpur was published in Bhattasali (1929, pl. LXXI (a)). It shows five miniature images above the goddess's head. According to Bhattasali they are reminiscent of the five Tathāgatas and represent Śiva (centre), Brahmā (to the right), Kārtikeya and Gaṇeśa (to the left). The remaining figure may be that of Viṣṇu. Except for the sword, the attributes cannot be seen clearly from the photograph.

5. Icon from Amarāvati/Andhra Pradesh

A sculpture of the Buddhist goddess in limestone measuring 13" × 7" × 3" was found in Amarāvati and published by Murthy (1989, pl. 5 (2)). The attributes agree with those in 1.1–1.3, but details of the crown are not clear.

Conclusion

In this article I have provided compelling evidence that Śāsvatavajra's *sādhana* of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā/Ugra-Tārā (eleventh century) was almost completely incorporated in the Hindu *Phetkārīnūtantra* (thirteenth century?), including not only the iconographical description of the goddess but also the typically Buddhist Tantric visualization pattern. The goddess's description was adopted by a large number of Hindu texts from the *PhT*'s version. The Hindu tradition retained the description of Akṣobhya on the goddess's head but interpreted him as Śiva, who was said to adorn the goddess's head in the form of a snake. The dead body on which Ugra-Tārā is standing was interpreted as Śiva's body in many paintings. The bone ornaments (*pañcamudrā*) of the goddess were interpreted as a garland of five skulls on her forehead by some authorities. While the Buddhist *sādhana*s do not refer to special worship practices of the left-hand Tantric tradition, the Hindu tradition includes the goddess among the deities worshipped with some of the *makāras*, meat, fish and enjoyment of women, and enjoins that the practitioner perform the practices sitting on a corpse. Through the name Mahācīna, Tārā is linked with the practice (*ācāra*) of Mahācīna, which is described as using wine, meat and women and is said to have been introduced to India by Vasiṣṭha, who received the transmission from Viṣṇu in the form of Buddha in Mahācīna.

⁴¹ cf. also S. Lienhard: 'Religionssynkretismus in Nepal', in H. Bechert (ed.), *Buddhism in Ceylon and studies on religious syncretism in Buddhist countries: Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung. I. Report on a Symposium in Göttingen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978), 146–77, 167.

⁴² cf. Zanen, M.: 'The Goddess Vajrayoginī and the Kingdom of Sankhu (Nepal)', *Purusārtha*, 10 (Paris: Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, 1986), 125–66, esp. 127–8, 155. Cf. also the discussion of the image in Slusser (1982, n. 331 and illustration 199).

The importance of the case of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā lies in the fact that we can gain a clear understanding of the adaptation process of a goddess from a Buddhist Tantric text into a Hindu Tantra. Further comparative study of Buddhist and Hindu Tantric texts may elucidate similar processes in the case of other deities shared by both the Buddhist and Hindu pantheons.

Text and translation of the sādhanas of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā

The following presents the newly edited texts and translations of the two Buddhist *sādhanas* of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā. The passages in the *Phetkārīṇītantra* (PhT) which correspond to the second *sādhana* are printed on opposite pages. They are reproduced from the printed edition, which refers to readings in manuscripts as Kha and Gha.

The edition is based on Bhattacharyya's (Bh) *Sādhanamālā*, which refers to manuscript readings as A, C and N. In addition I have used the manuscripts of the **Sādhanaśataka* (SS) and **Sādhanaśatapañcāśika* (SSP)⁴³ published in Bühnemann (1994) and the following manuscripts:⁴⁴

- B 1 (Vīrapustakālaya 1966) National Archives, Kathmandu, no. 3–387, fols. 79b.6–81a.4
- B 2 (Vīrapustakālaya 1966) National Archives, Kathmandu, no. 3–603, fols. 73b.10–75a.9. This manuscript is very faulty; it was used in part by Bhattacharyya (labelled as Na); cf. *SM*, preface, vol. 1, xiiif.
- K Kyoto University Library no. 119 (Goshima/Noguchi, 1983), fols. 135a.1–136b.6
- M 1 University of Tokyo Library no. 451 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 78a.3–79a.6
- M 2 University of Tokyo Library no. 452 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 54b.9–55b.5
- M 3 University of Tokyo Library no. 453 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 78b.1–79b.6
- T 1 Takaoka Collection no. CA 26 (Takaoka, 1981), fols. 94b.6–95b.7
- T 2 Takaoka Collection no. KA 30 (Takaoka, 1981), fols. 95a.3–96b.4

Obvious scribal errors have usually not been noted.

The available Tibetan translations have also been consulted, but their readings were included in the apparatus only in exceptional cases. For reasons of space the five Tibetan translations have not been edited here.

