PIERRE ARÈNES
Herméneutique des *tantra*:
etude de quelques usages du «sens caché»  

GEORGES DREYFUS
The Shuk-den Affair: History and Nature of a Quarrel

ROBERT MAYER
The Figure of Maheśvara/Rudra
in the rNīn-ma-pa Tantric Tradition

JOHN NEWMAN
Islam in the Kālacakra Tantra

MAX NIHOM
Vajravinayā and Vajraśauṇḍa:
A 'Ghost' Goddess and her Syncretic Spouse

TILMANN VETTER
Explanations of *dukkha*

Index to *JIABS* 11-21, by Toru TOMABECHI

English summary of the article by P. Arènes
Vajravinayā and Vajrāśaunḍa: 
A ‘Ghost’ Goddess and her Syncretic Spouse

In Marie-Thérèse DE MALLMAN’s Introduction à l’Iconographie du Tántrisme Bouddhique (1975), on page 431 one finds the entry Vajravinayā:

De vinaya, séparer, rejeter. Déesse figurant parmi les divinités hindoues du Manḍala Durgatipariśodhana (NSP 22). Épouse de Vajrāśaunḍa (i.e. Balarāma), elle est pareille à lui; cependant, elle peut tenir de la gauche le khaṭvāṅga au lieu du soc.

The requisite passage in Abhayakaragupta’s Nispanṇāyogāvalī (p.89) indeed reads:

\[
\text{kunjare vajraśaundah sitaḥ savye vajram vāmena lāṅgalam / vajravinayā vajrāśaundavat / vāmena khaṭvāṅgam bibharti tū viṣesah /} \\
\text{Vajrāśaunḍa, white, on an elephant, has in his right hand a vajra [and] in his left hand a plough. Vajravinayā is like Vajrāśaunḍa. With her left hand she holds a khaṭvāṅga. Such is [her] particularity.}
\]

Similarly, in SKORUPSKI’s edition of the Sarvadhurgatipariśodhana-tantra, recension B, at 252.6-10 we find:

\[
vajrāśauḍo gaṇapatir gajavāhanō daksīṇakareṇa vajram dhārayed vāmena lāṅgalam dhārayed avasthitāḥ / sitavarnāḥ / \\
vajravinayā Vajrāśauṇḍavad ayaḥ tu viṣeṣo yad uta vāmakaṛenā khaṭvāṅgadhārīṇī / \\
\]

Here, the Tibetan translation reads:

\[
\text{rdo rje tshogs bdag glaṅ sna glaṅ po che žon pa can / phyag g.yas pas rdo rje 'dzin cin / g.yon pas g/os 'dzin cin gnas pas / mdog dkar po/o /} \\
\text{rdo rje 'dul ma rdo rje glaṅ sna lta bu/o / 'di ni khyad par te gaṅ že na / phyag g.yon gyis khaṭvāṅga 'dzin pa/o /} \\
\]

Save that glaṅ po che žon pa can implies *mahāgajavāhana, the Tibetan seems in accordance with the Sanskrit as printed. For gajavāhano manuscript B reads gajāvāhakō and for dhārayed manuscript G reads dharah. These discrepancies are minor. Of more interest is that for vajravinayā, well represented by Tibetan rdo rje 'dul ma, no less than four manuscripts (of seven), namely A, B, C and G, read vajravilayā.
Obviously, given the support of the *Nispannāyogāvalī* and the Tibetan of *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-B, such would not seem to be a problem. However, although in the *Nispannāyogāvalī* the set of gods of which Vajrāśaunda and Vajravinayā are a part are found in the outer circle of the maṇḍala, and although SKORUPSKI, who indeed noted the almost total identity of the divinities of the former with the set found in SDP-B, also suggests that these gods are found “beginning in the northeast” of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanamandala* (1983: 87-91), in fact this set of gods is practically identical to the set described in the Vajrasamaya section of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* for the Trailokyavijayamaṇḍala (*Tattvasaṃgraha* 172-173), where they are each the vajranāma or consecration name of an associated Hindu divinity. *Tattvasaṃgraha* 172.13 (Tib. 242a2/3) and 173.13 (Tib. 242b2/3):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{madhumattāya Vajrāśaundaḥ} \\
\text{sbran ṅaṣis myos pa ni rdo rje'i glaṅ po'i sna'o}^1 \\
\text{māraṇaya vajravelā} \\
\text{bsod ma ni rdo rje 'ju ma'o}
\end{align*}
\]

