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

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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 Vajrayogini, accompanied by Vajravarnani and Vajravairocani, is the prototype of the Hindu Chinnamastā accompanied by Dākinī and Varṇīni. Forms of Ekajāta and Mañjūghoṣa 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. 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 Pethākāritātantra, 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 Mahācīna belongs to the varieties of dark Tārās. She is described in two Buddhist sādhana, which form part of the three major sādhana collections in Sanskrit and Tibetan:

1. the unedited *Sādhanaśatakam, 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 *Sādhanaśatapatācaśika 54 (= PTT 4020) and 55 (= PTT 4021–22), translated into Tibetan by Tshul khrims rgyal mtshan of the Pa tshab clan in collaboration with Abhayakaragupta, who lived from the second half of the eleventh century to the first quarter of the twelfth century; and
3. the Sādhanaṃlā/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 amuṣṭubh metre, is attributed to Šaśvatavajra, who is identified with Prajñārāksita, 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 pratyāśita stance, with the left leg

1 A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the 20th 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 Ekajāta came first to be adopted in Buddhism and from there in Hinduism.”
3 Cina and Mahācīna are usually regarded as identical. Tucci (1971: 549–50) identified Cina 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 Himalayas, Tibet and at least parts of Mongolia and western China. Bagchi (1939: 46–7) thought it to refer to Mongolia, while Levi (1905: 1908, r. 347 and cf. also Shastri, 1922: 11 and Weller, 1927: 446) held that it refers to China. Schar (1971: 103–4), interpreting Sāktisāmāsātantra 3.7.48–9, identified Cina with Tibet and Mahācīna with China.
stretched out and the right retracted. 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 lolloing tongue. The goddess has a single tawny-coloured knot of hair with Aksobhya, 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. She utters extremely loud, frightening laughter.

The Hindu Tantric compendium Mantramahodadhi (4.39–40), composed by Mahidhara 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).

vītvarvāpyapakavāminadayavilasachvetyāmbyanmasthītām
kartrikhadagakapalalālaninī rājaikarā mätalabhām
kāśicyacfieldhārakanikaganalasatkīyūramāṇīrātām
āptair nāgavaraś vibhūṣitaśāmanā rākṣemetratrāyām // 4.39
pinpokaikajajātām lasatrasanāmām dāmārākālānanām
arme dvapī varamā katuu vadihatīm svetāshtipāthikān
aksobhyena viśajamānasaśānam smerānambhoruhām
tārām śāvahṛāsanām dṛḍhakacam abām trilokyāh smare // 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 Aksobhya, 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 Aksobhya on her head, but wears a diadem of white bone (svetāshihpatī) as opposed to the five (bone) ornaments. Aksobhya is specified as the seer (ṛṣi) of her mantra. The surrounding deities, such as Vairocanā and Aṃitābha, worshipped in her yantra and the mantras used in her worship, such as yathāgata (for: tathāgata)bhisekasānugri me han phat or aksobhaya vajrapuspam prāticolah svāhā, leave no doubt that the goddess is an adaptation from the Buddhist Tantric pantheon.

About a century later, c. 1670, the Tantric encyclopaedia Tantrasāra by Kṛṣṇananda Ágamavāgīśa (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 Phetkārīṇītantra (PhT), I discovered that Sāvatavajra’s

4 cf. the descriptions in the Tibetan translations of the sādhanas, PīT 4020–21, 4194, 4315–16. In the llāhā stance the right leg is stretched out and the left retracted.
5 These are the diadem (ulcer), ear-rings (kunṭala), necklace (kunṭhī), bracelets (rucca) and belt (mekhati) (cf. SM, p. 447.10–13; 461.4).
6 This mantra is given in Mahidhara’s autocommentary on Mantramahadodihi 4.66.
7 For this mantra, cf. Mahidhara’s autocommentary on Mantramahadodihi 4.93.
mahācukramatārāśādana (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:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SM</th>
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<tr>
<td>No. 101, verses 1–2</td>
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<td>101.3</td>
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<td>101.8cd–11c</td>
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<td>101.11d–13a</td>
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<td>101.13b–d</td>
<td>11.31b–d</td>
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<td>101.14–15ab</td>
<td>cf. 11.32cd–33</td>
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<td>101.15cd–20</td>
<td>11.36cd–41</td>
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<td>101.21</td>
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<td>101.22</td>
<td>11.42</td>
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<td>101.23–24</td>
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The PhT has been assigned to the thirteenth century by Bharati (1965: 60), for unknown reasons. The earlier Tantric compendiums, such as the Prapachasara (before the latter part of the eleventh century) and the Sāradātika based on it, do not describe Tārā at all.

