

Ture

**Blessed Tārā: Greetings in One-and-Twenty Verses Sung
(21 Praises of Ārya Tārā)**

*āryatārānamaskāraikaviṃśatistotram
of samyaksambuddha vairocana*

ॐ

Translated and Edited by Warren Clarke

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“And Eurynome, the daughter of Ocean, beautiful in form, bare Zeus three fair-cheeked
Kharites (Graces): Aglaea, and Euphrosyne, and lovely Thalia, from whose eyes as they
glanced flowed love that unnerves the limbs, and beautiful is their glance beneath their
brows.”

-Hesiod, “Theogony” ca. 700 B. C.
tr. Hugh G. Evelyn-White

“I could see, between me and the *Light*, a most exquisite, divine *Beauty*...Attir’d she was
In *thin loose silks*, but so *green* that I never saw the *like*, for the *Colour* was not *Earthly*...
..Her *Eyes* were *quick, fresh* and *Celestiall*, and had something of a start ..her *Locks*..like
Sun -beams from a *Mist*..ran *dishevell’d* to her *Breasts*...in *Curls* and *Rings* ...Her *Haire*
behind her was *rowl’d* to a curious *Globe*, with a small short *spire*, flowered with *purple*
and *skie-colored Knots*...I ask’d her if she would favour me with her *Name*. To this she replied
very familiarly, as if she had known me long before:

Eugenius (said she) *I have many Names, but my best and dearest is Thalia: for I am
alwaies green and I shall never wither.*”

-Eugenius Philalethes, “Lumen de Lumine” 1651 A.D.

“Ah! Thel is like a wat’ry bow, and like a parting cloud, like a reflection in glass,
like shadows in the water, like dreams of infants, like a smile upon an infant’s face,
like the dove’s voice, like transient day, like music in the air.”

-William Blake, “The Book of Thel” 1789 A.D.

“Like a meteor at dawn, a bubble in a creek, like a flash of lightning in a summer cloud,
like a candle flickering out, a mirage, an apparition or a fleeting dream: such is seen
to be the condition of existence. Thus spoke the Buddha.”

-The Diamond Sutra ca. 200 A.D.



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Introducing...

Tārā, youngest daughter in the family of Indian goddesses, who came late in unfolding from Her lovely lotus, blossoming beyond beauty... The exact location from which that lotus bloomed remains a mystery. Each of the cardinal points (*digantara*) of India--East (Bengal, Orissa), West (Ajanta), South (Kerala), North (Ladakh, Nepal) and out beyond (Tibet, China)--has been claimed as Her original home. All points-of-view have their evidences. None has a shred, in the thick mists surrounding Her lotus pond, of viable confirmation, of proof. The exact religious atmosphere into which She bloomed remains a mystery. There is pointless contention in this, a great deal of it, none germane. Let Tārā be born (*bhava*) in your heart (*tava hṛdaye*), where no proofs are needed.

The external origin of Tārā is of no concern whatsoever here.¹ The apogee of Her practice as it developed in Indian Buddhism is. It was reached early on during or just after the final decline of the Gupta dynasty, perhaps late 6th century, (reasons for this suggested dating will be given). At that time the spread of Her name was accelerating in quick stages throughout India. She attained orbit easily, a bright star. In Her orbital procession this shining (*bhāsvara*) apogee, beaming forth (*kiraṇa*), will be forever fixed (*druva*) in *āryatārānamaskāraikaviṃśatistotram*, "Blessed Tārā: Greetings in One-and-Twenty Verses Sung".

Austine Waddell deplored Vajrayāna but adored ĀryaTārā. What he gleaned and learned-a great deal, having fully participated in Her ceremonial ritual invocation (*sādhana*) and having benefitted thoroughly from reading several of the commentaries upon the 21-Verse Praise in Tibetan-he utilized in a ground-breaking study, "The Cult of Avalokita and His Consort Tārā" published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (JRAS), in 1894. He presented his accounts with care, accuracy and detail. When he speculated, which was not infrequent, hindsight has shown him to be often in err. He was the first to present a translation of the Twenty-one Verse Greeting in a western language, from the Tibetan "Lhasa dialect". Declared "almost literal", it is frequently insightful, quick to grasp at subtleties missed by the many who have come since, yet often charmingly inaccurate. Some readings feel shaky and uncertain; others, confident and brilliant. It brims with high-altitude late-Victorian enthusiasm. He has reduced the precise eight-count of the Tibetan to an equally precise seven-count of his own (we can overlook verse four). There is no better way to introduce Tārā than to present his version here:

Arya Tara! Hail to thee!
Our Deliveress sublime
Avalok'ta's (messenger)
Rich in power and pity's store!

Hail O Tārā! Quick to Save!
Lotus-born of pitying tear
Shed down by the Three-World-Lord
Grieving sad for sunken souls...

¹/ *tarantaḥ syāma durgahā //...30*, ":(ocean)-vessel, [across] dark danger", Book VIII, Hymn 43, 'Hymn to Agni', *r.v.*, *ghedaghni svādhyo ahā viśvā nṛcaḥśasaḥ.../*, "O fire! From our (informed) free will (offering) be it granted entirely, before men, (by the gods)": this one boon:

Hail! To Thee with fulgent face,
 Bright as hundred harvest moons
 Gleaming in the tribute light
 Brought by hosts of sparkling stars...2

Hail! To Thee whose hand is decked
 By the lotus golden blue.
 Eager soother of our woe,
 Ever tireless worker, Thou!...3

Hail! To Thee with grand piled-up hair,
 Shrining there Tathāgata,
 Victor of the universe.
 Thou a saintly victor too!...4

Hail! To Thy '*tut-tāra-hung*'
 Piercing realms of earth and sky,
 Treading down the seven worlds,
 Bending prostrate everyone!...5

Hail! Adored by mighty gods,
Indra, Brāhma, Fire and Wind,
 Ghostly hordes and *gandharvas*
 All unite in praising thee!...6

Hail! With Thy dread '*tre*' and '*phat*'
 Thou destroyest all Thy foes.
 Striding out with Thy left foot
 Belching forth devouring fire!...7

Hail! with awful word '*tu-re*'
 Banishing the bravest fiends,
 Vanquishing the troops of foes,
 Even by Thy merest frown!...8

Hail! O emblem Trinital!
 Charming with Thy breast-posed hand,
 And Thy halo dazzling bright
 Enemies all puts to flight!...9

Hail! In Thy most placid mood
 Beaming brighter in Thy gems,
 Gaily laughing *tū-tu-ra'*
 Thou enslaves men and fiends...10

Hail! Sole owner of the Earth!
 Rich and Mighty bend to Thee,
 Quaking 'neath Thine angry gaze;
 But, the poor Thou cherishest...11

Hail! with moon as diadem,
 Amitā, the Boundless Light,
 Seated midst Thy plaited hair
 Ever shedding glory bright...12

Hail! O Worker wreath'd in flames
 Glowing as the *kalpa* fire;
 Striding out with Thy right foot
 Routing all foes utterly...13

Hail! With frown and angry eyes
 Beating ground with fist and feet
 Uttering the mystic '*Hung*'
 Conquering the seven-fold foe...14

Hail! O happy Kindly One
 Active soother of our woe
 Spotless Thou by '*Swā-ha Om*'!
 Cleansing us from foulest sin...15

Hail! most brightly halo'd one
 Glad to conquer passion's flame
 You the mystic ten words coin'd
 And by *Hung* all wisdom solv'd...16

Hail! With '*Tūre*' bent foot
 Gaineth thus all knowledge germs
 Meru, Mandhar, Vindhya Mounts
 Stirring all the Triad Worlds...17

Hail! O holder of the deer
 Omended deer of godly lakes
 Saying '*Tā-ra*' and Thy '*Phat.*'
 Purging every poison out...18

Hail! O teacher of the gods
Indra, and the *kin-na-ra*
 Richly clad in gladdest cheer
 Blotting out bad dreams and strife...19

Hail! O brilliant clearer Thou
 Clearing mist from sun and moon
 By '*Tu-tāra*' and '*Hara*'
 Stamping out the dreadful plague...20

Hail! O pure mirac'lous power
 Triply potent, mild and real
 By Thy '*Tu-re*' routing out
Yakkha hordes and ghosts and fiends....21

We have prais'd Thy mighty spells
Hail! to Thy Forms twenty-one

Waddell, giving only the first eight verses in *Lamaism*, modified his translation as follows:

Hail! to thee with fulgent face,
Brilliant as a hundred moons
Of harvest gleaming in the light
Of myriad dazzling stars....2

Hail! to thee with pil'd-up hair
Where Tathāgata sits shrined,...4

...*tut-tārā-huñ*...5

Hail! with fearful spell "*tu-re*"
Banishing the bravest fiends,
By the mere frown of Thy brows,
Vanquishing whole hordes of foes!...8

Later still, in 1908, the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* compiled by James Hastings, pub. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, presented his article "PRAYER (Tibetan)" in Vol. 19, in which are given Verse 1) and Verse 3), both slightly altered. He refused to rewrite the second couplet of the third verse, which, quite lovely and entirely appropriate, is all of his own:

Hail! Exalted Tārā-the-Saviouress!
Heroic mother, the messenger
Of the three-world Lord,
Rich in power and compassion!...1

Hail to thee whose hand is decked
By the golden lotus,
Eager soother of our woe
Ever tireless worker, thou...3

In 1967 Fredi Bedi (née Freda Houlston in 1911), then recently ordained into the Karma Kagyu lineage as Gelongma Karma Khechog Palmo by H. H. Kalu Rinpoche; with the collaboration of Lama Karma Thinley Rinpoche prepared a translation in Dalhousie, Himchal Pradesh which is free-form, free-verse, free-style², free-spirited, very freely-interpretative, vastly instructive and downright sublime:

"O most revered One, Holy Dolma, to you I bow down.

To you I bow, the one who brings immediate realization. The glance of your eyes is quick like lightning. The Protector of the Three Worlds (Chenrezi) has a mouth like the Water-Born, The Lotus. You are the one who emerged from its heart...1

² I have totally adjusted the layout and tampered a bit with the punctuation so that it more conforms to the regular versification of the original, in this case, Tibetan. Many apologies. The presentation from which this is transcribed is available at <http://luxlapis.tripod.com/tara.htm>.

I bow to you, of the colour of the harvest moon: full is your face, made of a hundred moons.
From you shines the light of a thousand stars. Radiant, flaming with glory,...2

I bow before you. Wearing yellow and blue lotuses, with hands like water-lilies; lotuses in your hands,
always adorned with flowers.

Generous; full of energy; patient in ascetic practice: full of the peace of meditation. Enduring all, with
mind one-pointed, the essence of perfect activity...3

To you, I bow, the crest jewel of the Tathagatas, those who have gone beyond.
He who conquers all that is evil, who attain[s] every perfection; always upholding the Bodhisattvas...4

To you, I bow, Tutth Tara with the HUNG letter in your heart. You who fulfill all wishes, as many as will
fill the sky.

Treading under your feet, the six spheres of the Wheel of Existence, in whom is no idleness, able to
summon all the Siddhis...5

Before you bow Sakhya, King of the Gods, the Fire Gods (agni Deva): Brahma, the God of the Air:
Mahesh.

In front of you even the unhappy spirits, the ghosts, the scent loving spirits and the Yakshas sing
praises,...7

To you I bow who is called Saviour, Phat, the remover of difficulties. You who defeat the enemies of the
higher mind, all delusions,

With your right leg curved and the left outstretched, trampling them all under your feet. Flaming with
fiery light, Mother always flaming...8

Honour to the TURE, the greatly awesome; always defeating delusions formidable.

That face, lovely as the water-born lotus, half smiling, half angry, you are showing it to us. All enemies
within, you slay to the last one...9

I bow to you, adorned with the gesture of offering the three lotuses, with your fingers joined on your
heart.

Always adorned with the Mandalas most excellent that are offered to you; always radiant in lights of
many colours...10

I bow to you dwelling in the splendour of great joy, wearing the crest ornament of light and necklace of
many coloured jewels.

Smiling, always smiling, your name is TUTTH TARE, the One who saves. You who show your power over
the world and its illusions...11

To you I bow who are protected by the Guardians of the Four Quarters. Great is your power, you who
naturally attract all to you.

From the angry smiling face in a moment emerges the HUNG letter...12 [ff. ?]

Honour to you whose head ornament is the crescent moon, always shining radiantly in your jewels. .

The Buddha of Boundless Light, is in the knot of hair on your head: You are always beautiful in that glow.

I bow to you, flaming like the fire at the end of an aeon: Mother in the circle of blazing light.
Your right leg is straight and your left leg is curved. You we circle in the great bliss of our mind.
Completely defeating the armies of Mara, the deluder...13

I bow to you, you who call on the earth to witness your enlightenment, touching it with the palm of your hand. The soles of your feet press the ground, controlling evil.
You of the letter HUNG are angry, clenching your teeth; controller of the seven spheres...14

O Mother, to you, I bow; bringing happiness, virtue and peace. Mother you are the essence of that action that comes from deep meditation,
Remaining always, perfect, in SWAHA OM, the mantra. You whose nature it is to destroy sin,...15

To you, I bow, who defeat the King of the Maras encircling me. You immobilize our enemies completely:
Your mantra of ten letters we put in our hearts. Dolma, the Saviour, coming from the HUNG in our minds...16

To you I bow, TURE, stamping your feet. In the form of the HUNG letter you are the essence of the seed mantra.
Even the Mandara Mountain you can pierce, you who can shake the worlds...17

To you I prostrate, who takes the form of all the heavenly ones. You hold in your hands the disc of the moon, with the deer on it,
When we say the two TARAS and PHAT all poisons without exception are cleansed...18

You are the one the mountain gods respect: whoever among the gods or men pray to you, He has protection.
Wearing the armour of perfections, brilliant like the light of the first Bhumi [Earth-] Mother, who clears away strife and bad dreams,...19

To you I bow. Like the full moon and the sun are your two eyes, brilliant with light.
Saying both TARA and TUTTH TARA, all diseases you send away...20

To you, I bow thrice: The power to make all completely calm is yours.
You are that most excellent one who controls all evil and mischievous spirits with the TURE mantra...21

This mantra, the root of all virtue, I praise. And Dolma, in her twenty-one emanations.”

Background and Texts

Enter dreaded (*jaṭā bhāra*) historicity. We need a backdrop. If we intend to examine the growth of certain tree limbs we need to step back and take a look at the foliage of the entire forest for a moment. Louis de la Vallée-Poussin, in his review of *Matériaux*, (JRAS, 1896, pp. 241-242) provides the panorama:

“Round Buddha, in the pantheon of new churches, crowd a multitude of other divinities, and their splendour threatened to eclipse that of the Master. Popular imagination continued its work, hand in hand with the enlightened piety of learned devotees. In place of the self-controlled sage, the type of perfect humanity, there was substituted a protecting goddess, kind as a mother. The living Bodhisattva took the place of the extinct Buddha. And as the idea of the divinity changed, the rules of life and the conditions for gaining salvation became modified.

The faithful is now he who loves, and who prays to, any Buddhist divinity whatsoever, the *ishṭadevata* of his family, his country, or his monastery. It is neither by *Bhikṣhutā*, nor by *Jñāna*, that salvation may be gained; but by *Bhakti*, the fervent devotion, the slavery (*dāsavata*), both material and moral, of man with regard to the deity. But it is not in every environment that religion preserves this character of intelligent piety...”

And now, to zoom in: Kenneth J. Saunders, traversing *Epochs in Buddhist History*, published back in 1924 by University of Chicago Press (pp. 206-7), gives a presentation of Our-Lady-in-Question that is delightful and succinct (even as I may disagree upon certain details).....he drifts into *Tārā*, focuses upon Her, then drifts away.....

“...And even the ordinary monk, lazy and corrupt though he be, is accepted as the intermediary between the suppliant and his gods, Tara or Dolma alone being at all times directly accessible to human prayer. So from the mud of corruption flowers this lotus bloom upon the ancient stem, and it is good to pause and contemplate the goodness and power of God, and the yearning of the heart of man, even as here it vindicated itself.

The goddess Tara seems to have found a place in the Buddhist pantheon in the sixth century, and Hiuen-Tsiang found her cult strongly established in Northern India, until, as the centuries went by, every house had an image of this deliveress. That seems to be the meaning of her name, and beautiful stories are told of her begetting; one that she sprang from a blue ray that streamed from Amitabha’s eye, another that a tear from the compassionate Avalokitesvara grew into a lake, from out of which arose a lotus bloom, and in its fragrant heart lay the pure and lovely Tara. She is incarnate in all good women¹, and was first revealed to Tibet in the queens of Srong-tsan-gampo. So grew the belief in her twofold manifestation as the white and the green Tara, one a full-blown, open lotus, the other closed. The white Tara, like the open lotus, symbolizes day; and the green, a closed bloom, symbolizes night², for the compassion of the good Avalokitesvara is ever vigilant. In support of this interpretation are many pictures in which she holds a full-blown lotus, and above her are Sun and Moon. Yet even this lovely figure was not allowed to go unsullied, and to her were added the ferocious manifestations, red, yellow, and blue, which, with her two kindly forms, were all regarded as the Shakti, or female energies, of the five Dhyani-Bodhisattvas.

¹ “The lamas say...” This oft repeated line is Alice Getty’s, as are abridged other of her descriptions here.

² It has been pointed out since Saunder’s day that this *nilotpala* does bloom, only on moonlit nights.

As Sakti of Avalokitesvara³ the white Tara symbolizes Transcendent Wisdom, and has often the third eye of fore-knowledge, and the green Tara often has four arms, symbolizing her gifts to mankind, while among their titles are such noble names as these—"dispeller of grief," "subduer of evil passion," "giver of happiness," "assuaging strife," and "potent in all nature."

The symbolism of these various forms is in itself an elaborate study, and indeed Tibetan Buddhism has carried symbolism to a wonderful perfection, and its art is a unique blend of microscopic detail and bold, decorative schemes...."

The 21-Verse Greeting⁴ derived from a Brilliant Mind, one Buddha Vairocana.⁵ The erroneous premise is that there is no mortal's attribution.⁶ The point-of-view of the Greeting is omniscient, befitting its composition by a Buddha. It is not possible to distinguish whether the Greeting is about Tāra in the 'third person' or addressed to Tārā in the 'second'. It is both. The case ending 'e' for nouns ending in 'a' may frequently be read as feminine vocative in the second person if the vowel is stretched, *ā*, or masculine locative in the third if it is unstretched, *a*. Or both, *à la fois*. This subtlety, the manipulation of declension, is beyond the boundary (*ābaddha*) of English grammar.

Even the opening entreaty *namastāre* may be read "Praise! O Tārā!" in the feminine vocative and "Praise Tāra, here!" in the masculine locative. *ture!* is both the affirmation, "She arrives (here) swiftly", and the exhortation "O, Do be swift!" And *vīre*, "She is so valiant!" or "O, Be (you) brave!"

Valiance; we need a brief word concerning etymology, here. *tāra*, single-stretched, "the bearer across" derives from the root verb *tr̥*, "to traverse"; *tārā*, double-stretched, "star" derives from *str̥*, "to scatter." Sir Monier Monier Williams' Sanskrit English Dictionary (henceforth referenced MW) gives "a star (as in the 'light-strewer')." Our goddess may be pronounced either way, and is both. In English She may be Tara, as She is, or "the Tara", singular or collective; *tārā....nikara* "gathered, (constellated?)"

The text is not narrative, no story is told. It is only loosely, often beautifully, descriptive, but specifically *not* in the style called *kesadī padām* (or is it *kesādi pādām*, I've seen both), 'head to toe', literally 'hair to foot', in which the body and the adornments of the deity are depicted thus, as is done in *avalokiteśvarastavah*. The sense of the order of composition is not one of having been written straight through in a burst, as in Adi Saṅkarācārya's (attributed?) *śrī gaṅgā stotram*. Rather it is that of verses

³ All those who cringed upon striking this Capitalized Phrase "Śakti of Avalokiteśvara" please raise your hands. Keep them there. Now note: in the second millennium in Tibet the proper phrasing was *prajñā* and *upāya*. In the first millennium in India this new paired-conception of the "union of wisdom and ways of approach" was just beginning to be discussed in tea shops in certain bad neighborhoods. Do not take it personally. Cease cringing. Put your hands down. Blessings. By the time *upāya* was firmly rooted into Tibetan soil (11th cen.) three branches had sprung up in neighboring Kashmir in Śaivite bloom: three "ways" to ascend. *aṅṅavopāya* is the whole point. Start here. Get moving. It takes progression, *śāktopāya*; reaches perfection, *śambhavopāya*, and makes its point; full circle, the phantom fourth, nothing happening, *anupāya*, no point at all. No way. "Who," says Abhinavagupta, "Is to be liberated, how and from what?" (Tantrāloka III, 272-3) tr. Bäumer, Bettina, *The Four Spiritual Ways (upāya) in the Kashmir Śaiva Tradition*, ed. Sundararajan and Mukerji, pp. 17-8. Abhinavagupta boldly states *upāyajālam na śivam prakāśayed*, "The net of means of reaching (is) not Śiva seen in Clear Light". This *might* appear cruel, harsh. It needs to be noted. It is 'appearance' that deceives. From the *tantrasāra*, ed. Shāstrī, Verse 6), p. 9.

⁴ *namaskāra* is a compound that means "salutations". Only Yeshi and Jayasvāla have translated this appropriately.

⁵ He was a real person. This was his real name, "preserved" elsewhere and indicated; the example forthcoming at the appropriate moment in the commentary.

⁶ Only Waddell has speculated, based upon a reference in the diary of Hsuan-tsang (aka Hiuen Tsaing), that it may have been the work of the Kashmiri Monk Vairocana, who transmitted the *dharma* (according to Waddell in the eighth century). Our Chinese pilgrim (whom most now agree lived in the seventh century) mentioned an otherwise unidentified To-lo Temple, quite popular, presumed Tara's, whose name the Chinese transliterate as To-luo (Chung-Fang Yu, p. 250) but this was not associated with the Monk Vairocana in any way. Insufficient evidence. Getty restates this surmise, unreferenced.

either composed singly or in small clusters being carefully fitted together into an overall pattern of interwoven complexity and organization, as in Adi Saṅkarācārya's *śiva pañcākṣara stotram*. That there are three sections of seven stanzas each in the Greeting is obvious. Beyond that it becomes interpretative.

Buddha Vairocana's formula throughout much of the Greeting, a device powerfully oriented for *bhakti*, is to give an image of Tārā's activity or to give a component of *mantra* in the first couplet, then Her or *its* application and effective results in the second. There is poetic license. The ordering of this pervasive thematic concern need not be firm and fixed, hard and fast; nor is it. One time this order is reversed, twice both are secured in both couplets, twice both in one couplet. This seems to be the way of Verses 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 (rev.), 8 (both), 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 (2nd couplet), 16 (both), 17, 18, 19 (2nd couplet), 20, and 21. The application often acknowledges some well-known tension, then supplies a resolution with prompt expediency in each case. "[She causes] complete obliteration", *nāśini*, is a favorite remedy for elimination of a variety of problems. That just to be in the sphere of Her joyous, radiant glow, *pramuditā(-ṭopa)* and *(-baddha)*, is another. Here are a couple of examples:

Verse 1) Tension? *ture!* Hurry! Image? Lightning-eyed! A resolution "arises here", *bhave*, in the lotus.

Verse 3) Image? The hand-held lotus. The application it represents is the (here rearranged) six *pāramitā*, "perfections". Tension: *dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-*. Resolution: *-kṣanti titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare*. In the singer's voice, "Reaching, rising, reaching; resting. Soaring so serenely on through."

Verse 4) Image: She crowns Those-thus-gone. Resolution: They adore Her. No 'tension' in this Verse.

Verse 5) Image: *mantra* fills all space. Tension: All beings are attracted. Resolution: Here they come!

Tārā, in the Greeting, has no body. She has a pretty lotus face even when She is wrathful, but we get no details. We see very little of Her, just glimpses. Her eyes are celestial: the sun, the moon; lightning. Her hands, unseen, undescribed, hold one time a golden blue lotus, another the full moon mirrored in cosmic waters, still another, form the sign of the three jewels. We find Her hair all messy, *jaṭa bhāra*, with a beacon in it. In the Praise She has no consort; not Amitābha (the beacon's name, 'Endless Light'), not Akṣobhya, not Avalokiteśvara, nor Amoghasiddhi. She has no color, not *śyāma*, 'green-dark'⁷, like *tamāla* bark, not *sita*, 'white', not *nīla*, the 'color of monsoon clouds'⁸. She has no substance. She is represented in wrathful pose in the most generic of terms; *ghore*, "here wrathful", (our 'gory' derives from this; 'garish'), *bhṛkuṭī kṛta* "furrowed eyebrows" and *(praty)āliḍha*, "archer's stance". We get flickering impressions. She has no shape⁹, save the shape of a thousand stars. She has no outline. That is what She looks like.

Stylistically, Buddha Vairocana favors the locative throughout¹⁰, emphasizing Tārā's presence here.

The Greeting had to withstand the rigors of brahmanic scrutiny even as it conformed to the tenets of Mahāyāna Buddhism and left the door open for followers of Mahāvīra the Jain. Buddhism, itself, is downplayed.¹¹ The Greeting is to Tārā.

The first on record about the Greeting (with the *pro forma* mention that there is a gap here) is the second Candragomin. There were (at least) two. Alex Wayman, deriving dating data for his work on

⁷ *śyāma* is the color emerging when green and blue blend indistinguishably into each other as late sunset approaches dark night. Tibet has turned Her emerald green. All taras are Tārā.

⁸ Wilson, P. L., p. 85.

⁹ *na svarūpā na rūpiṇī*.

¹⁰ Warnemyr would have all of these be read as feminine vocative. Where the context does suggest, the locative seems more appropriate, e.g. *gocare*, "field, pasture, range", used twice, makes more sense to me as "within the field" or "this field here", than, "O, field!" It does work as an exclamation. "O, field of peaceful bliss!", but his own translation, "Enjoys the domain of peaceful Nirvāṇa," makes no attempt to incorporate or accommodate this.

¹¹ The only specifically 'Buddhist' references are the reworked *pāramitā*; *tathāgata*, *triratna* and *amitābha*, which Tārā offers or completes (not the unmentioned Buddha), and *māra*, the evil which Tārā destroys with Her mantra syllables; again, not the Buddha. *tritattva*, as will be explained, is not a Buddhist reference.