In my edition I have used the *anusvāra* instead of the more correct *anunāsika* in the *mantras* for reasons of printing. I have emended the spelling of the syllable *hum* in Bhattacharyya's edition to the more correct *hūm*, which agrees with the analysis of the *mantra* in the text itself. I have chosen the reading *tām* (Tārā's seed syllable) over Bhattacharyya's reading *tāṃ*. The metre in the second *sādhana* is defective in many places; no attempt was made to rectify this.

I have attempted, in the following translations, to render the Sanskrit texts as faithfully as possible. The iconographical description extracted from the second *sādhana* had earlier been translated by Foucher (1905: 76–7).

The first *sādhana* presupposes a knowledge of the practices on the part of the reader, and the mental creation of the goddess by the *yogin*, her physical

⁴³ The manuscript of the **Sādhanaśatapañcāśikā* was partly used by Bhattacharyya and referred to as manuscript B in his edition.

⁴⁴ I wish to thank Ms. R. Sakuma, Nagoya, for providing copies of the relevant manuscript sections.

characteristics and the *yogin's* repetition of the *mantra* are described in a very concise manner. The second *sādhana* is slightly more elaborate. It consists of the following parts:

- description of the goddess in the form of a *dhyāna* verse (1)
- introductory verse (2)
- suitable places for the *sādhana* (3)
- suitable seats for the *sādhaka* (4)
- the process of mental creation of the goddess (5–14), including the description of the goddess's characteristics (10–14)
- the repetition of her *mantra* (15–20), including the extraction (*uddhāra*) of the letters of her *mantra* from the alphabet (16–19)
- beneficial results of the repetition of the *mantra*: poetic skills and eloquence (21)
- concluding verses (22–2).

The mental creation of the goddess is described as follows: The *yogin*

1. visualizes three diamond sceptres (*vajra*) pervading the triple states of existence with their rays performing the benefit of beings;
2. he withdraws the rays and contemplates emptiness (*śūnyatā*), reciting the *mantra om śūnyatājñānavajrasvabhāvātma ko 'ham (Om I am of the nature of the diamond-like knowledge of emptiness);*
3. he visualizes the red syllable *āḥ*⁴⁵ in the sky, which transforms into a red lotus;
4. the white syllable *tām*⁴⁶ appears on top of the lotus and transforms into a skull cup;
5. in its centre, on a sun, the dark seed syllable *hūm* appears;
6. it transforms into a cutter adorned with the seed syllable *hūm*;
7. the cutter transforms into the *yogin* who identifies with Mahācīnakrama-Tārā.

The goddess's *mantra* is given as *om hrīm trīm hūm phaṭ*. The Hindu tradition has preserved the variant *strīm* for *trīm*. The same *mantra* is employed for Ekajaṭā, who shares many iconographical characteristics with Mahācīnakrama-Tārā, as appears from the *sādhanas* in *SM* 125 to 127. Bhattacharyya's edition of the *SM* occasionally omits the syllable *om*. The above *mantra* is termed the 'root' (*mūla*) *mantra* of Ekajaṭā in *SM* 123, p. 258.19, while the same *mantra* appended with the syllables *hūm svāhā* is termed her 'heart' (*hrdaya*) *mantra*. The *upahrdaya mantra* is said to be the 'root' *mantra* without the final *phaṭ*. The *mantra* is said to grant eloquence and turn the *yogin* into a great poet. This must be the effect of the seed syllable *hrīm* contained in it, which, according to the passage *SM* p. 269.24, produces similar results when recited by itself. According to Śrīharṣa's *Naisadhīyacarita* 14.88–9 the syllable *hrīm* is considered as representing Śiva's Ardhanārīśvara form: when repeated it grants similar results.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The variants *ah* and *a* are also preserved by the texts.

⁴⁶ I have chosen the reading *tām* over the reading *tām* in the edition of the two *sādhanas*, since *tām* is commonly the seed syllable (*bīja*) of Tārā.

⁴⁷ cf. *Naisadhīyacarita of Śrīharṣa*, (tr.) K. K. Handiqui (Poona: Deccan College, 1964), 215 and 580 (s.v. *cintāmaṇimantra*). I wish to thank T. C. Cahill for providing this reference.



Fig. 1: (Buddhist?) *Mandala* of Ugra-Tārā from a book of pictures otherwise containing Hindu images and *yantras*, of Nepal, dated 1765. Gouache on paper. 37 × 37 cm. Preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, no. 10054. Photographed by the American Institute of Indian Studies, Ramnagar/Varanasi, no. 3-46.

