

Article

# Ornament of Reality: Language Ideology in a Tantric Śākta Text

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**Abstract:** The *Mahānayaṅprakāśa* of Śitikaṅṭha is an understudied text within Kashmir Śaivism, notable for its rich description of the inner structure of consciousness vis-à-vis the body and the natural world, and esotericization of Left-Handed Tantric Practice. Furthermore, it is also significant in its form; like the Buddhist *dohakośas* it consists of Apabhraṃśa verses with accompanying Sanskrit commentary. However, in the sporadic scholarship on this text it is consistently portrayed as an early attestation of “Old Kashmiri,” and siloed off into obscurity. This article demonstrates that these verses are definitively composed in Apabhraṃśa, and argues that they should be examined alongside their Buddhist counterparts, which also articulate a mystical cosmology of the sacred realm Uḍḍiyāna located within the body. Afterwards the fourth chapter of this text is translated and presented, in which the human body takes center stage as the *pīṭha*, the pilgrimage destination and practice space of Tantric ritual. Ultimately this article argues that within medieval Tantric traditions the Apabhraṃśa verse form served as a privileged vehicle of esoteric teachings, and that it commands a unique linguistic value by indexing mystical states of consciousness.

**Keywords:** Tantra; Kashmir Shaivism; Krama; Apabhraṃśa; embodiment; Shaktism; Language Ideology; Diglossia

## 1. The Tantric Body

Within Kashmir Shaivism the body and the senses take on important roles. Here the body and the senses are not disparaged and disciplined as one might see in Yogic traditions. Instead the body and the senses are cultivated and utilized in advanced meditation and ritual.<sup>1</sup> This is exemplified by Abhinavagupta, the Kashmiri polymath whose extensive works synthesized the whole of the Śaiva Tantric canon into a cohesive whole. As Kerry Skora has shown, for Abhinavagupta “ultimate awareness is a recollection of Being that takes place in the body,” and indeed he so embodied the Trika tradition that his every gesture and *mudrā* expressed the nondual consciousness of Śiva.<sup>2</sup> Abhinavagupta’s attitude towards the body is perhaps best epitomized in his *Dehasthadevatācakraṣṭotra* (“Hymn to the Wheel of Deities dwelling in the Body”) where he worships the senses as deities in liturgical visualizations which identify the body with the cosmos itself (See Flood 2006, pp. 155–57).

However, there is another tradition of “Kashmir Shaivism” that was far more prolific and well-established than the Trika,<sup>3</sup> and had an even more profound divinization of the body. This is the Krama tradition (also called the Mahānaya, Mahārtha), itself the most radical and “Left-Handed” of the Tantric traditions in its thoroughgoing antinomianism, radical metaphysical and ritual nondualism, and devotion to a pantheon of goddesses led by the ferocious Kālī. Within the Krama the body itself becomes the *pīṭha*, the sacred destination of pilgrimage. Within this privileged dwelling of the goddess—consciousness Herself—the practitioner embarks on a visionary journey; visiting a cremation ground, worshipping its protector deity, encountering nonduality through sensory seizure, and finally beholding the inferno of the final sacrifice as the universe dissolves into its true nature. In the Krama tradition this visionary practice is called the *Pīṭhacakra*, and in the *Mahānayaṅprakāśa* of Śitikaṅṭha (ca. late eleventh century CE (Sanderson 2007, p. 305)) it is described in



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extraordinary detail in the medium of Apabhraṃśa verse. This article examines these verses within the context of pilgrimage and Śākta Tantrism, and demonstrates that Apabhraṃśa verses fulfill a unique function within Tantra by indexing a mystical subjectivity beyond the mundane and simply discursive.

## 2. Tantric Pilgrimage

Within South Asia pilgrimage holds an important place, with millions of people every year undertaking often long and arduous treks to sacred cities, temples, rivers, lakes, and mountains. Indeed, for a majority of Hindus religious practice revolves around interacting with sacred space, whether in local temple worship or pilgrimage. In this sacred geography, particular locations are imbued with a “salvific space,” which can purify sins, secure rebirth in heaven, and grant liberation from cyclic existence (Jacobsen 2013, pp. 5, 31–40). Buddhists also revere sacred places, and Tantric practitioners as well. Indeed, Tantric texts often include lists of “power places” where practitioners would congregate.<sup>4</sup> Foremost among these places are *pīṭhas*, sacred “seats” which served as epicenters and hotspots for Tantric teachings and practice.

One particularly important *pīṭha* for Tantric traditions was Uḍḍiyāna (also spelled Oḍḍiyāna, Oḍiyāna, etc). Uḍḍiyāna is located in the Swat valley of northwest Pakistan, and during the medieval period was famed as a center for esoteric Tantric teachings, and seen as the progenitor for much of the Tantric Buddhist canon in particular. Davidson notes three stages in the development of the “aura” of Uḍḍiyāna vis-à-vis the Tantric Buddhist canon: the first being the origin place for collections of magic spells (the precursors to Tantric texts), the second being the myths associated with the king Indrabhūti, and lastly its extensive mythologization within the Yoginī Tantras (Davidson 2002, pp. 160–63). Furthermore, these places are said to be inhabited by *yoginīs* and *ḍākinīs*,<sup>5</sup> powerful female beings who were either viewed positively as priestesses or negatively as diabolical witches.<sup>6</sup> Uḍḍiyāna was particularly notable in this regard,<sup>7</sup> and was associated with many female Tantric adepts and teachers, whose writings survive in canons to this day. Indeed, one of the surviving *sahaja* Tantric Buddhist teachings is attributed to princess Śrī-Mahā-Līlādevī, who after meeting with a *ṛṣi* in a forest monastery attained awakening into the nature of *sahaja* along with five hundred of her ladies in waiting (Davidson 2002, p. 162). Six other female authors from Uḍḍiyāna have been identified by Kragh: Sahajavajrā, Vajravatī Brāhmaṇī, Lakṣmī, Mekhalā, Kanakhalā, Ḍākinī Siddharājñī. As Kragh shows, these female authors’ works underscore their provenance from Uḍḍiyāna, as well as showing a concern with worshipping the deity within the body via energy channels and seed syllables (Kragh 2018, pp. 8–20). Most importantly, Kragh shows that within these women’s teachings Uḍḍiyāna is not a merely delimited space in space and time, but also a state of mind, a visionary location worshipped within one’s own body.<sup>8</sup> These Buddhist examples distinctly resonate with descriptions of Uḍḍiyāna within the *Mahānaya prakāśa*, and points to the text’s proper literary background.

## 3. The Krama and the Śaiva Canon

The Krama (also called Mahārtha, Mahānaya) represents the culmination of the Leftward trajectory within Śaiva Tantra. As Sanderson charts, the Śaiva Tantric traditions developed by transcending the more exoteric and orthodox traditions that preceded them, which they accomplished by offering successively more esoteric rituals and initiations. This produced a hierarchical structure in which each successive Tantric system is increasingly antinomian, gnostic, and focused on female deities and pantheons (Sanderson 1988, p. 669). This leftward trajectory culminated in the Krama tradition, which featured an entirely female pantheon along with thoroughly nondual practice and metaphysics, and represented a mature flowering of Tantric mysticism.

The Krama tradition itself traces its origins to Uḍḍiyāna, where it was revealed to the initiate Jñānanetra in the ninth century (Sanderson 1988, p. 696). In this legend Jñānanetra encountered the *yoginī* Maṅgalā in the cremation ground Kāravīra, and he received the

earliest Krama scriptures. These scriptures teach a gnostic practice that transcends the ritualism of previous Tantric systems; in the *Kramasadbhāva* Bhairava asks the Goddess for this secret teaching residing within the hearts of the *yoginīs*, which is free from the restrictive and cumbersome observances of outer practices (Sanderson 2007, pp. 263–69). It is unclear whether Jñānānētra’s visionary encounter took place in the physical Swat Valley or in the inner *pīṭha* (i.e., his body as the “seat” of consciousness), but the story still contains many of the elements of Tantric pilgrimage: going to the cremation ground, encountering a *yoginī*, and receiving esoteric teachings. The Kashmiri Krama teachings with which this article is concerned appeared far later in time; in Dyzkowski’s model the Krama culminates in the elaborate *śāstras* by the name of *Mahānayaprakāśa* (“Illumination of the Great Way”).<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. The *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Śitikaṅṭha

The *Mahānayaprakāśa* (“Illumination of the Great Way”) of Śitikaṅṭha is one of three Kashmiri Krama texts under that name, one composed by a disciple named Arṇasimha and the other anonymous.<sup>10</sup> The *Mahānayaprakāśa* is understudied,<sup>11</sup> no complete survey of the text has been published, much less a translation.