*mañjuśrī nāma-saṃgīti*¹², summarizes the situation, “The dating of the M-N-S is also dependent upon the commentators. These include Candragomin, and if he is the eminent Buddhist grammarian, he has been placed in the first half of the sixth century. There is more than one Candragomin, and the M-N-S commentator is reasonably to be identified with the one who wrote the commentary of the ‘Twenty-one Praises of Tāra ,’ probably in the eighth century, where there is also the M-N-S commentator Vimalamitra.” Pieter Verhagen¹³ gives the date as “placed in the latter three quarters of the seventh century.”

Candragomin wrote a number of *stotram* dedicated to Tārā, at least five of which have survived in Tibetan.¹⁴ Tucked deep into the folds of *tārādevīstotra puṣpamālā*¹⁵, “Flower Garland”, verse 28 (of 31, plus the *phala śruti*) commences:

Obeisance: Heroine (Vira), Vajratara

So the line reads:

namaḥ vīra vajratārā

which, with only a slight touch of rearrangement has been extemporized from:

namastāre ture vīre

Candragomin was, in his day, most familiar with the Greeting. A *sādhana* so dedicated is attributed to him. The Greeting emerged, therefore, during or before the seventh century.

At some point early in the course of transmission a *phala śruti*, literally “fruits effusion MW”, i.e. benefits list attached itself. With a formal couplet colophon these five and one half verses bring the total to twenty-seven; multiply by four-lines-per-*śloka*, yields one hundred and eight, the *mālā*. This appended list employs a more varied grammar and elaborate syntax, concerns itself with substance (the benefits), to the detriment of style (the poetry) and has a formalized, mannered cohesion-from-afar not of its own invention. In short, it was written by someone else and welded to the work at some point after the Greeting was in circulation but before it went off pre-packaged thus to Tibet.

Sūryagupta came along, maybe mid-ninth century. He made a big impact. He threw a rock into Her perfect pond and counted twenty-one ripples. It was in the hands and mind of this sorcerer’s apprentice that “The Greeting in Twenty-one Verses to Blessed Tārā” became “The Praises to Twenty-one Blessed Tārās in Verse.” It has been said that Sūryagupta had lots of visions of Tārā. Rather that he had visions of lots of taras¹⁶. The Greeting came to him perhaps with the *phala śruti* but no *dhyānam* “visualization

¹² Wayman, A., *Chanting the Names of Mañjuśrī*, rep. Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 1999, p.5.

¹³ Verhagen, Pieter C., *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1994, p.185.

¹⁴ And there are stories...old woman...lovely daughter...no money for the wedding...she went begging...came to Nālandā...went to Candragomin...he had nothing but compassion...he prayed before a wall mural of Tārā, tears in his eyes...the image animated, took off Her (painted on, but now very real) jewelry, and gave it all to Candragomin who passed the gift along to the overjoyed woman...the empty places where the ornaments had been were aflame. /abridged slightly from *The Bodhisattva Vow*, Sonam Rinchen (comm.), Ruth Sonam (tr. and ed.), Candragomin; Snow Lion Publications, 2000, p.185.

¹⁵ Translated by Prof. Driver. No further reference given, (Yogi C. M. Chen website). This may be John Driver of Samye Ling, Scotland. And see the bibliography Ms. reference given in Arènes, p. 398. Willson notes it not.

¹⁶ All taras are Tārā: the Tara, collective...*nikara*.

recipe". This he supplied, one per verse.¹⁷ His extensive commentaries, the only extant in Sanskrit, are followed by many.¹⁸

I have before me a flyer (for August, 2009)¹⁹ offering "A Rare Empowerment—First time bestowed in the Bay Area 'The Twenty-one Taras' of Nyima Baypa (Surya Gupta). Pre-registration is required...all twenty-one empowerments..."

The legends surrounding the life of Venerable Dīpaṅkar Atiśa of Bengal, late tenth century, are vast. That's good. That means there's lots of information about him. Like the time when he sailed out to Sailendra (Sumatra) upon gentle trade winds, but, Lo! A big storm came up which turned the sky black, terrified the phblank out of everyone on board and threatened to capsize the whole operation with wild winds howling. He called upon Tārā, "Yo! Tārā!" Suddenly, amidst the raging waves, there were twenty-one young girls in canoes alongside the bigger vessel, all smiling at him and saying, "Don't worry. We'll save you." And they did. The storm abated. The captain, crew and passengers congratulated him. He took the credit. Laughing at him, *hasat*, the girls asked him if maybe he wasn't forgetting something.²⁰

Later on in life, back in Bengal after studying for 13 years in Indonesia, Tārā suggested to him that he go to Tibet, indicating that She wanted to go along with him. He thought he would be taking Her far away, to someplace new and strange. He was wrong. He was taking Her home.

Buddhism, long implanted into Khotan, Korashan, Kashgar and Dun-huang down on the Silky Way where it was easy to get to and thus a standing rabbit to encroaching Islam, was spreading into everywhere and every pore up across the more inaccessible Tibetan Plateau. One man's weed is another man's wildflower.

More than any other, it was Atiśa who plowed the ground and planted the Tārā seeds. Within a century they had ripened wonderfully. Atiśa brought with him, many lineages proclaim, images and mantras²¹ for each separate tara. It is more than likely that he knew the 21-Verse Greeting, in Sanskrit. He wrote a *stotra* dedicated to Tārā which became quickly popular. Its opening quatrain:

*lha dang lha min cho pen gyi
zhab kyi pa mo la tu de
phong pa kun la drol dza ma
drolma yum la chag tsal lo*

Gods and demons wearing crowns
Prostrate at your lotus feet.²²
Lightening every burden,
Tārā, blessings and praise.

has been incorporated as an 'adoration' that prefaces most Tibetan lineage recitals of the Praises in *sādhana*. Atiśa, himself, reworked a stanza from Candragomin's *puṣpamālā* for these lines:

¹⁷ Arènes, *La Déesse sGrol-ma (Tārā)*, p.217, n. 247: "Tous les textes de Sūryagupta, se rapport à l'Éloge en Vingt et un Hommages, sont consacrés essentiellement à la descriptions des formes à visualiser et des actes rituels."

¹⁸ Willson, *In Praise of Tara*, p.111: "Since I have no other Indian commentary on the Praise, it is appropriate to translate the Praise in accordance with Sūryagupta as far as possible." Wayman, *Buddhist Insight*, p.443, noting commentaries embedded in the Tibetan Tanjur compendium observes that these, "are not true commentaries, but rather ritual works dealing with the twenty-one aspects of Tārā. These are principally by the *ācāryas* Sūryagupta and Candragōmin. The first work by Sūryagupta is the *sādhana*, or iconographic description for evoking the deity, for each of the twenty-one forms of Tārā." As catalogued by Vidyābhūṣaṇa, S.C., p. v-vi., see Entries 8-10) from the Tangyur, here attributed to Ravi-gupta, "Secret Sun"; same meaning. Entry 7), *tārā-sādhanam*, is [doubtfully] attributed to Ārya Nāgārjuna.

¹⁹ Ewam Choden Tibetan Buddhist Center, Kensington, California.

²⁰ Drastically abridged from 'Biography of *Atisha*' of Gurugana Dharmakaranama, pp. 31-35. From the translators' preface: "...Tibetan historical writings. The reverential approach tends to poetic truth rather than to historical accuracy, but it would be wrong to treat the more fabulous incidents as having no foundation in fact," p. ix.

²¹ John Blofeld gives the mantras in *Mantras: Sacred Words of Power*, pp. 41-2.

²² Reconstructive surgical whimsy: *devāsura mukuṭa padmapāda sevitaḥ?*

Obeisance: (Thou) the lotus feet of whose
 Unrivalled most excellent Body, seated
 On a full moon mat in outflowless bliss (anasravasukha)
 Gods and anti-gods (asura) touch with their crowns....9.²³

Buddhism, suffering further severe setbacks in India involving some combination of reabsorption into Hinduism and the depredations of the onslaught of Islam, was rising to resplendent glory in Tibet, a great renaissance, exciting times. Even as the new Tibetan version of the Praises raged like wildfire across the Tibetan Plateau, the Sanskrit effort of Buddha Vairocana was smoldering and dying in India,²⁴ save for embers that were preserved in unbroken lineage in what were to become the Newari communities of Nepal.

In Tibet the beautiful black bees were most busy amongst the wildflowers. One little hive way up north, the monastic village of Nyen, became an important center for pollen gathering and honey production; the procurement of sacred Sanskrit texts and their translation into Tibetan. A century after Atiśa had done his good work, the famous *Iotsawa* "translator" Darmadra embarked upon a lengthy pilgrimage to India to further his studies at the dwindling source and collect texts, returning to Nyen with a recension of the (now) Praises, which he translated into Tibetan.²⁵ He must have accomplished an immense amount of good work in his life. All that has survived is the Tārā Praises. "Survived" is not quite the right word. In Tibet they have thrived like no other. Made welcome by lineage and lay alike, to this day every Tibetan who is Buddhist knows the Praises by heart.²⁶

The brief record of Darmadra's journey, mentioning his mission and his safe return was provided by Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen, Fifth Patriarch of Sakya, a century later in a commentary upon the Tārā Praises, since become available throughout Tibet based upon Darmadra's translation of the one recension that he had in his pack when he returned.

One recension, herein lies the problem.

The Sanskrit of the Greeting, our concern here, came into western captivity for the first time under the good auspices of Brian Houghton Hodgson, British Resident at Kathmandu, who uncovered a horde (*gaṇa*) of Buddhist Sanskrit documents of dramatic importance in Nepal and crated up the cache Europe bound (*ābaddha*) back in the 1820's and 30's. It was this recovery (ranking amongst the greatest *termas* ever found) that literally created the real possibility for Sanskrit Buddhist Studies, unearthing texts presumed non-existent or assumed lost forever. Six institutions and Eugene Burnouf received gifts of manuscripts. The 21-Verse Greeting, three versions thereof therein, went one to the JRAS Library, one to Cambridge, with one catalogued at Oxford in 1905. The Greeting languished, all copies catalogued as "modern writing", placing them perhaps in the early nineteenth century amidst older, longer, more immediately exciting major philosophical finds. They were catalogued thrice, remaining otherwise unnoticed and uncommented upon for over half a century. It would take still another seventy-five years

²³ Op. cit. And while we are on the subject, stanza 4):" Obeisance Mistress of many workings/Thy bodies various, in essence like a glass (i.e. reflecting forms)/Not definite in one color or set of implements,/(But) arising differently (in accordance with) whom Thou art near"; bears an intriguing resemblance to the last couplet of the 33rd stanza, the quotable favorite, of *sragdharā stotram* which was penned about a century later.

²⁴ While Tārā's status in Śaivism had soared to the top: *mahāvidyā bhavānī ca tārābrahma svarūpinī -rudrayāmala*

²⁵ Tibetan has not the fluidity to match Sanskrit. Darmadra foreswore reiteration of *anuṣṭubh* as futile. The graceful, open lazy-eight of the Sanskrit becomes a punctual, rapid-fire straight-eight in Tibetan; chanted fast. Where *namaḥ śive śubhe śānté* soars serenely, *chak-tsal dema gema zhima* resounds with power. It has become perfectly different. It works.

²⁶ Waddell: "Even illiterate farmers."

more before the Tārā Greeting reached outside of a very small academic community to a wider audience, to blossom not just in the west, but worldwide. In the late sixties and early seventies a larger force by far just took over: Tibetans met hippies. The Tibetan diaspora has successfully against all odds gone world-wide. It was the 'counter-culture' that first created the options for Tibetan Buddhism to be able to flourish on other continents, providing land and labor to make this happen. Today, as you read, *tārā sādhana* is being performed in the French Alps, the Australian outback, the jungles of Brazil. The Tārā Praises, the Tibetan language version, have circumambulated the earth. The Sanskrit of the Greeting, which the Tibetan people do not use, has languished relatively unknown.

In 1895 Librairie Émile Bouillon released a monograph, the 107th in a series, the doctoral dissertation of a young Swiss scholar of Sanskrit, Godefroy Jean Henry Louis de Blonay, titled *Matériaux Pour Servir à l'Histoire de la Déesse Buddhique Tārā*. It was the first scholarly work in a western language devoted entirely to an understanding of the Noble Savioreess., "With a zeal worthy of a devoted follower of the kind goddess," commented his mentor Louis de la Vallée Poussin in his JRAS review the next year, earlier calling him, "Le jeune et savant sans critiste," in the Belgian journal *Le Muséon*.²⁷ De Blonay presented history and folklore primarily derived from the great Tibetan historian Jo Nang Tāranātha, epigraphy from the Kalasan temple inscription and the efforts of the German Sanskritist Franz Kielhorn who travelled northern India in the 19th century copying every word chiseled in stone before it might be removed or destroyed,²⁸ commentary of his own, and a selection of three songs in Sanskrit pertaining directly to Tārā in romanized transliteration with excellent yet idiosyncratic French translations for two of these. The last among the three to be presented, but without a translation was *ekaviṃśatistotra*, from two source texts in the Hodgson Collection.²⁹ In his introductory comments he gave the Greeting a scathing critique, which Poussin translated (not exactly exactly) into English for his aforementioned review, "...a string of Tantric fragments, a litany of colourless epithets easily transferred from one divinity to another in which language, metre³⁰, and reason are abused with equal indifference."³¹ At least, bless him, it made the cut. Tārā's popularity received a small surge, most of the attention going to the ninth century Kashmiri Sarvajñamitra's *sragdharā stotram*, a complex tantric effort thrice as long. Poussin remarked, "Her personality, so precisely defined in *Sragdharastotra*,...". In the Greeting, just to note, Her 'personality' is very precisely *not* defined. She has no 'personality'. The Greeting continued to remain unnoticed. Waddell's full translation in JRAS was not so readily available as his oft-reprinted longer survey *The Buddhism of Tibet, or Lamaism* which edited the translation down to just the example of the first eight verses. It is doubtful if anyone outside of academic circles, and few if any within, made the connection between the English translation by Waddell of a joyous Tibetan chant centering a *sādhana* published in a British scholarly journal and the untranslated Sanskrit of an obscure, isolated³²

²⁷ *Le Muséon*, Vol. 11., 1892, p. 109.

²⁸ *samsārāmbodhitārāya tārāṃ uttāralocanām*

You bring the sea of lives to light. You traverse across, eyes on high.

vande! girvvāṇavāṇinām Bhāratīm adhidevatām

Praise You! Cry out. You beam so bright. Your voice rings o'er where gods dwell nigh.

²⁹ Two manuscripts he consulted. A third he overlooked. It was perhaps not yet catalogued. "Add. 1449 (1-140). MS. Hodgson 6; 55 F. 64 Tārā Ekaviṃśatistotra, from 'A collection of Dhāranis, Stotras and Avadānas', [dated] A.D. 1819", recorded in *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Vol. II.*, 1905, pp. 259-260. However, this entry has been miscatalogued. Folio 64, in Rañjanā cursive (generically noted as Newārī in the *Catalogue*) is *not* the 21 Verse Greeting. I am looking at the microfilm (courtesy Bodleian Imaging) as I type. It appears in Folio 63, to be described here below. See 'Parting shot!'

³⁰ The meter is not at all 'abused'. Just adjust it to a reduced tempo.

³¹ JRAS, p. 245. So much for 'sans critiste', but be sure to catch the pun, anyway.

³² De Blonay obtained at least one of his versions from a *dhāraṇī*, a songbook; a collection. This would have given him no indication of the Greeting's central significance in *pūjā* "worship" and *sādhana* "summoning ritual".

and less important *stotram* published in a French scholarly offprint without special notice excepting a brief sneer in the introduction. De Blonay, himself, did not make this connection to point it out in print even though he referenced Waddell's article, "Mr. Waddell has studied this subject especially and published an English translation of hymn extracts from the manual of adoration, bearing some resemblance (*assez semblables*) to those which we translate. There is added a list of a certain number of Taras, without, sadly, giving the sources."

Alice Getty's *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* (1914) has a lengthy section concerning Tārā, but since her work is primarily a survey and overview of iconography. The Greeting, by way of Waddell, gets only one brief mention. She does give the name of 'each tara' of the twenty-one taken, with full credit given, from Waddell's appended descriptive list.

Hirananda Shastri's *The Origin and Cult of Tārā* (1926) is finely focused upon the Hindu Tārā but fuzzy about the Buddhist Tārā³³ whose Tibetan presence has twenty-one forms (referencing Waddell). Shastri seems to be entirely unaware of either the Greeting or its Indian Sanskrit origin.

Godefroy de Blonay had nowhere placed the Greeting in the context of *sādhana*, but Waddell had, square in the center, and Alex Wayman, then a graduate student at UC Berkeley fluent in both Sanskrit and Tibetan, knew it. He chose to concentrate his effort upon the origin of the 'Praises', which had received no prior discussion, not the currency: *The 21 Praises of Tārā: A Syncretism of Śaivism and Buddhism*.

Stare at that! This proclamation, published in 1959, was buried in the Journal of the Bihar Research Society (to be reprinted decades later in the big book of essays, *Buddhist Insight*, with new footnote reference no.6 interpolated). It may have gotten noticed by his elder peers for its brash radical-departurism, but being off the beaten path as it were—both the journal and the subject matter—they let him live. After a fashion he did have lineage approval: "Qu'entend-on par l'alliance du Bouddhisme et Çivaïsme?" Eugene Burnouf had (p. 488 ff.) considered the theme a century prior. Wayman has presented the Greeting in devanāgarī typeface collated from the Tibetan transliteration of Sanskrit preserved in "the third chapter of the Tibetan translation of the *Sarva-tathāgata-māṭṛ-tārā-viśvakarma-bhava-tantra-nāma*"³⁴, referencing de Blonay's text by way of comparison, and noting *one* very minor variant between the Nepali and the Tibetan Sanskrit versions. He mentions that the Derge Kanjur contains several corruptions, but does not note where in the text. There are *two score* variants between his published version and that of de Blonay, both presented here. Count them and see for yourself. He essentially accepted the Tibetan versions to be the correct text and published his own in accord with this assessment.

In the magical year 1967 Dr. Lokesh Chandra published a tiny and now very-hard-to-get pamphlet in India, *Hymns to Tārā*. It is the key to the highway. As Chandra recounts in *Dialog: A Journal of Astha Bharati* (Vol. 2, #3, 2003) at the invitation of "the Buddhist Patriarch of Siberia His Holiness Hambo (Khampo) Lama" he and his wife embarked from "holy India" to "Ulan-Ude, the capital of the Buryat Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic" where a Buddhist enclave around Lake Baikal has existed for 350 years. One favorite highlight from the pilgrimage:

"Oh! The goddess sings thus in heaven! A special puja was performed in honor of our visit. Amidst the clanging of sonorous instruments, in the cold of the entire [Siberian] atmosphere, we heard a hymn to Mahakala, a favorite deity of the Buryats. Mahakala seems to pervade those desolate vastnesses. We also heard other stotras recited in Sanskrit and in Buryat translations. The Buryats have tried to preserve the accuracy of Sanskrit stotras and their correct pronunciation. The Patriarch insisted that my wife sing

³³ All taras are Tārā.

³⁴ All Those-Thus-Gone, Mother: Tārā('s) All-Encompassing Activity [and] Origination Weaved Together (with) Praise Names. This work, a female tantra of the lotus (*padma*) family was translated into Tibetan by Chokyi Zangpo and Dharmaśrīmitra, but see Willson, p. 49 and Beyer, p. 13. From the Kanjur; biblio. ref. Vidyābhūṣana, pp. ii-iii.

a stotra. Which stotra was the question? He wanted to hear a stotra which they also recite. He went in and brought a xylograph. It was a stotra to Twentyone Tārās (I have printed it in original Buryat and Sanskrit). It consists of twenty-one Shlokas to Tārā in the Buryat language and in Sanskrit. My wife recited a shloka from it." (At this point Chandra inserts a paragraph of commentary on the 21st shloka, which will be quoted in full and discussed at the appropriate moment later.) "When my wife completed the recitation of the stotra, the patriarch was moved, his eyes half-closed in meditation. He said: "Oh! The goddess in heaven must be singing Sanskrit shlokas in this way." The extasy is not only past history but a part of their living life. For centuries the Siberian Buryats have preserved not only this single stotra to Tara, but nearly seven thousand texts, an entire literature inspired by India. They are kept at the Siberian Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR."

Chandra's small work consists of 14 pages of photocopy of a xylograph, Palden Lhamo protecting, and two pages of excellent modern devanāgarī script done with a soft feminine touch.³⁵ I suspected Dr. Chandra's wife. I was right. He has most kindly supplied me with the following full references:³⁶

1. Tibetan-Mongolian brought by my father Prof. Raghuvira from Mongolia, possibly from Lama Yishithakai in 1955. This was published in 1967 with the Sanskrit text in Devanagari from (3). The Devanagari text has been written by my late wife Dr. Sharada Rani.³⁷
2. Tibetan-Chinese version brought by my father Prof. Raghuvira from Peking in 1955. It is illustrated with 21 Taras. Publ: Studies in Indo-Arian Art and Culture, vol. 4, 1975
3. Sanskrit-Tibetan version, presented to my father by Academician Rinchen during his visit to Ulanbaatar, Mongolia in 1955. The Sanskrit is astonishingly correct. Publ: Studies...Vol.4, 1975

There is no date in any of these xylographs.

Berkeley, California, 1978: Tarthang Tulku's followers have founded Dharma Press. Lama Yeshe's are building a *gompa* in the nearby Santa Cruz mountains, Chogyam Trungpa's have started up a center in sister city Boulder, Colorado. Interest is widespread and eager. A young graduate student who had done a year of field research in a Tibetan refugee community in India, Stephan Beyer, has just had his thesis (written in 1973) published by UC Berkeley, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet*. It is available at Shambala Book Store on Telegraph Avenue and The Bodhi Tree on Melrose in Los Angeles. Equally as Waddell but in much greater detail he presented the full *sādhana* with the Greeting as the centerpiece, giving an excellent and sympathetic translation from the Tibetan language version. Nor did he mince words: "The *Hommages to the Twenty-one Taras* is the single most important praise of the goddess in the entire literature." His work was widely read and well received. The Greeting had reached *terra incognita*, the West.

On Losar (Tibetan New Year) in 1981 the Nyamgal Institute in Sikkhim took advantage of the auspicious moment to publish Volume 17, Number 1 of its Bulletin of Tibetology. Included in the issue was *Devanagari text of Tarastotra (panegyric) with translations* written by the incomparable Jampa Yeshe, who "Studied at monastery of Drepung in Tibet for several years; holder of M.A. in Buddhist Philosophy and Diploma in Sanskrit from the Post Graduate and Research Institute of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Bihar." He provides a full glossary of Tibetan-Sanskrit correspondences, a list of 'corrections' of the Sanskrit which is reproduced here, and a translation and brief commentary in charming, very enjoyable English. In the preface he notes, "The present copy has been transliterated into the Devanagari from a very rare Tibetan manuscript copy being preserved at this Institute in

³⁵ The goddess writes thus in heaven.

³⁶ Personal correspondence, 2011.

³⁷ Reproduced here under terms of copyright: For Buddhist Ritual Use.

consulting with its Tibetan version, commentaries by the 1st Dalai Lama, Gedun dup, the 2nd Dalai Lama, Gedun Gyatso, Sakya scholar Darkpa Gyaltsen and it has been compared with its Lanchha (Ranjna) script text as well. The original Sanskrit text does not follow strictly the grammatical rules of the Panini school. There have been found several omissions (perhaps mis-calligraphy) in euphonic combination (sandhi)³⁸ and metre defects for which a note is given separately....The Devanagari transliteration is based entirely upon its original Sanskrit text in Tibetan script and that of Lanchha transcription. The verses and terms were unrevisedly kept in exact form as in original Sanskrit text of Tibetan script. According to reknowned Sakya scholar Darkpa Gyaltsen, this Tara panegyric belongs to Acharya Nagarjuna's tradition and it was rendered into Tibetan by Gnyan Lotsawa."

Insert the first: Also in 1981 the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, brought out a translation of Jo Nang Tāranātha's *The Origin of Tārā Tantra* with the full Tibetan text, edited by David Templeman, with a well-crafted version of the Tārā Praises in English derived from the Tibetan transliteration and translation. A couple of his readings went a bit awry.

In 1986 Wisdom Publications brought out a compendium of songs, ritual and commentary titled *In Praise of Tara: Songs to the Saviouress*. Penned by Martin Willson, an astrophysicist, who was for ten years an ordained monk in the Gelugpa lineage, the work was intended to be both popular and academic. He presents a critical edition of the Tibetan of the Praise(s), and the devanāgarī in transliteration with translation, a running commentary by Sūryagupta, and notes of his own. He consulted five Kangyur versions, "De-ge, Lhasa, Nar T'ang, Peking and Tog, and in Bu-tön Rinpoche's copy from an early edition"; a "remarkable quadralineal block print,"³⁹ of which Gonsar Rinpoche kindly lent me a photocopy...gives...Sanskrit (Lañ-tsha script), Tibetan, Mongolian and Chinese,..."; along with Wayman and de Blonay. He notes, "Another manuscript, in modern Devanāgarī script, of which Gonsar Rinpoche also lent a copy, proved to differ so little from (de Blonay's) that it could well have been transcribed from it."⁴⁰ His devotion to Tārā is manifest. Unfortunately so is the slant of his scholarship. His commentary on the Sanskrit is extensive, but neither thorough nor impartial. He overworks minor points, obfuscating that he has overlooked or selectively omitted major ones.

Since then several more versions have come to my notice. In 1994 Motilal Banarsidass brought out *Buddha Stotra Saṁgraha*, "Buddhist hymn collection", edited by Dr. Janardan Shastri Pandeya in Hindi with a *mālā* of songs among which is the Greeting in two Nepali versions with variants from his second text given parenthetically, all in devanāgarī and without comment (giving *sragdharā stotram* and *tārā stutiḥ* a brief mention in the preface). His text, something of a hybrid of de Blonay's and the Tanjur versions with yet an array (as we shall see, an overlay) of other variants, will prove to be a very important bridge in what follows here.

