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Cacā song, Savākrāntā

Makoto Kitada (Osaka University)

In this link, I upload the recording of the Cacā song, Savākrāntā, in my own voice on 23th Aug 2012. For further information of the Cacā songs, i.e. Buddhist esoteric ritual hymns, and for 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

Ratnakāṣī Vajrācārya [1996: 15]'s version

Rāga Dhanāśrī, Tāla Caspati

Author: Samarasa-vajra

savākrāntā mahāsukha cheriyā, caū ānanda dehā 2
tribhūvana phalayi mahāsukha lāyā candra sūrya dvaya meriyā //
na pāpa rinā na pūnya rinā tribhūvana eka svarūpī 2
sarva vikalpa vidhvaṃsanī devī anuttara jñāna varadāyanī //dhu//
amitāmbha maṇḍala vandhiyāre sthiti kalpānalām iva rūpadhārī 2
karti kapāla khatvāṅgadhārī prajñā jñāna varadā dehā //
dīgamvara makuṭa keśī cakri-kuṇḍala kaṇṭhe dhārī 2
rūcaka mekhalā pāyaladhārī grīvyā naraśīla mālā //
sarva tathāgata jananīdevī virahita bhāva abhāvā 2
śrī vajrayoginī caraṇa śiregata gāvanti samarasa vajrā //dhu//

Note

In the footnote, it is stated that this is the Cacā of Vajra Vilāśinī (= Vajra Vārāhī).

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.

Dāś'gupta's version [1989: 49]

sarvākrāntā mahāsuha kṣariā² caü ānanda dehā
tribhuvana pharayi mahāsuha rāā candra sūrya dui bhediā //dhru//
na pāpa līnā na puṇya līnā tribhuvana eka-svarūpī
sarva-vikalpa-vidhvaṃsanī devī anuttara-jñāna-vara-dāyanī //
amitābha maṇḍala udyā re thiti kalpānalām iva rūpadhārī
karaṭi-kapāla-khaṭvāṅga-dhārī prajñā-jñāna-vara-dāyanī //
digamvara makuṭa-keśā cakri-kunḍala-kaṇṭhī-dhārī
gṛīve rudra nara-śira-mālā rucaka mekhalā pāyala-dhārī //
sarva tathāgata janānī devī virahita bhāva abhāvā
vajrayoginī caraṇa śira dhariyā gāvanti samarasa vajrā //dhu//

My teacher's version

// vajravārāhī-nṛtye // rāga dhanāśrī // tāla jati //
śavākrāntā³ mahāsukha kṣeriyā⁴ caü ānanda dehā⁵ 2
tribhuvana sphalayī⁶ mahāsukha lāyā candra sūrya duyī melīyā //
na pāpa rīṇā na puṇya⁷ rīṇā tribhuvana eku svarūpī 2
sarva vikalpa vidhvaṃsanī devī anuttara jñāna vara-dāyanī //dhu//
amitābha maṇḍala udayāre thiti kalpānalām iva rūpadhārī 2
karati kapāla khaṭvāṅga dhārī prajñā jñāna vara-dāyanī⁸ //
digamvara makuṭa keśā cakri-kunḍala kaṇṭhi dhārī 2
rucaka-mekhalā pāyala-dhārī gṛīvya rudra nara-śira-mālā //
sarva tathāgata janānī-devī virahita bhāva abhāvā 2
śrī vajrayoginī caraṇa śireṃgata [dhariyā]⁹ gāvanti samarasa vajrā //dhu//

² The other two versions have *cheriyā* and *kṣeriyā*. Indeed, the spelling *kṣariyā* is pronounced as the same as *cheriyā*.

³ In the manuscript is written *śavākrāntā* although I learned to sing *sarvākrāntā*.

⁴ The letter *kṣe* is pronounced as *che*.

⁵ *Caü ānanda dehā* means 'that whose body [consists of] the four joys'. However, if *dehā* is taken as the imperative of *de-*, this phrase would mean 'give the four joys.'

⁶ It might be *sphūlayī* although blurred at the margin of the page.

⁷ My teacher reads *purya* which seems to be false. The half form of the letter *ṇa* resembles *ra* (or *rā*) very much.

⁸ However, I learned to sing *vara-dehā*. *Vara dehā*, if correct, might be **vara deha* 'give a reward!'

⁹ *Dhariyā* is secondarily added in the margin by handwriting.

Translation

[The goddess] who treads on the corpse [of her husband], after oozing¹⁰ the Great Pleasure (*mahāsukha*). [She is] that whose body [consists of] the four joys (*ānanda*).¹¹

The three worlds are brought about as fruit (*phalayi*), bringing¹² the Great Joy, [and] rejecting both the sun and the moon¹³.