The text itself consists of ninety-four verses in Apabhraṃśa (usually labeled “Old Kashmiri”) with accompanying Sanskrit commentary. The version we have begins with some initial benedictory verses, and starts in earnest (Skt: *atha granthārambhah!*) with two root verses in Sanskrit and accompanying commentary. However, all subsequent root verses are composed in another language altogether, consistently identified in secondary scholarship as “Old Kashmiri” (Grierson 1929; Chatterji 1963, pp. 258–59; Rastogi 1979, pp. 99, 220–21). This identification dates back to Grierson’s early study, and is accepted in most subsequent literature. However, this identification is ambiguous, for these verses are in fact quite archaic and distant from both middle and modern Kashmiri. Grierson posits that this language represents the stage when Apabhraṃśa had “just merged into a modern vernacular,” and notes that the lexicon is almost entirely Sanskritic. This indicates composition by a Sanskrit scholar, and as such the language is very different from contemporary Kashmiri.<sup>12</sup> This is a significant admission, and bears repeating: the language is actually quite distant from both modern Kashmiri and the form of Kashmiri that would have been spoken when the text was composed. However this is consistently ignored and overlooked in subsequent literature. Verbeke exemplifies the cognitive dissonance quite plainly when he asserts that the text is “written completely in Old Kashmiri” while also noting that it shows a “mix of Sanskrit, Apabhraṃśa and Kashmiri forms.” (Verbeke 2018, p. 355). Verbeke observes that it is often unclear how much this language differs from Apabhraṃśa;<sup>13</sup> however this begs the question whether the designation of “Old Kashmiri” is itself appropriate.

This confusion probably arose in part from the Sanskrit commentary, which describes the language as “local language accessible to all” (Skt: *sarvagocarā deśabhāṣā*).<sup>14</sup> Nowhere does the text delimit what is included in *deśa*; it could refer to the local language of Kashmir, or more probably a variety of Prakrit or Apabhraṃśa. This equivocation occurs elsewhere in Sanskrit literature; as Ollett argues, Vātsyāyana in his *Kāmasūtra* uses the terms Sanskrit and *deśabhāṣā* in opposition, and Prakrit is probably included in the latter (Ollett 2017, p. 119). Indeed, as Ollett notes, premodern South Asian grammarians often referred to Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa as *deśabhāṣā* (Ollett 2017, pp. 140, 152, 156–57).

Regarding the “Old Kashmiri” thesis Kogan offers a sharp rebuttal. Surveying the text’s Sanskritic lexicon and wildly nonstandardized phonology, Kogan concludes that its language is a thoroughly literary and artificial Apabhraṃśa, and therefore cannot be the ancestor of any natural language, including Kashmiri (Kogan 2010, pp. 15–20). Kogan is correct. Admittedly, the Sanskrit lexicon could merely be sectarian vocabulary, and the oscillating phonology could be a literary flourish. However, apart from a few counterexamples the grammar itself is firmly within the domain of Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa. Therefore, given the text’s lexicon and grammar there is little reason to classify this language as “Old

Kashmiri,” and it should instead be regarded another example of literary Apabhraṃśa. This begs the question: why would the author compose a sacred text in an artificial Apabhraṃśa far from the local dialect?

I propose that we can find the reason for this choice by looking at Apabhraṃśa verses in other Tantric texts across the sectarian divide. This literary form is ubiquitous in Tantric Buddhist texts, and reserved for particularly intimate and esoteric contexts, such as appeals from *yoginīs* and the pithy teachings of enlightened masters. For instance, within Creation-stage visualization rituals *yoginīs* rouse the practitioner from their apophatic stupor with erotically charged verses. In these verses the *yoginīs* beg the practitioner to embrace them and honor their commitments to all sentient beings (Stephenson 2020). Verses are also recited at other junctures in Tantric Buddhist ritual, as well as cited at the end of a chapter to summarize or challenge the chapter’s teachings (Stephenson 2021). In these contexts, Apabhraṃśa verses stand out from their Sanskrit frame in both form and content, signalling another level of discourse in the same manner as a shift in language register (Agha 2004, pp. 25–26).

Parallels to these examples can be found in Krama texts. In the first case, we can find similar verses in the *Chummāsaṃketaparakāśa*, a collection of secret *yoginī* teachings delivered to an initiate named Niṣkriyānanda. This text consists of pithy *sūtras* in “Old Kashmiri” / Apabhraṃśa with Sanskrit commentary. Intriguingly, the commentary sections sometimes conclude with verses (*carcās*) in Apabhraṃśa, direct from the lips of the Pīṭheśvarīs (*yoginīs*).<sup>15</sup> Like the *Mahānayaparakāśa* these verses are also designated as “Old Kashmiri” and justified with problematic linguistic arguments.<sup>16</sup> Consider the following verse:

*pīṭhāgatu pēṭhīsarivadanā, gītikathākamukta esa jhalakku |*  
*anubhaveti nirupamacissadanā, saṅkamādiku rāu avikampu | |<sup>17</sup>*

“This brilliant flame rising from the *pīṭha* is freed by the songs spoken from the mouths of the Pīṭheśvarīs, who kindle the experience of the still sound<sup>18</sup> of transmission, etc, from the abode of unsurpassed consciousness.”

One finds nothing particularly “Kashmiri” about this verse, apart from specialized vocabulary associated with a branch of “Kashmir Shaivism.”<sup>19</sup> It contains some relatively archaic forms of Middle Indic (e.g., the *-eti* ending), but otherwise the grammar and phonology is thoroughly Apabhraṃśa. Also, as Sanderson notes, this is probably the text that Śiva[swāmin] Upādhyāya refers to as the *Prākṛtatrimśikā* (“Thirty verses in Prakrit”) (Sanderson 2007, pp. 343–44). Like their equivalents in Buddhist texts, these Apabhraṃśa verses stand out in both form and content, in an intentional manner.

Additionally, within the commentary of *Mahānayaparakāśa* verses 2.6 and 5.1 we have an Apabhraṃśa fragment attributed to an anonymous *Siddhasūtra* text. Elsewhere in the *Mahānayaparakāśa* it is said that the teachings of this *Siddhasūtra* text grant magical powers.<sup>20</sup> This may be suggestive of the Buddhist Siddhas, but not conclusive, for the term Siddha could point to a shared Tantric culture of venerating Siddhas. However, the shared use of this verse form in a variety of texts points to a common Tantric literary practice current between the 9th and 13th centuries. Specifically, within these texts esoteric teachings and direct appeals were expressed in an artificial Apabhraṃśa, as exemplified within the Buddhist *dohākoṣas*. Composed neither in Sanskrit nor a true vernacular, these pithy verses are composed in a literary koine, much like Pāli. They also stand out within their context, their form and content indexing other levels of speech, discourse, and furthermore also states of consciousness.<sup>21</sup> As such, the *Mahānayaparakāśa* (and the verses of the *Chummāsaṃketaparakāśa*) deserves to be studied alongside other examples of literary Tantric Apabhraṃśa, like the Buddhist *dohākoṣas*, and not siloed off into the specious category of “Old Kashmiri”.

## 5. The Pīṭhacakra

Below is a presentation of the fourth chapter of the *Mahānayaprakāśa*, including its root verses and Sanskrit commentary. All translations from this text and others are my own, unless otherwise noted. In the notes I have also provided a Sanskrit gloss for each verse.

### 5.1. Verse 4.1: The Nature of Uḍḍiyāna

The *Mahānayaprakāśa*'s fourth chapter introduces the five-fold concept of the *pīṭhacakra* ("Wheel of the Seat"), consisting of the *pīṭha*, *śmaśāna*, *kṣetra[-īśa]*, *melāpa*, and *yāga*:

*so oḍḍiyānu śaccī ullasane pīṭhu maśāna kṣetra melāpu |*

*yāgu uḍḍa anubhava parikalane tatha āvaṭha pañcana ku apalāpu || 4.1 ||*<sup>22</sup>

When Śakti shines forth,<sup>23</sup> that is Oḍḍiyāna, consisting of the *pīṭha*, *śmaśāna*, *kṣetra*, *melāpa*, and *yāga*. When [these] are directly felt through [one's] soaring experience, how is their fivefold possession denied?