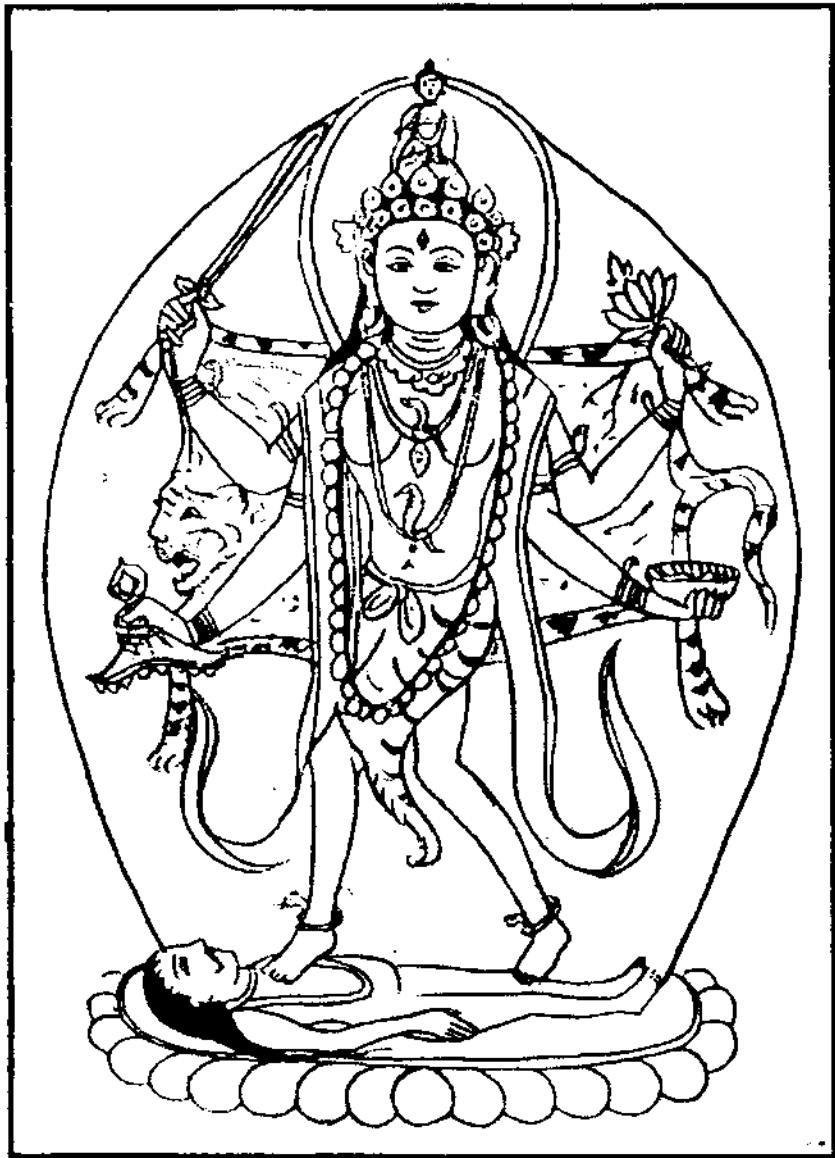


Fig. 2: Mahācīnatārā (Buddhist), first published in Bhattacharyya (1958), plate XXVII (b).



Fig. 3: Ugratara. Pahari painting, eighteenth century (?), Delhi National Museum 87/363 (Ajit Mookerjee Collection).



Fig. 4: Poet-painter Mola Ram worshipping Tārā. From a series of paintings of the Mahāvīdyās by Mola Ram, Garhwal, dated 1811, preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, no. 113129.

Mahācīnakramāryatārāsādhana (1)

(**Sādhanaśatapañcāśikā* 54 (73a.2–73b.2), PTT 4020, *Sādhanamālā/Sādhanasamuccaya* 100, PTT 4315)

pūrvoktavīdhānena śūnyatābhāvanānantaram rakta-āḥkārājaraktapadmopari⁴⁸
sitatāmkārajapadmabhājanē⁴⁹ sūryasthanūlahūmkārajasabījakartripariṇāmena⁵⁰
kr̥ṣṇām⁵¹ āryatārābhāṭṭārikām caturbhujāikamukhīm trinetrām kharvalambo-
dārīm⁵² dāmṣṭrākarālavadanām pratyāliḍhapadena⁵³ śavārūdhām⁵⁴ nāgāṣṭaka-
bhūsanām vyāghracarmavasānām⁵⁵ avalambamānamundamālām pañcamudrā-
vibhūsitām khadgakartridhāridakṣīnakarām utpalakapāladhārivāmakarām sā-
kṣobhyanāthapīṅgalajātājūtām⁵⁶ atighorāttahāsabhūmarūpām nispādyā om hr̥m̄
<tr̥m̄>⁵⁷ hūm phaṭ iti⁵⁸ mantraṁ⁵⁹ viṣayaprajñādhīkārena⁶⁰ japet |
nīraṁsumālikām dhyātvā khadgasthāne vicakṣaṇaḥ |
sphuratsamhārayogena samjapen mantraṁ uttamam ||
iti mahācīnakramāryatārāsādhanam⁶¹ ||

⁴⁸ PTT 4020 °*ahkāra*°, B 2, K, T 2 °*ākāra*°.