Insert the second: In 1996 Peeters of Leuven (Belgium) published *La Déesse sGrol-ma (Tārā)* by Pierre Arènes. It is a massive, micro-managed scholastic effort to pin Tārā down, swarming with detail, hazy in conclusion, saying much, adding little. He delves into a variety of Sanskrit-named states-of-being and notes an occasional demon or two, but only utilizes the Tibetan for his full text of the Tārā Praises.

Insert the third: One year later, in 1997, the followers of Bokar Rinpoche in France published *Tara: le divin au feminine*, brought out by Association Claire Lumière (tr. rep. 1999 by Clear Point Press, San

³⁸ *sandhi* is the system of rules for combining end-of-word letters with beginning-of-next-word-letters to smooth out articulation. There are many. They are easy. They help everything along. e.g. *kiraṇa-ut-jvale* becomes *kiraṇojjvale*. It's kinda like legitimizing 'doanचा wanna' for 'don't you want to'.

³⁹ Elisabetta Chiodo notes (p.14, n. 90): "Serruys, [Henry] "Early Lamaism [in Mongolia]", pp. 187-201; the 21 hymn to Tārā and the hymn to the five "Dhyāni Buddhas" in Chinese, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Mongolian was printed in Peking in 1431."

⁴⁰ Willson, p. 109. For this latter text, I will surmise, without having seen it, that Willson takes this assumptive leap concerning its origin because Gonsar Rinpoche resides at Rabten Choeling in a French-speaking part of Switzerland.

Francisco). In this slender volume, historicity falls somewhere between illusory and non-existent.⁴¹ On the other hand, cosmology falls somewhere between charming and wonderful. Tibetan, a translation of the Praises and commentary in the Tibetan style are presented.

In 2000 Tibet House, New Delhi published a version of *āryatārānamaskāraikaviṃśatistotram* in pamphlet form edited by Prof. K. Angrup Lahuli, with Tibetan, Sanskrit, English translation and commentary in Tibetan, following the Tibetan recension versions but with several unusual variants.

In 2004 Vāsantī Gōpinātha Jayasvāla, a Kerala native living and teaching in California added a version to her website Amba House.org ., with devanāgarī, transliteration, an excellent glossary, translation and interpretation. She came to her translation with neither knowledge of nor reliance upon the Tibetan, offering some refreshingly accurate readings and insights, credit to this deficit. She has graciously supplied me with the following details:

“My husband’s family’s kuladevata is Maa Taara [*Ekajātā*]. She had saved his ancestors on one occasion and since then the worship is maintained faithfully by them.

I have taken the textual part of the 21 Praises, and only the textual part, from a Hindi work by Janardhan Shastri Pandeya⁴² who in turn took it from a work by Prof. Sempa Dorje of Tibet [tutor to the 17th Karmapa]. A Buddhist nun surprised me with this, and I think it was copied from manuscripts in the BHU Library, Varanasi.”⁴³ Her text follows the Tibetan model, but with notable variants, several of which correspond with the Nepali recensions.

Lennart Warnemyr of Sweden has presented a text on the internet (2007) in conjunction with a Palyul lineage commentary, giving transliteration, translation and an excellent, annotated glossary; his text a transliteration of Wayman’s devanāgarī, with several minor transcription errors, which he, bless him, acknowledged and confirmed by e-mail correspondence (2012)⁴⁴.

A fifth text, a monograph written by Dr. Alexander Zorin, *Hymns to Tara*, published in Russian by Otkryty Mir Pub. in 2009, contains *Namaskaraikavimshati-stotram guna-sahitam* (i.e. “threaded together”), with transliteration, glossary and a Russian translation, derived from the Peking, Narthang and Derge Kangyur compendia. He offers a ‘critical’ edition, but based only upon these Tibetan versions. I have not been able to peruse the Sanskrit of this work, however an internet-available English translation (programmed, unreliable) of his Russian text would seem to indicate by the vocabulary choices that it recapitulates versions derived from only Tibetan sources, as he indicates.

In April, 2011 Dr. Alexander Berzin posted a version ‘translated from the Sanskrit original, as clarified by the Tibetan’ on his website, of *Aryatara-mantramula-stotra-namaskara-ekavimshatika-nama* giving also a Tibetan title, but no manuscript reference. Several of his readings do indicate a cross-comparison with the Tibetan language version: (to jump ahead here) for Verse 4) he gives “desire, direction and space” for *puritāsā-digantare* (incorporated *āsā* can also mean “desire”, a forced reading here), Verse 5), “vayu, vishva, ishvara” for *marud-viṣveṣvara* (Vishveshvara being unknown to Tibetans) and in Verse 10), “māra-demons and the world” for *māra-loka* (the “māra-realm”, which is split into “māras and this realm”). These are the Tibetan readings. Interpolations like “with (vajras streaming from her) syllable HUM” in Verse 14) derive from *post hoc* Tibetan commentaries. To claim ‘clarified by’ the Tibetan is subjective presupposition on Berzin’s part, a subset of what is called ‘creeping probabilism’; first suggest, then repeat, then assume. Berzin just jumps to ‘assume’. Scholars of his assumed discernment should know better, as in this case shall be shown by repeated specific analysis of examples. If he had just said, “Augmented by,” instead of choosing, “Clarified by”, his effort would have been acceptable.

⁴¹ Which is fully and cheerfully acknowledged in the first line of the introduction. Many blessings.

⁴² Different from the one presented in *bauddha-stotra-saṁgraha*; bound together with *sragdharāstotram*.

⁴³ E-mail, 2010.

⁴⁴ *prabhu(ditā)* in Verse 10), *vinaśiti* in Verse 13) and a couple in the *phala śruti*.

The Nepalese Buddhist Sanskrit transmissions have since Hodgson's day come by a reputation, and not a good one. The premise here is that these manuscripts have been recopied far more frequently over eons with fewer constraints upon accuracy, allowing for a great deal of malarky and tomfoolery to creep through the verbiage. These texts are considered by too many western scholars to be stainfully impurified, rife with variants of all sizes and shapes and most disagreeably "corrupted". I was prepared to believe this to be the case here. Wayman did, *de facto*; Willson, *de jure*. It is true. They are. Every sort of variant is present, often in droves: grammatical ambiguities, stressing irregularities, no *sandhi*, added *sandhi*, confusion of orthography, spelling alterations, suspect case ending, various 'improvements', artificially sweetened readings, synonym switches, vocabulary changes, rewritten sentences, oral transmission flukes and metric anomalies. It is all there.

Wayman acknowledges de Blonay's text, praises its value *pro forma*, then simply ignores it. Willson takes them both to task,⁴⁵ "The complete list of variants among the different editions of this *Praise* runs to several pages. If we standardize the arbitrary conventions of spelling, ignore readings found only in the Nepalese MSS (de Blonay) or Wayman's edition, and correct obvious errors to the nearest reading worth considering, the points where real choice exist, etc." The 'obvious error' that Willson has committed is not having read Lokesh Chandra's text, available at the time. In a land filled with excessive variants everywhere, this hand-copied version of a text from Mongolia is *identical* right down to vowel stretch⁴⁶ and stroph with the transliteration of Godefroy de Blonay.⁴⁷ Two perfect copies were made from a xylograph edition, one in transliteration by de Blonay, the other, "in modern Devanāgarī script" by Dr. Śāradā Rāṇī; one from Cambridge, the other, Mongolia. This was, if I may, 'obviously', the version which Willson was shown by Gonsar Rinpoche⁴⁸, which he chose to ignore. And now we have Pandeya's edition, which shares several important readings with these two cognate texts, different from the Tibetan transmissions, as does Hodgson Ms. 6 in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, to be described.

With Chandra's text, we may now make two observations about de Blonay's printed version, both involving layout. First, the order of Verses 13) and 14), the apocalyptic pair, has been switched. This we can only attribute to a typesetter's error that de Blonay did not catch in proof. The second is that he arbitrarily, uniformly and consistently segregates *namaḥ/namas* from the rest of the line in all cases. Wayman here follows. Opening the Greeting, de Blonay gives *namas tāre* where the catalogue entry he references, which gives the 'first word'⁴⁹, here agreeing with Chandra's text, in devanāgarī type reads *namastāre*. Of the twenty one times de Blonay keeps the margin, only one time does this seriously affect the reading (to be pointed out in the commentary shortly).

Willson, most aware that, "Unfortunately, only one Tibetan translation of the *Praise* appears to have survived," can nonetheless comment that de Blonay's recension was "too garbled for him to attempt a translation."⁵⁰ This repeats the litany begun by Wayman, "Of course, most of his edition is correct, but many a verse has some serious fault—which may be the reason he did not present a translation."⁵¹

⁴⁵ Op. cit., note 30, pp. 381-2

⁴⁶ Found a pea...nut laast night: Verse 11) GD: *bhūpālā*, LC: *bhūpāla*. And another: GD: *sampūrṇa*, LC *sampūrṇa*.

⁴⁷ ...years later, out in the Arizona desert miles up a dirt road, Chandra's long-awaited text came in off the printer from far away Australia. I savored its penmanship, did a quick spot check for viral nepalitis, with which it was rife, then began to read it. My first thought was, "This is just like de Blonay's text." My second thought, occurring somewhere between *sāriṇi* and *bhayamkari*, was, "No, this is de Blonay's text."

⁴⁸ It needs to be noted that the text copied by Dr. Rāṇī came side-by-side with a Tibetan translation. Were the two versions homologous? If so, this Tibetan would have to be quite different from that of Darmadra.

⁴⁹ Cowell and Eggeling, JRAS, Vol.8, 1876, p.25.

⁵⁰ Willson, p.109

⁵¹ Wayman, JBRS, p.37. *Buddhist Insight*, p. 443.

Maybe not.⁵²

Recall Lokesh Chandra: "The Sanskrit is astonishingly correct."

In choosing to ignore the Nepali Sanskrit testimony, Wayman and Willson have made a huge, vast error. They have thrown out the baby with the bathwater. More than several of the 'orthodox' Tibetan-transmission wordings, copied in Sanskrit-as-a-second-language also beg an alternative. There are *non sequiturs* and glaring ambiguities. Some readings require clever translation-stretching to resolve. Others provide unclear conclusions, requiring commentary for explanation. Nepali lineage limbs have been bent and buffeted about by the winds of time, but they go back easily two to three centuries before Buddhism was established in Tibet, before Tibet had a written language. Even accepting caste, the Newari Buddhists have kept their identity, and Tārā's. They are the only Mahāyāna Buddhists who still use the Sanskrit language directly in full in ritual. Tibet does not.⁵³ We seek the 'original' of Buddha Vairocana, a critical text. The determination here is to examine each variant for its own merits as contender for 'original reading'. The methodology that assumes the Tibetan texts to be essentially correct based upon a solitary transmission (however popular) occurring half a millennium after the composition of the original is in no way sound, no way valid. The Nepali texts are not only not to be ignored; they become required. We shall take a very close look at every variant. We must. We need these options.

For Darmadra, too, was working from a defective text, and he only had one. Herein lays the problem.

We have nine published editions of the Sanskrit of the 21-Verse Greeting to work with. Six of these, those of Tibetan origin, essentially conform to one another, with perhaps four or five minor vocabulary variants per text and the usual disruption of *sandhi*. In her essay, *The Mongolian manuscripts on Birch Bark from Xarboxyn Balgas*⁵⁴ Elisabetta Chiodo concludes, "The text of the "Twenty-one Hymns of Tārā was basically transmitted in the same form and the most significant variants concern its orthography more than its vocabulary." These texts all derive from the one recension that Darmadra had in his pack. Henceforth they shall be referred to, when appropriate, as Darmadra's Pack. Wayman, with the exception of his variant *tritātā* presents the type of this text. It will be given in transliteration with variants from Yeshi, Willson, Lahuli, Jayasvāla and Warnemyr noted. In the case of Willson, only the primary text will be considered in the compilation immediately following here. His half-page of footnoted variants, mostly involving *sandhi*-failure, vowel-strophs, or locatives and lack thereof, will be mentioned separately where they are pertinent to the commentary. De Blonay's text will be given next (and his four variants), with his margin layout adjusted to conform with Chandra's; then Pandeya's (with his second-text variants) will be noted in comparison with de Blonay's version. The editors will be identified by their initials:

Godefroy de Blonay	GD
Alex Wayman	AW
Lokesh Chandra	LC

⁵² As for a reason: within the swirling, visionary backdrop of l'Art Nouveau and *fin de siècle ennui*, *sragdharā stotram*, with its shades of Baudelaire and tones of Mallarmé merged and emerged easily (but see Burnouf, p. 496 "cet ouvrage fort médiocre"..."un écrivain non inspiré"). Ici je suis d'accord: "Plunged as I am in the abyss of misery...(6), ...greatly burning with an unbearable and ceaseless internal fever...(7)", tr. Vidyābhūṣaṇa, pp.115-6. To which I can only respond didactically: 'Lighten up, bro'. We all got problems'. The more austere and de-personalized Greeting did not find favor. The karmic seed had not yet fully ripened.

⁵³ At an empowerment I have heard Tārā's *mantra* pronounced very precisely incorrectly *om tāre tūtare(!) ture soha* by a Tibetan lama, to be repeated 100,000 times. He meant well.

⁵⁴ Chiodo, p. 131.

Jampa Yeshi	JY
Martin Willson	MW ⁵⁵
Janardan Pandey	JP
Angrup Lahuli	AL
Vāsantī Jāyasvala	VJ
Lennart Warnemyr	LW

A word or two about the transliteration pronunciation is required. First, no matter how perfectly one may speak or sing Sanskrit today, no one had a tape recorder fifteen hundred years ago. Accents change. History is mute. The point of precise pronunciation is moot. Coulson notes, p. 4, and I just happen to agree, that “The French sounds are seldom more inaccurate than the English, and often very much nearer the mark.” Sanskrit is softer than English and more finely-tuned. However, this is a song which has not come to us scored or arranged, just the words. The meter is in 4/4 time, as simple as it gets. We have no melody line. Coulson and Willson both explain *anuṣṭubh*, with appropriately conflicting explanations. Take your pick or do it yourself. Count to eight. You just follow the bouncing ball.

Herein is used Unicode (the dots and dashes), primarily because it is the least annoying to scan.

Dot on top of a consonant is nasal; tongue up forward with a little growl. Dot underneath a consonant is cerebral, tongue slaps the roof of the mouth. If *r̄*, then roll it. If *ṝ*, then growl it. Dot underneath *ḥ* is aspirate. Good *nāga*. Accent over *ś* is as in ‘as’. Monier-Williams uses ‘z’. Coulson says, “Never ‘z’”. Go figure. Dot under *ṣ* is ‘sh’. When it shows up with the conjunct *kṣ*, pronounce the *k* at the end of the preceding syllable (e.g. *vīre kṣaṇa-* as *vīrek shaṇa-*). The letter *c* is soft, like the ‘ch’ in ‘chocolate’. The letter-with-symbol *ñ* is pronounced like the ‘ny’ in ‘canyon’, Spanish-style.

The symbol ◦ indicates a line break. I use the word ‘bar’ for the horizontal line above that connects the letters.

The letter *a* is pronounced as in “ahah”. The double-hatch given as *ai* is pronounced as in “trail” (*okyanātha*), between ‘court trial’ and ‘dirt trail’. Final short *a* drops off into a schwa. The *i* is like the double “e” in “beet”. Dash over a vowel is ‘long, extended’; somewhere between ‘stressed’ and ‘stretched’. I use the word ‘stretched’ in the commentary. It is not just ‘length’, but emphasis, without accenting. Call it what you will. Please pay ‘perfect’ attention: *pāramitā* has the first and last syllables stretched, but it is the second that gets the accent: *prajñāa paara’mitaa*, not “praj’nuh par’uh-mee’duh”.

The grammatical tile has two small cracks. The vowels *e* and *o*, created by adding a hatch above the bar, and for *o* the supplemental vertical stroph, cannot be identified as ‘long’ or ‘short’. The reading becomes optional, with tradition, regional style and context being contributing factors⁵⁶. For the Greeting, sung in Sanskrit, unlike Hindu *stotram*, we have only the context until a Nepali CD manifests.

Here is the transliteration of Wayman’s text⁵⁷:

*namas ◦ tāre ◦ ture ◦ vīre ◦ kṣaṇairdyuti-nibhekṣaṇe
trailokyanātha-vaktrābja-vikasatkesarodbhave...1*

⁵⁵ MW following an English word in “quotes” refers to Monier Williams. MW following transliteration in *italics* is Martin Willson.

⁵⁶ In Jayasvāla’s published text the transliteration program utilized automatically and arbitrarily lengthens both of these every time. No harm done, e.g. *gōcarē* for *gocare*.

⁵⁷ Warnemyr, copying from same, uses the ‘circumflex’ where I use nothing or give the syllable the full stretch. Willson deploys the circumflex in his effort as well. I do not. The system works. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.

namaḥ ° *śata-śaraccandra-sampūrṇa-paṭalānane*
tārā-sahasra-nikara-prahasatkiraṇōjjvale...2

namaḥ ° *kanaka-nīlābja-pāṇipadma-vibhūṣite*
dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-śānti-titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare...3

namas ° *tathāgatoṣṇīṣa-vijayānanta-cāriṇī*
aśeṣa-pāramitā-prāpta-jinaputra-niṣevite...4

namas ° *tuttāre-hūṃkāra-pūritāśā-digantare*
sapta-loka-kramākrānti ° *niḥśeṣākarṣaṇa-kṣame...5*

namaḥ ° *śakrānala-brahma-marud-viśveśvarārcite*
bhūta-vetāla-gandharva-gaṇa-yakṣa-puraskṛte...6

namas ° *traḍṭi-phaṭkāra-parayantra-pramardini*
pratyālīḍha-padanyāse śikhi-jvalākulēkṣaṇe...7

namas ° *ture* ° *mahāghore* ° *māra-vīra-vināśini*
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-vaktrābja-sarva-śatru-niṣūdini...8

namas ° *triratna-mudrāṅka-hṛdyāṅguli-vibhūṣite*
bhūṣitāseśa-dikcakra-nikara-svakarākule...9

namaḥ ° *pramuditātopa-mukuṭākṣipta-mālinī*
hasat-prahasat-tuttāre-māraloka-vaśaṃkari...10

namaḥ ° *samanta-bhūpāla-paṭalākarṣaṇa-kṣame*
caladbhṛkuṭī-hūṃkāra-sarvāpada-vimocinī...11

namaḥ ° *śikhaṇḍa-khaṇḍēndu-mukuṭābaraṇōjjvale*
amitābhā-jaṭā-bhāra-bhāsvāra-kiraṇa-dhruve...12

namaḥ ° *kalpānta-hutabhug-jvālamālāntara-sthite*
ālīḍha-muditābaddha-ripu-cakra-vināśini...13

namaḥ ° *kara-talā-ghāta-caraṇāhata-bhūtale*
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-hūṃkāra-sapta-pātāla-bhedini...14

namaḥ ° *śive* ° *śubhe* ° *sānté* ° *śānta-nirvāṇa-gocare*
svāhā-praṇava-saṃyukte-mahāpāpaka-nāśini...15

namaḥ ° *pramuditābaddha-ripu-gātra-prabhedini*
daśākṣara-padanyāsa-vidyā-hūṃkāra-dīpīte...16

namas ° *ture-pādā-ghāte* ° *hūṃkārākāra-bijite*
meru-mandāra-kailāsa-bhuvanatrāya-cālini...17

namaḥ ° *sura-sarā-kāra-hariṇāṅka-kara-sthite*
tāra-dvirukta-phaṭkārairāśeṣa-viṣa-nāśini...18

namaḥ ° *sura-gaṇādhyakṣa-sura-kinara-sevite*
ābaddha-muditā-bhoga-kali-duḥsvapna-nāśini...19

namaś ° *candrārka-saṃpūrṇa-nayandyuti-bhāsure*
hara-dvirukta-tuttāre-viṣamajvara-nāśini...20

namas ° *tritātā-vinyāsa-sivasakti-samanvite*
graha-vetāla-yakṣa-gaṇa-nāśani ° *pravare* ° *ture...21*

Several of Jampa Yeshi's text's noted minor slippages (e.g. *vākatrabja*; confusion of *d* and *ḍ*, *t* and *ṭ*, that sort of thing) need not be presented here in the name of clutter. His list may be determined from his Corrections-page (p. 62). Some of his corrections are quite correct. Others are kwight korrekt. Some seeming errors he missed. Some that he caught in proof are given on the Errata page at the end of his work. A few others that I have spotted will be noted. There may be more. His is an intriguing text. It often runs the bar where all others break it. The few occasions where it uniquely breaks the bar it is right on the metrical mark. His presentation is given with attention to accuracy, sincere devotion and homespun reliance upon existing Tibetan tradition. Several 'corrected errors', bless the attempt, give every indication of being original readings, e.g. *pādāgāta*.

Certain other variants involving all nine of these texts, mostly involving stretching and locatives, will be examined fully grouped later on in the commentary and only noted now. Here are the variants:

- 1) *namastāre MW, AL, VJ namastāreturevīre- JY kṣaṇadyuti JY, AL, VJ kṣaṇair* ° *dyuti LW keśara MW* (noting *kesara* as the var.)
- 2) *prahasit VJ*
- 3) *tapaśa JY*
- 4) *aśeṣa MW, JY, AL, VJ -prāpta* ° *jina- JY*
- 5) *tuttāra MW namastuttāra JY, AL, VJ pūritāsādi-gantare LW*
- 5) *kramākrānti* ° *aśeṣa- MW, JY (-ti is fem.) kramākrānta* ° *niḥśeṣa- AL, VJ*
- 6) *marutviśveśvarācīte JY*
- 7) *namastraditi* ° *phaṭkāra AL, (JY runs the line), (MW splits it all), (śikhi ff. will be discussed)*
- 8) *namasture AL, VJ, (JY runs the line)*
- 9) *namastriratna- AL, VJ, (JY runs the line), mudraṅka* ° *hṛdyāṅguli JY*
- 10) *pramuditodīpta AL, VJ prabhu LW mālini MW, JY, AL, VJ vasaṅkari VJ, AL*
- 11) *samasta VJ, calada JY, AL cala VJ*
- 12) *bhāsure MW, JY bhāsvare AL, VJ, LW?, (bhāsvare-kiraṇa-dhruve will be discussed)*
- 13) *hutabhuka JY (jvālāmālāntara will be discussed), mudrita VJ ābhandha MW vinasiti LW*
- 14) *dyāta VJ*
- 15) *namaśiśaveśubheśānte*⁵⁸ *JY samyukte* ° *mahā JY pātaka MW, AL, VJ*
- 16) *ripugātra* ° *prabhedini JY nyāse MW, JY, AL hūñ JY, VJ*
- 17) *namasture JY, VJ (pādāgāte will be discussed) kailāśa JY vindhya-ca AL huṅkāra VJ huñ JY*
- 18) *sure AL, VJ śara AL, VJ -kāra* ° *hariṇāṅka- JY tāra* ° *dūi rukta JY kara* ° *aśeṣa MW, JY, AL*

⁵⁸ Sea shells she sells. Compare Verse 3): *tapaśāśānti*, attempted *sandhi*.

karair ° aśeṣa LW vighna VJ

19) asura AL, VJ kinnara JY, AL, VJ kimnara MW bhaga JY kari AL VJ

20) namaḥ ° candrārka ° JY hārā ° dūirukta ° tuttāre- JY, bhāsvare AL, VJ

21) tritattva MW, JY, AL, VJ, yakṣaughā MW -vetāla ° (only line break) yakṣōgha- JY

Here is Godefroy de Blonay's text, with the cedille given as ś, presented with Lokesh Chandra's word placement substituted, which affects only the margin between *namaḥ(s)* and the word following:

*namastāre ° ture ° vīre ° kṣaṇadyuti-nibhekṣaṇe
trailokyanātha-vaktrābja-vikasatkesarodbhave...1*

*namaḥ ° śānta-saraccandra-saṃpūrṇa-paṭalānane
tāre sahasra-vikalpa-prahasatkiraṇojjvale...2*

*namaḥ ° kanaka-nīlābja-pāṇipadma-vibhūṣite
dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-kṣānti-titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare...3*

*namastathāgatoṣṇīṣa-vijayānta-cāriṇi
aśeṣa-pāramitā-prāpta-jinaputra-niṣevite...4*

*namastuttāra-hūmkāra-pūritāsā-digantare
sapta-loka-kramākrāntā ° aśeṣākaraṣaṇa-kṣaṇe...5*

*namaḥ ° śakrānara-brahma-marudviśveśvarārcite
bhūta-vetāla-gandharva-gaṇa-yakṣa-puraskṛte...6*

*namastra-tritriphaṭkāre ° paramantra-pramardani
pratyāliḍha-pādanyāse ° śikhijvālākulojjvale...7 var. kulajvale*

*namasture ° mahāghore ° māra-vīra-vināśani
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-vaktrābja-sarva-duṣṭa-nisūdani...8 var. nisūdani*

*namastriratna-mudrāṅke ° hr̥dyāṅguli-vibhūṣite
bhūṣitāśeṣa-dikcakra-nikare ° sukulākule...9*

*namaḥ ° pramuditāṭopa-mukuṭākṣipta-sāriṇi var. māriṇi
hasat-prahasat-tuttāre māra-loka-bhayaṃkari...10*

*namaḥ ° samanta-bhūpālā-pātālākaraṣaṇa-kṣaṇe
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-hūmkāre ° sarvāpada-vimocani...11*

*namaḥ ° śikhaṇḍa-khaṇḍendu-mukuṭābaraṇojjvale var. abharaṇajvale
amitābha-tathā-bhāre bhāsvare kiraṇa-dhruve...12*

*namaḥ ° kalpānta-hutabhug-jvālā-mālāntare ° sthite
āliḍha-muditābaddha-ripucakra-vināśini...13*

*namaḥ ° kara-talā-ghāta-caraṇāhata-bhūtale
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-hūmkāra-sapta-pātāla-nāśini...14*

*namaḥ ° śive ° śubhe ° śānte ° śānta-nirvāṇa-gocare
svāhā ° praṇamya ° saṃyukte ° mahāpātaka-nāśini...15*

*namaḥ ° pramuditābaddha-ripugātra-prabhedani
daśākṣara-pādanyāse ° vidyā-hūmkāra-dīpite...16*

*namasture ° pādāghāte ° humkāra-kāra-jīvite
meru-maṇḍala-kailāśa-bhuvanatraya-cāraṇi...17*

*namaḥ ° surā-sarākāra-hariṇika-kare ° sthite
hara-dvirukta-phaṭkāra aśesa-viṣa-nāśini...18*

*namaḥ ° sura-gaṇa-yaksāsura-kinnara-sevite
ābaddha-muditā-bhoga-kari ° duḥsvapna-nāśini...19*

*namaś-candrārka-saṃpūrṇa ° nayana-dyuti-bhāsvare
tāra ° dviruktottāre ° viṣamajvala-nāśini...20*

*namas-tritala-vinyāse śivaśakti-samanvite
graha-vetāla-yakṣādya-nāśani ° pravare ° ture...21*

Of Pandeya's texts' many variants, more than several will conform with or approximate to Darmadra's Pack. Others will prove homologous with GD/LC. What this suggests is that at some point in the past a copyist had two (or more) versions of the Greeting at his disposal from which a selection (unreferenced) had to be made. Here are the variants:⁵⁹

- 1) *kamalod* replaces *kesarod*
- 2) *śataśara, saṃpūrṇeva varānane, tārā, kiraṇaiḥ* replaces *vikalpa*
- 3) *śā(kṣā)nti*
- 4) *śeṣa*
- 5) *tutāra, ākrā[nte], karuṇā* replaces *karṣaṇa*
- 6) *śakrānala*
- 7) *namaḥ ° straditi, parajatra(yantra), śikhi(khī)*
- 8) *mālavīra, śatru-nisundanī(śūdini)*
- 9) *namaḥ ° strīratna* (ff. GD, not LC)-*mudrāṅka, bhūṣite, -svakarākule*
- 10) *pramuditā(śeṣa-muktākṣira-pra)sāriṇi, māralola-vaśaṅkari*
- 11) *bhūpāla-pata(ṭa)lā-karṣaṇa(ṇe), cara-bhṛkuṭi, vimocanī(cini)*
- 12) *śrīkhaṇḍa, [su]muktābharaṇa(ṇo)jjvale*
- 13) *mālāntare(ra), mudi(dri)tā*
- 14) *karatarā(lā)-ghāṭa(ta), bhedinī(ni)*
- 15) *praṇava,*

⁵⁹ The many variants (present in all texts) deriving from the word *nāśana*, 'dispel, destroy', will be given later in a big box.