It can thus be established that Śāivatavajra’s mahācukramatārāśādana was incorporated in the Hindu PhT, which was then quoted as authoritative on the description and worship of this form of dark Tārā, called Mahācukramara-Tārā or Ugra-Tārā in a number of Hindu Tantric texts, such as the Tārābhaktisūdhāravarna (second part of the seventeenth century), previously mentioned Tantravāra, Brhamanatantra, Śrīvidyāvānatantra (c. seventeenth century) attributed to Vidyāranya Yati and Purāscaryāvānava. The description of Ugra-Tārā in PhT 11.9 even appears in Śrīuttvānāthi 1.69, compiled by Mummadi Kṛṣṇarāja Wodeyar III, King of Mysore, who ruled from 1799 to 1868, quoted from the “āṃśāya”. Similar descriptions of the goddess also appear in Brahmanandagiri’s Tārāraksya (beginning of the sixteenth century) 3.134–36 and Merutantra 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 Ākṣobhya.

11 For this date, cf. F. Bhattacharyya, introduction to his edition of the Tārābhaktisūdhāravarna, 3.
12 cf. p. 269.1–8–PhT 11.30–35ab.
14 The lower limit for the composition of the work is the year 1589, i.e., the date of composition of the Mantreñamahadāthi, which is quoted in it, and the lower limit is the year 1726, i.e., the date of a manuscript.
17 For a discussion of this form, cf. van Kooij (1974).
The Buddhist Mahācīnaka-Tārā is iconographically identical to one of several existing forms of Ekaṭāja/Ekaṭañjī, described in sādhana, such as SM 124 to 126. The same mantra is employed for both goddesses. A white Ekaṭañjī who is not identical to Mahācīnaka-Tārā is described in SM 127. The colophon of this sādhana in Bhattacharyya’s edition states that Nāgarjuna took the tradition of the goddess from the inhabitants of Bhota (bhoteṣu uddhiṭān). Bhattacharyya\(^{19}\) identified Bhota (Tibet) with Mahācīna and concluded that the goddess Ekaṭañjī or Mahācīnaka-Tārā, worshipped by native inhabitants of Tibet probably professing the Bon religion of Tibet, entered the Buddhist pantheon with the Tantric Nāgarjuna in the seventh century. Against this it can be argued that SM 127 refers only to the white Ekaṭañjī, not to the dark Mahācīnaka-Tārā. Also, SM 127 is not part of the earlier sādhana collections *Sādhanaśataka* and *Sādhanaśatapatācaśīkā* and that—as Kane\(^{20}\) has already pointed out—not all manuscripts of the Sādhanaśatā Sādhanaśatanucaṭa contain this part of the colophon. It is, however, part of the Tibetan translation of the collection, which was completed in 1268.

The Buddhist Mahācīnaka-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 *Tōḍalatantra* 1.5–6\(^{21}\) explains that Śiva is called ‘unshakable’ (aṁkṣobhya), because he drank the deadly Hālikhala poison without agitation (a-kṣobha). Kṛṣṇananda 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 Bhāvacudāmani,\(^{23}\) Mantracudāmani\(^{24}\) and Brahmasamhitā,\(^{25}\) 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 (ṛṣi) of Ugra-Tārā’s mantra. According to the Suktisamgrahatantra (last part of the sixteenth century or first half of the seventeenth century),\(^{27}\) Ugra-Tārā was

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\(^{18}\) 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.