⁴⁹ B 1, Bh, SŚP °*ṭām*°.

⁵⁰ A °*karttā*°, K 1, M 1, 2 °*kartti*°.

⁵¹ A, N °*kr̥ṣṭām*°.

⁵² Emendation °*rīm* with the text of the second *sādhana*: B 1, 2, Bh, K, M 1, 2, 3, SŚP, T 1, 2, °*raṁ*°.

⁵³ B 1, 2, K, M 1, 2, 3, T 2 °*pada*, A, N °*padām*°.

⁵⁴ A °*pañcaśavā*°.

⁵⁵ K, SŚP, T 2 °*carmam*°.

⁵⁶ A °*jūṭi*°.

⁵⁷ Suggested addition in accordance with the *mantra* given in the second *sādhana*.

⁵⁸ N °*abhi*°.

⁵⁹ M 1, 3 *mantra*.

⁶⁰ PTT 4020, SŚP °*viṣapra*°, PTT 4315 °*prajñā*°; A °*kāraṁ*, B 1, 2, M 1, 2, 3, N, T 1, 2 °*kāre*,

K °*kāra*,

⁶¹ SŚP °*kramatārā*°.

Mahācīnakramatārāsādhana (2)

(**Sādhanaśataka* 65, fols. 31b.2–32a.4, PTT 4194; **Sādhanaśatapañcāsikā* 55, fols. 73b.2–75a.2, PTT 4021–4022, *Sādhanamālā/Sādhanasamuccaya* 101, PTT 4316)

*pratyāliḍhapadārpitāṅghriśavahṛd ghorāttahāsā*⁶² *parā*
*khadgēndīvarakartrikharparabhujā*⁶³ *hūmkārabījodbhavā /*
kharvā nilaviśālapīṅgalajatājūtoḡranāḡair yutā
*jādyam nyasya kapālake trijagatām*⁶⁴ *hantya ugratārā svayam // 1*⁶⁵
mahācīnakramām natvā tārām tribhavatāriṅim /
tatsāadhanam aham vakṣye yathā gurūpadeśataḥ // 2
ekaliṅge śmaśāne vā śūnyāḡāre ca sarvadā /
*tatrasthah sādhayed yoḡī vidyām tribhavamokṣaṅim*⁶⁶ *// 3*
*mṛdunasūrakam*⁶⁷ *āsīno 'nyesu komaleṣu vā*⁶⁸ */*
viṣṭareṣu samāśritya sādhayet siddhim uttamām // 4
jhaṭity ākārāyogena trivajraṃ susamāhitah /
trīṣu sthāneṣu tam dhyātvā raśmim viṣphārayet tataḥ // 5
tribhavacārīnah sattvān avabhāśyānayet punah /
samhāre ca punar dhyāyāc chūnyam viśvam samantataḥ // 6
tataḥ
paṭhej jinanantrakam om śūnyatādisvabhāvakam /
*antarīkṣe*⁶⁹ *tato dhyāyād āḡkārād*⁷⁰ *raktapaṅkajam // 7*

*bhūyas tasyopari dhyāyāt tāmkārāt*⁷¹ *padmabhājanam /*
tasya madhye punar dhyāyāt hūmkāram nilasam nibham // 8
*tato hūmkārājām*⁷² *paśyēt kartrikām bījabhūṣitām /*
kartriparīnatam dhyāyād ātmānam tāriṅisamam // 9
pratyāliḍhapadām ghorām muṅdamālāpralambitām /
*kharvalambodarīm*⁷³ *bhūmām nilanīrajarājitām*⁷⁴ *// 10*
tryambakaikanuikhām divyām ghorāttahāsabhāsurām /
*suprahṣṭām*⁷⁵ *śavārūdhām*⁷⁶ *nāḡāṣṭakavibhūṣitām // 11*

⁶² A *ghorā hrṣṭā ca*, T 1 *ghorā hrṣṭā hāsā*.

⁶³ Emended with *PhT* (cf. also PTT 4316: *thod pa phyag bsngams*), since this reading accounts for the fourth attribute: °*kartrikārpitabhujā* B 1, 2, Bh, K, M 1, 2, 3, SS, SSP, T 1, 2.

⁶⁴ A, M 1, 3 *ti*°.

⁶⁵ Metre: *Sārḡūlavikrīḡita*.

⁶⁶ M 1, 3, SSP °*mokṣiṅim*.

⁶⁷ B 1, C, SS °*macūlakam*, SSP °*macūlakasam* (one additional syllable), suggested emendation: °*ke*.

⁶⁸ SS *ca*.

⁶⁹ Bh °*ksam*.

