

**Zeitschrift:** Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie  
**Herausgeber:** Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft  
**Band:** 49 (1995)  
**Heft:** 2  
  
**Artikel:** Remarks on two translated passages from the Buddhist tantric literature  
**Autor:** Nihom, Max  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-147188>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 03.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## REMARKS ON TWO TRANSLATED PASSAGES FROM THE BUDDHIST TANTRIC LITERATURE

Max Nihom, Vienna

The publication by SNELLGROVE in 1959 of an annotated edition and translation of the Hevajratantra inaugurated a new period in the study of the Buddhist tantric and tantristic literature. Similarly, the publication some twenty-five years later by SKORUPSKI (1983) of the Sanskrit text of one of the two known recensions of the Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra together with a copiously annotated translation has to some extent already enabled a deeper if preliminary understanding of the *yogatantra* class of texts. In both cases, while one may argue about the methodology of redaction and the accuracy of translation, students will for the foreseeable future be greatly indebted to the efforts of these two scholars.

Nevertheless, the present effort proposes, in accordance with academic tradition, to quibble. This is not because our understanding of Buddhist tantricism has been endangered by the two above-mentioned works. It is precisely their publication which has cleared the way to a better comprehension of detail, an understanding which remained practically impossible in the absence of the publication of the texts. The two details of translation and understanding which the present article proposes to treat are: 1) the rendering of the term *vidarbhya* in SKORUPSKI's translation of Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-B – a somewhat jejune detail which will prove easily correctable by reference to the secondary literature on the Hindu tantric traditions – and 2) SNELLGROVE's translation and understanding of a passage on a rite of magic from the Hevajratantra commentary named the Yogaratnamālā, the publication of the Sanskrit text of which was provided in his edition of the tantra. A rectification will be attempted via consideration of a few passages from the Āyurveda and Dharmaśāstra literature.

### I.

#### *Vidarbhya* in the Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra

In SKORUPSKI's exemplary study of the Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra, consisting of a Sanskrit edition of recension B of this text and provided with

an English translation, we find, in chapter 3, a lengthy passage treating of the rites for the dead which is also found in recension A in chapter 1.<sup>1</sup> Within this section of the tantra dealing with various rites for the dead, we find three times the phrase *tannāma ca vidarbhya*<sup>2</sup> and once *nāma vidarbhya*<sup>3</sup>. In a footnote to the first occurrence, SKORUPSKI states:<sup>4</sup>

Tib translations help us in establishing the meaning of *vidarbha*. Tib. A renders it as *miñ nas smos nas* or *miñ nas brjod nas*. Tib B rather inconsistent has either *miñ dan spel ba'i snags* or *miñ dan spel nas*; *miñ nas brjod pa* or *smos ba* usually means to call by name or to call upon one's name.<sup>5</sup> We render it as 'calling the name', understanding by it an intention to recall one's presence in order to act for his benefit.

The Sanskrit text of this first passage (242.29-244.3), its Tibetan translation (243.36-245.4), the Tibetan of the parallel passage of Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-A (319.37-320.2)<sup>6</sup> and the translation of SKORUPSKI (p. 82) are:<sup>7</sup>

- 1 SKORUPSKI 1983 has been somewhat unjustifiably criticized in a review article by VAN DER KUIJP 1992. The same author has also incorrectly retranslated a passage from SNELLGROVE's edition of the Hevajratāntra (cf. VAN DER KUIJP 1985 and note 29 in NIHOM, "On the Attraction of Women and Tantric Initiation: Tilottamā and Hevajratāntra II.v.38-47 and I.vii.8-9", to appear in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 58/3.
- 2 SDP-B 242.29, 244.5, and 244.8. 244.5: *tannāma ca vidarbhya yathoktamantram sahasram japet //*, (B) *de yi miñ dan spel nas ni //* *ji ltar gsuñs pa'i snags stoñ bzlas //*, (A, 320.3) *de nas miñ nas brjod nas ni //* *ji skad gsuñs pai snags bzla žiñ //*; 244.8: *tannāma vidarbhya kuśalo lakṣaśataṃ vā yāvac chataśahasram //*, (B) *de yi miñ nas spel ba yi //* *mkhas pas 'bum phrag brgya 'am ni //*, (A, 320.6) *de yi miñ nas brjod nas kyañ //* *mkhas pas 'bum phrag brgya 'am ni //*
- 3 248.22 *nāma vidarbhyābhimantrya*, (B) *miñ spel snags ni mñon btab nas*, (A, 322.4) *rañ gi miñ smos snags btab nas*.
- 4 SKORUPSKI 1983: 82 note 20.
- 5 Cf. JÄSCHKE (1881: 415) ad *miñ*: *miñ nas rjod pa* or *smo ba*, "to call by name, also to call upon the name of".
- 6 No Sanskrit version is available for recension A. This is unfortunate since all the Tibetan commentaries are on this version of the tantra.
- 7 The text as furnished in Vajravārman's Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-A commentary is (136-2-6f.): *de yi miñ nas smos nas ni //* *gur gum bzañ po'i snags bris la //* *sdig can sdig ni zad bya'i phyir //* *rims kyis 'bum mam bye ba yis //* *grañ ni rab tu tshañ bar du //* *mchod rten las ni rab tu bya //* *de ni ñes par dmyal gnas las //* *'dis byas pa yis grol bar 'gyur //*

