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The Vajragīti of the Hevajratantra still sung in Kathmandu

Makoto Kitada (Osaka University)

The Vajragīti, i.e. “Diamond Song” composed in Apabhramṣa language, which is contained in the Hevajratantra is chanted even today in the Vajrayāna Buddhist ritual songs (cakrapūjā/gaṇacakra) by Vajrācārya-s, i.e. the members of the highest rank of Newari priests. In this link, I upload the recording of the first stanza and *dhuā* (refrain) of this Cacā song in my own voice. For further information of the Cacā songs, i.e. Buddhist esoteric ritual hymns, and the reason why I had to record it in my own voice, see my earlier article [Kitada 2012]. In my recording, I did not try to beautify my singing in an artistic manner. Instead, I made efforts to imitate my teacher’s way of singing as faithfully as possible, and to reproduce the structure of the composition as precisely as I could. Certainly, I might be able to create a notation in the Western style, but perhaps a notation written on paper would be not much better than the recording in my voice which I recorded on the spot immediately after I learned the song.¹

According to my teacher, this is an extremely secret (*guhya*) Cacā. Although Cacā-s which are less secret such as *Trihāndā* might even be recited openly in less secret rituals in which other castes than Vajrācāryas are also allowed to take part in, this song *Kolāi* is not the case. It is never recited outside the secret ritual. It is a so-called *yoginī cacā*. It is not danced.

The text of the Vajragīti in the Hevajratantra [Snellgrove 1959, Part 2: 62]:

kollaire ṭhia bolā mummuṇire kakkolā /
ghaṇa kibida ho vājjai karuṇe kiai na rolā //
tahi baru khājjai gāḍe maanā pijjai /
hale kāliñjara paṇiai dunduru tahi vajjai /
causama kacchuri sihlā kappura lāiāi /
mālāindhana śāliñja tahi bharu khāiāi //
premkhaṇa kheṭa karante śuddhāśuddha na muṇiai /
nirāṁsua amga caḍābī tahiṁja sarāba paṇiai /
malayaje kunduru bāṭai ḥiṇḍima tahiṁ ṣa vajjai //

The version given in Vajrācārya [1996: 26]:

rāga todi, tāla māṭha

¹ A Western notation would be useful to analyze the structure of a composition minutely. However, I do not deal with the musicological aspect in this article.

author: Karṇapāḥ

kolāilethiyā volā mumunire kana kolā 2
ghanakapithi hoyivajrayi, karūṇe kriyāyina lolā //1

malayajam kudurū vajrayi ḥiṇḍimātā nahivajrayi //dhu//

tahibharū khājanagādhe mayanāpivayina yāyi 2
horekālījamna pranayāyi dumdurū vajranayāyi //2

caüsama kasturi silhā, karpūra lāona yayi 2
malayaṁjayi dhanasālijale, tahibharū khājana yāyi //3

prekhu nakṣatre kareta śuddhā śuddha nama nayi 2
nirām sūha amga candrā bayiyā tahija sarā pānayāyi //dhu//

The version whose recitation I learned from my teacher:

// rāga toḍi // tāla □□□² //
kolāī re thiyā volā muṇmuni re kana kolā 2
ghanakapithi hoyi vajrayi karūṇa kriyāyina lolā //dhu

malayajam³ kundurū vajrayi ḥiṇ⁴dimātā nahi vajrayi //dhu//

tahim bharū khājana gāndhe mayenā pivayina yāyi 2
hāle kālimjana pranayāyi dundurū vajra na yāyi //2

caüsama kasturi silhā, karpura lāvana yāyi 2
malayajam indhana sālimjare, tahimbharū khājana yāyi //3

preṣu nakṣatra karante śuddhāśuddha namūnayi 2
nirāmsuha amga candrā vayiyā tahimja surā pāna yāyi //dhu//

² The name of tāla is illegible, being blotted out in black.

³ The dot of *m* might be a stain.

⁴ The dot of *m* might be a stain.

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