\(^{21}\) samudra-maitrihe devi kalakārtiṁ samuttihitam / sarve devaḥ sadarās va mahāsabham avajযayah // 1.5

\(^{22}\) akṣobhya devarūḍhānvin tānmu rājanih kartari / aṁga eva mahesāni akṣobhyaḥ purikritāh // 1.6


\(^{24}\) Quoted in Tārābhaktisūdānaya, p. 201.10 and Purāṇacaryāṇa, p. 787.5: akṣobhyānagasaṁbuddhajātyantam varajyataṁ /

\(^{25}\) Quoted in Purāṇacaryāṇa, p. 715.19: akṣobhya devarī prakṣeta trīmuṣā nirgrahīdyṝ //

\(^{26}\) 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 (prajñā), suggesting that the image is Buddhist.

\(^{27}\) cf. Suktisamgrahatantra 4, also called Akṣobhyāstidānamvāda, ch. 5. For a discussion of the date, cf. Goudriana and Gupta (1981: 89).
born in a lake named Cola\textsuperscript{28} 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 (vīśvavīpākatotāya) in the region of Cina (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 moon\textsuperscript{29} 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 Tripurasundari uses Śiva as her mattress while four deities function as supporting legs of her throne.

Kṣpañanda (p. 269.9–10) further explained the five bone ornaments (‘five seals’, pañcamudrā) adorning Tārā, which originally belonged to the Kāpālikā tradition, as five skulls having four plates of white bone between them (i.e., one plate between any of them)\textsuperscript{30} on the authority of the Tantricādāmanī, which states that the goddess is adorned with five skulls connected with plates of white bone,\textsuperscript{31} and the authority of the Śāmkarācārya of Gauda (North Bengal) (p. 269.8–13).\textsuperscript{32} Apparently the pañcamudrā ornaments have been taken as the pañacakapāla (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 sādhanaś of Mahācāna-Tārā. Through the name Mahācāna (cf. PhT 11.10ab), Tārā was linked with the practice (ācāra) of Mahācāna, which is expounded in chapters 9 to 10 of the Nīlatantra and mainly in the Mahācānacaratantra (Ācārasāratantra, c. 1700).\textsuperscript{33} These texts, however, do not provide us with an iconographical description of the goddess. References such as the following in Hindu Tantras to Vaśiṣṭha receiving the mahācānācāvara tradition in Mahācāna from Buddha in the form of Viṣṇu are additional indications that the Hindus imported Mahācāna-Tārā from the Buddhists.

The Rudrayāmala 17.106 ff.\textsuperscript{34} narrates that Brahma’s son Vaśiṣṭha, who worshipped the goddess with austerities unsuccessfully for a long time, is advised by the goddess herself to go to the Buddhist country Mahācāna and follow the ‘Atharvaveda’ practice. In Cina he encounters the Buddha surrounded by women, drinking wine, eating meat and engaging in sexual acts,

\textsuperscript{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 Mayurādhavān (Calcutta, 1912: rep. Delhi: Rare Reprints, 1981), LVII: merōḥ pācintakūle tu colanākhya hrado mahān / tatra jayate srayam tārā devi nilasaravat /.

\textsuperscript{29} I.e., the sixteenth lunar digit (indukalā), containing nectar and symbolizing divine power.

\textsuperscript{30} kālīte svēttāktipāṭikācautīṣayānītikapātkapātakahabhātihum iti arthah.

\textsuperscript{31} svēttāktipāṭikācautīṣayānītikapātkapātakahabhātihum iti tantraśādāmanī. The following line from the Mantraśādāmanī is quoted in Tārābhadrikāśāhām, p 200.18: viniścayamala kālīte kālaṁ kāṬalāṁ kapalāṁ ca pañcāántam ihāraśānām iti /.

\textsuperscript{32} The quote is from the Tārābhadrikāśāhām by Śāmkara Āgamaśācārya of Bengal, written before 1630. For this date, cf. Goudriaan in Goudriaan and Gupta (1981: 153).

\textsuperscript{33} For this date, cf. Meisig (1988: 12).