*tannāma ca vidarbhya mantram kumkumena likhitvā //*  
*caityakarma kuryād yāval lakṣaṃ paripūrṇam //*  
*mahāpāpinaḥ pāpakṣayāya koṭim api pūrayet //*  
*evaṃkṛte te 'vaśyaṃ narakād muktā bhavanti //*  
*tathā tiryagbhyaś ca muktā devanikāyeṣūtpadyante //*

*de yi miñ dan spel ba'i sñags // gur gum bzañ pos bris nas ni //*  
*'bum ni yoñs su rdzogs par bya // mchod rten las ni rab tu bya //*  
*sdiḡ chen sdiḡ ni yad bya'i phyir // bye ba yañ ni rdzogs par bya //*  
*de ltar byas na de ñes par // dmyal ba las ni grol bar 'gyur //*  
*de bzin<sup>8</sup> yi dags byol soñ las // grol te lha rigs rñams su skyes //*

*de yi miñ yañ smos nas ni // gur gum bzañ po sñags bris la //*  
*rim gyis 'bum ni tshañ tsam du // mchod rten las ni rab tu bya //*  
*sdiḡ can sdiḡ ni zad bya'i phyir // bye ba sñed ni tshañ bar bya //*  
*de ltar byas na ñes par ni // dmyal ba las ni grol bar 'gyur //*  
*yi dags byol soñ sdug bsñal las // grol te lha yi gnas su skye //*

<sup>9</sup>Calling the name (of the deceased) and writing the mantra with saffron, he should perform the *caitya*-rite up to one hundred thousand times. In order to pacify the sins of a great sinner, he should do it ten million times. By this action they are certainly freed from hell. Likewise in the same way they are freed from an animal state and are born among the assemblies of gods.<sup>10</sup>

This selection is by no means the only one in the Buddhist tantric literature with *vi-darbh*. It is to be found in the Hevajratantra and in its commentary called Yogaratnamālā in the chapter dealing with mantras. Hevajratantra I.ii.4 and Yogaratnamālā 111.12-15 (Tib. 132-4-7/8):

*sarvamantrapadāḥ / oṃkāradisvāhāntā hūṃphaṭkāraavidarbhitaḥ*

*sñags thams cad kyi rkañ par dan por oṃ gyi rnam pa dan / mthar ni svāhā dan /*  
*hūṃ phaṭ kyi rnam pa ni nañ du gzug go /*

*sarvety ādi hevajrāṇāṃ jāpyamantrapadāḥ oṃkāraḍi hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ kāra-*  
*vidarbhitaḥ svāhāntāveditavyāḥ / anyatra gurūpadeśād yathāyogaṃ vidarbhaṇaṃ*  
*veditavyaṃ*

*sñags thams cad ces bya ba ni dgyes pa'i rdo rje'i bzlas pa'i sñags kyi tshig ste /*  
*yi ge oṃ dan por sbyar ziñ hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ ces bya bas brgyan ciñ svāhā*  
*mthar dbye bar bya'o // gzan dag ni bla ma'i man ñag gis ci rigs par dbye bar*  
*bya'o //*

8 For printed *bzin*.

9 See also Vajravarman 136-2-7ff, translated by SKORUPSKI 1983: 82 note 21.

10 Tib. B *lha rigs rñams su* implies \**devakuleṣu*, "in the families of the gods".



The rendering *brgyan* is a literal translation from the Sanskrit, ‘adorn’. However, from the Tibetan rendering of *-vidarbhitāḥ, naṅ du gzug*, which may be rendered “placed between”, it is clear that *vi-darbh* may be translated in this context by “intertwine”.

[The Hevajratantra passage] beginning with ‘all’<sup>11</sup>: [‘] the words of the mantra [‘] are to be recited to the Hevajras.<sup>12</sup> [These words] are to be known<sup>13</sup> as [‘] starting with the syllable *hūṃ*, intertwined (adorned) with the syllables *hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ*<sup>14</sup> *phaṭ* and ending with *svāhā*.]’ In other cases the intercalation (adornment) which is fitting is to be known through the instructions of the guru.

From this perspective it is evident that the Tibetan Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-B renderings *miṅ daṅ spel ba’i sṅags* and *miṅ daṅ spel nas* are not, in truth, “inconsistent”, inasmuch as they may be rendered, respectively, “the mantra mixed (*spel ba*) with the name (of the deceased) [is written]” and “[the mantra is written] having been mixed with the name (of the deceased)”. This yields:

Having drawn the mantra with saffron having intertwined<sup>15</sup> it (the mantra) with the name of him (the deceased), one should perform the *caitya*-rite up to a full one hundred thousand times. For the destruction of the sins of a great sinner, one should complete ten million [repetitions]. Upon having done thusly, they surely become released from Hell. Likewise, from the animal state they are released and are born among the assemblies of gods.

A minor but interesting point is that, despite appearances, it is evident that the readings of Sarvadurgatipariśodhana B and the lost Sanskrit of A were identical at this particular juncture, since the phrases *miṅ nas smos nas* or *miṅ nas brjod nas* can easily be made to refer to the feature of *vidarbhāṇa*. In particular, the term *vidarbhāṇa* with as Tibetan *smos pa* is found in a list of terms referring to ritual in the Mahāvīyutpatti (no. 4351). While EDGERTON<sup>16</sup> proposes “*speaking or naming... Perh[aps] some verbal ritual act, recitation,*

11 Tibetan reconstructs to *sarvamantreti*.

12 The “Hevajras” must refer to the initiated and successful disciples. The Tibetan, here also assuming a genitivus pro dativo, yields “to Hevajra.”