- 16) *rigātra, pada*
 17) *humkāravijite, cāriṇī(ṇi)*
 18) *sure ° sa(śa)ra, hariṇāṅkakare(ra)sthite, hari, phaṭkara(re)*
 19) *surāsuragaṇa-yakṣa-kinnara, ābuddha*
 20) *tārādvirukta, viṣamajvala(ra)*
 21) *tritattva, vetāra(la)-yakṣoṣma*

The Praises presented by Darmadra have taken on their own joyous course through the history of Tibet. Hundreds of commentaries have been catalogued. Perhaps thousands have been written. They reflect the ingenuity, the intricacy of vision and the real depth (and height) of devotion of the Tibetan people, all lineages and lay, ongoing for a millennium.

Tibetan commentaries over centuries all refer to one text and are all by way of ritual application and symbolic refinement. They are not, nor were they ever meant to be, exegetical or critical in the western sense of literary criticism. This study is. Even the translation of Darmadra, with careful correspondences and consistent application of method, cherished and carefully copied over generations, will not aid this quest. We need extra-Tibetan Sanskrit variants. The points under considered involve the grammatical *minutae* of Sanskrit; *sandhi*, stressing, synonym switches and such, which evaporate in translation. The ambient of medieval India, which we will need to portray, provided a very different atmosphere than that of post-first millennium Tibet, which was too remote in time and space to be able to offer a reliable depiction of it. To disregard the Tibetan-language textual testimony is to step into a scholarly hornet's nest. Step taken, reasons given.

All translations are the author's, unless indicated.

All errors are the author's, unless indicated.

From the depths of obscurity and the brink of oblivion the wonderful Tibetan chant of the 21 Tārā Praises has circled this earth in fifty years. The Sanskrit of the Greeting to Ārya Tārā by Buddha Vairocana is a beautiful song. Let it be sung.

This concludes our sermon.

Now please turn to the hymnal.

Analysis and Commentary

Bauddha Stotra Saṁgraha, Pandeya's "Buddhist Hymns Anthology" includes our only text source not preconfigured to be specifically about Tārā. Wayman and Willson both promote points of view. Pandeya does not. This gives his readings a certain harsh objectivity. Published Indian hymnals often come unreferenced. Pandeya's is no exception. After the preface (*āmukha*), in which *śragdharāstotram* and *tārāstutiḥ* are noted once but *ekaviṃśatistotram* is not mentioned, come songs, without comment. The Tārā Greeting is one of only a very few songs in the book for which he consulted a second text and gave variants (in parentheses) and perceived *lacunae*, gaps in the text, [in brackets].

Start with the worst-case-scenario, the line with the most variants. It is the first line of Verse 10):

Darmadra's Pack:

namaḥ pramuditāṭopa mukuṭākṣiptamālini
 praise gladdened puffing crown thrown out garlanded
 joyous swelling tiara loosened beaded
 delighted pluming crest scattered wreathed

LW gives *prabhuditāṭopa-*, a minor and acknowledged misreading, from *m* to *bh*, then gives "bound; torn, divided" for his reading *dita*. He ends the line stretched, following AW, *mālinī*.

AL and VJ give *-ōdīpta* "shining". Willson notes that the Tog Tanjur gives the Tibetan word for "shining." Here we have an intriguing post-Pack micro-branch.

GD/LC give *sāriṇi* in place of *mālini*; GD giving *māriṇi* as the variant (as does Hodgson Ms. 6).

Pandeya's recension:

namaḥ pramuditāṣeśa muktākṣiraprasāriṇi
 all let loose water expanding (from core)
 every liberated milk stretching out (from source)
 entirely loose pearls Milk Ocean streaming (from essence)

The extended metaphor that secures any of these readings is, of course, *tārā*, "stars". Our interlocutor has not reworked the entire line as given by Darmadra's Pack. He has reworked the line as given by GD/LC, working back from *sāriṇi*. The line as given by the Pack is usually translated as some 'variation' upon "Crown garlanded with expanding joy." *ākṣipta* has a special meaning, "thrown on the beach (by the sea)MW". *kṣīra*, which has replaced it, is a most popular name for the Great Churned-Milk Ocean of cosmic origin, the Heavenly Ganges, the Milky Way; *prasāriṇi*, She, the stars, "stretching out". The lost syllable from *muk(u)ṭa* is regained with *pra-* prefixing *sāriṇi*; which also gives a bit of word-play with *pramudita* preceding and *prahasat* in the line following,. Writing *pramuditāṣeśa*, "entirely joyous", skirts with neutral aplomb and an easy fit the problem that "pearls", *mukta*, do not "puff up".¹ It is very clever. But why? We shall return.

We are left with one unexplained variant, *sāriṇi*. De Blonay gives a second reading, *māriṇi*, (and Hodgson Ms. 6, *pramāriṇi*) which is most likely an orthographic slip-up from *s* to *m*, another easy mistake to make. Now, Tara is a "killer lady", but this may not be exactly what Buddha Vairocana had in mind. A prior copyist has confounded what is going on vis-à-vis *māra loka* in the line following. Someone

¹ They do, however, "shine", *-ōdīpta*; but this leaves no compulsion to make a change; which change must, then have derived from a text that had read otherly; i.e. *-ātopa*.

else really didn't like it (for good reasons). In Newari Sanskrit, the soft *l* and the soft *r* often get interchanged. This occurs a handful of times in the Greeting's' variants, with a handful of different reasons, or none, and will come up again and again. Bendall, p. 103, in an unrelated document, records 'ekara-, or ekalla-' by way of example. For another, *vidyākṣarasottram* (Pandeya. p. 225) reads *rocānā* (*māmakī*, etc.) for *locānā*. Making this change, *māriṇi* becomes *mālini*, "garlanded with a crown of expanding joy". "Beaded with joy?"² It is back on the same page, but further down. It puts the crown around Tara's neck.³ This is mixed metaphor. Even as the *mālā*-beads may represent stars, it is not a fully sensible reading. *mālā* may well be and is, indeed, exalted as a "garland" or "wreath",⁴ however this association of "wreath" brings to mind the Indian equivalent of an Hawaiian "lei", *puṣpamālā*. The Kashmiri Śaivite *mālinīvijay(ottara)-tantra* translates with grace, "Garland of (Higher) Victory". The primary meaning of *mālā* is "a string of 108 beads". The bottom line: Is Tārā's swelling joy Her "essence" *tārāsāra*, or Her "beads" *tārāmālā*? The joy which crowns Her streams from Her source (and connotes the movement of vital energy upward through the cakras). *sāriṇi* provides a clear reading appropriate to the context (and subtext). It alliterates superbly with *tuttāre* in the next line. It is the original of Buddha Vairocana. It is not the only one that will appear in these Nepali texts.

Now, we return to Pandeya's texts' interlocutor. Who would do such a thing? He is inventive. He is bored and it is something with which to occupy his time. He has the time on his hands. He is feeling no guilt whatsoever about what he is doing, rewriting a sacred text. Well, he did not sign his work, so we certainly will never know his name, but he did "date" it. And the date tells all. Verse 7) concerns itself with mantra syllables used to defeat or deflect *parayantra*, "hostile designs"⁵. However, Pandeya's primary text reads *parajatra*.⁶ "Hostile festivals?" The word *jatra* comes late to Sanskrit, in the 15th century. It borders upon Hindi. Not given by Monier-Williams or Huet, it derives from *yatra*, "pilgrimage, journey, procession", involving the same transformation in pronunciation (and spelling) that makes a medieval *yogī* into a modern *jogī*; the island of Yava into Java. We are working with a text of Nepali origin. For centuries one of the most popular festivals in Kathmandu has been Gai Jatra, the annual Cow-fest, "Procession of Cows". It is "a day for making merry jokes and satires. It is a day when everyone is allowed to make satirical comments on anyone. Before Nepal became a republic, Gai Jatra was the only medium to satirize the King."⁷

Or the Queen Mother. We have the work of a young, classically trained (and quite brilliant) copyist tampering with the text for fun. He is good and he knows it. His Sanskrit is excellent. He may be a Hindu convert, possibly a paid scribe. The circus is in town and he is clowning around, stuck inside working. He is on the hook about getting it all done; deadline, penance, commitment, no matter. He thinks he is off the hook about how he goes about it. His handiwork is all over Pandeya's texts. Our next step is to march straight through the Greeting, chase this fox down and eliminate every one of his delightful and clever readings.⁸

² And not "bejewelled". These are plain, round wooden beads. Rich folks might choose ivory or sard. No sparkle.

³ I mentioned this in conversation with Vāsantī Jayasvāla, whose text read thusly only. She gave me the very briefest nod-and-grin, and said, "Yeah, that puzzled me, too."

⁴ Now for *javālmālā*, "beads of fire", we have a congruent metaphor in English.

⁵ DB/LC here read *paramantra*. If the metaphor is "arrow aimed at target" then *yantra*. If it is "returning enemy fire" then "*mantra*". Both readings make sense. More later.

⁶ His second text gives *yantra*.

⁷ Internet. Now Public News Coverage. Crowd Powered Media. 08/18/08.

⁸ In Verse 1), *kamala(-od)* "lotus" replaces *kesara(-od)* "stamens". MW gives *kamalabhava* as a compound. In Verse 5), *karuṇā* "with compassion" replaces *karṣaṇa* "coaxing, being drawn forth". With *kamala* we lose the well-fitted rolling *r* in *kesara*. With *karuṇā* there is word-play that gets eliminated; *akarṣaṇa* with *śakrana-* commencing the next line. Both of these readings have a shared feel, but they are not 'clever' in particular. They are the work of yet another hand, but may still be rejected.

Verse 2) describes Tārā's face metaphorically as "full moon(s)" . Darmadra's Pack gives *saṃpūrṇa paṭalānane*. "Full (moon), 'roof, thatch; veil, cover; a mass, multitude MW',- face." Pandeya's version reads *saṃpūrṇeva-varānane*, "full (moon), just as, beautiful, face." It is a beautiful line⁹. However, the particle *eva*, nowhere else in use in the Praises, changes metaphor to simile, which Buddha Vairocana does not deploy.¹⁰ The text in several places clusters *three* 'retroflex cerebrals' (touch your tongue to the roof of your mouth) for ease of articulation. This line is the 'example'. One of these three cerebrals-in-a-row (the lower dots) vanishes with this rework. In the next line of Praise 2), referring to *tārā* "stars", *kiraṇaiḥ* "beaming" replaces *nikara*¹¹ "bundle, collection"¹²; essence; gift, treasure MW". The word *kiraṇaiḥ*, in the instrumental plural, is just too perfect. This case ending is not used anywhere else in the Greeting-proper¹³. Rejected.

The next suspicious unique reading in Pandeya's text, in Praise 8) is *mālavīra*, which replaces *māravīra*. Now *māravīra* is an expression, coming with a touch of irony, that is common in and to Sanskrit and English, the "valiant enemy", the "honored opposition". "Valiant beads?" This new enemy may not be worth the full weight of Tārā's wrath, so we shall gently reject it. It may be an example of the *l-r* switch, thus possibly occurring at the hands of a different copyist. In the second line of Praise 10) *māraloka* "evil place" is replaced with *māralola* "evil shaking, agitated, inconstant, restless, etc.MW". This reading may not be so easily dismissed. We need to table its discussion for a moment, keeping it in mind until we turn to de Blonay's text.

In Verse 9) the intensifying prefix *vi-* is dropped from *vibhūṣite*. This is viable, but without correspondence from DB/LC must be rejected. It does drop the syllable-count down to seven.

The next rogue reading, coming in Verse 12) replaces *śikhaṇḍa*, "crest of hair, crown lock" with *śrīkhaṇḍa*, a Nepali sweet curd dessert with saffron. It also is the name of a Nepali white sandalwood incense. Either way, it is not the home of "endless light", *amitābha*. Also in Verse 12) the word *mukūṭa* has been replaced with *mukta* here as in Verse 10), again falling a syllable short, for which Pandeya has supplied [*su*] "self-lit" in brackets to fill the void. In the second line his text gives *jiṭā* "conquered" for *jaṭā* "matted" *bhāra* "hair". Out.

Verse 16) has a simple spelling error. In place of *ripugātra-prabhedini*, "tearing up enemies' limbs" the line reads *rigātra-prabhedini*, "tearing up severed limbs", which is redundant and one syllable short. Rejected.

In Verse 17) Darmadra's Pack describes the syllable *hūṃ* as *bījite*. Pandeya's text reads *vījite*, 'uncrossing the *b'* for a more powerful reading indeed, "victorious" replacing "seeding" as in seed-syllable. However DB/LC give *jīvite*, "lived through, animated, a living being, life, MW" and we shall return.

In the first line of Praise 19), which lists various astral and demonic beings who supplicate Tara, there is an assumed syllable-count problem, which Willson notes. The line reads:

*namaḥ ° suragaṇayakṣāsarakinnarasevite*¹⁴

⁹ In sound as well as sight. It sings wonderfully.

¹⁰ Only in Praise 1), Buddha Vairocana uses *nibheksaṇe*, from *nibha* "like" *ikṣaṇe* "eyes here"; which phrase has specifically been 'adapted' from an earlier Hindu source, to be noted in a discussion of the context.

¹¹ DB/LC reads *vikalpa*, "diverse variety".

¹² constellation

¹³ The *phala sruti*, authored by another, does; *vigniaḥ*, in Verse 27). LW reads i/pl. for 1) *ksanaiḥ* and 18) *karaiḥ*.

¹⁴ DB/LC give *gaṇayakṣa*. AW and VJ read *gaṇādhyakṣa*, stretched, in which *adhyakṣa* means "ruler, supervisor". Several translations from Tibetan so read. MW and LW give the semi-stress circumflex "ā"; this pleads 'no contest'. JY gives *gaṇadhyakṣa* without the stretched vowel. Pandeya's text rearranges only, in order to to accommodate the extra syllable in the second half of the line. It does not, in this case, appear to 'respell'. In Verse 6) all texts read *gaṇayakṣa*. The reading given by de Blonay and Chandra for Verse 19) may be preferred.

Our clever lad has readjusted the line to accommodate this:

namaḥsurāsuragaṇayakṣakinnarasevite

And while he was in the neighborhood, in the second line of Verse 18) preceeding, he has changed the mantra syllable *hara* (so it reads in GD/LC) to read *hari* “lord” (usually associated with Viṣṇu). Immediately following in the first line of Verse 19) we find that *ābaddhamudita* “bound for joy” has been changed to *ābuddhamudita* “mindless joy”. Ha. Haa. Just a little flip up for the *i* in *hari*, a quick curl under for the *u* in *ābuddha*, and it is done. “Hey, this is fun! Nobody will ever notice.”

Wrong.

For the very last line in the Greeting, Pandeya gives the list of demons-destroyed as:

grahavetārayakṣōṣmanāśini, with (most helpfully) *vetāla* as the variant. All other texts read *vetāla*.

vetāra, “ghouls”, is another Hindi neologism, confirming the late date of the change. In Verse 5) the *vetāla* remain unmodified. *yakṣōṣma*, “oozing yakṣas” would appear to replace the reading given by Darmadra’s Pack, *yakṣagaṇa*, “hordes of yakṣas”, but appearances can be deceiving. We shall return.

At this juncture it will become useful to have a list of the remaining variants existing between Pandeya’s two manuscripts spelled out in parallel columns:

Primary text	Second text
3. śānti	kṣānti
5. karuṇā	karuṇe
7. śikhī	śikhi
8. nisundanī	niṣūdini
11.patalā	paṭalā
11.karṣaṇa	karṣaṇe
12.abharaṇa	abharaṇo
12.dhrure	druve
13.antare	antara
13.mudita	mudrita
13.vināśinī	vināśini
14.tarā	talā
14.ghāṭa	ghāṭa
14.bhedinī	bhedini
15.nāśanī	nāśini
17.cāriṇī	cāriṇi
18.sarā	śarā
18.kare(sthite)	kara
18.kāra(aśeṣa)	kāre
19.karī	kari
19.nāśinī	nāśini
20.jvala	jvara

To backtrack a moment, it has been boldly asserted based upon a chain of logic that involves meaning, articulation and orthographic deformation that *sāriṇi* is an original reading. It cannot be 'proven'; nor, it must be pointed out, can *māliṇi* be proven. There is one reading involving one letter in one word used one time that *can* be proven by source-critical determination, i.e. an external reference.

In Northern Buddhism there are given the Six Pāramitā ("perfections") of a Bodhisattva¹⁵, which are: *dāna*, *śīla*, *kṣānti*, *vīrya*, *dhyāna*, and *prajñā*. In Praise 3) Buddha Vairocana slightly ruffles the order and provides synonyms, for reasons of his own, both different, for two words: *dāna*, *vīrya*, *tapas*, (*kṣ*)*śānti*, *titikṣā*, and *dhyāna*.¹⁶ He has substituted the more generic *tapas*, "austerities" for the more specific *śīla*, "monastic vows", perhaps because this is a song for the whole family.¹⁷ Also, he has replaced *prajñā* "wisdom", with *titikṣā*, "endurance, forbearance", which is a most admirable trait in its own right but is not synonymous in particular with "wisdom".¹⁸ *titikṣā* was selected not primarily for similitude here, but because it alliterates excellently with *kṣānti*, catching the double-click, as given in DB/LC and in Pandeya's second text. This repeats the alliteration of *kṣanadyuti...kṣane* in Verse 1). With the reading *śānti*, minus the *k* (as the Pack all read), this alliteration disappears. The named *pāramitā*, *kṣānti* means, also, "patience". The word *śānti* means "tranquil", certainly a blessed state, but not necessarily involving "patience".¹⁹ There has been some fancy word-work from commentaries in both Tibetan and Western languages that assume the innate accuracy of the Tibetan-recension version of Darmadra by way of offering clever explanations for this tiny discrepancy. The explanation is simple. Occam's razor. *śānti* is a faulty reading. To look at the layout in devanāgarī script leaves no doubt about this. It is just one letter. It proves that this one reading, *kṣānti*, in the Nepali texts (including Hodgson Ms. 6) is the original. We may at this point legitimately examine any other Nepali reading as a contender for original, provided a chain of logic involving meaning, orthographic deformation and/or aspects of grammar be supplied.

The shoe is now on the other foot. Unless the reading *kṣānti*, conforming with a well-known doctrine and imparting excellent alliteration in the text, can be disproved, it stands as original. With this, it stands to reason that for every other variant shared by GD/LC and JP for which there are Tibetan-recension variant readings, the Tibetan-recension readings which concur with these must be the original. The other variant readings *per force* represent later, newer branches. There are several, involving vocabulary, stressing and *sandhi*. In order from the beginning they are:

¹⁵ The Southern Schools give ten. Add *upāya*, *bala*, *praṇidhi*, and *jñāna*, "ways, drive, calm concern" and "clear comprehension".

¹⁶ The line may still be read off as a list. However, with the slight ruffling of the order and the two interpolations *tapas* and *titikṣā* it may also now be read as a sentence. See the translation.

¹⁷ Wayman notes (p.446), "With Saivitic flavor, austerity and peace here substitute for morality (*śīla*). The Sanskrit word *titikṣa* substitutes for *kṣānti*, both meaning "forebearance". They do both mean "forebearance", but this is not the substitution. De Blonay used two texts, both reading *kṣānti* immediately preceding *titikṣā*, of which Wayman was aware. He does not mention this, probably because it could compromise his premise. And why should "two" words (austerity and peace) substitute for one?

¹⁸ Why this has been done can only be speculative. One possibility is that Tārā and Prajñā-pāramitā, the Goddesses, had, under the overall umbrella of Buddhism, competing temples. In the same fashion, Baptists do not go to Catholic service, yet both are Christians. The premise that Prajñā-pāramitā was on Buddha Vairocana's mind when he wrote this line is borne out by the simple observation that the word *pāramitā*, "transcendence", (see Conze, p. 124), is used in the very next verse, yet *prajñā* has been switched out. Again from Conze: "The Prajñāparamita and Tārā were the first autonomous Buddhist deities. The cult of Tara seems to have entered Buddhism about 150 A.D. ... Tārā was a creation of the popular mind. The Prajñāparamita, on the other hand, originated among small groups of ascetic metaphysicians.", p. 192. Whether Tārā first emerged into Hinduism or Buddhism cannot be determined and is wholly immaterial. Deity influence transfer has not been so linear as it has been in the west. Based upon epigraphical evidence from Amarāvati, I concur that Conze's date for Tārā's entry is correct.

¹⁹ *kṣānti* "just takes hold"; *śānti*, "just hold".

In the first line, Verse 1), Wayman, Willson and Warnemyr give *kṣaṇairdyuti* (MW noting *kṣaṇa-* as a variant), which applies *sandhi* to the middle of a compound, “lightning”, one word. This is literally uncalled-for. In the devanāgarī it crowds up a clean line. LW, in support of Wayman’s reading, calls it ‘/pl., *kṣaṇaih*’ and breaks the bar, *-kṣaṇair ° dyuti-*. This abides not.

In Verse 2), for the word “laughing”, GD/LC give *prahasat*. Darmadra’s Pack concur, excepting the text of VJ, which gives *prahasit*, which is easier to sing; which is OK. This reading is likely a later accommodation to the vocalist or miscopied from oral transmission. The preference must go to *prahasat*.

In Verse 5), Wayman and Warnemyr read *tuttāre* for *tuttāra* in all other versions. Alliterating with *hūmkāra*, *tuttāra* is original. The (thus supplied) conformation with Tārā’s *mantra* is not required, primarily because *hūṃ* is not part of the *mantra*.

Also in Verse 5) GD/LC reads *-ākrānta ° aśeṣa-*, which would appear to need *sandhi* desperately. JP gives a *lacuna* in brackets *ākṛā[n̄te] ° aśeṣa*. The Tibetan versions scramble to solve this conundrum. We have *ākṛānti ° niḥśeṣa* AW and LW, *ākṛānti ° aśeṣa* JY (who ‘corrects’ to *-ntiniḥ*) and MW (who notes a variant *krāntairāśeṣa*), and *ākṛānta ° niḥśeṣa* VJ and AL. Peace, it is a pause point, end-of-‘sentence’. The bar break is in all texts. Tuck-and-roll the tongue, say ‘ahh’ like at the doctor’s office with a tongue depressor. Stay on *a*, then flip up into *-śe* and catch the *k*’s. There is no problem, no *sandhi* needed and no issue.²⁰

In Verse 7) we have discrepancies involving stretched vowels and vocabulary. GD/LC and JP both read *śikhijvālākulojjvale*, with GD giving *kulajvale* as the variant, “pointed fire, clustered, blazing”²¹ and Pandeya giving *śikhī* as the primary; *śikhi* as his variant.

Darmadra’s Pack read variously:

AW *śikhijvalākulekṣaṇe*
 JY *śikhijvalākulajvale*²²
 MW *śikhijvālākulêkṣaṇe*
 AL *śikhijvālākulojjvale*
 VJ *śikhijvālākulojjvale*
 LW *śikhijvalākulêkṣaṇe*

We may reject *ikṣaṇa* on the grounds just given, that it does not conform to the Nepali readings where other Tibetan versions do, but we shall take a moment. Willson reads *ākula* “full of, confused, raging”, and translates, “Eyes all full of blazing fire”, omitting *śikhi*, “pointed-”, then notes, “*ikṣaṇe* ‘eyes, look,’ but (Tog Tanjur) follows the reading *ut-jvale*, lit. ‘blazing up’ but also ‘beautiful, glorious’ as (Sūryagupta).” Warnemyr gives, “view, sight, look, glance”, taken from MW, and translates “Dazzling amidst whirling flames”, substituting “whirling” (perhaps from the Tib. *ḥkrug pa*) for *śikhi* “pointed”, then reconciles with “a dazzling cluster”. Wayman footnotes (p. 444), “I have accepted here the reading in the Sanskrit transcription in the Kanjur against both de Blonay’s edition, *śikhijvālākulojjvale*, and the Tibetan which agrees with the latter, *me ḥbar ḥkrug pa śin tu ḥbar ma*.” Wayman has here miscopied from de Blonay’s printed romanized version, *śikhijvālākulojjvale*, inserting a stretched *-ōjj-*, not done in de Blonay’s text. It is optional, but this is the sin of cōmission, not the sin of omission.