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

A place named Vasīṣṭhārama, Vasīṣṭha’s hermitage, where it is claimed that Vasīṣṭha performed austerities, is located about 10 miles east of Gauhati/Assam.\textsuperscript{36} According to another tradition, Vasīṣṭha, after meeting the Buddha in Cīna, had a vision of Tārā in Tārāpīṭh and made his residence there.\textsuperscript{37} Tārāpīṭh (previously Chandipur), a village in Bhirbhum district, c. 290 miles north of Calcutta, claims the status of one of the 51 ‘seats of śakti’ (śaktipīṭha). Sāti’s eye is said to have dropped here. Another ‘seat’ (piṭha) of the goddess Ugra-Tārā is her temple on the banks of the Sugandhā (Sunandanā) river in the village Sīkārpur, 13 miles north of Barisāl, Bākarganj district, West Bengal.\textsuperscript{38} It is said that Sāti’s nose dropped down here.\textsuperscript{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 Pañāḍī paintings in which she is often included in the group of goddesses called the Mahāvidyās.\textsuperscript{40} The illustrations which came to my notice date from the eighteenth centuries:

1.1. painting of the goddess from Guler (c. 1745–60), first published in Lentz (1986, no. 5);
1.2. Pañāḍī 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 Kāli, published in Mookerjee (1988: 107);
1.5. painting from the series of Mahāvidyās 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 sādhanas 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 Nīkṣalā-Śiva).

\textsuperscript{35} cf. 16.25a, 64.55 65 and 64.113.
\textsuperscript{37} cf. Morinis (1984: 166 7).
\textsuperscript{39} cf. Kaliyā Jī (1957: 189).
\textsuperscript{40} cf. Mundahākuttra, part 1, 6.132d–134ab lists the ten Mahāvidyā goddesses as Kāli, Tārā, Śoḍaśi, Bhuvanesvarī, Bhairavi, Chinnamastā, Dhūmāvatī, Bagalā, Maṭinda and Kamalātmikā.
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 Kāli in the Mahāvidyā 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, kartari) 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 Hindi and Marāṭhī, the word is also understood as a pair of scissors.

2.1. Mandala 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 mandala, 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: Vairocanā (W), Amoghasiddhi (N), Ratnasambhava (E) and Amitābha (S). Their consorts (prajñā) in the intermediate directions are Pāṇḍūrī (for: Pāṇḍarā) (NW), Tārā (NE), Māmakā (SE) and probably Lokanā (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 Varuna (Western gate), Vāyu (NW), Kubera (Northern gate), Īśanā (NE), Indra (Eastern gate), Agni (SE), Yama (Southern gate) and Nairṛtāya (SW); the zenith (urdhva) is indicated between SW and W and the nadir (adhaṅk) 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
Vajrayogini temple at Sāmkhu in Nepal contains a statue of Ugra-Tārā.\(^4\) It seems, however, that it is a two-armed benevolent statue holding a sword and a lotus.\(^5\)

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, i, 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 Aksobhya 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 Śiṣṇu (centre), Brahmā (to the right), Kārttikeya 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 Śaśvatavajra’s *sādhana* of Mahācīnakrama-Tārā/Ugra-Tārā (eleventh century) was almost completely incorporated in the Hindu *Phetkārinītantra* (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 *PH*’s version. The Hindu tradition retained the description of Aksobhya on the goddess’s head but interpreted him as Śiṣṇu, 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 Śiṣṇu’s body in many paintings. The bone ornaments (*pathecumuddra*) of the goddess were interpreted as a garland of five skulls on her forehead by some authorities. While the Buddhist *sādhanas* 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.


The importance of the case of Mahācinakrama-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 Mahācinakrama-Tārā

The following presents the newly edited texts and translations of the two Buddhist sādhanas of Mahācinakrama-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) Śādhanamālā, which refers to manuscript readings as A, C and N. In addition I have used the manuscripts of the *Śādhanaśāstra (SS) and *Śādhanaśāstraśāstraśāstra (SSP) published in Bühnemann (1994) and the following manuscripts:

B1 (Virapustakālaya 1966) National Archives, Kathmandu, no. 3–387, fols. 79b.6–81a.4
B2 (Virapustakālaya 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
M1 University of Tokyo Library no. 451 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 78a.3–79a.6
M2 University of Tokyo Library no. 452 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 54b.9–55b.5
M3 University of Tokyo Library no. 453 (Matsunami, 1965), fols. 78b.1–79b.6
T1 Takaoka Collection no. CA 26 (Takaoka, 1981), fols. 94b.6–95b.7
T2 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 amśvāra instead of the more correct amṇāsika in the mantras for reasons of printing. I have emended the spelling of the syllable hum in Bhattacharyya’s edition to the more correct hūṃ, 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 tām. 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

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43 The manuscript of the *Śādhanaśāstraśāstraśāstra 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 śūnyatāṁ naṁ vajraśvabhāvaṁ mako ‘ham (Om I am of the nature of the diamond-like knowledge of emptiness);
3. he visualizes the red syllable āḥ in the sky, which transforms into a red lotus;
4. the white syllable tāṁ appears on top of the lotus and transforms into a skull cup;
5. in its centre, on a sun, the dark seed syllable hūṁ appears;
6. it transforms into a cutter adorned with the seed syllable hūm;
7. the cutter transforms into the yogin who identifies with Mahācīñakrama-Tārā.