⁷⁰ A, K, M 1, 3, T 1, 2 *ākā*°, PTT 4194 *akā*°, SSP *āmkā*°.

⁷¹ Bh, SS, SSP *tām*°.

⁷² Bh, SS, SSP °*jam*.

⁷³ B 1, 2, Bh, K, M 1, 3, T 1 °*ām*.

⁷⁴ K *nilanīlabjasam nibhām*.

⁷⁵ A *prahrṣṭāṅge*.

⁷⁶ A *cārūdhām*.

Phetkārīṇītantra (PhT) 11.9–42

*pratyālīḍhapadārpitāṅghrīśavahrđghorāṭṭahāsā parā
khaḍgendīvarakarṭṛkharparabhujā hūmkārabijodbhavā /
kharvā nīlaviśālapīṅgalajāṭājūtogranāgair yutā
jādyam nyasya kapālake trijagatām hantya ugratārā svayam // 9
mahācīnakramām natvā tārām tribhavatārīṇīm // 10cd
tatsādhanavidhiṃ vakṣye mama sārvañjñyasādhanam⁷⁷ / 11ab
ekalīṅge śmaśāne ca śūnyāgāre catuspathe /
tatrasthah sādhayed yogī tārām tribhavatārīṇīm // 24
mṛducūḍakam āsīno 'py anyeṣu komale 'pī vā /
viṣṭareṣu samāśritya sādhayet siddhim uttamām // 26*

.....śūnyam viśvam vicintayet // 27b

antarikṣe tato dhyāyed āhkārād raktapañkajam /

*bhūyas tasyopari dhyāyet tāmkārat śvetapañkajam // 28
tasyopari punar dhyāyed ikāram⁷⁸ nīlasamñibham /
tato hu(m)kārajām paśyet karṭṛkām bījabhūṣitām // 29
karṭṛkopari tām dhyāyed ātmānaṃ tārīṇīmāyam /
prayālīḍhapadām ghorām muṇḍamālāvibhūṣitām // 30
kharvām lambodarām bhīmām / 31a*

⁷⁷ Emended with *PhT* 11.39b *mama sārvañjñyākāranam: PhT sarvajña°; Kha, Gha °sādhakam.*

⁷⁸ Suggested emendation with *sādhana* 2, 8d: *hūmkāram.*

*raktavartulanetrām ca vyāghracarmāvrtām*⁷⁹ *kaṭau*⁸⁰ /
navayauvanasampannām pañcamudrāvibhūṣitām // 12
*lalajjihvām mahābhīmām sadamṣtrotkatabhīsanām*⁸¹ /
*khadgakartrikarām savye vāmotpalakapāladhām*⁸² // 13
piṅgograikajātām dhyāyān maulāv akṣobhyabhūṣitām /
*bhāvanābalaṇiṣpattau*⁸³ *bhaved yogī mahākaviḥ* // 14
jado 'pi yadi mūrkhah syād bhāvanārasatatparah /
*labhate mañjuvānūn*⁸⁴ *tu lakṣamantrasya jāpataḥ* // 15
*tryakṣaro*⁸⁵ *'sau mahāmantrah phaṭkārānto*⁸⁶ *hr̥di sthitaḥ* /
pañcaraśmisamāyukto ajñānendhanadāhakah // 16

*tasyoddhāraividhiṃ*⁸⁷ *vaksye yogācārānusārataḥ*⁸⁸ /
*prathamam saparam*⁸⁹ *dattvā caturthasvarabhūṣitam* // 17
rephārūḍham sphurad dīptam indubindusamanvitam /
*tramkāram*⁹⁰ *ca tato dadyāt caturthenaiva bhūṣitam* // 18
*dirghokārasamāyuktam*⁹¹ *hamkāram*⁹² *yojayet punaḥ* /
*phaṭkāram*⁹³ *ca tato dadyāt sampūrnam siddhamantrakam*⁹⁴ // 19
niraṃsumālikām dhyātvā khadgasthāne vicakṣaṇaḥ /
sphuratsamhārayogena samjapet mantram uttamam // 20
kalpayet sthiracittena paṇḍito 'ham mahākaviḥ /
ajasrabhāvanābhyāsād bhavaty eva na sumśayah // 21
*tārāyāḥ sādhanam kṛtvā yan mayopacitam*⁹⁵ *śubham* /
bhavantu prāṇinas tena paṇḍitā jinaśāsane // 22
kṛtiḥ śāsvatavajrasya seyam medhāprasādhanī /
*agādhaḥ paṇḍitā*⁹⁶ *atra*⁹⁷ *kṣantum arhanti sādhaḥ* // 23
*mahācīnakramatārāsādhanam*⁹⁸ *samāptam* //

⁷⁹ A, B 1, 2, K, M 1, 2, 3, SŚP, T 1 °vrtā, N °vṛta.