Thinley and Palmo (1967) translate, “Flaming with fiery light, Mother always flaming”. No eyes.

The Tibetan recensions give *jvālā* or *jvalā*, variously, with some circumflexing employed by MW and LW. It is the double-stretching that gives impact. The readings *jvalā* turns the line sing-song, which is not

²⁰ See MacDonell, Arthur A., *A Vedic Reader for Students*, p. 210, n. for *svadhā*.

²¹ e.g. for *kula* VJ gives “collection, conglomeration”.

²² JY, for reasons mysterious, ‘corrects’... *jjvale* (with two *j*’s) to *...jj-jvale*, with *virāma*, vowel and a third *j*.

what we want to express Tārā's wrath. In English, a good example is the chorus to a song by Robert Hunter, "Fi--re! Fire on the Mountain!" Double-stretch the first "Fi--re!"

Wayman, Willson and Warnemyr are essentially forced to read *ākule*, i.e. (*ā*)*kulekṣaṇe* (AW translates "wild glance") because "pointed fiery 'clustered' *kula* eyes *ikṣaṇe*" does not 'look good' either on Tārā's face or in translation. However with *javālā* doubly-stretched, as given by GD/LC and JP with VJ and AL's texts here as well, *ākula*, the reading that gives sense, sends the meter into myocardial purgatory. It is to be rejected.

The introductory *śikhi* may be stretched *śikhī* for excellent rising articulation. With only one manuscript (JP-1) so reading it is most likely a minor oral transmission error, but do sing it so.

The variant *sandhi*-error *kulajvale*, given by de Blonay, with Yeshī's text corresponding, does confirm the reading *javale*, "fire, blazing" as correct, not *uj(ut)-javale*, "higher fire, blazing up", which would require *kulōjjvale*, double-*j*. VJ's text gives the proper reading. In Verse 11) read *abharaṇojvale*; not so in Verse 2), *kiraṇōjjvale*.

In Verse 11) GD/LC and JP give *samanta* "all, every". Most Tibetan versions concur. The texts of VJ and MW (var.) give synonym *samasta*, "all, combined", which may be rejected as a late interpolation. The *dhyānaṃ* for *viṣṇu sahasranāma* gives *namaḥ samasta bhūtanām*, "all living things".

For both Verses 13) and 16) the Nepali texts all read *ābaddha* (about which more later), not *ābandha* "tie, bond; ornament, decoration MW", which AW and MW note as an alternative. This seeming synonym may be rejected. In Verse 13) Pandeya's second text offers *mudrita*, as does VJ. This reading takes all the "joy", *mudita* out of the line. Meaning "stamped, impressed", although a better reading here might be "stomped", this rogue variant must be kept in consideration, although unlikely.

In Verse 15) *pāpaka* is given by AW, JY, LW, which MW notes as a variant, for *pātaka*; both "sins" are synonymous. This is either oral misinterpretation, or an orthographic slip, the *t* turned upside-down.

In Verse 18), where the Nepali texts read *phaṭkāra* ° *aśeṣa*, Wayman, with Warnemyr following and VJ's text agreeing, read *phaṭkārairaśeṣa*. The others follow the Nepali. Wayman gives a footnote: "I have taken the liberty of writing *phaṭkārairaśeṣa*, although both the Kanjur transcription and de Blonay's edition have *phaṭkāra aśeṣa*." At this juncture Wayman needs to be both congratulated and thanked kindly for giving all students of Sanskrit a truly perfect example of how texts being "corrected" by those of scholarly mien are actually becoming "corrupted" instead. Bless him for being smug enough to footnote it.²³ Pandeya's second-text variant gives *phaṭkāre* in the locative to avoid this situation. We may eliminate this reading, also. It is trivial. *sandhi* is not required. There may well be an unrecorded text reading *phaṭkāra* ° *niḥśeṣa*, as JY proposes as a 'correction'. No matter, it is end-stopped. Take a breath. *aśeṣa* begins a new thought, a new sentence.

In Verse 21) GD/LC give *vinyāse*; also JY, JP, VJ and AL. AW (LW following) and MW give *vinyāsa*.

Before we enter the entire mangrove swampful of interconnected branches a word here is needed about the locative limbs, called *adhikaraṇa* "supremacy,...support....,a claim...MW". Usually given in English with a prepositional phrase; they locate, they place. Whether it be, "up, down, in, out, back, front" or a variety of special conditions must be determined by context.²⁴ However, the locative will always affirm or connote "here"²⁵. "Over here, back here", it puts it "here". Transition of meaning from nominative to locative may be very slight. Buddha Vairocana deploys the locative for five reasons. The

²³ A friend of mine once commented upon 'How to Stay Out of Trouble with the Law', "Don't commit two crimes at the same time." Wayman, by his own hand, in his own footnotes, held hopefully to his own standards, is busted; first for fouling the firing order of *śikhijvālākulojjvale* in de Blonay's text; second, for 'taking liberty' with *phaṭkāra* that was not his to take.

²⁴ Vocative or locative, the Buddha Vairocana consistently went out of his way to *not* give the required context. He enjoyed leaving the option open while incorporating the both. This is a singer's delight.

²⁵ or "there"

first is to emphasize Tara's presence here. The second is to conceal gender by coupling the masculine locative with the feminine vocative. The third is to shift meaning just a drop. The fourth is to slightly alter stressing as appropriate. The fifth is to achieve a rhyme.

The second and third occur prominently and congruently in Verse 1) *namastāre ° ture ° vīre °* and Verse 15) *namaḥ ° śive ° śubhe ° śante °. namastāre* conceals gender, secures the double meaning and conforms to Tara's mantra: *oṃ tāre tuttāre ture svāhā*. In Verse 15), if it were to have read *namaḥ ° śiva ° śubha ° śānta*, this would allow the very real direct association with Lord Śiva, which was not to be imputed. In the locative for *śiva* or the vocative for *śivā*, *śive* is just another word for a state of being. In both of these lines it is all-or-nothing: the following words must also be in the locative/vocative for the powerful articulation, thus the chain of three words so modified in both cases. These are great lines.

The texts of GD/LC have been enhanced by a 'locative maven' (Yiddish; 'helpful busy-body') who has scattered extras throughout thereabout, primarily for effect. Those that are not present in either of Pandeya's texts or in any Tibetan-recension renditions may be directly eliminated. They are:

Verse 2) *tāre*

Verse 7) *kāre*

Verse 9) *mudrāñke*

Verse 9) *nikare*

Verse 11) *kāre*

Verse 12) *bhāre*

Verse 18) *hariṇika-kare* The Pack read *hariṇāñka*-²⁶ *kara*, JP giving *kara(re)*. This line is different. Here the locative, changing the meaning from "moon hand" to "moon here in hand" must be kept in consideration.

These are the variants that may be discussed *en bloc*.²⁷ The remainder must be dealt with one at a time or, occasionally, in pairs or small clusters. It is a huge mess. At this time it does not fully resolve.

Trying to loosen up one particular bungi chord from a snarl of rope, "That's my motto! If something can tangle, it will!"

—Kemp Minor Woods

Verse 1): there are (at least) two reasons why *ture* is associated with Tārā. The first is to declare Her speed. The second is to speed Her along with avian efficiency by providing Her with a plumed crest and tail feather in beautiful calligraphy (title page: Dr. Śāradā Rāñī).

Pretty much everyone translates "eyes (or gaze) like lightning". Literally, it is "lightning, like-eyes".

vīra is "hero", "valiant (spiritual) warrior"; "brave, courageous, fearless". Of Lord Indra it is bespoken, *vīratarastvat*, "(no) greater hero than you"; *ṛg veda*, Book VIII, Hymn 24, Line 29 (*id est* 15a). For Tārā this is glossed "Heroine" or "Valiant One". This does not do justice to either the reality of Tārā's gender or the full scope of the word itself. In the late medieval West emerged the Code of Chivalry, melding valiant courage with graciousness and open availability; hospitality and charitability. This is *vīra*.

From *gopi gītā* in *bhāgavata purāṇa* (10.31.14): *vitara vīra nas'te dharāmṛtam* "Deliver (be charitable) to us (with) the ambrosia of your lips."

"Hero" is descriptive only. There is an active component. The *vīra* is a bringer. The *vīra* offers.

²⁶ *āñka*, "mark, sign" (cf. *mudrāñka*, Verse 8; which assures this reading).

²⁷ In Verse 11), JP gives as the variant *karṣane*. All other versions read *karṣana*. This is from a different part of the same block.

The line *trailokyanātha-vaktrābja* “three-world’s sovereign face (throat)” of “lotus (conch, moon)”; all “water-born”; *vikasatkesarodbhave* “expanding open, stamen-filaments, being born (arising, originating)-here” is a *pro forma* requirement; always has been, always will be:

tribhuvana tāriṇī tarala tarāṅge ...to traverse these worlds three, trailing wavelets trembling
śaṅkara mauli vihāriṇi vimale ...in Lord Śiva’s cupped, coiled braids your pure waters leap and play

-Adi Śaṅkarāchārya, *śrī gaṅgā stotram*

“Born on a mountain top in Tennessee
Greenest state in the Land of the Free”

-Tom Blackburn, *Ballad of Davy Crockett*

It answers the question, “Where did our *vīra* come from?”

vaktrābja, “lotus-face”²⁸, being “rosy-cheeked” may well also directly imply “conch-throat” from which emerges a sonorous *hūṃ*. Here, *vaktrābja* might seem by proximity and line-placement to be depicting *trailokyanātha*. It is ambiguous. More to come.

For a genial translation of *kesara*, “stamens”, I have borrowed Yeshe and Beyer’s choice, “corolla”. “Corona” would be nice but it is not close enough. “Iris”, a close relation of the lotus, would be perfect. Within the iris is the pupil, the center of the eye; *tāra*. With “conch-throat”, the *kesara* “filaments” would become “vocal chords, the larynx”; metaphor, like “honey-throated”, to compliment “rosy-cheeked”. From Ramachandra Rao’s tidy essay *The Yantras* (p. 17) we learn, “There is a schema by means of which the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet are all accommodated in the lotus of eight petals. The sixteen vowels are inscribed outside the lotus, often inbetween the petals (called “kesara-sthāna”), and the thirty-five consonants inside the petals.” Also *kesara* may be encountered as “pollen”.

In Verse 2) the opening *śata-śarac-candra* “hundred autumn moons” is given by GD/LC as *śānta-sarac-candra* “mild (peaceful) fluid-(pooled) moon”; compare Verse 18). In the second line these texts replace *nikara* “gathered, clustered” with *vikalpa* “variegated, combined diversity of-” *tārā* “stars”. These readings do not draw attention to themselves nor do they stand out in any way. They are neither too clever, not anachronistic, nor neologisms and are in no way discernably inappropriate to the context. They may well be original readings, but there is no proof. These, and several others, will be noted as viable variants in the compiled text. Hodgson Ms. 6: *satasaraścandra*.

Shastri gives several sample-*dhyānam* for Tārā in *devanāgarī*, pp. 25-6, variously outsourced. One, drawn from A. Foucher, in *mṛtyuvañcana-*, “Death Deceiver”, “Trompe-la-Mort”, as Foucher gives -*tārā sādhana*, in four lines, commences its third, here in Fouchet’s transliteration, p. 66 (which Shastri put back into *devanāgarī*): *śarac-candra-kalā-kārāṃ*, “autumn moon crescent made/attached”. Although the expression *saraccandra* is popular poetically, the proper *month* is not a standard component of a visualisation and not a requirement for one, especially if not even representing the luminous full moon but the new moon’s crescent. This choice of image may be allocated to familiarity with the Greeting’s usage, which had become an implanted association,²⁹ easily applicable as well to other auspicious

²⁸ At face-value. The word *abja*, taken to its source, connotes “water-born”, referring specifically to the trio “lotus, moon and conch”. Avalokiteśvara, not mentioned by name, is presumed to be the source of the “water”. Waddell summarizes, “The tear from the left eye [of Avalokiteśvara] falling on the earth formed a lake, on which instantly, like a lightning flash, appeared floating on a lotus-flower the goddess Tārā.” p.64.

²⁹ Goddesses are pretty as the moon. Rādhā in Her *sahashranāma* is pretty as jillions of moons, *candra koti*, one of which is Her *śaraccandra mukhi*. Lalitā, in Hers, has a *śaraccandra nibhānanā*. Śaṅkarāchārya’s *ananda lahari*,

dieties. B. Bhattacharyya gives the *dhyānaṃ* for Goddess *Cundā*, associated with *Tārā* (p. 221) from *sādhanamālā*, which commences: *śaraccandrabhām*, “autumn moonlight”. Bhattacharyya translates, “She is of the colour of the autumn moon...”, thus, “overall”, Her skin’s hue, silvery white. Foucher, from a different Ms., with aspects ordered differently, gives and translates (p. 81) *saraccandraprabhām*, “elle a l’éclat de la lune d’automne”.

For *tārāṃ śyāmāṃ*... (p. 64, *mahattarī tārā* in *khadiravaṇi*, “the acacia grove”) ...She is *sarva-bharaṇa-bhūṣitaṃ* “all decked out” (my translation), “ornée de toutes les parures” (Foucher’s).

Here in Verse 2) *tārā* is a full, familiar *double entendre*. “*Tārā*” is “laughing, just beaming”, *prahasat-kiraṇo*... “Stars” are “beaming, just blazing up”, ...*kiraṇojjvale*. For *kiraṇa* the metaphor carries, conveys, bears across from Sanskrit into English the double-bearing “beam”. This image survived the centuries on its own in cold Siberia to emerge only slightly scathed from the pen of Helena Roerich (1930, p. 195, entry 245), “...the ray of the Tara affirms the fiery vibration on the planet.”, to encourage what her husband Nicholas felt would be the advent of a New Era.

In the second half of the second couplet, sneak in a *d* for *sandhi*-effect without ‘written’ authorization (none being needed); *prahasatkirano(d)jjvale*, when singing. Like ‘nudge’. See how well it then interweaves tonally with *vikasatkesarodbhave* completing the preceding verse. The *d* will want to form itself naturally. In *o(d)jjva* it is easy to sing, with or “without textual back-up, and may well get copied in as a little ‘supplementary-sandhi’ when taken from an oral transmission, as seems to be the case with both *caladbhīkuṭi* from Verse 11) and *gaṇādhyakṣa* (*adhyakṣa* “chieftans”) from Verse 19) which show up thus written down in versions from the Pack. VJ’s text alone gives *cala-* in Verse 11), JP giving synonymous *l-r* switch *cara-*. The compound *gaṇādhyakṣa* names Lord Gaṇeśa. It is not two words as translations based upon or compared with the Tibetan would have it. Gaṇapati here is inconsistent with the rest of the line and outside of Buddha Vairocana’s loop.

In Verse 3), *namaḥ kanaka-nīlābja* “praise gold(en) blue lotus” actually would sing better if the order were reversed; *namaḥ nīla-kanakābja*. Buddha Vairocana knew this, tried it; tasted it. He realized that it might draw association with *nīla kaṇṭhāya*, “blue throat”, Lord Śiva, which is not what is wanted. But blue-lotus-or-not, it can still mean “blue conch-(throat)” or “blue moon” for that matter. We find *pāṇipadma* arranged perhaps so as to not be confused with *padmapāṇi*, Lord Avalokiteśvara.

Bhattacharyya gives a *dhyāna* extract (p. 56) from the popular 11th century *advayavajra-saṅgraha* by the Brahmin-born scholar-author of the same name; a depiction he notes is of *śyāma tārā*. This brief passage fills vast blanks in the color chart. For display here, *vinyāse*, is the text with my translation:

Aiśānyām candramaṇḍalopari kanakaśyāma-Tām kārapariṇāta Tārinī śyāmavarṇā śyāmanilotpalacihnā vāyudhātusvārūpā Karmakulā irśyarakṭā

Possessing the blessing of a peerless moon-maṇḍala behind (Her); a golden dark Tām making perfection, ‘full (as the moon) MW’: Tārinī, a dark lustre, a ‘characteristic MW’ dark blue lotus, the winds’ source self-formed, causation’s generation, crimson with rage.

Bhattacharyya translates *śyāma* as “green”, forcing his reading “green night lotus”, which we know to be blue. I prefer “dark” blue. Without the blue lotus Tārā does not become Herself. *cihnā*, it is Her “sign, stamp, symptom MW”. In his glossary note (p. 437) for *padma*, Bhattacharyya expounds, “lotus, which

verse 7: *śaraccandra vadana*. Foucher gives *sarac-candra-karā-kārām* as a variant here, the *l-r* switch “autumn moonbeams, [literally] hand-made”, [figuratively] hand-held. Both readings make sense. Has She got a crescent-moon hairpin or do moonbeams emit from Her hands? Au choix. For this the iconographers may determine the more appropriate or original reading. For *Mahāsarasvatī*, Bhattacharyya (p. 350) gives *śaradindukarākārām* from *sādhanamālā*, translating, “resplendent...”.

may be of any colour except blue. The blue lotus is designated by the word Utpala or Nilotpala. In Tāntric works the Padma is the day lotus, while Utpala stands for the night lotus.” Buddha Vairocana appears to not acknowledge this differentiation, which may well apply to Tantric works. For *śyāma tārā*, usually considered to be *saumya*, “auspicious, lovely, good natured”, the *krodha*, “fierce” element *īrśya-raktā* seems out of place, backfitted in or tagged on.

In Verse 4) one may choose to draw association with Lady Uṣṇīṣavijayā (as Wayman does) but She is neither ‘named’ nor specifically implied by the context of the phrasing *tathāgatoṣṇīṣa-vijayānanta*.

Also in Verse 4) we have seeming metric overrun. *aśeṣa-pāramitā*³⁰-*prāpta*, as given by GD/LC, adds up to nine syllables. Several of Darmadra’s Pack chop off the initial vowel, reading *śeṣa*. When singing, if the vowel (or syllable, or two) is sung as a ‘lead-in’ before the line’s commencement, all goes smoothly. This is a very standard compositional technique. Adi Śaṅkarācārya used it all the time, even in mid-verse (*man/dākinī-salila-chan/dana-charchithāya ° nan/dī-svara etc.*³¹). Bob Dylan relies upon it, “Far be/tween sundown’s finish...”

Buddha Vairocana has used both *vijayā* and *jina*, both to insure “victory” and to assure the notice of a Jain audience, hopefully receptive; to lure devotees of the less-important *tīrthaṅkara*-consort, the *yakṣinī* Sutāraka, “Holy Star”, over to Buddhism.

Several ‘English’ translations read *bodhisattva* for *jinaputra*. This is what we call ‘gilding-the-lotus’.

W. J. Verdenius (pp. 117-8), commenting upon Olympian Ode 14, notes, “It is a favorite idea in Pindar that the fame of a victor is like a plant which is made ever flourishing [Thalia] by the song of praise...and such a song will equally live on forever.”

In Verse 5) *sapta loka*, “seven realms” are *kramākrāntā* °, a compound, “attacked by anyone who has taken up a position of advantage MW” It is *tuttāra-hūṃ*, the mantra, having taken up this position by the expedient of *pūritāsā* “filling space with its strength”, *digantare*, a compound, reiterating “the cardinal intervals; the four quarters, “the points within”; that is doing the attacking. It does not, with “steps”, *kramā* “trample down” *ākrāntā*.³² *hūṃ* alone does this later in Verses 14) and 17). Here coupled with *tuttāra* it is mollified, more measured, matriculated. These seven realms, if that is what is being referred to in the next line, cannot well be “quickly attracted” if they have been squashed flat. Tārā is making friends here. In all the seven realms it is counterproductive to trample ones adherents.

In Verse 5) and Verse 11) GD/LC and JP at *kṣame*, “patiently”, give *kṣaṇe*, “instantly” to describe the activity of *tuttāra hūṃ*; *ākaraṣaṇa*-“attracting”, either, “patiently” -*kṣame*, or, “instantly” -*kṣaṇe*. “Instantly” is more in keeping with Tārā’s *ture*, also with *kramākrāntā*. It is a matter for mantrologists. (Hodgson Ms. 6 reads *kṣaṇe*). The unreferenced translation of Lama Karma Thinley Rinpoche and Gelongma K.T. Khechog Palmo, incorporating the phrase “in whom there is no idleness” in Verse 5), would indicate this reading. For Verse 11) they read, “You who naturally attract all”, which here reflects *kṣame*. Buddha Vairocana chose *ākaraṣa(na)* by way of mulling the word *akṣara* “(mantra)-syllable”, having just given a couple of them.

In Verse 6) for the Pack’s uniform reading *śakrānala*, “Indra and Agni” GD/LC give *śakrānara* with the *l-r* switch. Usually associated *vaiśva’nara*³³, alone it is obscure, and although synonymous, must be rejected.

³⁰ which “Buddhists” will translate after the so-named *sūtra* “perfection”. More accurate is “transcendence” as per Jāyasvāla. Barzin gives a great phrase, “far-reaching”. It can mean “further than ever” or “far beyond measure.”

³¹ *śiva-pañcakṣara stotram 2:1-2 ff.* Many recorded versions I have heard double the tempo based upon the grace of the snugly-fit first verse, into a forced crash-compression of the syllable-count, resulting in an arrhythmic staccato morass in the second.

³² The ‘interpretation’ is that Tārā is kicking compassionately with Her lotus foot.

³³ e.g. *candrārka vaiśva’nara locanāya*, also from *śiva-pancakṣara stotram 4:3*.

Bhārata, “India,” is a big place. It might be difficult to pinpoint exactly where Buddha Vairocana was when he wrote the Greeting, to point out His hut on the street, but we can come close; say, within a square mile or two. Here we have deities, Sky and Fire, Source, Wind-bringers; all major national luminaries serving Tārā. Here we have *Viśveśvara*, “Lord of All the Universe”, principal local aspect of Lord Śiva (VJ thus translating “the dissolver”) in Vārāṇasī, Kaśī, where His temple downtown is a major pilgrimage site.³⁴ What in three worlds is a local aspect doing in with the big boys? Buddha Vairocana, eight miles down the road in Sārnāth, knew His audience and had His reasons. He may well have considered and rejected *viṣṇuviśveśvara* for the line; one hornet at a time is enough.

Jayasvāla most aptly observes, “We can safely assume at this point that the term *trailokyanātha* used in Verse 1) refers to a power that is conceived as higher than the ones mentioned here.” *trailokyanātha*, who has generated a popular Hindu surname, is mysterious. This is neither a recognized ‘Name of Śiva’ amongst Hindus nor an appellation of Avalokiteśvara common in Buddhist literature, as far as I can determine. Buddha Vairocana could have very well slid *avalokitā* into the same slot. He did not. He had His reasons. More later.

Wayman, irrepressible, for *gaṇa yakṣa*, “hordes, flocks” of “goblins”, gives *gaṇa* separately as “attendants of Śiva”, then “secret folk” for *yakṣa*. There are special hordes that are indeed attending Lord Śiva. Monier-Williams says so; so does *linga purāṇa*. That is from whence Wayman cribbed this reference. The hordes here, Śaivite derived as they may be, are attending Lady Tārā.

In Verse 7), (and, be it noted, in all other verses) Wayman, perhaps influenced by de Blonay’s example, isolates *namas* ° from *traditiphaṭkāra*³⁵, “Praise, *traṭ* thus preceding *phaṭ* thrown forth”. So do Warmemyr, and Willson (who further breaks it down into *namas* ° *trad* ° *iti* ° *phaṭkāra* °). The texts presented (variously) in typeset devanāgarī-of-choice, JY, JP, AL and VJ, do not do this. JP and VJ give *namaḥ* ° *straḍiti*; JY and AL giving *nama(stra)ḍiti*. There is some discussion as to the propriety of *traṭ* or *straṭ*. Here *sandhi* softens the blow to *(s)traḍ*. Suryagupta commented upon *traṭ* and *phaṭ*.

Godefroy de Blonay gives *namas* ° *tratriphaṭkāre* °, separating *namas* as noted earlier, which makes no sense no matter how it is pulled apart.

Dr. Śāradā Rāṇī’s (LC) meticulous calligraphy fair jumped off of the page: *nama(stra)tritriphaṭkāre*. “Just one look, that’s all it took!”³⁶ Kiss that conjunct (*stra*). May not the line be read *nam’astra-tritriphaṭkāra* °, “Praise weapon *tritriphaṭ* hurled forth”? *parayantra(mantra) pramardini(dani)*, “hostile designs, crushing down-”. This could not possibly be more appropriate to the context. It resolves the ambiguity of *straṭ* or *traṭ* in its alternative. *tritriphaṭ* presents itself with excellent cadence. It is incisive. *tri*³⁷ is a sharp claw in Tārā’s arsenal. Natalie R. Marsh, in an essay for the Huntington Museum Archive (23 June 1998) notes, “The Sanskrit verbal root ‘tri’...is associated with Tara’s name.” This reading, with unresolved division amongst the Pack over *straṭ* and *traṭ*, becomes front runner in the race for original.

Willson notes variants *sphuṭa* and *phuṭa*. Lahuli transliterates *phaṭa*, even though his devanāgarī text reads *phaṭ*. These options may be rejected as vocal interpolation; wrong, but easier to sing.

Darmadra’s Pack uniformly read the second half of the line *parayantrapramardini*. GD/LC here read *paramantrapramardini*. If this is ‘returning like fire’, then *mantra*. If ‘arrow aimed at target’, then

³⁴ Gutschow, Niels.

³⁵ The word *kāra*, ubiquitous, neutral and secure, gives impact to the sound. Rebecca Norman translates its equivalent in Ladakhi, *yi-ge*, as “letter, both senses”. A singing taragram. *kāra* translates poorly literally. One may suit to fit. *hūṃ* has its aspects and different applications. Primarily it pounds to a pulp.

³⁶ Doris Troy.