We therefore have a ‘problem’. Four of the seven manuscripts of *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-B confirm the reading of the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, that the spouse of Vajrāśaunda is not Vajravinayā, but Vajravelā. Moreover, vilayā makes more sense, since the Hindu goddess is Māraṇī, She Who Causes Death. Since, paleographically, an erroneous reading vinayā for vilayā is no problem at all, we may propose that the ‘true’ reading is vilayā, and that Tibetan SDP-B had as basis a faulty Sanskrit reading.

It may consequently be formally proposed that Vajravinayā, whatever her subsequent textual or art-historical development may be, is a divinity whose origin is an orthographic error.

This simple reasoning is nicely supported by Ānandagarbha’s *Trailokyavijayamaṇḍalopāyikā*’s parallel to the SDP-B passage cited above. Indeed, the entire SDP-B section dealing with these divinities also found as reported by the *Nispannayogāvalī* in the exterior of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanamandala* is to be retrieved in the former text.² 45a8/b1:

1. Compare *Trailokyavijayamahākalparājyā* 64b6: chaṅ gis myos pa ni rdo rjes zin pa'ö. rdo rjes is clearly an error and may be corrected to rdo rje s[na].
2. Text-historical consequences may not be insignificant, since the *Trailokyavijayamaṇḍalopāyikā* also furnishes the set of mantras associated with the divinities of the Trilokacakramañḍala of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* in close propinquity to this passage which it shares with *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-B.
rdorje glan po'i sna ni tshogs kyi bdag po stey mdog dkar po / lag pa g.yas na
rdorje thogs pa/g.yon g'sol thogs te gnas pa glan po che la 'zon pa'o //
rdorje 'ju ma ni glan sna 'dra ba las khyad par ni 'di yod de / 'di ltar lag
pa g.yon na kha'tvanga thogs pa'o //

Being found here and in the Tibetan of Tattvasamgraha 173.13 above, the
translation rdo rje 'ju ma, with 'ju ba meaning “to melt, digest”3 and
with 'ju ba attested as representing vilina,4 now irrefutably may be taken
to be a reflex for vajravilaya.

Ancillary evidence for this conclusion is supplied by the parallel
passage of the Vajraśekharatantra (Peking 46a1): gsod byed rdo rje 'jigs
ma ste // Here, 'jigs ma should not be taken as representing bhīmā,
bhairavi or the like, but as from a non-standard perfect of 'jig pa, 'to
destroy, dissolve’.5 Further, we may adduce the mantra associated with
Vajravilaya in the sarvavajrakulakarmamanaṇḍala of the Trilokacakra in
the Tattvasamgraha (303.6-8):

atha vajravilaya śvākarmaśamayāṁ abhāṣat /
om vajravi[laye] chinda sīna bhinda vajrini mādayonmadaya piva piva hūṃ
phat //

The portion between brackets has been supplied by YAMADA on the
basis of the Chinese and Tibetan. That it is correct to do so is proven by
Trailokyavijayamanḍalopāyikā 44b5:

om vajravelaye chinda asina bhinda vajrēṇa maraya udmadaya piva priva hūṃ
phat //

I am unable to understand the readings sīna and asina as Sanskrit
(Chinese reconstructs to chinda sīnā’), although perhaps sīna is a Middle
Indic imperative corresponding to the Sanskrit root snā, ‘bathe’. TS
vajrini, taken as a feminine vocative, may be better than vajrēṇa, since
the set of mantras of which this is one is partial to vocatives. While it is
obvious that the mantra should read unmadaya, because Tibetan TS
reads māraya u[n]madaya and because the Tattvasamgraha has identi-
fied Māraṇī as Vajravilaya, it is not unlikely that one should read
māraya instead of mādaya or maraya, because the Trailokyavijaya-

3. JÄSCHKE 177.
5. Cf. JÄSCHKE 175. The usual perfect is bōig.
6. Tibetan TS (253d6) adds me.
mandalopāyikā, in its list of consecration names associated with the Hindu divinities of the Trailokya vijayamaṇḍala states (64c5): gsod ma ni rdo rje gsod ma'o / “Māraṇī is Vajramāraṇī”.