⁸⁰ A kartri, B 1, 2, K, M 2, 3, N, SŚP, T 1 kaṭim, M 1, 2 kaṭi.

⁸¹ K °nām mukhām.

⁸² SŚ, SŚP °dharām (one additional syllable).

⁸³ Bh, M 1, 3 °nācalanī.

⁸⁴ A °varnam.

⁸⁵ A, M 1, 3, T 1 akṣa°.

⁸⁶ Bh humkā°, C humkārāntā, SŚP phaṭkārāntām.

⁸⁷ Bh tasya dvāraividhiṃ.

⁸⁸ K yogatantrānu°.

⁸⁹ Bh haparam, A, N, C mam param, SŚP masaram.

⁹⁰ C um°.

⁹¹ Bh dirghākāram sa°.

⁹² Bh humkāram.

⁹³ Bh, T 1 hamkāram.

⁹⁴ SŚP siddhi°.

⁹⁵ A, N mama°.

⁹⁶ SŚ tās.

⁹⁷ SŚ tatra.

⁹⁸ B 2. M 2 iti śrīmahā°.

.....vyāghracarmāvṛttām katau // 31b
 navayauvanasampannām pañcamudrāvibhūṣitām // 31cd
 caturbhujām lalajjihvām bhīmarūpām varapradām // 32cd
 khadgakarīrdharām pakṣe⁹⁹ vāmotpalakapālinīm /
 piṅgograikajatām dhyāyed maulāv akṣobhyabhūṣitām // 33
 bhāvanārasasampanno bhaved yogī mahākaviḥ // 36cd
 jado 'pi yadi mūrkhah syād bhāvanāvaśatatparaḥ /
 labhate 'bhimatām vānūṃ mantrasya lakṣajāpataḥ // 37
 tryakṣaro 'yam mahāmantraḥ phaṭkārānto hr̥dī sthītaḥ /
 pañcaraśmisamāyukto 'py ajñānendhanadāhakaḥ // 38

tasyoddhāraividhim vaksye mama sārvaññyakāraṇam /
 prathamam saparam dattvā caturthasvarabhūṣitam // 39
 repḥārūdham sphurad dīptam indubinduvibhūṣitam /
 strīmkāraṃ ca tato dadyāt caturthasvarabhūṣitam // 40
 dīrghokārasamāyuktam haṃkāraṃ yojayet tataḥ / 41ab
 phaṭkāraṃ tu tato dadyāt sampūrṇam siddhimantrakam // 41

kalpayet sthiracittena paṇḍīto 'haṃ mahākaviḥ /
 ajasrabhāvanābhīyāsād bhaved devo na saṃśayaḥ // 42

The sādhana of the noble Tārā according to the tradition of Mahācīna (1)

After the meditation on emptiness according to the previously prescribed procedure, having visualized the dark noble mistress Tārā on a red lotus, which arises from the red syllable *āḥ*; in the 'lotus vessel' (= skull),¹⁰⁰ which arises from the white syllable *tām*; from the transformation of the cutter, which is accompanied by the seed syllable (*hūm*),¹⁰¹ which arises from the dark syllable *hūm* resting on the sun (which in turn rests in the lotus vessel),

(Tārā,) four-armed (and) with one head, who has three eyes, is dwarfish and big-bellied, whose face is terrible because of fangs, who has mounted a dead body with the *pratyālīdha* stance, has the eight snakes as ornaments, is clothed in a tiger-skin, has a garland of (severed) heads hanging down (from her neck), is adorned with the five (bone) ornaments, holds with the right hands the sword and cutter, holds with the left hands the blue lotus and skull, has a mass of tawny-coloured matted hair with the leader Akṣobhya (and) has a terrible form with extremely frightening, loud laughter,

one should repeat the mantra *om hr̥m* (<*trīm*>)¹⁰² *hūm phaṭ* with reference to the understanding of the objects (?) (*viśayaprajñādhikāreṇa*).¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Suggested emendation with *sādhana* 2, 13c: *savye* or: *dakṣe*.

¹⁰⁰ For *padmabhājana* = skull, cf. *Hevajratana* II.3.58 and parallel passages, such as *SM*, p. 260.12, where *kapāla* is mentioned.

¹⁰¹ Verse 1 of *sādhana* 2, states that Tārā arises from the syllable *hūm*.

¹⁰² The second *sādhana* includes *trīm* as part of the *mantra*, which is absent from *Bh* and *SSP*; cf. also *SM* 127 (p. 266.14).

¹⁰³ The meaning of the compound *viśayaprajñādhikāreṇa* is unclear. PTT 4315 omits *viśaya* altogether, while PTT 4020 reads *viśa*^o—poison, which is meaningless here. The reading *mantraviśayaprajñādhikāre* in *M* 1, 3 yields the meaning: with reference to the insight into the topic of *mantra*.