³⁷ The doubled *tritri* may represent *tritrikoṇam*, two superimposed equilateral triangles, ‘Star of David’ style. This would be a mental projection with the visualized aspect of a Japanese *shuriken*. *phaṭ* cracks the target. With an encircled invert triangle added in the middle of the formed hexagon, and the centered *bindu*, this is Tārā’s *yantra*.

yantra. The weight of tradition (*omkāra tārakā*) would suggest *yantra. pratyāliḍha*, “the archer’s stance” in the line following more or less clinches it. Yeshi’s translation for *parayantra*; “witchcrafts”, is excellent. With the full weight of the line falling upon the syllable *mar*, the singer could well drop the next vowel: *pramard(uh)ni*, turning it into a schwa, which could be misinterpreted *pramardini*. This gentle observation alone is not sufficient to resolve this reading and several others spelled similarly, mostly involving *nāsani/nāśini*. It must remain open. This is not of great import here.

In the next line all texts read *pādanyāse* except Willson, who reads *pādanyāsa*. Also occurring in Verse 16), here the texts of AW, MW, VJ and LW read *-nyāsa*; the others, including the Nepali texts give the locative. For this stanza, Willson notes the locative variant. With the concurrence of the Nepali texts, including Pandeya’s, we accept the locative. “Foot dancing *down*” is strange here. When drawing back a bow string, the foot naturally comes *up*. Need be, it refers back to the *mantra, pramardini* “crushing”.

In Verse 8) Waddell, in accord with Darmadra’s determination to not translate *mantra* syllables, quite brilliantly gives this line the import “with awful word *tu-re*” that it is the word, itself, that is *mahāghore* “very wrathful here”, not the Goddess. So do Yeshi, “With great fierce word *ture*”, and Barzin, “Totally terrifying *TURE*”. My interpretation is that *namasture* is an exhortation to Tārā to “Be swift!”, thus so I translate. The interpretation of Waddell, Yeshi, and Barzin is fully viable. Lahuli’s translation applies this with a ‘twist’, “I prostrate to *Ture*, who vanquishes the great fears”.

Again we have the line separation problem, here only affecting the articulation: GD, AW, MW and LW read *namas ° ture*; LC, JP, VJ, and AL read *namasture*; JY runs the full line together, *nolo contendere*. De Blonay has, as has been shown, regularized his text; AW, MW and LW have followed suit. Here, and as repeated in Verse 17), the reading must be *namasture*.

That which is dispatched here by Tārā’s wrath is given by Darmadra’s pack as *sarvasatru-nisudini (-ani)*, “all (evil) enemies, destroying”.³⁸ GD/LC give *sarvaduṣṭa-nisūdani*, “all wicked (ones or things), destroying”. Both readings are viable. There is no point of reference with which to make a determination. Pandeya’s text gives *nisundani* as the primary, with *nisūdini* as the variant. De Blonay gives *nisundani* from his second text as a variant. Sunda and Upasunda are famous, powerful, important demon brothers from Mahābharata; *nisundani* is thus “demon destroying”, but this reading is unlikely because individual demons are not named in the Greeting, as they are in detail in *devī māhātmyam* and *lalitā sahasranāma stotram*.

Tārā, or Her *mantra* application *ture* (as it be), here project “greater wrath”, *mahāghore*. However, the full verse, itself, brims with cheer. Tārā vaporizes “all evil” with a withering, wrathful glare, no other fire-power needed. It is done. Sing this line with a smile. It is upbeat, with a happy culmination: *sarva-śatru* is simply obliterated. And good riddance.

In Verse 9) the second line, *bhūṣitāśeṣa-dik-cakra-nikara-svakarākule*, as it is presented by Darmadra’s Pack has some interpretation options. In the line preceding Tārā forms or makes the “three-gem sign/mark/seal” with “fingers-at-heart”. To see how this relates to that, we need an interlinear translation:

<i>bhūṣitāśeṣa</i>	<i>dik</i>	<i>cakra</i> ³⁹	<i>nikara</i>	<i>sva-karākule</i>
adorned	all cardinal points	wheel	collected	self-hand agitated
“	every spoke (of)	circle	gathered	self-ray flurried
“	entirely “	halo	amassed	self-beam eagerly occupied

³⁸ Compare *ādityam hṛdayam*, opening verse 4): *ādityam hṛdayam puṇyam sarvasatru vināśanam*.

³⁹ There is a Śaivite list: *khecārī cakra, gocarī cakra, dikcārī cakra*, and *bhūcārī cakra*. These have attributed levels of awareness. *dik cakra*, third down, is the outer sensory realm. It is noted as nature. Śaivism would relegate it to a lesser status than realms beyond ‘this level’. Buddha Vairocana would care to disagree with this assessment.

There is some subjectivity involved in determining what is modifying what. Most interpretations translate, “adorned (with) fully-spoked wheel”, “wheel of all directions”. It may also be read “adorned-fully (with) spoked wheel.” Now, *bhūṣita*, “adorned, ornamented” does not necessarily imply “just jewelry”, although this is a common assumption. It may also, with *aśeṣa*, mean “all dressed up, all gussied up”, to wit: “lookin’ good!” The Wheel may certainly (as Wayman notes) be considered to be *dharmacakra*, The Great Wheel of Dharma, called in the West, The Universal Wheel or The Wheel of Life⁴⁰. However, *nikara*, “gathered”, equally certainly, is a ‘collective’, seemingly implying ‘lots of wheels’. Several translators (including Wayman), encountering this, have indeed pluralized “wheels, circles”. *nikara* may well refer back to *bhūṣita*: “Adornment-all; the Universal Wheel, gathered in”. Rearranged to smooth out the sentence, “All adornment gathered in the Universal Wheel”. Or as I will use, “Your full gown gathered, the Wheel of Life”. At this point in the line we have passive description. The question arises, “What is the Wheel doing?” We have two answers to choose from, one from Darmadra’s Pack, one from the corresponding texts of de Blonay and Chandra, and they are very different.

Here Darmadra’s Pack read *svakarākule*, with the reading *ākule*, and not *kule*, “clustered”, which would be too redundant with *nikara*, “gathered”. If this is *svakara*, Tara’s “own hand” it would be out of character for Buddha Vairocana to be portraying Tara as “full, over-burdened with, agitated, overwhelmed”, *ākule*. For *kara*, Charles Rockwell Lanman gives the definition, “Rays of heavenly bodies conceived as hands or feet.”⁴¹ Of the various translations to date, only Steve Beyer has captured both of these nuances in a brilliant interpretation which allocates *ākula* back to *dik cakra*: “Her palms adorned with the universal wheel, radiating a turbulent host of its own beams.” Lahuli, too, catches this beautifully, “With an overwhelming burst of light”. One hand forms *triratna*, the other emits *dikcakra*.

ākula also may mean “full, actively engaged, agitated,” even “flurried”, Beyer reads “turbulent”. It may, however, well refer to Tara’s hand(s). It is not that she is “over-burdened, agitated” (Wayman gives “distracted”) but “eagerly occupied” and, yes, “flurried”. It is not that She has “full hands”, rather, read in the order written, “She’s got Her hands full!” Rays of light? “She’s just beaming!” Her full wrap, *bhūṣitāśeṣa* is the universe itself, *dik cakra*. It is Her stage, Her show. When (and where) She turns, the Wheel turns. She is most “actively engaged.” What is the Wheel doing? It is turning. Who is doing the turning? Tārā. She is putting Her hands to the Wheel.⁴²

Now, cut to the chase, GD/LC read ° *sukulākule*, detached and isolated from the rest of the bar. No hands! The late (dated 1819) Hodgson Ms. 6, gives *svakulākule*, which will be discussed in detail later. *su-* “urge, impel, excite; beget, bring forth....good....virtuous...easily...willingly...quickly MW”
sukula- “a woman of good family, a respectable woman MW”

-kula “race, family, community, tribe, caste, set, company (ishtadevata) MW”

“Good woman! Eagerly engrossed!” creating and impelling *dik cakra*. An interpretative translation here is, “All adornment gathered, as You turn it turns the Wheel. Great Lady, give it all Your might!”

If one applies *sandhi* to *su*, it becomes *sva-*.⁴³ The *l-r* switch is evident; *kula* to *kara*. These are isolated factors in the possible sequence of transformation. How the full switch came about is a puzzle

⁴⁰ The *kālacakra*, The Wheel of Time, came later. Very timely, *śubham*.

⁴¹ Lanman, C.R., *A Sanskrit Reader*, 2 Vols., p.139.

⁴² This coupled with Tārā’s summoning power dovetail nicely in the thoughts of Helena Roerich, who cherished Her as Dukkar ‘The White Saviour’ (from the more urbane *drolkar*), “When the Tara was affirmed on earth, the three rays of the Lords reverberated. These facets of cosmic fires can be seen on the Tara by a sensitive eye. These facets are so powerfully revealed that their radiance melts all discovered obstacles. One may truly say that the Radiant Image will give new understanding”, (p. 167, entry 201), and “Thus the ray of the Tara summons to the far-off worlds. Yes, yes, yes!”, (p. 197, entry 249).

⁴³ This works in both directions: *svāhā*, for example, dropping *sandhi*, becomes *suhā* (from *su-ahā*); thus the Tibetan *soha*.

not solved. No determination may be made as to originality. Both readings are viable. *sukulākule*, isolated, which gives emphasis where needed, is to be preferred. It alliterates excellently and aligns orthographically with *mukuṭā-* in the Verse following.

Dory Heiligers-Seelen, in his essay 'The doctrine of Śaṭcakra according to the Kubjikāmata' (ed. Goundriaan, 1990, pp. 56-7), notes "a Hindu Śakta Tantra from about the tenth century" and observes "The Śaṭcakra occurs in a twofold variety.....the first...referred to as Kulākula being the combination of Kula (=Śakti) and Ākula (=Śiva)." Thus considered as a compound, this preconfigures Verse 21), *su-*, "self" i.e. Tārā, *kulākule*, which is reasserted with *śivaśakti-samanvite*.

In Verse 10), hopefully, *sāriṇi* has been resolved to satisfaction. In the next line we have agreement over *hasatprahasat*, "laughing, just laughing" *tuttāre*, but there is no accord as to its accomplishment.

Darmadra's Pack: *māralokavaśāṅkari*, "evil place, subjugating" some giving "evil and earth, subjugating" which conforms with Darmadra's Tibetan translation.

GD/LC : *māraloka-bhayaṅkari*, "evil place; frightening off"
JP *māralola-vaśāṅkari*, "evil quaking; subjugating "

If *māraloka* is to be understood as 'in your mind', better to "subjugate i.e. take control of" the problem than to "scare it off". Strangely enough here, a composite of the variants, *māralolabhayaṅkari*, "scares off quaking evil", ("She's scary. They scurry."), does make its sense. Either way, from *vaśāṅkari* to *bhayaṅkari* or vice-versa, with soft *v* and *bh* (and, of course, *b*; in Bengal, Viṣṇu City is Biṣṇupur) easy to misinterpret, and with *m* and *n* interchangeable (Wayman, with Warnemyr following, read *vaśaṅkari*), a primary element of this reading is oral transmission slippage. My feeling is that Darmadra's Pack contains the original. Both of the variants must be retained as not disprovable, unless:

By way of optimizing and regularizing 'nothingness', let it now be pointed out that GD/LC has substituted *sarvaduṣṭa* for *sarvasatru* a couple of verses back and *bhayaṅkari* for *vaśāṅkari* right here. Let your attention now be directed to the *uttara* "last" *kāṇḍa* "chapter" of the *padma purāṇa*, which is dated to the twelfth century,⁴⁴ in which one may find the wonderful *mahālakṣmī aṣṭakam stotram* to contain the following line from the third verse: *sarvaduṣṭabhayaṅkari*. Note the spelling, the *n*. If (and only if) there is a temporal stylistic congruence here (which would be hard to prove with these three common words), this would suggest both of these are changes made in Nepal a century after Darmadra.

Tāranātha gives two lines to an old tale, the retelling of which adds one new element in the first: "At another time when the demon hosts [aerial *maras*] were approaching [Lord Buddha as He sat under the Bodhi Tree on the night before His enlightenment, to make one, final valiant effort to distract his focus], Tārā laughed eight times [viz. *hasatprahasat*], and, tumbling them to the ground, made them unconscious, so it is said."⁴⁵ Being thus incapacitated, they cannot reveal to us whether Tārā was *vaśāṅkari* or *bhayaṅkari* to be able to so overcome them. No help here.

Throughout three realms, although not specifically mentioned in the Greeting-proper, Tārā enjoys a great reputation as the dispeller of fear, *bhayaṅkara-nāśini* (see note 132). This widely appreciated aspect may have encouraged a scribe (or a committee) to make the vocabulary switch here.

Verse 8) and Verse 10) both dispense with *māra*, both deploying words from Tārā's *mantra*, being *tāre* (interpreted thus) and *tuttāre*, to do so. Twice affirmed, this constitutes the perhaps earliest Sanskrit commentary upon the efficacy and sphere-of-activity of the *mantra*; that it is a specific against *māra*. Literally "death", it is often 'personified' as annoying, disruptive, dangerous gremlins.

Buddha Vairocana, familiar with the compound *ghorāṭṭahāsā* (see note 60), splits it apart to deal with the *māra* infestation problem, leaving aside *-aṭṭa(hāsa)*, "a haughty, mocking burst..." . In Verse 8),

⁴⁴ Wilson, Horace Hayman, p.313.

⁴⁵ Templeman, D., p. 3. [with my added explications bracketed].

mahā-ghore sweetly and succinctly eliminates the lot. In Verse 10) *hasat-prahasa* just laughs off *marā-loka* without so much as a shrug. The word *ghorāṭṭahāsā* is abrasive, vicious. Here this harsh element of wrath evaporates into a stern look, *bhṛkuṭi-kṛta-vaktrābja*, and glad tidings, *pramuditā*. These several observations suggest that Verses 8) and 10) were composed together, with Verse 9) then inserted between them, thematic reason unknown. From the *dhyāna* for *prasannatārā* in *sāadhanamālā* (Bhatt., P. 249) we find *mahā ghorām Tārā devīm*.

In Verse 11) GD/LC overstretch *samanta-bhūpālā* (LC: *-bhūpāla*)-*pāṭālākaraṣaṇa-kṣane*, most likely by way of oral transmission (and see Part 1, n. 46.) With the Pack's reading, stretch *paṭalaaa*, then accent *ākaraṣaNAK* hard! Verse 5), also. For *ākaraṣa*, Berzin's "allure" is excellent.

Darmadra's Pack record that the wrathful *hūm* comes in conjunction with *caladbhṛkuṭi*, "moving furrowed eye-brows", LW noting: from *calat*; AL and JY give *calada*. VJ gives *cala*. Here, with the *l-r* switch, Pandeya's texts read synonym *cara*; while GD/LC, preconfiguring Verse 14), give *bhṛkuṭikṛta hūmkāra*. To jump ahead, in Verse 17) both GD/LC and JP replace *cālini* with *cāriṇi*. Occam's razor will slice out *bhṛkuṭi kṛta*, a 'regularization'. How did *cala* (and complicating *cara*) derive from this? And Hodgson Ms. 6. supplies the proof of the pudding, stirred in well. See the Ms. 6 section appended. With nothing else for reference, there is no real way to choose between *cala* and *cara*. Fortunately, they sound alike and mean the same thing. My preference, with no proof, is to split the difference, accepting the reading *cala* given by VJ (without the unnecessary 'sandhi', which LW is forced to 'explain grammatically', *calat*). This holds for *cālini* in Verse 17) as well. Wayman sets the conjunct with *-br* slantwise and foreshortened below the inserted *d*, making messy. Wayman's translation of Verse 11) is superb; "Adoration! O Lady able to summon the multitudes of all the Local Genii, Who liberates all in distress with Thy Hum of shaking, contracted brows." And Yesi, "Hum, moved by indignation..."

In Verse 12), as in Verse 7), the no-sandhi variant *abaraṇajvale* given by GD (and Hodgson Ms. 6) would suggest that the original again reads *jvale*, not *ut(oj)jvale*. The Pack, excepting VJ, read the double *ojj*, as does GD's primary and LC. Pandeya's primary (two wrongs don't make a right) reads *abaraṇajvale*. His variant conforms with the Pack. If the assumption that *-jvale* as original is correct, then Jayasvāla gives the proper reading, *-ojvale*. It cannot be proved. It can be preferred.

In the next line, the Pack give *jaṭā-bhāra* for Tārā's "ratty hair". Here we have "high Tara's tufted head", as Sir William Jones describes her look in his poem "The Enchanted Fruit". It is like a beehive twisted together with dreadlocks, this conical coif from canonical iconography. Often it is called *jaṭā-mukuṭa*. GD/LC read *tathā- bhāre*. The locative has already been eliminated. The reading *tathā*, "thus" is neutral and not unreasonable, but uncommon in this context, and unlikely.

Getty observes⁴⁶, " 'Bhṛkuṭi' according to certain *sādhanas*, is an emanation of Amitābha, and may have an image of the Buddha of Infinite Light in her head-dress." This, in light of their placement in these consecutive verses suggests that whereas the phrase *bhṛkuṭi kṛta* given in Verse 8) is descriptive of Tārā in a moment of wrathful response; here the phrase *cala bhṛkuṭi* names the Goddess Bhṛkuṭi.

Sooner or later, even though She is not mentioned directly in the Greeting⁴⁷, the Heavenly Ganges comes into commentarial play, being entirely composed, as She is, of *tārā*, "stars".⁴⁸ Wayman flirts with this, noting that Ma Ganga is released from Siva's matted, coiled hair, then, as per his Śaivite-influence theory, he reverses who is in whose hair here, giving the line as, "(Tārā) is the constancy of radiant beams from Amitābha's mass of braided hair," declaring that "Amitābha here substitutes for

⁴⁶ *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, p.124.

⁴⁷ Excepting JP's text's *kṣira*, which has already been eliminated.

⁴⁸ Is Tārā to be found in The Heavenly Gañges?

devī sureśvari bhagavati gaṅge

tribhuvana tāriṇi tarala taraṅge

Adi Śaṅkarācārya does not specify.

Śiva.”⁴⁹ From the lay of the line one might deduce the former; *amitābha-jaṭā-bhāra*⁵⁰. A vast array of iconographic evidence, however, statues all over India from the medieval period, depict Tārā with a tiny Amitābha nestled in lotus posture or occasionally standing in Her hair. Amitābha is *not* associated with Lord Śiva, occasionally with Brahman, but this is specious since Brahman has *no* attributes. Early origin is uncertain. Being “Endless Light”, the most agreeable speculation, suggested by Sir Charles Eliot (p. 220), is that this core element of His being seems Zoroastrian with an infusion of the Manichaeon. Nestorian and Gnostic have been proposed. They were all in the area, on the page, at the time. *namu amida butsu*

The ending phrase, describing Amitābha’s activity, has a layout-and-locative problem, and one synonymous vocabulary option. We need to look at all versions:

GD/LC	◦ <i>bhāsvare</i> ◦ <i>kiraṇadhruve</i>
AW	- <i>bhāsvāra</i> <i>kiraṇadhruve</i>
MW	- <i>bhāsure</i> ⁵¹ ◦ <i>kiraṇa</i> ◦ <i>dhruve</i> - <i>bhāsure</i> ◦ <i>kiraṇodhruve</i> (var.)
JY	- <i>bhāsurekiraṇo</i> ◦ <i>dhṛ ve</i> corr. to <i>dhruve</i> ; the split, however articulates superbly, an oral fluke
JP	- <i>bhāsurekiraṇodhruve</i> - <i>bhāsurekiraṇoddhure</i> (var.)
AL	- <i>bhāsvara</i> ◦ <i>kiraṇadhruve</i>
VJ	- <i>bhāsvarakiraṇe</i> ◦ <i>dhruve</i>
LW	- <i>bhāsvāra</i> <i>kiraṇadhruve</i> (n. <i>bhāsvāra</i> = <i>bhāsvara</i> ?)

The reading is “shining (here), beaming (here), fixed eternally here”. LW prefers his *dhruve* in the fem. voc., “O, be eternally fixed!” *bhāsvare* and *bhāsure* are the synonyms. The locatives (or vocatives, as you will) are only for articulation. The ‘*sandhi*’ provided by MW (var.), JY and JP (var.) is an optional call. The only way to resolve these minor confusions is ‘singer’s choice’. Having sung this line in every way as loud as possible, it is a personal determination that GD/LC, with *bhāsvare* isolated (and with *dhruve* isolated, as per MW, JY, and VJ) rocks. Without *bhāsvare* isolated, i.e. *jaṭābhāra* ◦ *bhāsvare* etc., it articulates like ‘Barabbas’ from the Bible, with its second syllable getting the main stretch, which is not desired, but note that of those that connect the bar only Wayman supplies this necessary forced reading, *bhāsvāra*, legitimately questioned by Warnemyr.

Tārā is often associated with *dhruva*, the “fixed” Pole Star, navigator’s choice.

In Verse 13) we encounter a similar situation:

GD/LC	<i>jvālāmālāntare</i>
AW/LW	<i>jvālamālāntara</i>
MW	<i>jvālāmālāntara</i>
JY	<i>jvālāmālāntarā</i>
JP	<i>jvālāmālāntare</i> <i>jvālāmālāntara</i> (var.)
AL	<i>jvālāmālāntara</i>
VJ	<i>jvālamālāntara</i>

⁴⁹ Gudrun Bühnemann, 1996: “The Buddhist Mahācīnakrama Tārā bears the Tathāgata Akṣobhya on her head,” and continues, “In Hindu icons... ‘Akṣobhya’ was interpreted as an epithet of Śiva”, p. 475.

⁵⁰ If the interpretation is ‘Amitābha in (Tārā’s) dreaded-hair’, as usually accepted, then should not Verse 1) read ‘Trailokyanātha in (Tārā’s) lotus-face’? Just passing through. Blessings.

⁵¹ As may be seen, several texts give here and in Verse 20) synonym *bhāsure*, to be discussed.

JY's text, which only stretches the second syllable of *jvalā*, forces *mālāntarā* with the final syllable stretched. This is a very creative error/solution on the part of some prior copyist. Buddha Vairocana is emphatic about fire. Without that enhancing locative 'there', GD/LC, and MW, who semi-stretches *-an* with the circumflex *â* (which is close enough), reflect the choice here for original. The literal translation "beads-(of)-fire, within" *sthite* "(Tārā) abides here" is straightforward. For the purpose of song, one cannot possibly improve upon a line from Johnny Cash, "Burning Ring of Fire!" The meter is undercut in the preceding line at *hutabhug*. This compression allows time for a full draw of breath before the extended stressing coming.

In the line following is the first use of *ābaddha*.⁵² The variant *ābandha*, "bound-turban, crown of coronation, corona; tie" has already been dismissed for cause. There is contention. I shall enter the fray; the froth kicked up by Wayman and splattered around by Willson. Wayman ("circular band") would link it all to some sort of secret ritual protective circle within which he seems to be bound. Perhaps a sort of hypnotic fascination is involved. Willson gives "bound 'round (with joy)", which has a sense of self-prepossession. With tantric overtones, this would encase Tārā, create an enclosure. Rather make it "bound for joy", as in the title of Woody Guthrie's autobiography, *Bound for Glory*. To bring back Johnny Cash, a couplet from this love song, "Bound by wild desire, I fell into a ring of fire", makes it plain that "bound by", synonym 'with', means (oh-so-sweetly) "trapped". Tārā is certainly not in any sense trapped by Her spreading joy, neither is Her joy contained. "Bound to" as securely expressed by Robert Hunter, in the sense of 'destiny', for the Grateful Dead, also provides the accurate sense: "Every time that Wheel (*dik cakra*) turns 'round, you're bound to cover just a little more ground." Examples abound. Lord Śiva's *liṅgam* is bound to extend to infinity in both directions, revealed thus to Lords Brahma and Viṣṇu as an endless pillar of fire. Tārā's joy is bound to radiate, bound for everywhere from everywhere. A Net (*jāla*) has been devised and cast throughout Lord Indra's home *trāyastriṃśa* in the celestial realm that captures this, described in *mahā-vaipulya-buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*, Mahāyāna, 3rd Cen., and fabricated from *oṃ ratnacchāyā-mahāmegha-śabdātōpa-sarvodbhava saṃyukte hūṃ* (in this author's humble Sanskrit). Buddha Vairocana (perhaps here in a different incarnation) reveals and the Shingon repeat: "*oṃ amogha vairocana mahāmudrā maṇipadma jvāla pravarttaya hūṃ*". This from *mahā-vairocana-(abhi)sambodhi vikurvitaddhiṣṭhāna*- "shifting, abiding" *vipulyādhiṣṭha* "standing tall" *sūtra-indrarāja nāmadharma -paryāya* "revolving endlessly" and called *amogha-paśa*- "the infrangible perception-bound-hem" *vikrinīta*- "assailing" *mantra*.

Bound by with for against up down over into before beyond, here we find English to be more supple than Sanskrit, the translation into it bound (over) to the context. *ābaddha* negates *abaddha*. English finds the reverse, "unbound" unwinds "bound".

LW gives *vināṣiti* for *vināṣini*, a graciously acknowledged and most minor typographical error.

In Verse 14) JP's text gives *karatarā-*, the *l-r* switch; with *karatalā-* as the variant. *karatala* is a compound, "palm", so *karatara* is out. VJ's text gives *dyāta* in place of *ghāta*, a simple-to-make orthographic slip. Willson notes that de Blonay (and I may add, Chandra) give *nāṣini*, "dispel, destroy" in place of *bhedini*, "shatter, burst asunder." Both work; preference to the Pack.

Throughout Verses 13) and 14) the afterburners kick in and the song accelerates clear through the apocalypse. At Verse 15) they abruptly shut off. Tara achieves the serenity of weightless orbit, ascending from and through 'immanence' to full 'transcendence': *namaḥ śive śubhe śānte*. She has carried the

⁵² Jampa Yeshe gives *avada* and notes, "In this verse, Sanskrit word Avada, Tibetan Kun-nas-skor (means to encompass) the second Dalai Lama referred it to turning wheel of Dharma then it should be Avartana? And fire referred to fire of wisdom." *āvartana*, "turning, revolving". Wayman footnotes, p. 448, "...*kun nas bskor*, "completely circumambulating." There is frequently confusion between *b* and *v*.

weight of this universe. She has danced in the flames at the end of time with joy. She has annihilated the hell realms. Now She ranges completely free: *śānta nirvāṇa gocare*.