This verse declares that Oḍḍiyāna (also spelled Uḍḍiyāna), and the entire pilgrimage and practice it entails, is not the geographically delimited physical location but rather located in the pentad of *pīṭha*, *śmaśāna*, *kṣetra[-īśa]*, *melāpa*, and *yāga*. The Sanskrit commentary to this verse asserts that Oḍḍiyāna is overflowing with Śakti, and that when the power place is possessed (Ap: *āvāṭha*),<sup>24</sup> Śakti flies ceaselessly, and the true form of the possessed power center manifests itself as the five-fold *pīṭhacakra*, observed within the practitioner's own personal experience.<sup>25</sup> Each of the following verses (4.2–4.6) defines these key terms in turn, in an itinerary of inner worship beginning with a pilgrimage to the *pīṭha*, then arriving at the cremation ground within, offering worship to the protector deity, meeting with assembled *yoginīs*, and culminating in offering one's own body to the goddess Kālī. As we can see Uḍḍiyāna functions here as a metonym, encompassing not just the physical location but the pilgrimage and Tantric rites it entails. Thus the pilgrimage to Uḍḍiyāna and itinerary within have become internalized into a cycle of worship and meditation that occurs within one's own consciousness, based in the *pīṭha*.

### 5.2. Verse 4.2: The Pīṭha

*so pīṭhu e sakalavastu laṅkarano asvara pavanarūpa svaparāna |*

*jaṅgamāna jānau pīṭhapano cinmaya yona dyuliṅgu<sup>26</sup> śirāna || 4.2 ||*<sup>27</sup>

The *pīṭha* itself is the ornament [consisting] of [all] material substance, its form the soundless OM within self and other. Recognize the nature of the *pīṭha* within living beings, whose consciousness is their devotee's mark on the forehead.

This verse introduces the *pīṭha*, conceived as residing within living beings and all material reality. Here, the pilgrimage place is identified within the human body, making outer acts of pilgrimage completely unnecessary. This is a fundamental teaching of the Krama, and expounded in other two texts titled *Mahānayaprakāśa as well*.<sup>28</sup> The text's commentary declares the *pīṭha* to be the basis (Skt: *āsraya*) for the entire tradition of the Krama (here called Mahānaya), and that it should be visualized within all living beings as the deity with the form of the *liṅga*. The *pīṭha* is composed of the five elements, is the very abode of the gods, and reverence for it should be cultivated at all times.<sup>29</sup> In this world physical reality itself is sacralized, and is the privileged space where divine revelation takes place.<sup>30</sup> The resonances with Buddhist conceptions of Uḍḍiyāna are clear, this Śaiva/Śākta text understands it as a cosmic realm where secret teachings are both concealed and revealed.<sup>31</sup>

### 5.3. Verse 4.3: The Cremation Ground

*bhāva piśo tina samu cijjalane gāsaka kālīśarīru piśandu |*

*vitticakku todaśami galane e pīṭhi tina miśāna yasandu || 4.3 ||*<sup>32</sup>

Touched by the fire of consciousness, existence is like a piece of straw. The devourer touches the body of Kālī when the wheel of activity melts into the thirteenth [Kālī],<sup>33</sup> whose cremation ground is the third within the *pīṭha*.

This verse introduces the cremation ground (Ap: *maśāna, miśāna*), another common-place of outer Tantric pilgrimage interiorized into a mystical state. These frightening and dangerous places were sought out by *tāntrikas* and *yogīs* for the brutal confrontation with death and disintegration that they offer. In this impure and liminal place, all of the attachments upholding the mundane world are annihilated like a piece of straw<sup>34</sup> and the true nature of reality is revealed. Furthermore, within the Krama there are three interiorized cremation grounds, and the commentary discusses each of them in turn. The first cremation ground is the withdrawal of existence of those things born from one's own sense objects from the functions of the sense organs, as well as glossing the devourer as those sentient beings who touch (Skt: *spṛśanti*) the body of Kālī, which then brings repose (Skt: *viśrāmyanti*). The second cremation ground is the Swallowing of Time (Skt: *kālagrāsaḥ*), in which the entire wheel of activity (Skt: *samasta-vṛtti-cakram*) dissolves into the Thirteenth Kālī, the ultimate form of the goddess.<sup>35</sup> Finally, the third cremation ground is the Great Withdrawal (Skt: *mahāsaṃhārah*), which is the singularity that dissolves the sense organs themselves, and this repose is the calm that consists of the body of Kālī herself. The body of Kālī is like a black hole; when touched it dissolves the sense faculties and limited awareness of sentient beings, recalling her mythological exploits as the fearsome goddess of destruction who is simultaneously the bestower of grace.<sup>36</sup> After this the commentary declares that the outer form of this third cremation ground is the true form of the Karavīra cremation ground, where the Krama was revealed in Oḍḍiyāna.<sup>37</sup>

#### 5.4. Verse 4.4: The Guardian

*kṣetra śarīru eśu tasa pālaku āpā tie vācyu upalakṣu |*

*nāhatanādanadi jaga cālaku so cuhaṣṭana vannāna vivakṣu || 4.4 ||*<sup>38</sup>

This body is the *kṣetra*, and its guardian is the Self, marked by the three levels of speech. When the Unstruck<sup>39</sup> sounds, the world is set in motion, wishing to speak the sixty-four syllables

This verse focuses on the guardian of the *kṣetra* (Skt: *kṣetrapāla*), understood as one's own Self (Skt: *ātman*). As the entire itinerary of Tantric practice is interiorized within the body, here the guardian is the Self within the body, here called the *kṣetra*. To this effect the commentary cites verse 13.1 from the *Bhagavadgītā*, which declares one's body to be the "field" (Skt: *kṣetra*) and the animating consciousness within it as the "field-knower" (Skt: *kṣetrajñā*). After one's journey to the purifying fire of the third cremation ground from the previous verse, one can then proceed to worshipping one's true Self. This verse and commentary explicitly invoke the philosophy of the Grammarian Bhartṛhari. Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* privileges the science of Sanskrit grammar as the foremost of all spiritual disciplines, and uniquely capable of grasping ultimate reality.<sup>40</sup> Its most influential idea is the three levels of speech: potential speech (*paśyantī*), ideational speech (*madhyamā*), and the finished articulation (*vaikharī*).<sup>41</sup> The *Mahānayaṅprakāśa*'s verse and commentary correlate these levels of speech to the different levels of the *ātman* within one's body, with another presiding over them all in the form of Supreme Speech (Skt. *parāvāk*).<sup>42</sup> By contemplating these three levels of speech one worships the protector of the *pīṭha*, one's very own Self, after which one can then progress to the next stage.

#### 5.5. Verse 4.5: Encounter

*aka aka vāhadeva akaleśe pāveya nijaviṣaye melāpu |*

*kṣanakṣana ādideva ādeśe bahupīṭhagato melāpakalāpu || 4.5 ||*<sup>43</sup>

One by one, the Goddesses of the Five Flows<sup>44</sup> naturally induce union (*melāpa*) in one's own sense objects. Within moments these unions bundle together inside the many *pīṭhas*, by the will of the Chief Goddess.