In the light of the data presented so far, it is more difficult to account for unmadaya. True, given the imperatives piva piva⁸, “drink! drink!”, this statement seems insignificant.⁹ Yet acknowledgement of the importance of intoxication for Vajravilaya presumes that her symbolism is to be regarded as structurally admixed with that of her spouse, Vajraśauṇḍa, and this is a notion which, although certainly not unlikely, remains to be proved, since it would have consequences for our understanding of all sixteen pairs of divinities of the Trailokya vijayaya, Trilokacakra and Sarvarudatipariśodhanamaṇḍalas.

To this end, we may first cite Tattvasamgraha 284.8-9, which presents the mantra of Vajraśauṇḍa in the sarvakulavajramāṇḍala of the Trilokacakra:

\[
\text{atha Vajraśauṇḍah}^{10} \text{ svasamayamudrām abhāsat / om vajramade}^{11} \text{ hūṃ}^{12}
\]

Then Vajraśauṇḍa declared his own Pledge-Mudrā: om O (female) Vajra-Intoxication! hūṃ.

As male, Vajramada is found in the samayahṛdaya of Vajraśauṇḍa in the Trilokacakra mahāmaṇḍala description at Tattvasamgraha 271.11: om vajramada hūṃ¹³. This name is also supported by Vajraśekharatānta 45e4: myos chen rdo rje myos pa ste, “Mahāmada is Vajramada”.¹⁴

Curiously, the Tibetan (252c3) for Tattvasamgraha 271.11 reads: om vajradhama hūṃ. This dhama is definitely not an error: TS 294.6 has om mada mada hum phat, for which the Tibetan (253a4/5) is om dhama dhama hūṃ phat. The word dhama is interesting: the root ṇdham may

---

⁸. priva of the Trailokyavijayamaṇḍalopāyikā is an error.
⁹. See also Vajravilaya’s svahṛdaya at Trailokyavijayamahākalparājā 77b8: om khargamarini hūṃ. For marini, I suggest mārini, ‘she destroying’. kharga is more difficult. Given kharjikā, “a relish that provokes drinking” (MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 337), might one conjecture kharja? kharjamārini would then be a vocative: O She destroying the itch to drink!
¹². TS Tibetan 252c3/4: de nas rdo rje snas raŋ gi dam tshig phyag rgya smras pa / om vajramade hūṃ.
¹³. Chinese hūṃ.
¹⁴. See also Tattvasamgraha 279.9: madani madani tiḥraṃ.
mean ‘to blow a conch shell or any wind instrument, blow into, exhale, kindle a fire by blowing’ (MW 509). As noun, it also means ‘blowing, melting’, but is also said of Kṛṣṇa (ibid.).

Vajraśaunḍa is most easily taken as meaning ‘Vajra-Intoxication’ (śauṇḍa: ‘fond of intoxicating liquor, drunk, intoxicated’). Although in accordance with mada, this hardly fits with the Tibetan translation glan sna, glan po'i sna or the like. These suggest that śauṇḍa be taken as from suṇḍa, ‘elephant-trunk’, and imply a translation of ‘Vajra-Elephant-Trunk’. From here, the trumpeting of an elephant could be seen to be implied by the imperatives dhama and dhama dhama in the mantras above, the more since dhamadhama (ind.) means ‘blowing repeatedly or the sort of sound made by blowing with a bellows or trumpet’ (MW 509).

Such an association for Vajraśaunḍa with elephants is further supported by Ānandagarbha’s Trailokyavijayamanḍalopāyikā. There (39b7/8), parallel to the passages of the Tattvasamgraha and Trailokyavijayamahā-kalparājā identifying Hindu divinities with Buddhist ones, we find for Māraṇī/Vajravilāyā:

\[
gsod ma ni gs tso mo rdo rje 'dzum ma' o //
Māraṇī is the mistress Vajrānguli.
\]

This is at first obscure: ‘Vajra-Finger’ seems totally irrelevant. Nevertheless, anāguli also means “finger-like tip of an elephant’s trunk” (MW 8). This word has been previously attested only lexicographically and in Nīlakaṇṭha’s Māṭaṅgalīlā iii.l.15 Hence, analogous to the locution unmadaya in Vajravilāyā’s mantra above, we may use the presence of a particular association of the god (Vajraśaunḍa) to motivate the existence of aspects of his consort.