13 Tib. *dbye bar bya*, “to be divided”. This brings up the possibility that one might read Skt. *āvedhitavya-*, ‘to be cut open’, that is, ‘to be broken apart’.

14 The Hevajratantra has but one *hūṃ*.

15 JÄSCHKE 1975: 331: *spel ba* (4) – “to join, put together, mix”.

16 EDGERTON 1970: 489.

*invocation*”, this is clearly a specialized submeaning of *vi-darbh* in cases, as in the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana, where the intercalated words are a name. The Tibetan translations of Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-A are therefore an interpretation of the Sanskrit meaning of *vidarbhya* as “having intertwined”. Significantly, such a translation as *smos pa* is avoided in the Hevajratantra and the Yogaratnamālā where it would be palpably inappropriate.<sup>17</sup>

The proposition of SKORUPSKI cited above that the rite in question entails “calling the name” of the deceased, after which the mantra is written, may hence be slightly revised. In this case,<sup>18</sup> one ‘calls the name’ of the deceased by utilization of the mantra into which the name of the deceased who is to profit from the rite has been placed. Hence, the rite in question (which SKORUPSKI has termed the ‘*caitya sādhana*’) does not require recitation of the mantra at all, but rather only the deposition of the inscribed mantra containing the name of the dead in a *caitya*.<sup>19</sup> This recalls SCHOPEN’s study in which he noted that *dhāraṇīs* such as the Vimaloṣṇīṣa were deposited in *stūpas* in Bengal, Bihar and Gilgit between the 6th and 10th centuries.<sup>20</sup>

Now the real reason for this much ado about very little is a methodological point relating to the procedure of study engaged in by Buddhologists. *Vidarbha* and related derivations of *vi-darbh* are, in fact, a well known technical term of *mantraśāstra*. As long ago as 1925, BHATTACARYA, in his introduction to the second volume of the *Sādhnamālā*, stated:<sup>21</sup> “*vidarbha* consists in writing the letters of the name of the medium, between the letters of the *Mantra* used mostly in *Vaśikaraṇa* or bewitching.” A similar meaning of intertwining additional material between parts of a mantra was furnished by EDGERTON for *vidarbhayati* some decades later.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, approximately a half a century after BHATTACARYA first observed

17 Several other occurrences of *vi-darbh* are furnished by Saṃvarodayatantra 10.10, 13, 16, 20, 27, 37, 45, and 47. The Tibetan translations employ *spel ba*, which again is more appropriate than *smos* or *brjod* would be.

18 In the two other instances with *vidarbhya* in the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana the mantra is evidently recited.

19 SKORUPSKI 1983: 82 note 21.

20 SCHOPEN 1985: 145. This *dhāraṇī* has features which recall aspects of the Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra. See NIHOM 1994: 163-168.

21 BHATTACARYA 1968: lxxvii.

22 EDGERTON 1970: 487.

the technical nature of the term, *vidarbha* was the object of a detailed study by PADOUX who, basing himself mostly on Hindu sources, noted that the meaning of the separation [of the parts of a mantra] may be retrieved from Sanskrit lexicographic sources: "... c'est dont certainement sur l'explication donnée du mot *darbha* par la lexicographie traditionnelle que repose le sens technique de ce term."<sup>23</sup> In a subsequent study by this savant on the rite of mantra recitation or *japa*, he notes that *vidarbha* refers to "opérations où les mots ou les syllabes du mantra sont accouplés, invertis, emboîtés les uns dans les autres ou au contraire séparés" and that "on y a recours surtout dans les usages "magiques" du *japa*, notamment dans les *ṣaṭkarmāṇi*. On les trouve en contexte bouddhique aussi bien qu'hindou."<sup>24</sup> Hence, there are at least three methodological points to be made here. First, that traditional lexicography is of prime importance in the understanding of technical terms of the tantric literature, a perspective of PADOUX to which the present writer can not subscribe strongly enough; secondly, that, especially in the study of tantra, it is necessary that one at least attempts an acquaintanceship with both the Buddhist and Hindu primary and secondary literature: lastly, that, temptation notwithstanding, in the presence of a Sanskrit text, Tibetan renderings should not be given precedence over the original.<sup>25</sup>

## II

### Yogaratnamālā 112.17-23

In the course of writing the above, a further instance of *vidarbha* was found in the Yogaratnamālā. The meaning of *vidarbha* here is not different from the one above. The passage in question, however, reveals itself to have been misunderstood by SNELLGROVE. Yogaratnamālā 112.17-22 (on Hevajra-

23 PADOUX 1977: 349.

24 PADOUX 1987: 129. See also p. 128 note 49. The Buddhist loci provided above from the Hevajratāntra, Yogaratnamālā and Sarvadurgatipariśodhana are not mentioned by PADOUX.