The goddess’s mantra is given as om hūṁ trim hūṁ phat. The Hindu tradition has preserved the variant trim for trim. The same mantra is employed for Ekaṭā, who shares many iconographical characteristics with Mahācīñakrama-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 Ekaṭā in SM 123, p. 258,19, while the same mantra appended with the syllables hūṁ svāhā is termed her ‘heart’ (hrdaya) mantra. The upahṛdaya mantra is said to be the ‘root’ mantra without the final phat. The mantra is said to grant eloquence and turn the yogin into a great poet. This must be the effect of the seed syllable hūṁ contained in it, which, according to the passage SM p. 259,24, produces similar results when recited by itself. According to Śrīharṣa’s Naisadhiyacarita 14.88–9 the syllable hūṁ is considered as representing Śiva’s Ardhanārīśvara form; when repeated it grants similar results.47

45 The variants āḥ and a are also preserved by the texts.
46 I have chosen the reading tāṁ over the reading tām in the edition of the two sādhanas, since tāṁ is commonly the seed syllable (bijā) of Tārā.
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 x 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: Mahācintāmāṇī (Buddhist), first published in Bhattacharyya (1958), plate XXVII (b).
Fig. 3: Ugra-Tīra, Pahārī painting, eighteenth century (?), Delhi National Museum 87462 (Ajit Mookerjee Collection).
Mahācīnakramāryatārāsādhana (1)
(*Sādhanaśatapāñcāsikā 54 (73a.2–73b.2), PTT 4020, Sādhanaśatapāñcāsikā 100, PTT 4315)

pūrvavatavindhanena śīryātābhāvanāntaram rakta-āhkārajaraktapadnopari 48 sītyātmakārajapadmabhajane 49 sītyasthānāhūmkārajasabjakartripaṁśāmena 50 krṣṇam 51 āryatābhāṬaṅkām caturbhujaiñkumukhum tinetrām kharvalombadārum 52 damṣṭākarālaśvadānām pratyāḥśhayapadena 53 śavārūdhām 54 nāgāṣṭakabhīṣunām vyāghracurvavasanām 55 avalambanānamundalām patacaumndra-vibhūṣitām khadakakrīdhāraidaśānākārām upalakapālādāhīvāmakārām sa-kṣobhyantahapinagalaśājuṣṭām 56 atighorāttahāsabhūmāryām nispādya om hrīṃ <trim> 57 hūm phat iti 58 mantraṃ 59 visayaprajñādikārāna 60 jayet /

nirāṃśumālākāṃ dhyāṭvā khadgasthāne vicāṣṭānā /
sphuratamārāyagena samjapena mantraṃ uttānām //