Now in fact understanding how, if not why, Vajraśaunḍa was understood to include references to both elephants and to intoxication is not very difficult. His ‘Hindu’ name, Madhumatta, could be understood as ‘he (a furious elephant) drunk with liquor’ or ‘he (an elephant) intoxicated by the Spring (i.e. in rut)’. As such, that such an elephant would ‘trumpet’ or ‘blow’ (cf. dhama) with his trunk (śauṇḍa, glan sna) is quite acceptable.

In any case, the connection of Vajraśaunḍa with elephants is also furnished by Trailokyavijayamahākalparājā 77a2:

om mahābālāka mahāganade pīva pīva ruhrira sarvaduṣṭananā phat

Most of these orthographic monstrosities are easy enough to correct. ruhrira may be corrected to rudhiraṃ and sarvaduṣṭanā to sarvaduṣṭānām, while mahāganade should clearly be mahāgaṇapate. This leaves mahābālāka. Reading mahābālāka, the immediate meaning is 'a great young one'. This is in context seemingly senseless, save that one recalls that Vajragarbha, the more 'orthodox' name for Vajraśaṇḍa, is the prime vajrabodhisattva associated with consecration. As such mahābālāka could be seen to refer to the tantric candidate. However, perhaps more to the point is another meaning furnished by the dictionary for bālāka: 'a young elephant five years old'. This meaning of a young bull elephant fits very well with the other aspects signified by mada, matta, and dhama, namely, the characteristic of impetuousity.

om O great young bull elephant! Great Lord of Hosts! Drink! Drink the blood of all the evil ones! phat

Yet this is not the end of the matter. Above we noted that another use of dhama is as a name of Kṛṣṇa. This again seems irrelevant: till, that is, one adduces the parallel to the passages equating the Hindu and Buddhist names from the Trailokyavijayamanḍalopāyikā (38b3):

\[ \text{stobs bzan ni tshogs kyi bdag po rdo rje glan po'i sna'o //} \]

MALLMAN deems Vajraśaṇḍa to be called Balabhadra, who is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa (1975: 114). Indeed, Balabhadra, who is also known as Balarāma, is found outside of the fourth circle of the Dharmadhātuvāgīśvaramāṇḍala (Nispannāyogāvalī no.21) and is held in the skull in the fifth left hand of Viśvādāka in the northern circle of the Paṇcākāmaṇḍala (Nispannāyogāvalī no.24). Since stobs bzan is recorded as representing balabhadra, it follows that stobs bzan should also be so reconstructed. However, stobs bzan may also represent lāṅgalin (ibid.), which is another name for Baladeva (MW 900) who is indeed the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa and whose distinctive iconographic attribute is the plough (lāṅgala, hala. MALLMAN 1963: 270).

16. See also Tattvasamgraha 263.2-5: atha vajraśaṇḍo gaṇapatir bhagavate vajrapānaye idam hṛdayan nirvātayati sma l om vajraśaṇḍa mahāgaṇapati rakṣa sarvaduṣṭebhyo vajradhārṣidāṃ pālaya hum phat ī/17. Cf. MW 729. However, in the Mātaṅgalīla (v.2), bāla refers to "an elephant in the first year" (EDGERTON 1931: 121).
Now above we noted that MONIER-WILLIAMS records that dhama is said of Kṛṣṇa, but unfortunately no text locus is supplied. Nor is one found in the Petersburg Wörterbuch. Assuming that dhama and/or dhama dhama in the mantras cited above may be taken both as a name and as imperatives, the resultant discrepancy between the identification of Vajraśaunḍa as Balabhada/Lāṅgalin and as Kṛṣṇa is at first puzzling. On the other hand, evidence from Indian art exists of a syncretism between Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (MALLMAN 1968: 48 and note 49). Moreover, as MALLMAN has noted on several occasions, the elephant, here the mount of Vajraśaunḍa, is in fact connected with Kṛṣṇa and not with Balabhadra (ibid.; 1964: 177; 1975: 114-115).