This next phase of the Krama worship introduces a key term within Tantric *yoginī* cults, *melāpa*, meaning “encounter” or “union”. As Hatley has argued: “In tantras of the *vidyāpīṭha*, the entire edifice of tantric ritual appears oriented towards the aim of power-bestowing ‘union’ or encounter (Skt: *melaka*, *melāpa*) with *yoginīs*, a communion through which the *sādhaka* assumes the powers of Bhairava himself.” (Hatley 2016, p. 43). Indeed Jñānanetra himself was initiated into the Krama by the *yoginī* Maṅgalā in the Karavīra cremation ground of Uḍḍiyāna. Not only does this visionary encounter with the *yoginī* correspond to attaining teachings and magical powers, it also overlaps with possession.<sup>45</sup> Encounters with *yoginīs* in earlier Tantric traditions invoked altered states of consciousness brought about through transgressive rites in liminal locations (Saraogi 2006, pp. 195–99), whereas here in the Kashmiri Krama it is interiorized into the “union” of the sense organs. As the commentary explains, when the *pīṭha* is possessed (Ap: *āvāṭha*) the sense organs merge together with their sense objects and become divinized. One by one these they merge into a twelvefold “bundle” (Skt: *kalāpa*).<sup>46</sup>

This encounter is explicated in other Krama texts,<sup>47</sup> particularly the *Kramasadbhāva*. The *Kramasadbhāva* lists the twelve *melāpas* (2.84–95), which fuse together the faculties of the human being with their functions, including hearing and sound, seeing and form, mobility and movement, and all of the others.<sup>48</sup> Here, when the *pīṭha* is possessed (Ap: *āvāṭha*) by the abundance of Śakti (as seen in verse 4.1), the sense organs attain nonduality with their objects. This divinization in a pattern seen throughout Kaula Tantras,<sup>49</sup> and here it naturally occurs by the actions of the Goddesses of the Five Flows (Skt: *vāhadevyaḥ*, *pañcavāha*), referring to the pentad of goddesses whose natural flow creates one's own body and the universe itself.<sup>50</sup> Thus the visionary encounter with a *yoginī* becomes a synaesthetic nondual state where the sense deities shine in union with their objects.

#### 5.6. Verse 4.6: The Great Sacrifice

*devi kālasakarṣana pekṣeta*<sup>51</sup> *yāgimaha bhairava upacāru* |

*mana mata mamata carū ākarṣata pāna vaḍeta āpa e upahāru* || 4.6 ||<sup>52</sup>

The Goddess Kālasaṅkarṣinī, seeing the veneration of Bhairava at the Great Sacrifice, attracted by the offerings of mind, thought, and individuality, enveloping living beings, the Self alone [becomes] the offering.

This verse describes the peak of the Tantric ritual. After the worship of the Self within the *kṣetra* and one's own senses being seized by the goddesses of the Five Flows, now one offers one's own self at the sacrifice to Kālī. As the commentary explains, Kālī is attracted by these offerings and then bestows the mind, thoughts, and identity of Bhairava, as all lesser aspects of oneself are dissolved in the all-consuming void of the goddess.<sup>53</sup> This is the apex of Tantric ritual, where the practitioner achieves liberation as the living embodiment of Bhairava.

#### 5.7. Verse 4.7: The Pīṭha Is Everything

*pīṭhu mahāthu i mahāvīro pañcavāhu kamu vā mahitāthu* |

*bhavanivvānadaśyu*<sup>54</sup> *vibhajīro pranusavvagato bhāvi na paramāthu* || 4.7 ||<sup>55</sup>

The *pīṭha* is the Mahārtha itself, the Great Hero, the Five Flows, the Krama, and the Great Reality.<sup>56</sup> Experiencing existence and liberation, the Supreme Truth is not realized by all Living Beings.

The final verse in this chapter emphatically declares the *pīṭha* to be the very essence of the Krama, and equal to other central components within it, such as the Five Flows, the Great Hero, and other terminology for the Krama (Mahārtha, etc.). The commentary

underscores this, and lists many methods for attaining the Great Way, while emphasizing that the practice of the *pīṭha*[-*cakra*] described in this chapter itself leads to the goal, and that this practice is not attainable by just any human being with limited faculties.<sup>57</sup> The import is clear: within the Krama the *pīṭha* is the very seat of practice (quite literally), the privileged abode of the gods and deified senses. This *pīṭha* is located within physical reality, and the path to liberation lies to knowing it experientially within the body.<sup>58</sup>

## 6. Apabhraṃśa and Linguistic Exchange

As we have seen, the *Mahānayaprakāśa*'s fourth chapter proclaims the *pīṭha* as the locus of divinity and the very foundation of the entire tradition. The supreme goddess resides within this sacred seat as consciousness herself, and by contemplating its flows and rhythms within the body one attains liberation and realization. There are clear resonances with cognate Buddhist traditions: both conceive of Uḍḍiyāna as a sacred realm mapped onto the body, a visionary space where esoteric teachings are found and practiced. This shared religious content should also guide how the form of the *Mahānayaprakāśa* should be read. Like the *dohās* of the Buddhist *siddhas*, these verses are composed neither in Sanskrit nor a true vernacular.

The Buddhist connection is significant. As Sanderson has noted, the Krama shares much in common with Buddhist Dzogchen, particularly in their methods and self-perception. Both traditions understand themselves as the culmination of a hierarchy of revelation, in which the highest practice consists of sudden enlightenment through the direct perception of self-arisen purity (See Sanderson 2007, pp. 290–91). The fact that both Tantric Buddhism and the Krama use Apabhraṃśa verses points toward deeper congruencies between the two traditions, however intensive textual work is necessary to tease them out.

It is instructive to return to the term that the commentary of the *Mahānayaprakāśa* uses to describe the language: *deśabhāṣā*. As Ollett shows, this term refers to languages deviating from Sanskrit in a hierarchical frame.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, it is unique in this form; the other two high *śāstras* of the Kashmiri Krama are also titled *Mahānayaprakāśa*, and yet those texts are composed entirely in Sanskrit. These texts read differently as a result, being far more discursive in nature, and lacking the directness (and allusiveness) of the Apabhraṃśa verses discussed here. As such there are clear resonances with the use of Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit in the 14th century *Mahārthamañjarī*. As Cox argues, while on one level Mahārāṣṭrī is the gendered language of the goddess who inspired the text, it is also suitable for its allusiveness and indeterminacy, which invokes a sense of wonder and suggestion (*dhvani*) that has transformational effects on the reader (Cox 2006: 185–87, 189–91, 194–95, 216, 238–39. Cox 2017: 125–35). Cox links this to the language used in the *Mahānayaprakāśa* and *Chummāsamketaprakāśa*,<sup>60</sup> however it is unclear whether the author Maheśvarānanda was aware of the *Mahānayaprakāśa* of Śitikaṇṭha, although he does cite liberally from the other texts under that name.<sup>61</sup>

In Tantric texts there is a clear intentionality behind the use of Apabhraṃśa. It is clear that this language choice reflects the Language Ideology of Tantra, in which Apabhraṃśa serves as a privileged vehicle for direct esoteric teachings. This is not an inherent and primordial property possessed by this language across all times and contexts; as Bourdieu shows, the aura, power, and authority of a specific speech form is not inherent in its form, but relies on the active collaboration of the listener or reader (Bourdieu 1991, pp. 109–15). Within the frame of the Kula (the clan), initiates are primed for this collaboration through teachings, practice, and exposure. In this space, the rhythms, meter, and grammatical features of Apabhraṃśa index<sup>62</sup> a subjectivity in which the horizons of the everyday world are suspended, and another way of being can be touched. Beyond their mere semantics, these “pleasing and appropriate” (Skt: *ucita-rucitā*) verses index a cluster of related motifs: inner realms, direct instructions from *yoginīs* and gurus, and ecstatic mystical states. In this Language Ideology, Sanskrit is still used, but relegated to more discursive and digressive contexts. In this linguistic market,<sup>63</sup> Apabhraṃśa commands the realm of the direct and potent language of realization.