'The wise (man), having meditated on the rosary of bones¹⁰⁴ in the place of the sword, should repeat the best *mantra* with the emitting and withdrawal *yoga*.'¹⁰⁵

Thus (ends) the *sādhana* of the noble Tārā according to the tradition of Mahācīna.

The sādhana of Tārā in the tradition of Mahācīna (2)

(1) Ugra-Tārā destroys the stupidity of the three worlds, having placed (it) in the skull, she who has placed (her) foot in the *pratyāhīdha* stance on the heart of a corpse,¹⁰⁶ who possesses frightening, loud laughter, she, the highest one, who has the sword, blue lotus, cutter and skull placed in her hands, who has arisen from the seed syllable *hūm*, is short, dark, fat and has a mass of tawny-coloured matted hair (and) is adorned with terrible snakes.

(2) Having bowed to Tārā in the tradition of Mahācīna, who saves from the triple states (of existence), I shall describe her *sādhana* according to the preceptor's instruction.

(3) In an *ekalinga*¹⁰⁷ place or a burning ground or in an empty building the *yogin*, at all times, staying in that (place) should perfect the *vidyā* (= *mantra*), which liberates from the triple states (of existence).

(4) Sitting on a soft cushion or having resorted to other soft¹⁰⁸ seats, he would accomplish the highest success.

(5) The very attentive (*yogin*), having visualized quickly three diamond sceptres in the three places¹⁰⁹ with the *yoga* of form (*ākārayoga*), should then emit a light ray.

(6) Having pervaded the beings moving in the triple states (of existence), he should bring (the light ray) back and in the withdrawal (*saṃhāra*) he should again visualize everything as completely empty.

Then:

(7) He should recite the Jina's (= Buddha's) *mantra*, consisting of (the words) *om śūnyatā*, etc.¹¹⁰ Then he should visualize a red lotus (transformed) from the syllable *āh* in the intermediate region.

(8) Again, on top of it he should visualize a 'lotus vessel' (= skull) (transformed) from the syllable *tām*; in its centre he should again visualize the dark syllable *hūm*.

(9) Then he should visualize a cutter adorned with the seed syllable <*hūm*>, arisen from the syllable *hūm*; he should visualize himself as transformed from the cutter (and) identical with the Saviouress.

¹⁰⁴ According to *SM*, p. 261.7 the sword held by the goddess is transformed into a rosary (*akṣamālā*) during the visualization process. *SM*, p. 267.9 and 268.23 specify that the *akṣamālā* is made of bone (*niramaṣūkasahitā akṣamālā*; *niramaṣūkāksamālā*). For the meaning *niramaṣū(ka)* = bone, cf. *Hevajratana* II.3.56; *asthyābharanam niramaṣūkam*.

¹⁰⁵ In this practice, light rays are emitted and withdrawn while reciting the *mantra*. (This is apparently a quotation. For the first line, cf. also *SM* 127 (p. 266.15). The same verse appears in the second *sādhana*, 20.)

¹⁰⁶ The compound *pratyāhīdhapadārpitāṅghriśavahṛd* is grammatically irregular.

¹⁰⁷ Probably a lonely isolated place. *Ekalinga* is explained in *Tārābhaktisudhārnava*, p. 139.30–140.1 as a place where only one *liṅga* (landmark or *śivaliṅga*?) is found within an area of five *kośas*:

*pañcalakrośāntare yatra na liṅgāntaram iṣṭ(y)ate |
tad ekalingam ākhyātām tatra siddhir anuttamā ||*

This definition seems a later interpretation that is inappropriate here. For similar occurrences of the term *ekalinga*, cf. *Guhyasamājatantra* 12.34ab: *catuspathaikavṛkṣe vā ekalinge śivālaye |* and 14.54: *mātrgṛhe śmaśāne śūnyaveśmani catuspathe | ekalingajāvṛkṣe vā abhicāram samārabhet|</>*.

¹⁰⁸ According to the *Tantrasāra*, p. 266.14–18 (quoting *Srikrāma* and *Nīlatantra*) *komala* refers to the corpse of a child less than five years of age. The Hindu tradition specifies that the practitioner perform the *sādhana* sitting on a corpse.

¹⁰⁹ i.e., in the triple states of existence mentioned in verses 2 and 6.

¹¹⁰ The *mantra* is: *om śūnyatāñānavajrasvabhāvātmaḥam* (cf. e.g., *SM*, p. 193.11 12, 195.12). 'Om I am of the nature of the diamond-like knowledge of emptiness.'