iti mahācīnakramāryatārāsādhanaṃ 61 //

48 PTT 4020 "ahkāra", B 2, K, T 2 "ākāra".
49 B 1, Bh, SŚP "tām".
50 A "karmā", K 1, M 1, 2 karmā".
51, A, N krṣṇam.
52 Enunciation "trim" with the text of the second ādhyāṃ: B 1, 2, Bh, K, M 1, 2, 3, SŚP, T 1, 2, "ram.
53 B 1, 2, K, M 1, 2, 3, T 2 "pada, A, N "padam. 54 A paṅcaśiavā").
55 K, SŚP, T 2 "carmāni".
56 Suggested addition in accordance with the mantra given in the second ādhyāṃ.
57 V abhi.
58 PTT 4020, SŚP viśapra", PTT 4315 prajñā"; A "kāraṃ, B 1, 2, M 1, 2, 3, N, T 1, 2 "kare, K "kāra. 59 SŚP "kramārā".
pratyādhipadārpatāṅghriśavahrd ghorattahāsaḥ parā
khudgendi varaku kartri-kharpa bhujāḥ hüm-karabhijodbhavā /
kharvä nilaviśālapingulajatājutogranāgair yutā
jādiyam nyasya kapālaka trījagatam hunty ugratārā svayaṃ //
mahācinakramāṃ nattā tārāṃ trībhavatārīṇāṃ /
tatsādhanam āhāṃ vakyē yathā gurūpadeśātah // 2
ekaliṅge śmaśāne vā śūnyāgare ca sarvāda /
tatrastah sādhayed yogi vīdīyam trībhava-mokṣaṇām // 3
mṛdumāśūrayakaṃ 66 asīna 'nṛṣeṣu komalesu vā // 4
viṣṭareṣu samāśritya sādhayet siddhim uṣṭamām //
ḫātiṇy ḫārayogenā trivṛjāṃ susmāhoe ṭaraḥ /
trīṣu sthānesu tam dhīyāvā rāśmiṃ vishārayet tataḥ // 5
trībhavacārīnām sattvām avabhāṣyānayet punah /
samhāre ca punar dhīyāvā cūnyaṃ vīvaṃ samantataḥ // 6
tataḥ
pathe jinamantrakam om śūnyatādisvabhāvakam /
antarikṣe tato dhīyāvā ēśkārād 70 raktaparnakajam // 7

bhūyas tasyapari dhīyāvā tāṁkārāt 71 padmabhājanam /
tasya madhye punar dhīyāvā hüm-kāranā nilasaṇāhham // 8
tato hüm-kārajām 72 pasyet kartrikāṃ bijabhūṣitām /
karttiparīṇatam dhīyāvā ātmanām tārīṇīsamām // 9
pratyādhipadām ghorāṃ mundamālāpralambitām /
kharvalbodarīṃ 75 bhūnām niṣṭhāra-jaṅjātīm // 10
tryambhakam anukāhāṃ dhīvyāṃ ghoritäḥśaḥbhasūram /
suprhaṅṣtāṃ 75 savārūdhām 76 nāgāṣṭhakāvibhūṣitām // 11
pratyālīihapadārpaṇṭāngḥriṣavahrdghorāttyahāsā pari
      khadvendīvarakarikharaparabhujā hūmkrābījodhavā /
      kharvā nilaśīlalapīngalajatājūtoragranāgaīr yutā
    jādyam nyasya kapālake trijagatāṁ hanta ugrārīṁ svayam // 9
      mahaṭāṇkramāṁ naṁvā tārāṁ tribhavatārīṇīṁ / 10cd
    tattādhānaavidhīṁ vakṣye manīa sārvajñīyasadhanam77 / 11ab
      ekalinge śmaśāne ca śaṇvāgāre catuspathe /
    tatraśīh saṁdheyod yogy tārāṅ tribhavatārīṇīṁ // 24
      mṛdućakam āśīno 'py anyesū komale 'pi vā /
      viśṭareṣu saṁāśritya saṁdhey iṣṭaṁ uttanaṁ // 26

...........śaṁyam viśvam vicintayet // 27b
      antarikṣe tato dhyāyed āhārāṁ raktapaṅkajam /

bhūyas tasyopari dhyāyet tāmkrāt śvetapaṅkajam // 28
      tasyopari punar dhyāyed ikāram78 nilasannibham /
      tato huṇākśāraṁ paśyant karikāṁ bijabhūṣitam // 29
      karikāparī tāṁ dhyāyed ātmanam tārṇīmayaṁ /
    prayāśdhāpapadām ghorāṁ muṇḍamalāvibhūṣitām // 30
      kharvāṁ lambodarīṁ bhīmām ...... / 31a