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## Notes

- 1 For a broad overview of the body within Tantric traditions see Flood (2006, pp. 74–96).
- 2 Skora (2007, p. 446); Skora (2016, p. 10). See also his article in which he argues that “[the sense of] touch brings the practitioner closest to the Infinite” (Skora 2009, p. 95).
- 3 For this reason, Sanderson argues that this term is “doubly misleading,” for its common usage by default excludes the Siddhānta tradition while also creating a false impression that non-Saiddhāntika traditions were a unified and cohesive whole (Sanderson 2007, pp. 431–33, 432 fn672).
- 4 See e.g., *Hevajra Tantra* I.7.12–8 (Snellgrove 1959, pp. 66–70; Snellgrove 1964, pp. 22–24), *Cakrasamvara Tantra* (Gray 2007, pp. 329–37), and *Samvarodaya Tantra* IX:14. (Tsuda 1974, p. 104). Uḍḍiyāna is listed among these places. As Sanderson shows this list within the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* and *Samvarodaya Tantra* was redacted from the Śaiva *Tantrasadbhāva* (Sanderson 1994, p. 95).
- 5 For a description of these beings in the *Cakrasamvara Tantra*, see Gray (2007, pp. 329–37).
- 6 Indeed, to this day many Indic words for “witch,” (e.g., *ḍāiṇī*, *ḍakaṇ*, *ḍāyan*) can be traced to this word (Turner 1966, p. 311).
- 7 As White shows, cognate *parī* traditions remain in Swat to the current day (White 2013, p. 23).
- 8 “Rather, the outer metaphor of the locality Swat alludes to an inner experiential locality of the human body as a site for *yoga* and non-dualistic knowledge in view of Vajrāvati Brāhmaṇī’s interiorization of the twenty-four pilgrimage destinations for Tantric practice. Hence, the embedded trope of place operates simultaneously on outer and inner levels, merging the literal (Skt. *svabhāvokti*) with the figurative (Skt. *vakrokti*)” (Kragh 2018, p. 21).
- 9 Dyczkowski outlines four phases of the Krama’s development, the first as the Kālīkula tradition embedded within a Bhairava Tantra, the *Jayadrathayāmala*. Within the Kaula reformation of Matsyendra, these *yoginī* traditions became prized as especially powerful teachings deserving of their own independent texts and lineages. In the third phase, the Krama takes shape as a distinct tradition revealed in the Uttarapīṭha of Oḍḍiyāna, called the Mahārtha. In its fourth phase, we have the scriptures called the *Mahānayaprakāśā* in which the focus is on the Five Flows (or currents) of the process of perception, called the Mahānaya (Dyczkowski 2010–2011, pp. 25–27; Dyczkowski 2018, pp. 69–71).
- 10 For the *Mahānayaprakāśā* of Arṇasiṃha, see Sanderson (2007, p. 296). For the anonymous text published in Trivandrum see Sanderson (2007, pp. 308–17).
- 11 Grierson (1929) is a linguistic appraisal of the text, presenting its grammar in depth but not its content. (Rastogi 1968, 1979) are the only monograph-length works on the Krama tradition, and treat the *Mahānayaprakāśā* of Śitikaṇṭha alongside other texts (Rastogi 1968, 1979). Sanderson treats the *Mahānayaprakāśā* within an extensive overview of Krama literature (Sanderson 2007, pp. 299–307).
- 12 Grierson (1929, pp. 77–78). This is also significant because Grierson classifies Kashmiri as a “Dardic” language descending from a distinct branch of Indo-Iranian, related to but divergent from Indo-Āryan. Therefore, according to Grierson’s own model this text’s overwhelmingly Indo-Āryan lexicon (and grammar) places it within a different language family than Kashmiri.
- 13 For instance Verbeke briefly examines the text in comparison to the later *Bāṇāsarakathā*, and yet many if not most of the “Kashmiri” characteristics he notes in the *Mahānayaprakāśā* are commonplace in Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa (e.g., a preference for word ending *-u*, and the sound changes *-ty-* → *-cc-*, *-ṛ-* → *-i-*, *-rn-* → *-nn-*). (Verbeke 2018, pp. 355–57); cf. Pischel §280, §50, §287 (Pischel [1900] 1957, pp. 53–54, 197–98, 201–2). There are some exceptions, including the presence of the Kashmiri second person plural imperative (*Mahānayaprakāśā* 12.6), as well as the frequent appearance of the Kashmiri genitive (MP 1.3, 2.5, 3.2, 3.7, 5.3, 5.4, 11.5, 12.1) (Verbeke 2018, p. 356).
- 14 *athocitarucitāṃ nutiṃ sarvagocarayā deśabhāṣayā viracayitum āha* (Śāstri 1918, p. 6). “Now the fitting and pleasant praise is said to be composed with a local language accessible to all.”
- 15 Sanderson (2007, p. 343). For an edition of the text, see (Rastogi 2011, pp. 111–33).
- 16 Sanderson (2007, pp. 333–44). See Verbeke in particular, who identifies the language as “Old Kashmiri” on the basis of phonological changes including the palatalization of dentals, as well as the “typical Kashmiri preference for the ‘u’ sound and consonant clusters which become simplified but retain the aspiration (sth > tth > th)” (Verbeke 2018, p. 354). He admits in a footnote that the preference for the *-u-* sound is also typical in Apabhraṃśa (Verbeke 2018, p. 354 fn1), however the same is also true for his other two examples as well (Pischel [1900] 1957, pp. 53–54 §280, pp. 215 §307; Tagare [1948] 1987, p. 73 §48).
- 17 Skt: *pīṭhāgataḥ pīṭheśvari-vadanāt, gītikathāka-muktaḥ eṣaḥ jvalakaḥ | anubhavayanti(?) nirupama-cit-sadanāt, saṅkramādikaḥ rāvaḥ avikampaḥ | | mss 27:1–2*. Sanderson tentatively translates this verse, but much of it is provisional and incomplete (Sanderson 2007, p. 343 fn365).