25 A cogent discussion of the difficulties associated with this unjustifiable over-emphasis on Tibetan translations of the Buddhist tantric literature is found in TSUDA 1974: 6-16.

tantra I.ii.16)<sup>26</sup>, its Tibetan translation (133-1-8/2-3), and the translation of SNELGROVE (1959: I.55 note 1):

*tathaiva amkāraṇiṣpannāṃ nairātmyāṃ vikṛtarūpāṃ kapālakhatvāṅgakarṭṭh-  
dharāṃ vicintya hr̥tsūrye nīlabumkāraṃ dṛṣṭvā pūrvasevāṃ kṛtvā brahmakapāle  
viśarājikāraṇarudhireṇa<sup>27</sup> ṣaṭkoṇaṃ cakram abhiliḥya koneṣu hūmkāraṃ  
vilikhya madhye oṃ bum amukam jvaraya hūṃ anyatamopadraveṣu nāma  
vidarbhya tuṣāgnau tau tāpayet*

*de bzin yi ge a las yoṅs su rdzogs pa'i bdag med ma'i gzugs su gyur pa thod pa  
daṅ khatvāṅga daṅ gri gug 'dzin pa rnam par bsams la sñiṅ gar ṇi ma las yi ge  
brum (sic) sñon po blta žiṅ sñon du bsñen pa byas la bram ze'i thod pa la dug  
daṅ skye<sup>28</sup> tshe daṅ tsha daṅ khrag rnams kyi 'khor lo rtsibs drug pa bris la / zur  
rnams su hūṃ bri žiṅ / dkyil du oṃ brum (sic) ce ge mo dza ra ya hūṃ žes bya  
ba'am / gnod pa gzan dag gis sbyor bar 'dod na yaṅ de'i miṅ gis brgyan žiṅ  
bsnun pa'i me la gduṅs pa las thams cad bya'o //*

One must imagine Nairātmyā, who becomes manifest from the syllable *am*. Her appearance is fearful and she holds the skull, *khatvāṅga* and knife. On a solar disk at the heart one sees the syllable *bum*, dark blue in colour, and having performed the prescribed worship, one should draw a six-sided *maṇḍala* in a brahma-skull with a mixture of poisonous mustard and blood. In the six corners one must inscribe the syllable *hūṃ* and in the centre *oṃ bum* Burn him hūṃ. For any intended misfortunes one should write his name and burn it in a chaff-fire (passage corrupt).<sup>29</sup>

We start with a detail. The translation “her appearance is fearful” for *vikṛtarūpā-* is superficially reasonable, but the meaning ‘fearful’ is not attested for *vikṛta*. Better is perhaps ‘malformed’ or ‘having a foul appearance’.<sup>30</sup> Further, Tibetan ... *gzugs su gyur pa* seems merely to refer to the form taken on by the goddess, that is, with her iconographic specifications, this phrase being in apposition to ... *dzin pa* which is the object of *rnam pa bsams la* = *vicintya*. Instead of “one must imagine” or ‘having imagined’, *vicintya* itself should be understood as “having meditated upon”, since at Hevajrat Tantra I.v.20 we find *vicintana* rendered by *bsam gtan*. SNELGROVE himself observes that “S[araha] says that *cintana* is ordinary thought, that *vicintana* refers to thought in terms of its absolute nature, and that this is

26 Hevajrat Tantra I.ii.16: *abhicārukaṃ / oṃ bum svāhā /*

27 After SNELGROVE. See *infra*.

28 SNELGROVE (1959: II. 112 note 6), citing the Narthang Tenjur, reads *ske*.

29 This is the comment of SNELGROVE.

30 Cf. EDGERTON 1970: 481.

*dhyāna*.”<sup>31</sup> This high opinion of *vicintana* here is also held by the *Yogaratanamālā*.<sup>32</sup>

More interesting is “with a mixture of poisonous mustard and blood” for the proposed reading *viṣarājikāravanarudhireṇa*, ms. *rājikārṇavanarudhireṇa*. The Tibetan has a series of four items:

1) *dug*, that is, poison, whence \**viṣa*.

2) *skye tsha* (Peking) or *ske tsha* (Narthang), both of which may represent *rājikā*, black mustard.<sup>33</sup> The rendering “poisonous black mustard”, does not appear likely since Tibetan construes the compound with a series of *dan*, ‘and, together with’.

3) *tsha*. LOKESH CHANDRA<sup>34</sup> provides the Sanskrit equivalents *ātapa* and *uṣṇa*, ‘heat’, which do not make much sense. On the other hand, the item *tshwa* is recorded representing *cukra* and *śuluka*.<sup>35</sup> *Cukra* (= Mahāvīyutpatti 5712) “is said to mean only *salt*; no such meaning is otherwise recorded for *cukra*; the preceding word is *aṃlaḥ*, which goes much better with the regular Skt. mg. of *cukra*; ... cf. *śulakaḥ*, defined in the same way”.<sup>36</sup> ‘Salt’ does not seem untoward, since one might then propose either a) [*viṣa*]*rājikālavanarudhireṇa*, assuming one does not want to admit an (elsewhere unattested) orthographic variant of *ravana* for *lavaṇa*, ‘salt’, or b) [*viṣa*]*rājikārṇavarudhireṇa*, if one should wish to propose a derivative meaning of ‘salt-water’ for *aṇava*, the sea. Since, in a rite of *māraṇa*,

31 SNELGROVE 1959: I.63 note 2. The Tibetan of Saraha (ibid.): *sems par byed pas bsams pa ste / de kho na ñid kyi tshul du rnam par sems par byed pa ste / de ñid bsam gtan no / Hevajratāntra I.v.20cd: tad dheyam cintitam yac ca dhyeyam yasmād vicintanam //*

32 *Yogaratanamālā* 118.34-36: *tad dheyam ityādi / tad iti yac cintitam sakalena tattva-pāṭalenānutpādalakṣaṇam tad dhyātavyam yasmāt kāraṇāt paramasārataram tad vicintanam yasya prabhāśvaralakṣaṇasya vicintanam atas tad eva dhyātavyam*, 135-5-7/136-1-1: *gaṇ bsams de ni zes bya ba la sogs pa la / de ni zes bya ba ni de kho na ñid kyi le’u gaṇ du bsams pa ma lus pa skye ba med pa’i mtshan ñid can bsgom par bya ba ste / de lta bas na gaṇ gi phyir mchog tu sñiṅ po ’gyur ba de rnam par bsam par bya’o / ’od gsal ba’i mtshan ñid de ñid rnam par bsam bya ba yin pas de’i phyir de ñid bsam par bya ba’o //*

33 LOKESH CHANDRA 1976: 136, 163.

34 LOKESH CHANDRA 1976: 1923.

35 *ibid.*

36 EDGERTON 1970: 231.



Samvarodayatantra 10.35-6 mentions poison (*viṣa*), blood (*rakta*) and the *dvandva* compound *rājikālavaṇa*-, reading a) is to be preferred.