(10-14) He should visualize her in the *pratyāhīdha* stance, frightening, having a garland of (severed) heads hanging down (from the neck), dwarfish, big-bellied, terrible (and) adorned with a blue lotus. She has three eyes, one head, is divine, terrible with frightening, loud laughter, is extremely excited, has mounted a dead body, is adorned with the eight snakes,¹¹¹ has red round eyes and a tiger-skin spread over (her) hips. She is endowed with fresh youth, adorned with the five (bone) ornaments, has a lolling tongue, is very terrible, is conspicuously dreadful with (her) fangs, has a sword and cutter in the hands on the right (and) holds the blue lotus and skull in the left (hands). She has a tawny-coloured, fierce, single topknot (and) is adorned on the head with Akṣobhya. At the completion (*nispatti*) of the power of the meditation the *yogin* would become a great poet.¹¹²

(15) Even if he were a senseless fool, he who is entirely devoted to the essence of meditation, obtains an agreeable speech through the repetition of a hundred thousand *mantras*.¹¹³

(16) That three-syllabled great *mantra*, ending in *phaṭ*, which stays in the heart (of the goddess?), possessed of 'the five light rays' (*pañcaraśmi = om*)¹¹⁴ burns the fuel of nescience.

(17) I shall explain the procedure of extraction of the (*mantra* from the alphabet) in accordance with the practice of spiritual discipline:¹¹⁵ first, having pronounced that (syllable) which follows *sa* (i.e., *ha*), adorned with the fourth vowel (= *ī*),

(18) mounted on 'r', shining, blazing, possessed of the 'moon dot' (= *anunāsikā*), he should then pronounce the syllable *tram* adorned with the same fourth vowel (= *ī*).

(19) Again he should employ the syllable *ham* joined with the long letter *ū*, and then he should pronounce the syllable *phaṭ*: The *siddhamantra* is complete (= <*om*> *hrīm trīm hūm phaṭ*).

(20) 'The wise (man), having meditated on the rosary of bones in the place of the sword¹¹⁶ while emitting (rays), should repeat the best *mantra* with the emitting and withdrawal *yoga*.¹¹⁷

(21) He should imagine with a firm mind that he is a learned great poet. By practice of perpetual meditation he becomes (a poet) doubtlessly.

(22) Whatever merit I have accumulated, having composed Tārā's *sādhana*, may thereby beings become learned in the Jina's (= Buddha's) teaching.

(23) This is Śāśvatavajra's composition, which effects intelligence. May kindhearted, profound scholars forgive (defects, if any) in this.

The *sādhana* of Tārā in the tradition of Mahācīna is complete.

¹¹¹ The verse 11cd is also found in *SM*, 123, p. 257.20.

¹¹² The verse 14ab is also found in *SM* 123, p. 257.22 and 14cd in *SM*, 127, p. 266.17.

¹¹³ The verse 15cd is also found in *SM* 127, p. 266.18.

¹¹⁴ I take *pañcaraśmi* here to refer to the syllable *om*; cf. *Mantrābhīdhāna*, 5.6; *Bhūtadāmaratantroktahijābhīdhāna*, p. 64.16; *Varnabījakosa*, p. 26, printed in A. Avalon (ed.), *Tantrābhīdhāna* (Delhi: Caxton, 1983 [repr.]). The syllable *om* as part of the *Tārāmantra* is also given in *sādhana* 1. *TS*, p. 263.23-4 explains *pañcaraśmi* with *varnapañcakam* ('five-coloured'). There are occasional references to five-coloured rays in the *SM*, cf. p. 254.21; 268.4 and 268.20; however, this meaning is less plausible here. The *Pradīpodyotana* commentary on the *Guhyasamāja*, 218.19-20, explained *pañcaraśmayah* as five-coloured rays of the seed syllables *ya-rā-la-va-ha*, symbolizing the elements wind, fire, earth, water and ether. *Srīvidyānavatantra* vol. 2, p. 262.20 explained *raśmipañcaka* (appearing in a quote from the '*Matsyasūktā*') as *varnapañcaka*, in the case of Ekajāṭā, and as the syllable *om*, in the case of Nīlasarasvatī. *Om* is also understood in *Srīvidyānavatantra* vol. 2, p. 263.10.

¹¹⁵ Manuscript K reads: according to the *Yogatantras*.

¹¹⁶ The sword held in one of the goddess's hands is transformed into a rosary of bones, cf. also *SM*, p. 261.7. cf. also n. 104, above.

¹¹⁷ The rays of light are emitted and withdrawn by the practitioner. (This is apparently a quotation. The same verse appears in *sādhana* 1. Only the first line appears in *SM*, p. 266.15.)



Fig. 5: Ugra-Tārā (Hindu). Lithograph first published in the edition of the *Mantramahodadhi* by R. Prasāda (Lucknow: Smarahimsakadatta Press, 1872), appendix, f. 4a. The upper right hand holds a trident with a banner attached to it and a pair of scissors. The goddess is shown in a sitting position on a corpse, which in turn rests on a lotus on a boat.

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