In Praise 15), those familiar with the Tibetan language version of Darmadra, which reads *gema*, translate *śubhe* as “virtuous”, a secondary meaning given later by MW and last by Huet. Jayasvāla gives the accepted Indian usage, translating, “auspicious”.⁵³ My choice, to save two syllables, is “blest”. Wayman translates *śubhe* as “Lady of Virtue”. However, in an entirely different essay from the same collection (“Significance of Dreams in India and Tibet”) he defines “auspicious” (dreams, in this case), as *śubha*.⁵⁴ Barzin offers an excellent choice for this multi-faceted word, “lustrous”.

The second line begins *svāhā-praṇava-samyukte*. The word *svāhā*, “obeisance, worship, do honor” completes many a *mantra*. The word *praṇava*, deriving from *praṇu*, “roar, reverberate MW” signifies politely to one and all the primal, perfect syllable *om̐*, which inaugurates many a *mantra* more. Willson mistranslates *samyukte* as “She endowed with”. It means “conjoined, united, working together, unified”.⁵⁵ There is no “She”. It is the *mantra* syllables working together that *mahā-pātaka-nāśini*, “greater sins, are destroying”. The dictionary entry for *pātaka* reads, “that which causes to fall MW”. Jayasvāla gives, “the great fall.” Waddell’s translation, “Cleansing us from foulest sin,” is well-phrased. This is a well-known category with a list of fine perversions, consistently translated from Hindu texts, where it is often found, as “greater sins”. Sticking with the literal, the version given here below will read “stumbling blocks”.

We have *svāhā* and the *praṇava* for reasons unknown given in reverse order. This occurs also in the 108 Names of Tārā, *āryatārā(bhaṭṭarikānāmā)ṣṭottaraśatastotra* (de Blonay, p. 51, 31:1; Pandeya, p. 83, 30:1) where they are extolled *dhṛtidā puṣṭidā svāhā om̐kāra kāmārūpiṇī*, “held, cherished...forming from love”. In the Greeting we find them in pursuit of the destruction of personal problems (*mahā-pātaka-nāśini*). The *praṇava*, “great prime” is purest peace pouring forth, not pursuit. Neither alone, nor “completed”, *svāhā*, “offered”, does it undertake tasks. It sanctifies by its presence. This declaration that the blessing of *om̐* has a spelled-out function oversteps a theological boundary, and it is a barbed-wire fence with a “No Trespassing” sign. None may claim *om̐*, not for any reason. *ekankar*, say the Sikhs, “One *om̐kāra*”. Purists would pounce upon this assertion that it is involved in a destructive effort, however worthy. The word they would use is ‘sacrosanct’. Adi Śaṅkarācārya was quite aware of this; *om̐kāraṃ bindu samyuktaṃ nityaṃ dhyāyanti yoginaḥ*, “Om̐ sound-and-source together link eternity, the sage’s gaze”. But let there be no application. Go no further. Buddha Vairocana may gleefully declare that any other deity worships Tārā. Many a *stotram* does this. Durgā just absorbs all *daśa* “ten” *mahāvidyā* including Tārā and more (and Śaṅkarācārya himself gets chastised for not doing his devotions) in Her *chālīsā*. The Buddhist *mahogratārāstutiḥ* selects with great felicity from the list: *gaurī lakṣmīmahāmāyā umā devī sarasvatī* and asserts *śaktirūpe* but names not *praṇava* (Pandeya, p. 166).

De Blonay and Chandra give a variant that resolves this completel y: ◦ *praṇamya* ◦, “oblations”. The reading becomes, “Obeisance and oblations work together”. *praṇamya* alliterates sweetly with *samyukte*. The opening line of a *vajratārā sādhana* attributed to Ratnākaraśānti (11th cen.) given in *sādhnamālā* reads:⁵⁶ *praṇamya tāriṇīṃ bhaktyā sarvasampattivardhanīm*, “...fully accomplished (and) accrued”, assuring the devotional intention of the ritual. There is no proof for this reading, *praṇamya*; neither can there be proof for the majority reading, *praṇava*. The preference must go to *praṇamya*.

In Verse 16) the second line begins with *dasākṣara*, “ten-syllable”, no more. “Ten-syllable what?” No identification is needed. Everyone entirely already knows exactly to what this refers, Tara’s ten-syllable

⁵³ And a brilliant translation of *śānta-nirvāṇa-gocare*, “grazing ground of nirvāṇa”.

⁵⁴ At the very end of a work is given the traditional *śubham*. This means, “Blessings, All-auspicious, All good”.

⁵⁵ Waddell makes this same error in a note, second-guessing a Sanskrit reading of *samyak* for Verse 21) from the Tibetan for what reads *samanvite*, “(here) fully endowed with” in all Sanskrit texts.

⁵⁶ *sādhnamālā*, van der Haegen, Tim; p. 96.

mantra: om täre tuttäre ture svāhā.⁵⁷ *sāadhanamālā* makes this explicit: *tatra daśākṣāraṇī om täre tuttäre ture svāhā*.⁵⁸

pādanyāse, (with *pā-* stretched as in the next verse) “The Twist, the Stomp, the Mashed Potatoes, too;”⁵⁹ *hūṃ* hammers it home, sparks flying: *dīpīte*, if you like, “illuminating”, but what Buddha Vairocana likes is “fire”. *Vidyujjvālākarālī*, Terrible Fiery Truth, is a true friend of Tārā’s. She is *Ekajaṭa*, looking into Her mirror, combing Her hair out, getting all fired up. And that is the flaming truth!

In Verse 17) we have the same situation as in Verse 7) and accept *namasture*. “Down comes the foot”, variously stretched. This time AW (with LW following) accepts the voc./loc. termination given in GD/LC, which this writer attributes to “locative maven”. Here is the breakdown of the full line:

GD	<i>namas ° ture</i>	<i>pādāghāte ° huṃkārakāra-jīvite</i>
LC	<i>namasture</i>	<i>pādāghāte ° huṃkārakāra-jīvite</i>
AW	<i>namas ° ture</i>	<i>pādāghāte ° hūṃkārakāra-bijite</i>
MW	<i>namas ° ture</i>	<i>padāghāta ° huṃkārākāra-bijite</i>
JY	<i>namasture</i>	<i>pādāghāta ° hūṃkārakāra-bijite</i>
JP	<i>nama[stāre] ture</i>	<i>pādāghāta ° huṃkāra- vījite</i>
AL	<i>namasture</i>	<i>pādāghāta ° hūṃkārākāra-bijite</i>
VJ	<i>namasture</i>	<i>padāghāta ° huṃkāra bijite</i>
LW	<i>namas ° ture</i>	<i>pādāghāte ° hūṃkārākāra bijite</i>

Willson notes, “*pa* scans better than *pā*”; this is VJ’s reading, also. I disagree. This line is pure impact. The foot comes down hard boom! boom! boom! stomp! stomp! stomp! Pandeya, his texts lacking the second *kāra*, comes up syllable-short and back-projects a perceived *lacuna*, *nama[stāre] ture*, where there is none. We have a full spread of stretch options for *padāghata*. There is no way to prove a reading. Sing it as desired. The preference here is triple-stretched without the locative: JY so reads. The locative, it should be noted, does conform with the similar earlier reading *namasture mahāghore*. The texts of JP and VJ do not double the *kāra*. The syllable count does suggest otherwise. The reverse situation occurs in *śrī gaṅgā stotram*, where the phrase *na yama śakta* is often sung *na yamama śakta* to take up the slack. Here, it is *huṃ* unstretched that allows *kāra* its repetition. The texts of JP and VJ, each with only one *kāra*, neither (re)stretching *huṃ*, suggest that here a *kāra* got dropped without a commensurate change to *hūṃ*.

Now, for *huṃkārakāra-bijite*, “seeding, sown”, asserting *huṃ*’s status as a mantraic seed-syllable, GD/LC here read *jīvite*, “enlivened, animated, a living being, life MW”. Willson would make the *mantra* “Her sound”. Beyer observes, “The mantra has a constant tendency to disassociate itself from the personality of the goddess and assume a life and more important, a power of its own.” *hūṃ* is a roaring favorite of Buddha Vairocana. It exists in roaring flames. Here it roars alive. It is not a seedling, not a sapling, and this is not a sappy line. Neither is *hūṃ* Tārā’s seed-syllable. Often *taṃ* is given. *bijite* was substituted later, perhaps in a standardization move, in order to conform with the arising of the formula *huṃkāra-bijod-bhavā*, which is noted in *sāadhanamālā*.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bühnemann, 2000, pp.31-2, gives an excellent summary of our *albeit* inconclusive knowledge of this *mantra*. MW also gives “beg, pray” for *tu*, but the Buddhist versions mostly conform in agreement upon the mysterious *tut*. I concur that Ratnākaraśānti’s derivation, from *tud* “pain”, which reverses the *sandhi*-‘requirement’ (Ouch!), is without foundation. Bühnemann offers no further explanation. Mine, given here later, is speculation.

⁵⁸ Op. cit., *Sādhana 94*, to *Vajratārā*, p .66.

⁵⁹ “Let’s Dance” –Chris Montez. *pādanyāsa*, a compound, is “a dance step”; also, a “ray”, “flare” or “beam”.

⁶⁰ Bühnemann, 1996, p. 486; commencing a *dhyānam* from *sādhana 101* from the *mālā*, for *mahācīnakramatārā: pratyālīḍha-padārpitāṅ-ghriśava-hṛd ° ghorāṭṭahāsā ° parā ° khaḍgendīvara-kartri-kharpara-bhujā ° hūṃkāra-bijod-bhavā /*, “Left foot arched, planted on a corpse’s heart; with awful, derisive laughter, teeth exposed:

There is the orthography. *bījite* is slightly awkward to write, with its elongated back-flip for *ji*. Dr. Śāradā Rāṇī's strong, extended strokes for *jīvite* (see illus.) leave no doubt about this reading. She was singing along as she wrote. *jīvite* brings the line alive. *bījite* plants it.⁶¹

For *meru-mandāra-kailāsa*, DB/LC, and JP read *maṇḍala*, which is occasionally also spelled *mandāra* and give *kailāsa*, as well, which is a neologism (i.e. a more modern spelling). Here we certainly have a "list of mountains", no *maṇḍala*, "sacred diagram", neither *māndarāva* flower, as Templeman translates, is involved. The line specifically compares in tone and style with the "list of demons" in Verse 6): *bhūta-vetāla-gandharva*. For an unknown, and much commented upon, reason, Darmadra left *mandāra* untranslated into Tibetan: *ri-rap mandara dang bik-je*. He has substituted Mt. Vindhya for Mt. Kailash. Prof. Anrup Lahuli's text, with the Sanskrit derived from the (already-so-modified) Tibetan, most cleverly reads *vindhyaca*, "Vindhya and", catching the *dang*.

Lastly, mentioned earlier in conjunction with Praise 11) the Pack's reading here of *cālini* is given by GD/LC and JP as *cārini*. Even with the *l-r* switch, these are synonymous. There is no way to posit a choice. Without the second 'o', say choc'late. Now say *cakra*.

In Verse 18) the Pack read *surasarā*, excepting AL whose text reads *sureśara*, and VJ, *sure ° śara*. JP gives *sure ° sarā* and the variant *sure ° śarā*. GD/LC share *surāsarā*. Hodgson Ms. 6 reads *sārasarā*. The reading of *sure* (m/loc. or f/voc?) shys away from aiding in a determination of *sura*, "heavenly, of the gods" or *surā*, "distil". VJ has made the best of the bad variant, *śara*, "arrow", bestowed upon her text, "Holding the arrow-like moon...". AL reads *śara*, but translates "celestial lake", anyway, to conform with the Tibetan with which he is entirely conversant. Then comes *ākāra*, "form, appearance, contour", which most do not incorporate into translation because it appears so innocuous, or just give the generic "form". "Heavenly lake form" is an image. The next line is passive, *sthite*, "abides". They do not connect. With the reading *surā*, "distil(led essence of) fluid/lake/ocean contour/form" we have, even as Bodhidharma is wandering China, a conundrum, a *koan*. Water has no form. It takes the shape of its container. We cannot do this, shape water, extract its appearance. Tārā can, next line, full moon, in hand. This reading, *surā*, gives better sense and song; the both. Accepted.

GD/LC read *hariṇīkakare* °.⁶² Pandeya gives *hariṇāṅkakare* as his primary, with *-kakara* as his variant. The *-ka* indicates friendly familiarity and is alliterative fill with *kare* following. The locative reading (rhyming with *sthite*) changes "full moon hand", *kara*, into "full moon in hand". With the primary from Pandeya to bolster the case, this becomes the more likely original reading. *sthite*, detached.

Now we come to the Great Mantra Switch. Darmadra's Pack give *tāradviruktaphaṭkāra*, where GD/LC and JP give *haradviruktaphaṭkāra* in its place. Willson notes, "*tāra* or *hara*, *phaṭ* or *sphuṭ*; Sanskrit sources evenly divided"; Yeshe noting, "Here in original text found *haradviruktaphutakara* which againts to all other editions where it read *taradvirukta phatkara* and all commentaries approved the same." In Verse 20), where the Pack give *haradviruktatuttāre*, GD/LC give *tāradviruktottāre*, JP giving *tāradviruktatuttāre*.

Supreme! Chopper, blue lotus, sword, and skull (in) hand(s). Hūṃkāra seed arising." Tārā has a certain haughtiness here in the stock phrase *ghorāṭṭahāsā*, typical of the *kaula* assertiveness. The author, Śāśvatavajra, became a follower of the school of Matsyendranath, the "fish-born", a founding *nātha siddha*, himself author of *kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya tantra*, which teaching he received eavesdropping upon Śiva and Parvatī (so his Hindu lineages affirm) from inside of the belly of big fish that swallowed him up and then swam down to the ocean's floor. Peace, he got out of it later; part Houdini, part Paracelsus. In the 10th cen. (?) *Nārada Purāṇa*, *ghorāṭṭahāsā* is named in the thousand-syllable *nṛsimha mantra*; Lord Viṣṇu's lion-headed *avatar* snarling, fanged.

⁶¹ Pandeya's texts' redactor was either annoyed at this enough to alter it to *vījite*, "bringing victory" or here confused the letters, but did not do so elsewhere, as JY's *avada*. See Hodge, p.27, comparing translations Chinese and Tibetan of *mahāvairocana tantra*: "...*bija* (seed)...*jīva* (life)...a reversal of the syllables...(b and v being virtually indistinguishable in many Indian scripts)."

⁶² *hariṇāṅka* is the "deer's [n.b. or "hare's"]-marked (moon)", a local metaphor for 'full', like "man-in-the-moon".

The word *tāra* is not associated with wrath. Why is it in line with *phaṭ*, “Crack!” in Verse 18)? *tārā*, double-stretched in JP⁶³ opening Verse 20), exactly mirrors *tārā* in Verse 2). With this, the double-stretch; the perhaps unorthodox, completely unrequired, and especially superb *sandhi* given by the text s of GD/LC, *dviruktottāre*, conserves one precious syllable. This shortens the count to seven; stretch *tārā*. At this point one wants to be able to “joyfully belt out *Tārā*”, *ābaddhamuditātārā*, as loud and long as can. In Verse 2) this is covered by singing *s’hasra*. And if I may interpret from the formula: *tāra tāra tuttāre* implores; *tārā tārā tuttāre* commands. The *sandhi* may have been a later adjustment, or Darmadra’s Pack’s version may represent a later removal. There is no way to ascertain.

hara, for its part of the reading in Verse 18), alliterates sweetly with *hariṇaṅka* in the preceding line. Here is where our Nepali prankster from Pandeya’s text has adjusted it to *hari* to ‘perfect’ the alliteration.

We are dealing with “poison”, *viṣa* here, “obstacles”, even, VJ var. *vigna*, and *viṣamajvara*, “plague fever”. If the pill is to be efficacious its contents need to match the prescription, but the labels on the the bottles have been switched.⁶⁴ The science of *mantram* is most specific. Yet here, by way of Darmadra’s translation, Tibetans will forever chant *tāra ni jō phaṭ ki ye-ge* and *hara ni jō tuttāra ye*. It still works. It is a mysterious thing.

All texts present the *mantra* sounds in Verse 18) as a remedy “dispelling all poison/venom”, *aśeṣa-viṣa-nāśini*, except Jayasvala’s, which reads *aśeṣa-vighna-nāśini*, “destroying every obstacle”. This is a most popular aspect of deity, often given *sarva-vigna-vināśini*. Her text contains another variant, in Verse 19) which conforms with a variant given by GD/LC and JP (*kari*), indicating that her text had been at some point cross-compared with versions different from the rest of Darmadra’s Pack. In this light the variant here may not be arbitrarily rejected, even though it is unique. The case for *viṣa*, in and of itself an obscure reading, cannot go forth in time to the emergence of “The Eight Great Fears from which *Tārā* protects”, of which ‘snake-bite/venom= envy’ is one. There is no other congruence with these eight anywhere else in the Greeting. The Greeting’s line appears in a context into which “fear” does not enter. It may refer back in time to the Churning of the *sara* “essence” of the *kṣiradhi*, the “Great Milk Ocean” in which *Vāsukī* the *Nāga* played so important a part, by being the ladle. The *amṛta*, “nectar-immortal” thus extracted (- may we say *surā*, “distilled”-) is associated with *candra*, “the moon”⁶⁵ (and, in another story from the *Purānas*, involving the Vedic sage *Bṛhaspati*, with *Tārā*). *Vāsukī*, to the point here, having been stretched out straight by the *devas* and *āsuras* and swung around vigorously to accomplish the churning, got dizzy (one may well imagine) and belched forth a cloudful of yellow poison gas called *halā-hala* (this, in Hindi, called *kālakūṭa* in Sanskrit) which threatened everything. Lord *Śiva* took it all in, saving everyone. It turned His throat blue, *nīla kaṅṭha*. This reference is a bit of a stretch, itself. Buddha *Vairocana* was certainly familiar with this story, but the attribution here is not specific enough to insure a connection with *viṣa*. Snake belch is not snake bite.

There is one truly incredible piece of evidence-from-afar that bespeaks of an early transmission with the reading *viṣa*. John Blofeld, pp. 151-152, gives a list of 42 of “Kuan Yin’s principal emblems,...taken from a Chinese edition of the Heart of *Dhāraṇī* of Great Compassion *Sūtra*”⁶⁶...“...a jeweled bowl containing cures for maladies (3)...a willow branch for driving away sickness (12)...a palatial pavilion

⁶³ JY also double-stretches and isolates *tārā* where he gives it in Verse 18), noting the change in his footnote, but this, as supportive evidence, is pure whimsy. His text also isolates and double-stretches *hārā* not done in any other version.

⁶⁴ Single-stretched as it is (excepting JY), *tāra*, “one who ferries across”, going gently down the stream, does not carry the cargo of wrath required to get this adversary gone. This is not the needed munitions vessel. *hara*, also “bearing”, directly connotes “taking away, removing; destroying MW”.

⁶⁵ See *śatapañcaśatka* of *Mātṛceṭa*, verse 72 for its deploy in a prior Buddhist text, “(Lord Buddha), such words so flow from your mouth in a”, *candrāddravamivāmṛtam*, “moondraught nectar-stream”.

⁶⁶ Also known as *nīlakaṅṭha dhāraṇī sūtra*. Shades of Lord *Śiva*. Apologists for Buddhism attempt to downplay this.

(36)...a precious volumn (37)...etc.” none of which apply to any one of the Greeting Verses whatsoever except for “a lunar disc containing a rabbit for counteracting poison (9).” Silfong Tsun, noting the list as requesting *mudra*, translates (2006) this line, “If one has a disease caused by the poison of heat and seeks for refreshing coolness, he should use the Moon-Quintessence Mani Mudra”. Tsun utilized the version Shramana Bhagavat-dharma translated in the seventh century (Tang Dynasty). This immensely popular (Korea, Viet-nam, Japan) Mahāyāna *sūtra* was translated twice in the 7th and again in the early 8th century into Chinese. Over time efforts have been made to reconstruct the Sanskrit fom these multiple versions. Copies were recovered from the cave temples at Dun Huang.

This is the ealiest (and only) Buddhist attribute-depiction from a non-commentarial source (i.e. Sūryagupta) precisely mirroring a Greeting Verse (excepting Tārā’s *mantra*-mention and the remixed six *pāramitā*) that I have been able to pinpoint. Either one derives from the other or they both share a common older source. There is no way to ascertain. Nor may this observation aid in postulating a date for either. The Greeting-Verse has extemporized water’s reflection and efficacious *mantra*-syllables into the image; with the use of *kare*, ‘in hand’ suggesting a *mudra*. The Great Compassion Dhāraṇī Sūtra has here in Tsun’s recension extemporized a more exact nature of the poison. What we have is one brief congruence of the Greeting as it came to and was transmitted by Sūryagupta and Darmadra with a Mahāyāna text preserved in Chinese four hundred years before Darmadra brought the Praises to Tibet.

In Verse 19) Darmadra’s Pack read that Tara’s expanding enjoyment of things, “strife, bad dreams, is destroying/dispelling”, *-kaliduhsvapnanāśini*. GD/LC and JP read *-kari* ° with *duhsvapnanāśini*, detached from the line as a separate phrase. VJ gives this reading also. So does Lahuli, *-bhogakari*-, “enjoyment, causing/accomplishing,” but with the bar continuous. Sung in a rising tempo clear through to the tenth syllable, the line’s articulation is excellent. This leaves a six syllable sentence, “Bad dreams dissolve away.” Perhaps more literally this would read, “Bad dreams, the dissolver; bad dreams, this dissolving.” Lahuli’s texts are intriguing. His English translation, “She soothes *conflicts* and nightmares as well,” clearly derives from the reading of Darmadra’s Pack, *-bhoga-kali-duhsvapna-nāśini* //. (From Darmadra’s own translation into Tibetan, it earlier interprets, “Her *armour* radiating joy to all”.) The clean, crisp devanāgarī typeface reads *-bhogakari-duhsvapnanāśini* //; not *-kali-*, which would accord with his translation. With full agreement from the Nepali texts, VJ’s rogue text’s concord here, and AL’s overlooked incongruency, this *l-r* switch option is far and away the likely choice for original. JP-1 reads *karī* (compare *sikhī*) which gives excellent uplift to the line, most likely (again) oral transmission.

In Verse 20) we having synonyms *bhāsvare* and *bhāsure* “shining” to choose from. The pack is again split; the Nepali texts read *bhāsvare*. In this case, the resolution may involve a concurrence with *bhāsura* in a Hindu *śakta stotram*, which will be noted in the ‘Hindu Sources’ section. Here (for once) I agree with Wayman, who gives *-bhāsvāra* ° in Verse 12 , however, preferring the detached locative ° *bhāsvare* °; then, in Verse 20) where he reads *-bhāsure* °; one of each. Both readings for Verse 20) must remain viable. The Nepali conformation to *bhāsvare* suggests that my premise following as it affects this word in particular is fallacious. No way to tell. It involves concealment fully containing the required clue.

Verse 20) aligns *candrārka-[sāmpūrṇa]* with *śata-śarac-candra-[sāmpūrṇa]* from Verse 2).

In Verse 20) Darmadra’s Pack find *viśamajvara*,” reoccurring fever”⁶⁷ *nāśini*. GD/LC read, again this *l-r* switch, *viśamajvala*, “fiery fever”. This reading is extremely obscure, if sound. With no additional support from the other texts excepting Pandeya’s primary (his second-text giving *-jvara*), it is to be rejected. Fire is often Tārā’s element in the Greeting, not to be destroyed, perhaps to destroy.

In Verse 21) *tritattva*, “three truths” are “here displayed”,⁶⁸ *vinyāse* (by Tārā, one assumes). Wayman, in support of his premise, reads *tritātā*, which I define, “three-such, displaying attributes of Śiva”. Warnemyr accords the reading, *tritātā*, although not acknowledging the Śaivite shading given by

⁶⁷ Possibly indicating that the Greeting was written either in a period of epidemic or during an outbreak of malaria.

⁶⁸ “spread out, put together MW”

Wayman. GD/LC read *tritala*, “three-tiered tower” or possibly “three stages”, for which this writer has been unable to posit further identification. That, in itself, is revealing. This is no place in the poem for *obscuranta*. Willson assures that Wayman’s reading is erroneous. Wayman mentions no other variants for this important word, even as he was utilizing the texts that contained them, and fully aware that the alternatives could upset the balance of his theory. Whether or not his choice is correct (and, by the way, which mss. contained it?), he is to be found guilty of the sin of prevairocation.

And lastly, we have a seemingly innocuous little alteration in demonology which is perhaps the most important single variant in the Greeting. Darmadra’s Pack, excepting MW and JY, give the list of demons as *grahavetālayakṣagaṇa*, “seizing demon(s), ghou(s), goblin(s), -horde, troop multitude, flock: stampeding. They are “destroyed, dispelled”, *nāśini*. At this culmination of the Greeting, as it presents its aspect as an Invocation, we are concerned about the timing of it all. The texts of GD/LC read *grahavetālayakṣādyanāśini*, “grabbers, ghouls, goblins promptly destroyed,” from *adya*, “at this moment, right now!” One or a million, Right Now! This is the banishing spell. It is vital to the efficacy of the ritual. Demons, go. Tārā, come. Demons go now! Tārā, “Come here!” *pravare*, “a call, a summons MW”. Hurry! *ture*. And, yes, the primary meaning of *pravara* is “supreme”. It is both. In the feminine vocative it is “O Supreme One!” but, equally it is an exhortation “O (do something!)” in which “something” is “Bestow Your presence”. *ture*, “Be swift!”

For the reading *yakṣagaṇa*, MW gives *yakṣaugha*⁶⁹, from *ogha*, “flood, flock, multitude”, which is synonymous with *gaṇa*. Orthographically⁷⁰ the letter *gha* and the conjunct *dya* look almost identical, one tiny scritch, one little blob may most inadvertently transform the one into the mistaken appearance of the other, paving the way for the next copyist to misread the word, thus the reading in Willson’s text.

yakṣagaṇa, itself (pl.?), as a compound is a neologism. It names a theatrical dance form popular throughout South India. Not to be destroyed.

For the reading *yakṣādya* we have agreement from a truly unexpected source. Jampa Yeshe’s assuredly Tibetan text gives *yakṣogha*, however, on his *devanāgarī* corrections page (p. 62) he offers the perceived ‘correction’ (from whence?), “not *yakṣayana* but *yakṣā(d)yana, śani*”, clearly and carefully spelled out with *virāma*, the vowel-mute stroke; *(d)ya*, where Dr. Ranī gives the conjunct *dya*. This suggests that this is the reading that Yeshe presupposes to be correct, as he learned as a child.