4) *khregs*, *rudhira*, ‘blood’, which is unproblematic.

I therefore propose the translation “with poison, black mustard, salt and blood” for the Tibetan and the same, minus ‘poison’, for Sanskrit.<sup>37</sup>

The second half of the selection clearly exercised the translator more, for in his philological notes to the Yogaratnamālā, SNELGROVE states:<sup>38</sup>

T. *gnod pa gzan dag gis sbyor bar 'dod na yañ de'i miñ gis brgyan zin bsnun pa'i*  
 \* *me la gduñs pa las thams cad bya'o*. ‘If one wishes to afflict (him) with other harms, then by burning in fire a –\* which has been adorned with his name and pierced, all will be done’. [some word is required where marked \*.] In the Sanskrit version *tau* may refer to two things, one inscribed, one pierced, or the idea of a pair may be taken erroneously from the previous hate-causing ritual.

Giving the verdict first, I am of the opinion that the passage in Sanskrit is not corrupt and that both translations, from the Sanskrit and from the Tibetan, may be improved upon. Access to what will be a fairly complex semantic argument is provided by the rendering “burn” for *jvaraya*. This is somewhat curious since the root *jvar* + causative does not mean ‘burn’ as such, that is, it is not identical to *jval*-, but rather means ‘make feverish’.<sup>39</sup> Note that this notion of causing illness to the victim is supported by the Tibetan *gnod pa* which as a verb may mean ‘injure, cause illness’<sup>40</sup> and here represents the noun *upadrava*.<sup>41</sup> The mantra is therefore: *om buṃ* Make so and so feverish! *hūṃ*.

With this interpretation of the mantra, we may re-examine *anyatamo-padrava*-. *upadrava*, in addition to ‘misfortune, harm, calamity’ etc., also means, in the Suśrutasamhitā, “a supervenient disease or one brought on whilst a person labours under another”.<sup>42</sup> But what, under these circum-

37 Compare Viṇaśikhatantra 155 (this text is the sole surviving representative of the *vāmasrotas*): *athābhicāraṃ kuryāt samidhānāṃ tathāsthībhiḥ / rājikāviṣaraktam śmaśāne homam ārabhet* // Note that both the Hevajatantra (I.ii.16) and this passage refer to a rite of *abhicāruka*.

38 SNELGROVE 1959: II.112 note 6.

39 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 428.

40 Cf. DAS 1903: 723.

41 See *infra*.

42 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 199. This lexicographer does not specify a text passage,

stances then is the primary disease of the Yogaratnamālā passage? It is fever (*jvara*), “leader and king of all diseases”,<sup>43</sup> of which Vāgbhaṭa in his *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṃhitā* (III.2.1-2) states: “Das Fieber, der Fürst der Krankheiten, das Unheil, der Tod, der Verzehr der Lebenskraft, der Beendiger, der Zorn, der Dakṣa’s Opfer vernichtete und aus Rudra’s oberem [d.h. Stirn-] Auge entsprang, [das Fieber], das in Bewusstlosigkeit bei Beginn und Ende besteht, glutartig ist und durch Verfehlung entsteht, – unter den mannigfachsten Namen weilt das grausame bei den verschiedenen Gattungen [der Lebewesen].”<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the phrase *anyatopadraveṣu nāma vidarbhya* may be considered to enjoin the intercalation of the name of the supervenient disease within the mantra *om bum* ... in those instances when such a malady is wished upon the victim in addition to fever.

Before turning to consideration of *tuṣāgni*, it is worthwhile noting that the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* provides another locus supporting the co-occurrence of death (scil. fever) and supervenient diseases. In the coda of chapter 2, the text rhapsodizes on the benefits which accrue to him who enters cities etc. having practiced the King of Procedures (*kalparāja*) enjoined by the tantra. *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-B 226.11f., its Tibetan translation and the parallel Tibetan of recension A (356.20f.):

*yaś cedam kalparājam śrāddho dhvājāgrāvaropitam kṛtvā ... sarvamṛtyūpadravam ca naśyati /*

*gañ zig brtag pa'i rgyal po 'di la dad pas rgyal mtshan gyi rtse mo la brtags te ...  
dus ma yin par 'chi ba dan / ñe ba 'tshe thams cad zi bar 'gyur ro //*

---

but see *Suśrutasamhitā sūtrasthāna* 33.3: *upadravaiḥ tu ye juṣṭā vyādhayo yāntyavā-  
ryatām / rasāyanāddhinā vatsa tām śṛṇv ekamanā mama //*, on which Ḍaḥṇa states: *upadravair iti yaḥ pūrvotpannam vyādhim jaghanyakālajāto vyādhir upasṛjati sa tanmūla evopadravasamjñah...* Likewise on verse 4a *vātavyādhīḥ pramehaśca*, we find *prathamam mūlavyādhayo bhavanti paścād upadravā iti...*