Neither leaning on sins nor merits, the three world has one and the same nature.

The Goddess is the destroyer of all the errors (*vikalpa*) and the bestower of the highest knowledge as a reward.

Composing the *maṇḍala* of unlimited light¹⁴, [and] abiding¹⁵ [in it], [she] is that who possesses the shape like the fire of the at the end of the world (*kalpa*)¹⁶.

[She is] that who possesses a knife (*karti/karati*), a skull¹⁷ (*kapāla*) and a club with a skull at the top (*khaṭvāṅga*) [and] the bestower of the knowledge of wisdom (*prajñā*).¹⁸

[She is] that whose garment is the sky (*digambara*, i.e. naked), and puts a diadem on the hair, wears a collar of circular form on the neck.

[She wears] a *rucaka*¹⁹, a girdle, anklets with bells, and a necklace of the human heads around (lit. ‘in’) the neck.

All the *tathāgata*-s and the mother goddess²⁰ [are] free from existence and non-existence.

Samarasa Vajra sings, [holding] the feet of venerable Vajra Yoginī on his head.

¹⁰ *Kṣeriyā* is spelled *cheriyā* by Vajrācārya’s version. Since the composite consonant *kṣ* is impossible in Middle Indo-Aryan, the reading *cheriyā* would be better. It might have originally been **cheliyā*. Its meaning is, however, obscure. I translated it provisionally as being derived from Skt. $\sqrt{kṣar}$ ‘to ooze, to emit’.

¹¹ Another possibility would be: “[Oh, the goddess] who treads on the corpse [of her husband]! Give (*dehā*) [me] the four joys, oozing the Great Pleasure!”

¹² I take *lāyā* as *lāiyā*, i.e. the gerundive of *lā-*. Indeed, in the *Cacā* dance, the gesture (*mudrā*) for the term *lāyā* is that of hauling something in toward oneself.

¹³ I translate *mel-* as ‘to leave, to reject’. The sun and moon seem to refer to the *Piṅgalā* and *Idā* tubes respectively.

¹⁴ *Amitāmbha maṇḍala vandhiyā re. Vandhiyā* (i.e. *bandhiyā*) is the gerundive of *bandh-* ‘to tie, to bind’. I translated it as ‘to compose’ in this context. The variant *udayāre* might be interpreted as Skt. *udaya* ‘rising, appearance’, or **udiyā re*, i.e. a gerundive ‘after having appeared’. In that case, this phrase would be translated: “The *maṇḍala* of unlimited light having appeared [...]”

¹⁵ *Sthiti/Thiti* ‘the state of standing’ is obscure. I interpreted it as a description of the goddess’ state of being settled in the *maṇḍala* which she has composed.

¹⁶ The term *kalpa* may denote various things. Here, *kalpa-anala* seems to denote the fire at the time of world destruction.

¹⁷ Or, a cup made of the skull.

¹⁸ Or, if the variant *dehā* is taken, “give [me] the knowledge of wisdom!”

¹⁹ Skt. *rucaka* ‘a golden ornament especially for the neck’.

²⁰ It would be also possible to interpret as: “The goddess [who is] the mother of all the *tathāgata*-s is [...]” However, I am not sure whether this interpretation agrees with the doctrine.

Some Remarks

Apabhraṃśa or NIA words are:

cheriyā, caü, dehā²¹, phalayi, lāyā, dui, merīyā/meliyā
vandhiyā, pāyala

The last line does not conform with the meter. It seems to have originally been something like following:

vajra yoginī caraṇa śire gata gāvanti samarasa vajrā.

However, in this form, the rhythm would be: 3 5 3 5 5 4 4.

Or, it might be analyzed differently as follows?

[vajra yoginī] caraṇaśi regata gāvan tisamara savajjā

(3 +5) 4 4 4 4 4²²

However, I have the impression that this division sounds somehow clumsy.

Another possible solution might be:

vajra yoginī caraṇa śiregata gāvāti samarasa vajrā 3 5 3 5 4 4 4

Namely, *gāvanti* in this case is supposed to be pronounced in four *mātrā*-s. Although I do not know whether this manner of rhythmical division conforms with the orthodox metrics, it seems to me to be the best solution, in which neither the rhythmic agreeableness, nor words division is violated.

Bibliography

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²¹ If it is the imperative of *de*-.

²² If counting *savajjā* as four *mātrā*-s, through pronouncing the last vowel short.