77 Emended with PhT 11.39b mama sārvajñīyasadhanam: PhT sarvanātha; Kha. Gha “sādhakam.
78 Suggested emendation with sādhaka 2, 8d: hūmkrām.
rakta-vartulanetrāṁ ca vyāghracarmāṅvṛtāṁ / 39
navayavanasampannāṁ pañcamudrāvibhūṣitāṁ / 12
lalajihvām mahābhūmāṁ sadamśratkatabhisānam / 31
khagakartrikārām savyā vānoipalakapaladāham / 13
pēngograikajātam dhyāyān maulāv aksobhyabhāṣitām / 83
bhaved yogi mahākavih / 14
jado 'pi yadi murkhar syād bhāvanārasatapatraḥ / 84
labhate manjavāṁ tu laksamanṛṣya jāpataḥ / 15
tryakṣaṁ / 85 sau mahāmantraḥ phatkarānto / 86
kri sthitāḥ / 16
pāncaraśīmamāyukto ajñānendhanadāhakah / 16

tasyoddhāravidhāṁ / 87 veksye yogācārānusārataḥ / 36
prathamaṁ saṁparāṁ / 88 dattvā caturthasvarabhisātām / 17
rephūrdham sphurad diptam indubindusamavānām / 18
trāmkāraṁ / 89 ca tato dadyāt caturthenaiva bhūṣitām / 18
dārgārhārāsamāyuktām / 91 hamkāram / 92
yojyaṁ punah / 93
phatkarāṁ / 93 ca tato dadyāt sampūrṇāṁ siddhāmani-rakām / 94
nīramśamālākāṁ dhyāvāva khāgasthāne vicakṣanāḥ / 19
sphuratsamḥarāvyogena saṁjñayam mantram uttāmadām / 20
kalpayet saṁvikṣitena pandito ṣāṁ mahākavih / 21
ajasrabhāvanabhāyāṇāśī bhāvata eva na sansālavā // 21
tāṝyāvāh sādhanāṁ kṛtvā yan maṇopācitaṁ / 99
śubhāṁ / 99
bhavontu prāṇinas tena pandita jīnasāsane // 22
kriṁ śāsavatavajrasya seyāṁ medhaśprasādhani / 23
agādhaṁ panditaṁ / 96 atraṁ kṣaṇum arhati sādharavāh // 23
mahācina-pramata-rāsādhanāṁ / 88

\[79\] A, B 1, 2, K, M 1, 2, 3, SŚP, T 1, 2, N, 3, s.vrta.  
\[80\] A, karti, B 1, 2, K, M 2, 3, N, SŚP, T 1 katāṁ, M 1, 2 kat.  
\[81\] K "nām mukhām.  
\[82\] SŚ, SŚP "dhāram" (one additional syllable).  
\[83\] Bh, M 1, 3 "nācātām.  
\[84\] A "varnam.  
\[85\] A, M 1, 3, T 1 aksa.  
\[86\] Bh humkā, C humkārānta, SŚP phatkarānta.  
\[87\] Bh tasyām dvāra-vandhatām.  
\[88\] K yogāntarānm.  
\[89\] Bh haparān, A, N, C maṁ paraṁ, SŚP maṇasāram.  
\[90\] C urē.  
\[91\] Bh dārgāhārānaṁ sa.  
\[92\] Bh humkāram.  
\[93\] Bh, T 1 humkāram.  
\[94\] SŚP sūrdhi.  
\[95\] A, N maṁa.  
\[96\] SŚ tāra.  
\[97\] SŚ tatra.  
\[98\] B 2, M 2 iti śrīmadā."
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 ēh; 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 prayūlītha 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 hand 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 hūm 〈trim〉102 hūm phat with reference to the understanding of the objects (?; viṣayaprajñātādhikāraṇa).103

99 Suggested emendation with sādhana 2, 13c: savye or: dakṣye.
100 For padmabhājana = skull, cf. Hewajratantra II.3.38 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 trim 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 viṣayaprajñātādhikāraṇa is unclear. PTT 4315 omits viṣaya altogether, while PTT 4020 reads viṣaya—poison, which is meaningless here. The reading mantraviṣayaprajñātādhikāraṇa 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 bones in the place of the sword, should repeat the best mantra with the emitting and withdrawal yoga.

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 prayāṭīṭha stance on the heart of a corpse, 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 hūṃ, 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 ekālinga 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 soft seats, he would accomplish the highest success.

(5) The very attentive (yogin), having visualized quickly three diamond sceptres in the three places 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 (samāhāra) 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. Then he should visualize a red lotus (transformed) from the syllable aḥ in the intermediate region.