43 MONIER-WILLIAMS (1899: 428) refers here to the *Suśrutasamhitā*. I have not found the locus in question. However, see Aruṇadatta’s *Sarvāṅgasundarā* commentary to *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṃhitā* III.2.1: *rogeṣu ca jvaraḥ pradhānaḥ /*

44 HILGENBERG und KIRFEL 1941: 215. *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṃhitā* III.1-2:

*jvaro rogapatih pāpmā mṛtyurojośano 'ntakaḥ /  
krodho dakṣādhvaradhvaṃsī rudrordhvanayanodbhavaḥ //  
janmāntayor mohamayah santāpātmā 'pacārakaḥ /  
vividhair nāmabhiḥ krūro nānāyoniṣu vartate //*



*brtag pa'i rgyal po 'di dad pas / rgyal mtshan gyi rtse mo la brtags te / ... nad  
dañ gnod pa thams cad ma mchis par 'gyur la/*

While, as we shall see, the Tibetan translator of the Yogaratnamālā understood its Sanskrit very well, the Tibetan renderings of the Sanskrit of the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana leave some things to be desired. In particular, the Tibetan of B understands *mṛtyu* as 'untimely death', \**akālamṛtyu*. Recension A sees *mṛtyu* of Skt. B as 'disease'. It may be noted, however, that *nad* occasionally represents Sanskrit *jvara*, fever,<sup>45</sup> even as both *ñe ba 'tshe* and *gnod pa* may be held to reflect *upadrava*.<sup>46</sup> As noted above, in Āyurveda fever is also known as 'death' (*mṛtyu*). Hence, despite the Tibetan translations of B, Skt. *sarvamṛtyūpadrava* may be rendered 'all fevers and supervenient diseases'. We may observe that from the perspective of the Sanskrit original this makes more sense than holding that the engagement of the practitioner with the tantra vanquishes all deaths and calamities.

It is, moreover, of some general consequence that in Āyurveda *kalpa* may mean "treatment of the sick, doctrine of poisons and antidotes".<sup>47</sup> Indeed, the *kalparāja* which the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana is deemed to be is promulgated by the Buddha as a reaction to the fall of the god Vimalamañiprabha from heaven and his susceptibility to skin diseases. In this respect it is worth hypothesizing that the meaning of *kalpa*, which is a term found with reference to other Buddhist tantras as well,<sup>48</sup> may well have been derived from this Āyurvedic meaning of *kalpa*, and should, in general, be rendered accordingly as 'procedure' or 'protocol' when part of a title of a text. These translations, of course, would raise some practical difficulties when applied to *kalpa* understood as a section of a tantra, since describing

45 Cf. LOKESH CHANDRA 1976: 1342.

46 Cf. LOKESH CHANDRA 1976: 1979, 1376.

47 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 262.

48 For example, the *sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittarahasyo guhyasamāja nāma mahākalparāja* (Tibetan translation of the Derge edition, MATSUNAGA 1978: 4 note 1). Three examples where *kalpa* has usually been taken to be a term for a 'section' of a text are: the Hevajratāntra, formally termed the *dvātriṃśatkalpoddhṛtaḥ kalpa-dvayātmako śrīhevajraḍākinījālasaṃvaramahātantrarājā* (SNELLGROVE 1959: I.xiii, see also Hevajratāntra I.i.xi.12); from the *yogatantra* class, the *śrīparamādyamantrakalpapakhaṇḍa*; lastly, the names of the sections of the *mūlatantra* of the *yogatantra* class, the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, e. g. *sarvatathāgatavajrasamaya nāma mahākalparāja*.

the Hevajratāntra, for example, as consisting of two protocols would be a good instance of Indobabble. Nevertheless, this need not mean that Āyurvedic connotations for the term would have been unappreciated at the time of the composition of the tantra in India itself.

<sup>49</sup>He with faith having performed the King of Procedures (the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana) which he has cast on the very top of his banner, ... all fevers and super-venient diseases come to naught.

Returning to the Yogaratnamālā, there remains the difficult item *tuṣāgni*. SNELGROVE considers the Tibetan here – *bsnun pa'i me* – corrupt. As we shall see, this may be inaccurate. MONIER-WILLIAMS' dictionary supplies two meanings for the term *tuṣānala* which, *anala* being synonymous with *agni*, will help: 1) a chaff-fire and 2) "a capital punishment consisting in twisting dry straw round a criminal's limbs and setting it on fire, W."<sup>50</sup> This meaning is not found in the Petersburg dictionary. The abbreviation 'W.' means that this definition derives from of the author of the dictionary who, unfortunately, does not specify the text in which it may be found. However, this meaning for *tuṣānala* is clearly identical, for all practical purposes, with the capital punishment called *kaṭāgni*: "straw placed round a criminal (acc. to Kull[ata] the straw is wound round his neck and then kindled)".<sup>51</sup> This is a punishment prescribed for various crimes<sup>52</sup> including adultery with a brahmin woman by a *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *sūdra* (Vāśiṣṭhadharmaśāstra xxi 1-5),<sup>53</sup> incest (Vṛddhahāritadharmaśāstra vii.220-1)<sup>54</sup> and arson or adultery with the queen (Yājñavalkyadharmaśāstra ii.282).<sup>55</sup>

49 SKORUPSKI's (1983: 72) rendering of Skt. B: "Should a believer in the *kalparāja* put it on the top of the royal banner ... all deadly calamities will be eliminated." Note that '*mṛtyu*', however, is not an adjective. *Śrāddha*, despite the Tibetan of A (...*la*) requires the locative, not an accusative. Lastly, *naśyati* is an intransitive verb.