- 18 Cf. with *Kramasadbhāva* 2.52: *tatrasthā paramā raudrā mantrabhūmistu sāvīdūḥ | rāvajñā rāvagārāvā rāvasthā rāvadā sadā | | 2/52 | |*  
 “Dwelling there is the Supreme (power of) Rudra, the adept stage of mantra that knows the sound, reveres the sound, dwells within the sound, and bestows the sound forever.”
- 19 On the limitations of this term, see Sanderson (2007, p. 432 fn.672).
- 20 For a translation and analysis, see Sanderson (2007, p. 368 fn.446).
- 21 For the uses of code-switching and indexing, see Woolard (2004, pp. 79, 86–90).
- 22 (Śāstri 1918, p. 49). My Skt. gloss (relying heavily on Grierson): *sa oḍḍiyānaḥ śakteḥ ullasanena pītha-śmaśāna-kṣetra-melāpa-yāgaḥ | uḍḍānubhava-parikalanena tasya āvaṣṭa (?) pañcānām kaḥ apalāpaḥ | |*
- 23 Grierson identifies this as an instrumental case, but also notes that since the locative singular shares the same ending at times there is confusion between the two (Grierson 1929, p. 97). This use of the instrumental for the locative is common within Prakrit (and non-standard Sanskrit as well (Oberlies 1997, pp. 2–9)). Here I am interpreting the instrumental as locative.
- 24 Turner lists this term under derivatives from \**āviṣṭi*, defining it as “demoniacal possession” (Turner 1966, p. 65).
- 25 *uḍḍiyānam—pīthe śakter ullasanena, śaktir atra uḍḍinā iti yasminn āvaṭhapīthe prācuryeṇa anavarataṃ pītha-vāsinām śaktiḥ uḍḍinā—ullasantī drśyate iti āvaṭha-samānam pītham oḍḍiyānam nirucyate | bahiḥ ca tatpraṇava-pīṭham devata-saṃketa-sthānam, tasminn āvaṭha-svarūpe pītha-śmaśāna-kṣetra-melāpa-yāgaḥ anubhūyamāna-bhūmikā-prāmānyād vaksyamāna-gatyā vibhajya nirdiśyante, teṣāṃ ko nāma atra apalāpaḥ | | 1 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition) “Uḍḍiyāna: due to the overflow of śakti at the pīṭha, here śakti flies. When the pīṭha is possessed (Ap. āvaṭha), the śakti of those dwelling in the pīṭha flies constantly and fully; [She] is seen appearing. The pīṭha that is equal to possession is declared to be Uḍḍiyāna. And in the outer world the pīṭha [filled with] that sound is the place for meeting with deities. There within the true nature of possession (Ap. āvaṭha) the pīṭha, cremation ground, guardian, encounter, and sacrifice [are] revealed from evidence at the level of personal experience, after having shared in it by arriving at the teaching. How indeed are these [five] denied?”
- 26 Śāstri, Grierson, and Dyczkowski all take *dyu* and *liṅgu* as separate words (Śāstri 1918, p. 50; Grierson 1929, p. 94; Dyczkowski 50); however it makes far more sense as a compound *dyuliṅgu* (Skt. *devaliṅgaḥ*).
- 27 (Śāstri 1918, p. 50). Skt. gloss: *sa pīṭham eva sakalavastur asvava-praṇava-rūpaṃ svapāreṣām | jaṅgamānām jānīhi pīthatvaṃ cinmayāḥ yeṣāṃ devaliṅgaḥ śirasām | |*
- 28 *Mahānayaṃprakāśa* of Arṇasiṃha v.8–9: *śivaśaktiyubhayonmesasāmaraṣyodbhavaṃ mahat | vīryaṃ tasmāddeha eva mahāpīṭhe samudgatam | | ādyasaṃvitsamullāsaḥ pīthe pīthe kṛtāspadaḥ | anantaśākticakraughasvāminī tatra mokṣadā | |* “Because the power that arises from the oneness of the appearance of both Śiva and Śakti is vitality, it arises only within the body, the Great Pīṭha. In whichever pīṭha the outflowing of primordial consciousness resides, there the mistress of the flow of the wheel of endless power grants liberation.” *Mahānayaṃprakāśa* (Trivandrum) v.2.2: *yathāsthitaṃ samāśritya bhūtabhāvātmakeṇ jagat | pīṭhakramasya saṃsthānaṃ kathyate hrdayaṅgamam | |* “Embracing the world as it is, composed of existing reality, the abode of the process of the pīṭha is said to come from the heart.”
- 29 *tat-pīṭham eva sarva-prakāraṃ samasta-mahānayaṃlāṅkāra-bhūtam—āśraya-bhūtatvāt, itthaṃ tasyāsvava-praṇavāpara-paryāyasya svapāreṣām jaṅgamānām sadṛśaṃ pīthatvaṃ mantavyam, yeṣu pīṭheṣu cinmayo liṅgarūpī devaḥ śiraḥ, evaṃ karmendriyāśraya-tvena kāyasya pīthatvam, jñāna-śakti-rūpatvāt śirasā ca liṅga-tvam, ataś ca yad-yat-pāñca-bhautikaṃ tat-tat-pañcānām pītha-śmaśānādīnām pratiṣṭhāsthānam devānām āyatanam iti | yathā nija-śarīre pratipattir bhaktiś ca tathā sarva-prāṇi-gata-śarīreṣu, yathā nija-śarīrasya adhiṣṭhātā cinmaya ātmā tathā sarva-śarīrāntāś cinmaya evaika ātmā, sa caika eva udapātreṣu iva arka-pratibimbaḥ sarva-prāṇi-gato mantavyaḥ | itthaṃ viśeṣeṇa sarvatra liṅga-pīṭha-pratipattir bhāvānīyā—iti pīṭhasvarūpam | | 2 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition) “The pīṭha itself is all things, consisting of the ornament of the entire Great Way, due to being [its] basis. Thus, the essence of the pīṭha, itself the unsurpassed repetition of the Soundless Om, is regarded to be within self and other and living beings. Within these pīṭhas is the foremost God, composed of consciousness, whose form is a liṅga. Thus because it is the basis of the organs of action, the essence of the pīṭha is [within] the body, and because it is the form of the power of Knowledge, the essence of the liṅga belongs to the head. For this reason, anything composed of the five elements is the abiding ground of the fivefold pīṭha, cremation ground, etc, and [also] the abode of the gods. Just as [one has] devotion and reverence to one’s own body, in the same way [it should be towards] the bodies of all living beings. Just as the Self, composed of consciousness, is the overlord of one’s own body; in the same way the one Self, composed of consciousness, exists within all bodies. And it alone is one, regarded to be within all living beings, like the reflection of the sun in multiple pots of water. In this way reverence for the liṅga and the pīṭha should be intensely cultivated at all times. This is the true nature of the pīṭha.”
- 30 I.e. the commentary to verse 1.3: *pīthe’sminn uḍḍiyāne param apara-malaṃ jñānam*. “Here in the pīṭha Uḍḍiyāna is the supreme knowledge devoid of the impurity of the other” (Śāstri 1918, p. 2).
- 31 *evaṃ mahārtha-svarūpaṃ pāramparyeṇa pītha-vare guptam asti iti samāśād iha sūcitam* (Śāstri 1918, p. 48). “Thus the true nature of the Mahārtha is progressively concealed in stages within the eminent pīṭha, here it is revealed succinctly.”
- 32 (Śāstri 1918, p. 51). Skt gloss: *bhāvāḥ sprśaḥ trṇaḥ samaḥ cijjvalanena grāsakaḥ kālīśarīram sprśantaḥ | vṛtticakraḥ trayodaśe galanena asmin pīthe trṭīyam śmaśānam yasya | |*
- 33 As with verse 4.1, I am interpreting this instrumental in the locative.

- 34 The metaphor of existence being destroyed like a piece of straw also appears in the *Kramasadbhāva* 1.42: *tena yaṣṭena vai samyak sarvaṃ jagad idaṃ tu yat | naśyate paramārthena yathā vahnigataṃ tṛṇam | |* “By that method this whole entire world is destroyed by the Supreme Truth, just as straw is consumed by fire.”
- 35 On the 13th Kālī, see Sanderson (1988, p. 677).
- 36 Cf. Sanderson’s description of Kālī within the *Jayadrathayāmala*: “Here the triumphant Goddess reveals herself to her devotees as a hideous, emaciated destroyer who embodies the Absolute (*anuttaram*) as the ultimate Self which the ‘I’ cannot enter and survive, an insatiable void in the heart of consciousness” (Sanderson 1988, p. 675).
- 37 *bhāvas tṛṇasamaś cid agninā sprṣtaḥ—iti indriya-vṛtteḥ svaīṣayībhūta-bhāva-saṃhārah śmaśānam, (p. 52) grāsakāḥ prāṇāś ca kālīśarīraṃ sprṣanti tatra viśrāmyanti iti kālagrāso dvitīyaṃ śmaśānam, samasta-vṛtticakraṃ trayodaśe galati iti mahāsaṃhāras tṛtīyaṃ śmaśānam, viśayasya svamarīci-devyā yadgrasanaṃ tadekam, prāṇasya kulābhyantara evāprāṇabhūmau upaśamo dvitīyaṃ, sarva-vṛttināṃ śrī-kālīkā-vapuṣy-upaśamanam iti tṛtīyaṃ, bahis tat karavīra-svarūpam | | 3 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition). “Touched by the fire of consciousness, existence is like a piece of straw. The cremation ground is the withdrawal of existence within one’s sense organs from the activity of the senses, Devourers and living beings touch the body of Kālī, and there find repose. The swallowing of time is the second cremation ground, which dissolves the entire wheel of activity into the Thirteenth [Kālī]. The Great Withdrawal is the third cremation ground. The swallowing of the sense object by the goddess of one’s own rays [of consciousness], this is [the first]. The second is the cessation within the plane of nonlife, itself being the interior of the Kula. [Lastly] the third is the repose within the body of Śrī Kālī within all activities. In the outer world, it is the true nature of Kāravīra.”
- 38 (Śāstrī 1918, p. 52) Skt gloss: *kṣetra-śarīram eṣaḥ tasya pālakaḥ ātmā tīrḥbhīḥ vāgbhīḥ upalakṣitaḥ | anāhata-nāda-nade jagac-cālakaḥ sa catuṣṣaṣṭīnām varṇānām vīvaḥsuḥ | |*
- 39 Skt. *anāhata*.
- 40 *āsanna brahmaṇas tasya tapasām uttama tapa | prathamam chandasāmāṅgamāhur vyākaraṇam budhā | | Vākya-padīya* 1.11. “The wise say that grammar, nearest to that Brahman and the foremost spiritual training is the most important (of such) subsidiary texts of the Veda.” (Translation from Piḷḷai 1971, pp. 2–3).
- 41 *vaikharyā madhyamāyās ca paśyantyās caitad adbhutam | anekatīrthabhedāyās trayyā vāca para padam | | Vākya-padīya* 1.143. (Piḷḷai 1971, p. 32) “And this is the wonder of *vaikharī*, *madhyamā*, and *paśyantī*, the supreme state of the threefold speech realized within multiple divisions and paths.” Translation mine.
- 42 *kṣetraṃ śarīraṃ, tasya pālako’ dhiṣṭhātā ātmā, yadgītam: idaṃ śarīraṃ kaunteya kṣetram ity abhidhīyate | etad yo veda tam prāhuḥ kṣetraṃ nam iti tadvidāḥ | | iti | tasya ca catvāro bhūmikā-bhedāḥ yatra kṣetre sa eva parārūpas tīrḥbhīr vāgbhīr ūpalakṣyate, tās catasro bhūmikāḥ— anāhata-nāda-nadanāt paśyantī-rūpaḥ, vikalpa-kallolita-tvāt mānasavyāpāreṇa jagat kalayan cālayati iti jagac cālako madhyamārūpaḥ, catuṣṣaṣṭī-saṃkhyānām varṇānām vikharākṣarāṇām prayoktā vaikharī-rūpaḥ, iti—tīrḥnām vācām adhiṣṭhātṛ-bhūtaḥ turīya-parāvāg-rūpa ātmā vedyā-varga-glapana-ssthānam, iti—balavat-taro bahir api saṃketaka-ssthāne svīya-parakīya-pratyūha-parirakṣāparaḥ kṣetrādhipaḥ pīṭhavartī pūjyaḥ | | 4 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition). “The *kṣetra* is the body, and its presiding guardian is the Self. As it is said in the [*Bhagavad-*] *Gītā*: ‘O Kaunteya, this body is known as the field, one who knows this is proclaimed as the field-knower by those who know.’ And it has four layers, where within the field its Supreme form is marked by the three forms of Speech. These four levels [are as follows]. From the sound of the Unstruck is the form of *paśyantī*. Due to the surge of conceptuality, the incipient world is disturbed by the functions of the mind. The moving world has the form of *madhyamā*. The enunciator of the sixty-four scattered phonemes and syllables is the form of *vaikharī*. The presiding ruler of these three levels of speech is the Self, whose form is Supreme Speech, itself being *turīya*, and is the state where knowable distinctions fade away. Also, in the outer world, it is the more powerful; at the place of meeting the ruler of the field residing within the *pīṭha*, who is devoted to gatekeeping the obstacles of oneself and others, should be worshipped.”
- 43 (Śāstrī 1918, p. 52). Skt gloss: *ekaikā vāhadevyaḥ akleśena prāpayati nijaviśaye melāpam | kṣaṇakṣaṇe ādidevy-ādeśena bahupīṭhagataḥ melāpakalāpaḥ | |*
- 44 These Goddesses of the Five Flows respectively govern the emission of the universe (*Vyomavāmeśvarī*), creation of a limited subject (*Khecari*), movement of the sense deities (*Gocari*), the sensory and motor organs (*Dikari*), and the creation of material objects (*Bhūcari*) (Rastogi 1968, pp. 653–55). As Rastogi explains: “The five flows as self-same with the universal mind, or the transcendental consciousness, individual subject, inner and outer psychic apparatus and external objectivity, demonstrate as well as construct the basic frame-work of any epistemic activity, whatever its nature be” (Rastogi 1968, p. 659).
- 45 Indeed, within the Tantric texts there is an increasing emphasis on directly invoking *yoginīs* in possession rituals; in the Trika text, the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata*, possession by a *yoginī* was required in order for mantras to be effective (Törzsök 2013, pp. 185–88). Saraogi notes, however, that while there is overlap between possession (Skt: *āveśa*) and encounters (Skt: *melāpa*, *melaka*), they are distinct and the former term cannot be adequately translated with the term “possession” as it is embedded within Western cultural concepts (Saraogi 2013, pp. 203–7). See (Sanderson 1985, pp. 200–2).
- 46 *ekaikā vāhadevī akleśena svārasyena ekaikasmin nija-nija-viśaye ādidevyadhiṣṭhānena melāpam āpādayati, iti—indriya-devatānām āvaṭṭha-pīṭha-gatānām melāpaḥ, sa ca pṛthakpṛthak—iti dvādaśībhāvena kalāpībhūtaḥ | | 5 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition). “One by one the Goddesses of the Five Flows swiftly and spontaneously bring about union within one’s own sense objects, one by one, by the force of the primordial Goddess. The union occurs within the sense deities when the *pīṭha* is possessed, and it [occurs] one by one. They become bundled together twelvefold.”