(8) Again, on top of it he should visualize a ‘lotus vessel’ (= skull) (transformed) from the syllable rūṃ; in its centre he should again visualize the dark syllable hūṃ.

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

According to SM, p. 261.7 the sword held by the goddess is transformed into a rosary (aṣṭamanā) during the visualization process. SM, p. 267.9 and 268.23 specify that the aksamālā is made of bone (nṛṣṭhukāśatā aksamālā; nṛṣṭhukāśkamālā). For the meaning nṛṣṭhuk (ka) = bone, cf. Hevajratantra 11.3.56: asthiyābharanam nṛṣṭhuḥkam.

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.)

The compound prayāṭīṭhapaṭāpatīṭhapaṭāpatīṭhaśrayaḥ is grammatically irregular.

Probably a lonely isolated place. Ekālinga is explained in Tārābhikṣṣuśāstram, p. 139.30–140.1 as a place where only one tīṅgu (landmark or śivalinga) is found within an area of five krośas:

pātacakraśāntare yatra na līṅgūntaram bhūṣyate /
ād ekālingam akṣhyitaṃ tatra siddhiḥ anumāṇam iḥ

This definition seems a later interpretation that is inappropriate here. For similar occurrences of the term ekālinga, cf. Guhyasamāja tantra 12.34ab: catuḥpatalikavṛkṣaḥ vaj ekālīγe śivalaye / and 14.54: mārgrega śmaśane śūnyavemani catuṣpateḥ / ekālingajāvṛkṣaḥ vaj abhīṣitam somāraḥbhūtiḥ. According to the Śrīpanchara, p. 266.14–18 (quoting Śrīpratama and Mānuntra) kūsana 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.

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

The mantra is: om śūnyatāḥ śūnyavajrasvabhāvātmakā hūṃ (cf. e.g., SM, p. 193.11 i 2. 195.12). “Om I am of the nature of the diamond-like knowledge of emptiness.”
(10–14) He should visualize her in the pratýāhāra stance, frightening, having a garland of (severed) heads hanging down (from the neck), dwarffish, 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 Aksobhya. At the completion (nispatī) 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 phat, which stays in the heart (of the goddess?), possessed of the five light rays’ (pañcarāmi = 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 (= i),

(18) mounted on ‘r’, shining, blazing, possessed of the ‘moon dot’ (= annaśīkā), he should then pronounce the syllable traṃ adorned with the same fourth (vowel = i).

(19) Again he should employ the syllable ham joined with the long letter ū, and then he should pronounce the syllable phat: The siddhāmantra is complete (= <om> hriṃ trim hūṃ phat).

(20) ‘The wise (man), having meditated on the rosary of bones in the place of the sword\(^{116}\) 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 Śaśvatavajra’s composition, which effects intelligence. May kindhearted, profound scholars forgive (defects, if any) in this.

The sādhana of Tārā in the tradition of Mahācāna is complete.

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\(^{111}\) 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 pañcarāmi here to refer to the syllable om, cf. Muntrāhūṃhāṃ, 56; Bhūtadānuprastāntaḥsūrabhūṃhāṃ, p. 64.16; Varnabhūṃkara, p. 26, printed in A. Avalon (ed.), Tantrabhūṃkara (Delhi: Caxton, 1983 [repr.]). The syllable om as part of the sādhana is also given in sādhana 1. TS, p. 263.23–4 explains pañcarāmi with varnapādākam ("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 Padmaprastāna commentary on the Guhyasamāja, 218.19–20, explained pañcarāmayaḥ as five-coloured rays of the seed syllables ye-ra-la-vi-ha, symbolizing the elements wind, fire, earth, water and ether. Śrīvidyāvinavatāramaḥ vol. 2, p. 262.20 explained rānapādākam (appearing in a quote from the Matsyasūkta) as varnapādākam, in the case of Ekajata, and as the syllable om, in the case of Niśasaravatī. Om is also understood in Śrīvidyāvinavatāramaḥ 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. 261.3, 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 Mantramahadadhī by R. Prasada (Lucknow: Sinarahimakadatio 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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS


THE GODDESS MAHĀCĪNAKRAMA-TĀRA (UGRA-TĀRA)


Sādhanaśatakā: see Bühnemann (1994).

Sādhanaśatakāpanāraka: see Bühnemann (1994).


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