50 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 452.

51 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 242.

52 Cf. KANE 1976: 401-2. The entry of MONIER-WILLIAMS also refers to the Mahābhārata, but I have been unable to determine which passage.

53 Vāśiṣṭhadharmaśāstra does not record the word *kaṭāgni* as such, but does extensively describe this procedure.

54 The reference is from KANE 1973: 401. I have, however, been unable to locate this in the one edition of the Vṛddhahārīta available to me.

55 *kṣetraveśmavanagrāmavivītakhaladāhakāḥ /  
rājapatnyabhigāmī ca dagdhavyāstu kaṭāgninā //*

Returning to the Tibetan, SNELGROVE understands *bsnun pa* as meaning “pierced”. This is indeed the primary meaning from the root *snun pa*.<sup>56</sup> However, LOKESH CHANDRA and DAS both note that *snun pa byed* represents Sanskrit *grathayati*, which the latter renders “puts together”.<sup>57</sup> *Grathita*, however, may mean ‘tied or strung together, wound’: from here it is not very far at all to the meaning ‘tied up, wound around’ for *bsnun pa*. *bsnun pa’i me* would then mean “fire which is (has been) wound around [something or someone]”. This is quite acceptable as a semantic translation of the penalty *tuṣāgni* as “a capital punishment consisting in twisting dry straw round a criminal’s limbs and setting it on fire.” Therefore, in contradiction to SNELGROVE, no word needs to be seen to be missing in the Tibetan translation of the Yogaratnamālā passage.

Consequently, the term *tuṣāgni* may be seen either as a type of capital punishment as such or, which is more likely in the present context, in a more general sense as a locus of fire where one has ignited straw which has been wound around something. This last, unwieldy definition may be easily reduced, in German, to *tuṣāgni*, ‘ein Wickelfeuer’.<sup>58</sup> As to what is enveloped, this is clearly the *brahma*-skull and the maṇḍala drawn on it. Hence, Skt. *tau*, ‘the two’ may be seen to refer to these two items taken separately. The Tibetan, instead, evidently did not regard *tau* as referring to these as separate and has translated this *tau* by *thams cad*, ‘all, everything’.

Lastly, if one inquires why *tuṣāgni* as a mode of capital punishment has been generalized in this particular rite of magic which speaks not of death but of disease, the answer would seem to be that the magical rite of causing illness (*vyādhikarāṇa*) is widely considered to be a variation of the rite of killing *māraṇa*.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, the use of the method of *tuṣāgni* in this Yogaratnamālā selection is not unbecoming.

Moreover, having meditated on her who bears a skull, a *khaṭvāṅga* and a knife, Nairātmyā, originated from a syllable *aṃ* [and] malformed, having seen a blue-black syllable *buṃ* on the sun in [one’s] heart, having performed the preliminary

56 Cf. JÄSCHKE 1881: 319, where *snun pa* is defined as 1) to stick or prick into, 2) to suckle. Similarly, DAS 1902: 770.

57 LOKESH CHANDRA 1976: 1440, DAS 1902: 770.

58 For this neologism I am indebted to Dr. M. Torsten MUCH (Vienna).

59 GOUDRIAAN 1978: 379 (with text references).

service,<sup>60</sup> having drawn a six-cornered ['circle'] with poison, black mustard, salt and blood on a *brahma*-skull, one draws a syllable *hūṃ* on the corners [of the 'circle']. In other cases of [where one intends] other supervenient diseases [in addition to fever] having [also] intertwined in the middle [of the mantra] the name [of the supervenient disease] with the mantra *om buṃ* make feverish so and so!, one burns the two (*brahma*-skull and inscribed maṇḍala) in a fire [ignited] in the straw [wound around these two].

In conclusion, although expenditure of this much academic time and space on a relatively unimportant rite in a commentary is perforce questionable, such is perhaps to be motivated by way of yet another methodological point. Namely, that in the study of Buddhist tantra and tantristic literature the understanding of particulars cannot rest solely on the 'religious' literature as such, whether Buddhist or Hindu. Instead, and this is of course the reason why such items as the above are interesting in themselves, the researcher is forced to cast his net much more widely. Although in the present instance this was only a shallow fling into the Āyurveda and Dharmaśāstra literature, there is good reason to suppose that a grand cultural approach will be necessary if we hope, in due course, to harvest a detailed understanding of the tantras at all.