Therefore, we may conclude that the figure of Vajraśaunḍa is probably another example of such a syncretism. It is worth noting that the name Baladeva occurs only once in the Tattvasaṃgraha and that in the epithet baladevarakṣini in the mantra of Vajrāśana (TS 303.9-14),19 the consort of Vajramāla whom MALLMAN (1964: 177) associates with Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). Moreover, since Vajaśaunḍa (Madhumatta) is the first and Vajramāla (Madhukara) the second of the four vajrabodhisattva in the South of the Trailokyavijayamaṇḍala, their positions may reflect the elder/joungest brother relationship of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.20 That the names Madhumatta and Madhukara are also similar is not likely to be chance. If not, then that the “maker of madhu” is Kṛṣṇa and the consumer is Baladeva (Balaraṅga, Balabhadra) is also an interesting observation of the Tattvasaṃgraha on the relationship between these two brothers.21

The aforegoing provides the student both with interesting conclusions on the nature of the yogatantras and with troubling questions as the proper

19. TS 303.10-14: atha vajrāṣanā svakarmasamayāṃ abhāṣat / om vajrāśane bha [kṣaya sarvająṣṭan vajradaṣṭiṇi saktidhāriṇi mānuṣa māṇsāhare nararucirā subhapriye majavaśānulepanaviliptagatre ānaya sarvadhanadhānyahiranya-suva[rmdini saṃkrāmaya baladevarakṣini hūm phat //

20. Note that Vajraśaunḍa is white in colour and that Balarāma is also said “of a white hair of Viṣṇu” (SORENSEN 1904: 107).

21. It also brings up the question of whether madhukara is a kind of pun on Kṛṣṇa’s famous epithet madhusūdana. Concern with the elder/joungest brother relationship is found elsewhere, in particular vis à vis Skanda and Gāṇeṣa (cf. SANFORD 1991: 297).
methodology towards their study. Let us take on the aspect of doubt first.

We may be accused of an all too flippant use or misuse of philological methods. Thus, for example, we have postulated that the word dhama within a mantra may be seen both as an imperative verb and as a noun in the vocative. That is, not only have we insisted on the multi-interpreta-
bility of words, but have also suggested that such a polyvalence extends
to grammatical categories. This is, to my knowledge, not usual.

Nevertheless, one may hypothesize that in the yogatantras the multi-
interpretability of names and mantras are precisely the salient feature.
That is, these śleśa – if one may call them so – are what distinguishes
tantric from non-tantric ritualizations. Indeed, I should like to go
further. I suggest that the subsequent semantic ‘overload’ was intended
by the writers of these texts. Perhaps, the idea is that by weighing the
disciple down with ultimately unwieldy and unbearable masses of
culturally determined meaning, the notion might arise that the meaning
of words and acts is in truth disjoined from imposed externalities and
resides solely in the mind of the disciple himself.

If this ratiocination has merit, it then follows that the academic student
of these texts must search for the ambiguities in them, even while
distinguishing between text developments external to the ‘system’ (e.g.
vinayā as orthographic error for vilayā) and intended ambiguities as
such. Clearly, this is in practise difficult, and may explain why so little
progress has been achieved in our understanding of the particulars of
these fascinating and recalcitrant texts.
Bibliography & Abbreviations


Sarvatathāgatatattvasamgraha: see Skorupski 1983.


Sørensen 1904 S. Sørensen, An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata, New Delhi, 1978 (reprint of 1904 edition).


Trailokyavijayamaṇḍalopāyikā: Ānandagarbha’s Śrītrailokyamaṇḍalopāyikā ārya-tattvasamgrahatantradhāṛtā (dpal khams gsum rnam par rgyal ba'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga 'phags pa de kho na ŋid bsdus pa'i rgyud las btaus pa), Tibetan translation, Peking edition, vol. 74 (no. 3342), pp. 32c8-52b8.