- 47 e.g., the *Vātūlanātha Sūtras*, #5: *siddha-yoginī-saṃghaṭṭān mahāmelāpodayaḥ*. Here Anantaśaktipāda's commentary glosses Siddhas and Yoginīs as the sense objects and sense deities, and their great union (*mahāmelāpa*) is the fusion of the two (Śāstrī 1923, p. 7).
- 48 *kathayāmi tava snehāt militaṃ ca padaṃ yathā | yoginyaḥ sarvabhāvās tu cid-bhāva-pada-madhyagāḥ | | dvādaśa ca samāsenā citsvarūpāḥ svarūpataḥ | srotrayor ubhayor madhye parā yā citsvarūpiṇī | | melāpe militā sā vai śabdasya paramā citiḥ | (1) tvaggatā sarvabhūteṣu viśve'smin sacarācare | | melāpe militā sā vai sparśasya paramā citiḥ | (2) cakṣurmadhye sthitā yā vai candrārka-dvaya-bhāsaktī | | melāpe militā sā vai rūpasya paramā citiḥ | (3) dvātriṃśad-vīra-saṃyuktā madhye yā svādinī kalā | | melāpe militā sā vai rasasya paramā citiḥ | (4) kapāṭa-dvaya-bhedena pakṣāpakṣa-dvaya-ratā | | melāpe militā sā vai gandhasya paramā citiḥ | (5) parā svarūpā paśyantī madhyamā vaikharī tathā | | melāpe militā sā vai japyate paramā citiḥ | (6) phaṇirūpā pañca-mukhā sarva-grāsaika-tat-parā | | melāpe militā yā vai ādāne paramā citiḥ | (7) sarvāntā ṣoḍaśāntā ca pāda-cakrasya vāhikā | | melāpe militā sā vai viharet paramā citiḥ | (8) apāna-vāyūm āśritya dvādaśānte nirākulā | | melāpe militā sā vai utsarge paramā citiḥ | (9) upasthasya tu madhyagā retovāhe sadoditā | | melāpe militā sā vai ānande paramā citiḥ | (10) saṃkalpasya vikalpasya madhye yā cetanī kalā | | melāpe militā sā vai manane paramā citiḥ | (11) pītā svasya samastasya ādyā yā bodhaktī daśā | | melāpe militā sā vai jñānasya paramā citiḥ | (12) etās tu kathitā devyaḥ melāpe yāḥ khamārgagāḥ | | Kramasadbhāva 2/83–96 | | “Out of love, I will explain to you the Encounter and its abode among the *yoginīs* who are all things and exist within the center of the site of Consciousness. Briefly, they are twelve in total, and in their true form are the very nature of Consciousness. Within both ears is the Supreme form of consciousness, which is encountered within *melāpa* as the Supreme consciousness of sound. Within skin, all beings, this universe, and all moving and nonmoving things, is the Supreme consciousness of touch, encountered within *melāpa*. Within the eye resides the illuminator of the pair of the sun and the moon, the Supreme consciousness of form is encountered within *melāpa*. Within the thirty-two heroes (teeth) is the element of taste, the Supreme consciousness of taste is encountered within *melāpa*. Delighting in duality of opposites by the divisions of the two doors (nostrils), the Supreme consciousness of smell is encountered within *melāpa*. The Supreme essence [of speech] is *paśyantī*, *madhyamā*, and *vaikharī*; the Supreme consciousness is recited and encountered within *melāpa*. Devoted to consuming all things, with five faces, and with the form of a snake, the Supreme consciousness in taking (receiving for oneself) is encountered in *melāpa*. The vehicle of the wheel of the foot, who is the end of all things and the sixteenth [on Kālī as the “*Ṣoḍaśādhikā*” (beyond the sixteenth *kālā*) see Rastogi (1968, pp. 521–22)], the Supreme consciousness who wanders, she is encountered within *melāpa*. Embracing the vital air at the end of the twelve, the Calm One is the Supreme consciousness in excretion encountered in *melāpa*. Perpetually rising in the flow of semen residing in the center of procreation, the Supreme consciousness in bliss is encountered within *melāpa*. The conscious power within ideas and thoughts, the Supreme consciousness in the mind is encountered within *melāpa*. The primordial condition of awakening which is the drinking of everything itself, the Supreme consciousness of knowledge is encountered within *melāpa*. These venerable goddesses so described reside within the path of the sky (of consciousness).”*
- 49 As Sanderson explains: “The Kāpālika . . . sought the convergence of the Yoginīs and his fusion with them (*yoginīmela*, *-melāpa*) through a process of visionary invocation in which he would attract them out of the sky, gratify them with an offering of blood drawn from his own body, and ascend with them into the sky as the leader of their band. The Kaulas translated this visionary fantasy into the aesthetic terms of mystical experience. The Yoginīs became the deities of his senses (*karāṇeśvarīs*), revelling in his sensations. In intense pleasure this revelling completely clouds his internal awareness: he becomes their plaything or victim (*paśu*). However, when in the same pleasure the desiring ego is suspended, then the outer sources of sensation lose their gross otherness. They shine *within* cognition as its aesthetic form. The Yoginīs of the senses relish this offering of “nectar” and gratified thereby they converge and fuse with the *kaula*'s inner transcendental identity as the Kuleśvara, the Bhairava in the radiant “sky” of enlightened consciousness (*cidvyomabhairava*)” (Sanderson 1988, p. 680).
- 50 Rastogi defines them as the “five flows of the self-emanative spiritual energy ranging from Vyoma-vāmeśvarī to Bhūcarī.” (Rastogi 1979, p. 78). In order, these goddesses are Vyomavāmeśvarī, Khecari, Dikcarī, Gocarī, and Bhūcarī. Respectively, they govern the emission of the universe (Vyomavāmeśvarī), creation of a limited subject (Khecari), movement of the sense deities (Gocarī), the sensory and motor organs (Dikcarī), and the creation of material objects (Bhūcarī) (Rastogi 1968, pp. 653–55).
- 51 For Grierson the absolute ending in *-eta* and *-ata* within the *Mahānayaprakāśa* is also evidence of Kashmiri (Grierson 1929, p. 114), however one does find absolute endings in *-t* and *-ta* in Eastern Apabhraṃśa (Tagare [1948] 1987, p. 328).
- 52 (Śāstrī 1918, p. 54) Skt gloss: *devī kālasaṃkarṣiṇī prekṣya mahāyāge bhairavasya(?) upacāram | manaḥ matim mamatāṃ carūnā ākrṣya prāṇān veṣṭayitvā ātmānam eva upahāram | |*
- 53 *parā devī kālasaṃkarṣiṇī samastavṛttipratyastamayāya mahāyāge bhairavasya manomatyahaṅkārān carunākrṣya pradadāti, tataḥ prāṇānāṃ parito veṣṭayitvā nijāparaprāṇānāṃ [kha pu: nijam param prāṇānāmiti pāṭhaḥ | |] pariveṣṭanam avalambya svātma-sāmarasyāya na grāsagṛhṇutayā viśvavilāpikā—iti tānprāṇānāpi vilāpayanti cinmātra-prakṛtiḥ satī patiṃ kuleśvaram atṛptam ākalayya (p. 55) ākulībhūtā taṃ cinmātram ātmānam tasmai bhairavāya upahārikaroti, iti—sthūla-sūkṣma-parastredhā madhyayāgaḥ, sāmarasya-bhūśceyam, tathā ca śrīrājīkāyām: bhuktvā viśvam aśeṣaṃ tṛptim na yadāgataḥ kuleśānaḥ | devyā tadā svadehaś carur atra niveditāḥ kulādhīpateḥ | | iti, tāṃś caturo nivedya ākulībhūtā ātmānam parāvāgrūpaṃ samarasībhāvayati iti upahārārthaḥ | evam ayaṃ bhagavatyā alamgrāsaparyā maty-ahaṅkṛn-manah—prāṇānāṃ samarpaṇād ākulībhāvena ātmanah sāmarasyena pañcacaruprāśano yāgo vihitaḥ | | 6 | | (Dyczkowski's edition). “The Highest Goddess, Kālasaṃkarṣiṇī, attracted by offerings at the great sacrifice, bestows the mind, thoughts, and individuality of Bhairava in order to arrest the entirety of activity. Then the Goddess who envelops life everywhere, holding up the veil [separating] the lives of self and other, [She] dissolves the universe not out of a great desire to devour [but to bestow] the oneness of one's own Self. Dissolving these very lives, the Lady, consisting of pure consciousness, regarding the insatiable*