### Bibliography

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Aṣṭāṅgahṛdayasaṃhitā | <i>Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya</i> (A compendium of the Ayurvedic System) Composed of Vāgbhaṭa, with the Commentaries 'Sarvāṅga-sundarā' of Aruṇadatta and 'Āyurvedarasāyaṇa' of Hemādri, Collated by Annā Moreśvar KUNTE and Kṛṣṇa Rāmachandra Śāstri NAVRE, Edited by Bhiṣagāchārya Hariśāstri Parādkar VAIDYA, Varanasi, 1982. |
| BHATTACARYA 1968     | Benoytosh BHATTACARYA (ed.), <i>Sādhnamālā</i> , 2 vols., Baroda, 1968.   |
| DAS 1902             | CHANDRA DAS, <i>A Tibetan-English Dictionary</i> , Kyoto, 1985 (Rep. of 1902 edition).  |
| EDGERTON 1970        | F. EDGERTON, <i>Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary</i> , New Delhi, 1970, 2 vols.  |
| GOUDRIAAN 1978       | Teun GOUDRIAAN, <i>Māyā Divine and Human</i> , Delhi, 1978.   |

60 On *pūrvasevā*, see NIHOM 1987: 78 note 12.

- Hevajratantra see SNELLGROVE 1959.
- HILGENBERG and KIRFEL 1941  
Luise HILGENBERG and Willibald KIRFEL (translators), *Vāg-bhaṭa's Aṣṭāṅgahrdayasaṃhitā: Ein altindisches Lehrbuch der Heilkunde*, Leiden, 1941.
- JÄSCHKE 1881  
A. JÄSCHKE, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, London, 1881 (reprint 1972).
- KANE 1973  
Pandurang Vaman KANE, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. III, 2nd edition, Poona, 1973.
- VAN DER KUIJP 1985  
Leonard W. J. VAN DER KUIJP, "A Text-Historical note on Hevajratantra II:v:1-2", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 8 (1985), pp. 83-89.
- VAN DER KUIJP 1992  
Id., "Notes Apropos of the Transmission of the Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra in Tibet", in *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 16 (1992), pp. 109-125.
- LOKESH CHANDRA 1976  
LOKESH CHANDRA, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, 2 vols., Kyoto, 1976.
- MATSUNAGA 1978  
MATSUNAGA, *The Guhyasamāja Tantra: A New Critical Edition*, Osaka, 1978.
- MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899  
Monier MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1899.
- NIHOM 1987  
Max NIHOM, "On Buffalos, Pigs, Camels, and Crows", in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 31 (1987), pp.75-109.
- NIHOM 1994  
Id., *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian Tantrism: The Kuñjarakarṇadharmakathana and the Yogatantra*, Vienna, 1994 (Publications of the DeNobili Research Library no. xxi).
- PADOUX 1977  
André PADOUX, "Un terme technique du *mantraśāstra*: *vidarbha*", *Journal Asiatique* ccliv (1977), pp. 145-349.
- PADOUX 1987  
Id., "Contribution à l'étude du Mantraśāstra III: Le *japa*", *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 76 (1987), pp. 118-164.
- Sarvadurgatipariśodhana see SKORUPSKI 1983.
- SCHOPEN 1985  
Gregory SCHOPEN, "The Bodhigarbhālāṅkāralakṣa and Vimaloṣṇīṣa Dhāraṇīs in Indian Inscriptions: Two sources for the Practice of Buddhism in Medieval India", *WZKS* 29 (1985), pp.119-149.

- SKORUPSKI 1983 T. SKORUPSKI, *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana: Elimination of All Evil Destinies*, Delhi, 1983.
- SNELLGROVE 1959 D. SNELLGROVE, *The Hevajratāntra: A Critical Study*, 2. vols., London, 1959.
- Tattvasaṃgraha YAMADA (ed.), *Sarvatathāgatātattvasaṃgraha nāma Mahāyānasūtra*, New Delhi, 1981.
- TSUDA 1974 Shinichi TSUDA, *Samvarodayatantra: Selected Chapters*, Tokyo, 1974.
- Suśrutasaṃhitā *Suśrutasaṃhitā of Suśruta with the Nibandhasaṃgraha Commentary of Śrī Ḍaḷhaṇācārya and the Nyāyacandrikā Pañjikā of Śrī Gayadāsāchārya on Nidānasthāna*, edited by Vaidya Jādvaji TRIKAMJI Ācārya, Delhi, 4th ed., 1980 (Jaikrishnadas Ayurveda Series no. 34).
- Vajravārman Vajravārman, *Bhagavati Sarvadurgatipariśodhani tejorāja tathāgata arhate samyaksambuddhaya mahatantrarājavibhāḥkhyasundarālamkāra nama* [sic] (bcom ldan 'das de bzin gsegs pa dgra bcom pa yañ dag par rdzogs pa'i sañs rgyas ñan soñ thams cad yoñs su spyod pa gūi brjid kyi rgyal po // rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po'i rnam par bśad pa mdzes pa'i rgyan zes), Tibetan translation, PT vol.76, pp. 105-1-1/202-1-3.
- Vāsiṣṭadharmasāstra Alois Anton FÜHRER (ed.), *Vāsiṣṭadharmasāstra: Aphorisms on the Sacred Law of the Āryas as Taught in the School of Vasishṭa*, Bombay, 1883.
- Vīṇāśikhatantra Teun GOUDRIAAN, *The Vīṇāśikhatantra: A Śaiva Tantra of the Left Current*, Delhi, 1985.
- Vṛddhahāritasmṛti pp.664-1233 in vol. 2 (of 6), *The Smṛiti Sandarbha: Collection of the Four Dharmashastric Texts by Maharshies*, Delhi, 1988.
- Yājñavalkyadharmasāstra *Yājñavalkyadharmasāstraṃ śrīstaṃślereṇa vratiślāvyānagara-mahāmaṭhe saṃskṛtabhāṣādhyāpakena śodhitam tasminneva ca nagare mudritam*, [Bratislava], 1849.
- Yogaratnamālā Sanskrit text in SNELLGROVE 1959, vol.2, pp. 103-159. Tibetan text, Peking edition of the canon (no. 2315), vol. 53, pp. 127-1-1/157-3-1.