Lord of the Klan, [She] becomes aroused and offers the Self composed of consciousness to Him, Bhairava. The intermediate offering is the threefold coarse, subtle, and causal bodies, and this becomes of one taste. As it is said in the *Śrīrājikā*: “[When], consuming the entire universe, the Lord of the Clan does not reach satisfaction, then one’s own body is the oblation, given now by the goddess to the Lord of the Clan.” Having given those four [offerings], the Aroused One transforms the Self whose form of Supreme Speech into one taste. This is the meaning of ‘offering.’ Thus this sacrifice composed of consuming the five offerings is arranged by means of the oneness of the Self which becomes aroused, by presenting life, imagination, mind, and individuality to the Goddess who is complete annihilation.”

- 54 Both Śāstrī and Dyczkowski’s editions read as “*bhava nirvānadacyu*.” However, as Grierson notes it is clearly the instrumental plural *-daśyū* (Grierson 1929, p. 101).
- 55 (Śāstrī 1918, pp. 55–56) Skt gloss: *pītham mahārthaḥ eva mahāvīrah pañcavāhaḥ kramaḥ vā mahātattva (?) | bhava-nirvāna-daśyām vibhajya pranasarogataḥ bhāvayate na paramārthaḥ | |*
- 56 The Apabhraṃśa term *mahitāthu* remains obscure, but I have tentatively glossed it as *mahātattva*.
- 57 *itthaṃ pīthākhyā eṣa mahārthaḥ, mahārtha-saṃpradāyātōc chārīro’ntaraṅgaḥ pañca-vāho mahākrama-garbhitaś catuṣṭayārtha-rūpo vā mahākramo mahārtho jñeyah, tato lokayātrāyām pītha-tvena tathā nirvāna-daśyām viśramabhāvena nirupādhivāmeśīrūpeṇa athāpi mahākrameṇa vā iti, eṣa eva mahārtho vibhajya prakāṣṇa pracura-prakāreṇa sthitaḥ paramārthatvena saṃbhāvanīyah, vastutas tu pītha-cakrād ārabhya samayavidyāntaṃ samena sāmrājyena mahārtha eva vakṣyamāṇavot bobhavīti iti bhāvayātām, nātra phalgu-sāra-bhāvah kaścit | iti pītha-cakra-svarūpam | | 7 | |* (Dyczkowski’s edition). “Thus, this Mahārtha is called the *pītha*. According to the lineage of the Mahārtha it is known as the body, the inner body, the five flows, the seed of the Mahākrama, the four-fold aim, the Mahākrama, and the Mahārtha. Therefore, experiencing the Mahārtha [is accomplished] with the *pītha* within worldly existence, by resting within the state of *nirvāna*, by [focusing on] the form of the absolute Vāmeśī, and also by means of the Mahākrama; it is manifestly present with a variety of methods. It is possible by means of the Supreme Essence, however, in reality, attaining it from the *pīthacakra* [one attains] the end of the root mantra of the goddess. The Mahārtha itself is described as being instilled by the same authority. [But] it is now not attainable by anyone with a limited aptitude.”
- 58 See also *Mahānayaṃprakāśa* (Anonymous) 2.4: *prādhānyena sthito loke vyavahārah kriyātmakah | ataḥ pītha-krama-jñaptis tanmukhenaiva kathyate | | 2/4 | |* “Worldly custom primarily resides in action within the world, therefore understanding the *pīthakrama* is said to begin with that.”
- 59 See notes 14 and Ollett (2017, p. 119). See also Ollett (2017, pp. 3–4, 114–22).
- 60 “These vernacular compositions, with their artfully artless language, were appropriate to the subitist soteriology embodied in one tendency of the the Krama’s doctrine, suggesting a sudden, unbidden irruption of enlightened consciousness unmediated by the linguistic disciplines of Sanskrit.” (Cox 2017, p. 121). While Cox’s larger points are cogent, the identification of the language as “vernacular” is clearly problematic, since the Apabhraṃśa employed in these texts is just as artificial and literary as the Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit of the *Mahārthamañjarī*.
- 61 See the commentary to verses 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 46, 68, 69.
- 62 On indexicality in Linguistics, see (Silverstein 1976, pp. 34–35, 41–43).
- 63 On the “linguistic marketplace,” see Bourdieu’s essay “Price Formation and the Anticipation of Profits” (Bourdieu 1991, pp. 66–89).

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