Pandeya’s text gives *yakṣōṣma*, perhaps “oozing”; this from Jayasvāla’s translation of *ṣōṣmayam* from *śrī suktam*. They may be oozing. This reading is confoozing.

The reading *yakṣagaṇa* brings the syllable count to nine, one too many (although it can be made to work). *yakṣādya* may be sung with strength and extra emphasis. This ‘variant’ given by GD/LC, here obliquely confirmed by JY’s note, with a chain of deformation and substitution manifesting clearly through Willson’s reading⁷¹, fully reflects the intention of Buddha Vairocana, and is the original.

tāremāṃ
śubham

⁶⁹ One unreferenced internet version reads *yakṣa ugra*, which, *yakṣaugra*, derives from *yakṣauga*.

⁷⁰ And see VJ’s reading for Verse 14), *dyāta* for *ghāta*, which reverses this.

⁷¹ Surprisingly, he gives no other variant.

Table of occurrences of variants deriving from *nāśana*, “destroying, destroyer”:

(de Blonay’s French notation, soft ‘c’ with *cedille* for ś, which actually conforms more precisely to Sanskrit pronunciation, is regularized to the English style for convenience.)

- | | GD/LC | AW | MW | JY | JP | JP (var.) | AL | VJ | LW |
|-----|------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| 8) | (vi)nāśani | nāśini | nāśani | nāśani | nāśini | ----- | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini |
| 13) | (vi)nāśini | nāśini | nāśani | nāśani | nāśini | nāśinī | nāśini | nāśini | naśiti |
| 14) | nāśini | bhedini | | | | | | | |
| 15) | nāśini | nāśini | nāśani | nāśani | nāśanī | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini |
| 18) | nāśini | nāśini | nāśani | nāśani | nāśiṇī | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini |
| 19) | nāśini | nāśini | nāśani | nāśani | nāśinī | nasini | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini |
| 20) | nāśini | nāśini | nāśani | naśani | nāśini | ----- | nāśini | nāśini | nāśini |
| 21) | nāśani | nāśani | nāśani | nāśani | nāśini | ----- | nāśini | nāśini | nāśani |

Nowhere in the Greeting is Tārā “a protectress from”, *nivāriṇi*, obstacles and problems. She is a “destroyer of”, *nāśini*, obstacles and problems. Cut to the chase.

Śiva-śakti: Bone of Contention

“And I’ll know my song well before I start singing.”

-Bob Dylan

namas tritattva vinyāse śivaśakti samanvite

There it is. Look at it. You don’t say it without you don’t mean it. And it don’t translate so good. So we’s jus’ gonna leave it be. It does not represent ‘the power of peace’. This is Lord Śiva and His Consort, naught else.⁷² Wayman got it half right, “O Lady endowed with the Power (śakti) of Śiva...” Everyone else squirrels out of it. Coast to coast across the great Śaivite Sea *śivaśakti* reigned supreme. Buddhism in India was a chain of islands, an archipelago thereupon. Says Alexis Sanderson, “We see Śaiva influences at every turn.”⁷³

Wayman’s premise, based upon this reading, *śivaśakti*, and the preceding *tritattva*, “Three essences/truths”, which he gives as *tritātā*, is that Buddha Vairocana was spearheading a crypto-śaivite fringe group. *tritātā* is not recognized as one of the 108 Names given by the Rishi (ṛṣi) Upamanyu, nor as one of the thousand recorded in *śivapurāna*. Yet herein lays the core of Wayman’s argument. Synchro-śaiva-system: The Final *Tā*; impassableness, insurmountableness, inaccessibility; inviolability MW. Can’t broach, can’t reach, can’t touch, can’t breach *śivatā*, “the nature of Śiva”. Thus encrypted, this would alter the sense, sending Śiva to the fore.

Alex Wayman translates, “Adoration! O Lady endowed with the Power (śakti) of Śiva to dispose the state of the Third;” coming by the phrase “state of” from the incorporated *-tat-*.

Austine Waddell: “Hail! O pure mirac’lous power. Triply potent, mild and real.”

Martin Willson: “Homage full of liberating power by set of three realities.”

David Templeman: “Homage to You, with the three truths displayed, O thou with the strength which comes from within.”

Thinley and Palmo: “To you, I bow thrice: the power to make all completely calm is yours.”

Steve Beyer: Homage, Lady endowed with the strength of calm by the array of the Three Truths [OM ĀḤ HŪḤ].”

Jampa Yeshe: “Salutations to Her who rightly possesses power of pacifying, by inscribing the three essences [OM AH HUM].”

Pierre Arènes: “Homage à celle qui, par la disposition des trois réalités [*tattva*] [ultimes], est parfaitement pourvue du pouvoir d’apaisement [*śiva*].”

Bokar Rinpoche (tr. from the French by Christiane Buchet): “Homage to her who through the three established principles fully possesses the power of pacifying.”

K. Angrup Lahuli: “I prostrate to she whose three nature are made perfect with serene strength.”

⁷² Durgā’s the Name, and Pārvatī

Tārāmbikā, Śākambharī

Lalitā’n’Sundarī

Ma Kālī, Padmāvatī

Mahā Vidyā, Mahā Śakti

Many Names; Mahā Devī

⁷³ Of this two-way street: “Though it rejects the teachings of other systems, such as Buddhism (especially Vijñānavāda [*yogācāra*]), Advaita Vednta, dualistic Śaiva Siddhanta, the grammarian school and so on, it integrated elements of each of them into a new vision of reality.”, Bettina Bäumer, *The Four Spiritual Ways (upāya) in the Kashmir Śaiva Tradition*, p. 3, Sundararajan and Mukerji, eds.

Vāsantī Gopinath Jayasvāla: “Obeisance to the one who is the repository of the three tattvas and is auspicious power and purity combined. “

Lennart Warnemyr: “Homage to you, who is adorned by three suchnesses. Perfectly endowed with the power of serenity.”

Alexander Barzin: “Homage! Goddess endowed with the pacifying power of (the syllables) marking her three aspects of being.”

Several of these translations, being Willson, Beyer, Yeshi, Arènes, Bokar Rinpoche and Barzin have subordinated *śivaśakti* to *tritattva*. Wayman and Lahuli reverse this, subordinating *tritattva* to *śivaśakti*. It is Darmadra’s doing. He has deployed the Tibetan connective *dang*, “and”, primarily to fill an empty syllable slot. Here *dang* also connotes “by reason of, on account of, because of”, often translated by the word “by”. The groupings *tritattva-vinyāse* and *śivaśakti-samanvite* are presented side-by-side, independently. There is no connective. Neither is there subordination nor enhancement in either direction. They are linked only in that they share, separately, equally, in the summation of Tārā’s value. These are two distinct thoughts. Templeman and Warnemyr have translated the line in accord with this. Jayasvāla gives “and”, and not “by”. Thinley and Palmo accord but with the interpretation, “bow thrice”.

Wayman’s “rather weird theory”, as Willson calls it⁷⁴, is not so strange at all. It reaches at the implication, rather than side-stepping the issue. Its substratum is, “a frank employment of Śaivite and Buddhist terminology.”⁷⁵ This doubly snares Willson, who is already enmeshed in his own lineage limitations: “Followers of a Śaivite cult of *śakti* would of course read *śiva-śakti* as ‘female energy of Śiva’.”⁷⁶ So would Buddhists. He caves in at the end to Wayman’s carved-in-stone logic, “Even so, it is not impossible that *śiva-śakti samanvite* represents some connection with Śaktism.” Willson and Arènes both attempt to rationalize this phrase away.

Śaivite terminology does not necessarily reflect a Śaivite bias. It does reflect a Śaivite ambient. At this point, overfocused upon an unreliable premise, Wayman has veered off a precise, full hundred and eighty degrees. He has skewed his translation in pursuit of a point-of-view, his own, not Buddha Vairocana’s. The import eludes him. This is not syncretism. Neither, at this penultimate point in the song is there concern to conceal a sect’s secrecy. Appearing under the bright parasol of folk music, the 21-Verse Salutation presents the most direct possible, permissible challenge to Śaivism. Buddha Vairocana throws down the gauntlet, engaging the *rishi*’s on their own turf, in their own terms. He is raising the banner, striking at the core. In Tibet after Trisong Detsen this would become irrelevant and unnecessary. In sixth century Sārnāth, in India, it would have been critical, this declaration; the cathedral capstone needed to crown Tārā’s supremacy in those medieval times. It was all cut-and-dried. Buddha Vairocana could either ignore Śaivism entirely or grapple with it. He chose to grapple, not to come to terms.

This is a pinnacle of the poem. What need is there for concealment and stealth? *śivaśakti* - drops like a fat plum into the lap of the line, to be at once absorbed, *-samanvite*. Sing it out: *śivaśaktee samanviteyy!* If Buddha Vairocana had wanted to acknowledge and name Lord Śiva at this point, He would have done so: *namaḥ śivāya-vinyāse*. The iteration is excellent. The case is pre-emptorily refused. The Greeting is to Tārā. The attributes are Hers.

The praise name *sarva śakti samanvite* had long-since been claimed on behalf of Ma Durgā in the *Caṇḍī* (1:87:3). Buddha Vairocana upped the ante. He has boldly stated what *Śakta* devotees may well have felt (and still do) but, being nominal Śaivites, were constrained from expressing.

⁷⁴ Op. cit., P.393.

⁷⁵ JBRS, 1959, p.36.

⁷⁶ Op. cit., n.26, pp. 394-5.

It is Tārā who is “perfectly endowed with MW” *śivaśakti*. And it is Tārā alone, *pravare*, “Here supreme”.⁷⁷ Lokesh Chandra puts this prosaically, “The twenty-first stanza integrates Shiva-Shakti into Tārā.” Buddha Vairocana would claim and incorporate the highest tenets and attributes of Śaivism for Tārā Herself. Tenets? Yes. We have full agreement that *śivaśakti* is Śaivite terminology. It would stand to reason that *tritattva*⁷⁸ also might be Śaivite terminology. It is. It stands for *ātma vidyā śiva*.⁷⁹ In Buddha Vairocana’s day, from Kashmir to Kerala, that is all it stood for. The first two provide no problem. Buddhism does not even want or acknowledge *ātma* except as incorporated in its negation *anātma*. *vidyā* is non-sectarian. Śrī Vidyā (The Blessing Truth) has since elevated it to paramount. *śiva* is the ‘pledge of allegiance’ here. It is the state of the third that must be disposed with. Tārā does not share equally with Śiva. Tārā shows Śiva. She aligns Śaivism, *tritattva vinyāse* and, pray note, bestows Buddhism, *triratna mudrānka*. Tārā.

The association of the ‘acronym’ *om āḥ hūṃ*, which represents *kāya vāk citta*, “body, speech, mind” with *tritattva* is well-known by Tibetan Buddhists. This was imparted to and given by Steve Beyer, who lived in a Tibetan community; and given by Jampa Yeshe who grew up where it was a ‘given’. Barzin’s insert, “(the syllables)”, gives this implication. The precise association of *tritattva* with *om āḥ hūṃ* may be dated back no further than the fifteenth century, to a popular commentary on the Praises by the First Dalai Lama. Sūryagupta, noted by Willson, gives “divinity, *mantra, samādhi*”. Arènes⁸⁰, giving this reference, declares, “It is clear that ‘divinity, *mantra, samādhi*’ correspond to Body, Speech, Mind”. On pence? Let us go back in time to the time of the Greeting’s emergence. Nāgendra Kṛ Singh, in a discussion of *guhyaśamājantra* observes, “Kaya (body), Vak (speech) and Citta (mind) are together called *trivajra*”.⁸¹ Robert Beer gives a glossary entry,⁸² “Three Vajras (Skt. *trivajra* Tib. *rdo-rje gsum*) The purified aspects of body, speech and mind.” *om āḥ hūṃ* and *kāya vāk citta* are associated directly and not infrequently in *sādhanamālā*. *om āḥ hūṃ* and *tritattva* (which word is used in other contexts) are not associated.

Earlier on in this work a part of Lokesh Chandra’s story of his trip to Siberia was quoted. He inserted a paragraph of commentary into his narrative:

“Dharma does not stand for unqualified ‘Ahimsa’, for docility against tyranny. Righteous *manyu* is an essential of Dharma. The God is *sat* and *asat*. *Sad-asac-caham* says Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Shiva is Rudra. Likewise in Buryatia, the deities have a shanta form and a dynamic or rudra form. In the following shloka, the rudra aspect of Tara is depicted powerfully.

The 21st stanza integrates Shiva-Shakti into Tara. The stotra ends with a *phala shruti*.”

To call Rudra’s activity ‘dynamic’ is to put it mildly. The word *rudra* means “to roar”. This is the necessary wrathful form, Father of the gale-force Marut. Although I fully agree that ‘Dharma is not unqualified *ahimsā*’ (‘lie down and take it’), in this final verse Tārā is reigning, not roaring. She has been shown to have taken many a stance against malignant forces throughout. Rudra is not named, perhaps, but just perhaps, implied in *ture*. There is no indication from either *vinyāse* or *samanvite* that here at this moment, with demons about to be out of the way, banished in the next line, Tārā is anything at all other than at peace and in power. This is Tārā in Her glory, not Tārā in wrath.

⁷⁷ That this claim is Hindu *śakta*-derived ideology is obvious. Lalitā’s 999th praise name is *śiva-śaktaikya-svarūpiṇi*. However, to “fully contain” *śivaśakti* represents a vastly different claimed state than to be “self-formed” from it.

⁷⁸ And not *tritātā* at all. *tritātā* has no currency. This is *tattvamayī*, “reality itself”. See Murthy, p. 187, #907.

⁷⁹ The interpretation of Advaita Vedānta, *brahman ātman jagat*, came into play a century or two later.

⁸⁰ Op. cit., P.99.

⁸¹ *Buddhist Tantrism* p.72. And for the *raison d’être*, pp. 22-3.

⁸² *The Handbook of Tibetan Buddhist Symbols*, p.259.

Addenda: tritattva

This must be cremated. Let the relics emerge:

- 1) samputika tantra for kāya-vāk-citta gives trividha, “aspects”, from vidha-dvāra, “door, gate, entry”.
- 2) The cārya-giṭi-vṛtti of Ātisá (tr. Chattopadhyaya, p. 516) gives triāvaraṇa, “coverings”.
- 3) The Nepali Advayavajra, aka Maitripa (ca. 1000 A.D.) gives tricakra.
- 4) All Japanese transmissions, by way of China, refer to triguhya, “secrets”. tritattva is not to be found associated with kāya-vāk-citta before Gedun-dup. Anywhere.

For Verse 9) Wayman associates internally, “The *dharma* jewel is usually represented by a wheel (*cakra*).” Then he wildcats, “The heart’s thumb⁸³ is presumably the heart’s *liṅga*, understood to be erect.” He must certainly have read Waddell’s translation, “Thy breast-posed hand.” Wayman held to his theory. In 1973 Weiser Books published a collection of Wayman’s essays, titled *The Buddhist Tantra’s Light on Indo-Tibetan Esotericism*. From a piece with the worthy title “The Fivefold Ritual Symbolism of Passion” (Special Studies 15, p.224), in the lengthy concluding paragraph, he writes, “Then, what is the meaning here of the passion suggested by the Śaivitic *ūrdhva-liṅga*? Starting with the *Atharvaveda* the main spot pierced by love’s arrow has been in the heart. So, just as in the “Twenty-one Praises of Tārā”, the “upward *liṅga*” is the “thumb” in the heart, marked with the Three Jewels as seen in the Stūpa-stambha of Amarāvati (*Bhāratiya Pratīk Vidyā*, picture No. 140.)”

hṛdyāṅguli is a compound meaning, “heart, fingers at/approach”. It indeed does mean, “thumb at heart”. *āṅguli* is generic, “digit”. Its meaning must be determined from the context. For advanced yogis it may well mean, “toes at heart”. However, here in this most graceful of images, we are not likely to be finding Tārā sticking Her thumb up in the air or pointing it back at Herself, tattooed with the Mark of Three Jewels, *mudrāṅka*; but rather unfolding the Sign, *mudrāṅka*, of the Three Jewels in the gentle flow of Her fingers. *hṛdyāṅguli* is extremely open ended. Every commentator gives a different *mudra*. Wayman is no exception, nor am I.

Before that note gets away: Amarāvati, located south-east near the coast on the Kṛṣṇa River in Andhra Pradesh, was once a major Buddhist center. One would have found, now in ruins, centered, *Mahā Caitanya*, the Great Stupa, equaling Sañchi’s in magnificence and exceeding it in size. It was begun by the Emperor Aśoka, remodeled in the 2nd century A.D., abandoned before Islam in the twelfth and excavated since the nineteenth. The statuary and carved elements, including many a medallion and *stambha* (upright pillar), are now dispersed to museums. Many carved, many aspects, many blessings. Many options; no one image may prove a category. Iconography cannot demonstrate allusion. That is a category that not even a Grecian urn can contain. It is for words to evoke.

By the sixth century the area was rife with Tārā devotion. Limestone statues of Our Lady have been found buried all over the site, in town and surrounding, a *tārā*-field. One writer says “an abundance”; another, “an exuberance”. Although no Tārā statue yet unearthed may be dated much before the sixth century, time and the tropics having taken their toll, a brief ‘notice of emplacement’ may:

“An inscription dated to 2nd century A.D. from the reserve collection of the Site Museum at Amarāvati (Dist. Guntur) refers to the installation of an image of Bhagavatī Puṣpatārā....The present inscription from Amarāvati should then be regarded as the earliest reference to the white-coloured Buddhist goddess of the East.”⁸⁴

If they are putting up a statue, She is not new in town.

Just passing through.

bhagavatī puṣpatārā

‘Your Grace’ Blossoms Tārā

⁸³ Given in parentheses in his translation: heart’s “thumb”.

⁸⁴ Sastry, p. 21.

The Nature of the Greeting

Some pages back, in a footnote, it was requested that those of a certain metabolic tenor raise their hands. To the root of that:

Agehānanda Bhāratī (Leopold Fischer) quotes and agrees with Lama Anāgārika Govinda (Ernst Hoffman) who “puts it somewhat radically, but, so I feel, with full justification,...(that) ‘ the conception of Shakti, of divine power, of the female-creative potentiality of the supreme god (Siva) or one of the many subordinate (Hindu) gods, plays no role of any sort in Buddhism. Whereas the notion of power (Shakti) is the pivot of interest in Hindu tantrism, the central idea of tantric Buddhism is realization, *prajñā* joined to *upāya*.’”⁸⁵

Donald S. Lopez, Jr., on unrelated business, echoes, “The *Shakti*...(is a)...Śaiva term that is not used in Buddhist tantra.”⁸⁶

Therefore, says the lady-in-her-triangle, if this be true, then *śivaśakti* being in the song; the song is not Buddhist tantra, which is true. It is not. The Twenty-one Verse Greeting to Noble Tārā, certainly Buddhist, is traditional, not tantric.⁸⁷ It is a mainstream Mahāyāna devotional song, not a secret teaching.⁸⁸ The accomplishment of the author, *samyaksambuddha*, (a popular Vajrayana appellation) may be picked out and plucked from the Pali canon, predating *tantra* by centuries. Conspicuous absence: The one word that signifies *tantra* more than all others, *vajra*, “thunderbolt, lightning; adamant, diamond”, is not used in the Greeting. Where it is conspicuously absent is right at the outset: *namastāre ture vīre kṣaṇadyuti*, “lightning”. Would not *vajra* bolt down right nicely right after *vīre*? Candragomin thought so: *namaḥ vīra vajratārā*.

The Tārā Greeting, very quotable, is not to my knowledge quoted in whole or any of its parts in any of the many Indian Buddhist tantras, not the *mahāyogā*, nor the *yoginī*, other than its transmission by way of the late (loaded with subjugating spells) *mātṛtārātantra* into the five Tangyur versions; its inclusion consulted and noted by Wayman and, in some detail, by Willson. The Greeting is bypassed, buried, not to be found elsewhere. Excepting the prolific Sūryagupta, there is neither comment nor allusion extant in Sanskrit. *vajrasattvastotram* recapitulates, giving the one-verse condensed version, see n. 132. Commentaries and *sādhana* abound by hundreds in Tibetan, with their insistence upon visualization and application, the back-up to *bhakti*, by then accepted. Tārā, with no empowerment, crosses (*tārinī*) all lineage demarcations and cancels (*nāśini*) all lineage disputes. The initiation is offered nonetheless, color-coded; red, green, white, yellow, blue; and the Desired Gem, *cintāmaṇi*, claimed. Where one might expect, the tantric text *sādhanamālā*, so imbued with aspects of Tārā, the Greeting is named not. If there are Indian Sanskrit references here missed, be assured that they are obscure.

⁸⁵ “wisdom” and “effective means”

⁸⁶ p. 131. *śricakrasaṃvarādicatuḥṣaṣṭisaṃvarastotram*, declared *mahātantra* in its colophon, would have its hero *cakrasaṃvara* be *śivaśaktisvarūpiṇe*, “self-forming from (same)” in line five, Pandeya, pp. 72-77. Why is there such a problem with this? Here it is, in a Buddhist tantric text. Keep rolling: *vajrayoginīpraṇāmaikaviśikā*, pp. 308-9; couplet 13 begins *śaive saktiriti khyāte tīrthe caṇḍī kalpīte*, “(same) thus named, claimed; way worthy of *caṇḍī*, thus envisioned.” *Caṇḍī* is *Durgā*. *Devī Māhātmyam* is called the *Caṇḍī*. Absorption, yes; denial, no. Capiche? *avalokiteśvarāṣṭottaraśatanāmastotram* claims *śambhu śaṅkara śuddhārtha buddhapadma*. Who are we kidding?

⁸⁷ Not that it matters, but, “According to some scholars the main difference between Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist Tāntrism is that the latter is not Śaktism....To the Buddhists Śakti is *māyā*, the very power that illusion from which only *prajñā* can liberate us. But we fail to agree with this observation. The Buddhists emphasize *Śakti-Sāhacharya* as much as the Hindu Tāntricians do,...”; Singh, op. cit., p. 20. We visualize this author as Sikh, not Hindu. Blessings.

⁸⁸ No empowerment or initiation is required for Tārā Practice; not then, not now, not ever. *oṃ padme mahā padme padmavatī maye svāhā* (*tārā-bṛhad-nīla-tantra*, *kāṇḍa* 11). Wrath upon those who would require it.

There is a premise that because the practice shifted from devotion to the male form (Avalokiteśvara) to devotion to the female form (Tārā) at the same time as *tantra* swept in, fourth century A.D., plus or minus serendipity, that the female form must be a “tantric goddess”. The evidence that supports this is *guhyaśamājatāntra*. The evidence that decries it is *āryatārānamaskāraikaviṃśatistotram*. Waddell (1894, p. 63) implies the former, “The introduction of the goddess Tārā into Buddhism seems to date from about the sixth century A.D., when Tāntric ideas began to tinge Indian Buddhism.” Tārā, evinced by the Amarāvati inscription, well pre-dates *tantra*.

tantra had been “weaving” its way in, “looming” everywhere; those ‘five m’s’ (*pañca māhāra*) forming an antinomian practice. *bhakti mārga*, “path of devotion” was still in full vogue in town even as *vāmā mārga* “left(-hand) path” *tantra* was applying pressure and leaving a bad impression⁸⁹. Within a few centuries the situation had gone hyperbolic. Alexis Sanderson puts it succinctly: “The Buddhism of the Yoginītantras entails forms of religious practice which a member of the Saṅgha could not adopt without breaking his vows.”⁹⁰ The *kaula* got all the attention, then as now. And, as usual, the extremists made serious inroads at ruining it for the rest. Adi Śaṅkarācārya took it to task to root out this recidivist riot across the board in India in the 8th century.⁹¹ Atiśa continued this effort within Vajrayāna, the name of Tārā on his lips, preaching against, forcefully softening its impact upon Tibet,⁹² even as it was exacerbating and hastening the deterioration of Buddhism in India. Tārā, strong in Śaktism, became second of *daśa mahāvidyā*, emanations of Parvatī, in great truth each guarding one of all ten directions to block Lord Śiva’s escape from this mess into *nirvāṇa*. Over in Tibet every Buddhist home and every Buddhist nomad had a Tārā altar.

A word needs to be inserted concerning the *mahācīna-kramā-tārā tantra*-cycle because the central yarn, with perhaps its earliest existing appearances being in *sādhnamālā* (Buddhist), *rudrayāmala* and *brahmayāmala* (Hindu), all just post first millenium, has been back-dated into more-or-less the same time-frame as that of the emergence of the Greeting. My take is that it is pure, stainless dissimulation: Vaśiṣṭha, in search of ‘the teaching’ travels far across wind-scorched trackless deserts and over treacherous towering peaks to a mysterious secret cavern only to be made to wait. Orgy in progress. Within is ‘Buddha’⁹³, the *guru* (some cave-*kaula*) who is dispensing his sect’s (*sic*) wisdom, if you will. By invitation only. Not available locally. We do not want anyone to be thinking that this heretical-as-hell teaching (and ‘we’ the authors know it) could possibly have originated in our fair India. Oh no no no. We got it from ‘them’.

Back on track, *bhakti* emerged easily into Hinduism, budding early in Vedic times, blooming perhaps first into Vaiṣṇavism⁹⁴, blossoming fully into Śaivism with the great *śakta* work *devī mahātmyām*. And it happened: “The school⁹⁵ which professes to deny the existence of *sva bhāva*⁹⁶ admits that we may pray

⁸⁹ Many claim that the explicit references depicting and requiring these practices-in-question given in *guhyaśamāja tantra* are purely metaphorical. The *tantra*, itself, gives no indication that this is the case. And see Hodge, p. 12.

⁹⁰ *Vajrayana: Origin and Function*. Yoginītantras date from the late-8th and 9th centuries.

⁹¹ T.V. Mahalingam reads the roll, “He is credited with the reformation and systematisation of the six creeds of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Gāṇapatya, Kaumāra, Saura, and Śākta which earned for him the name *Śaṅmatasthāpanācārya*,” pp. 24-5, *The Cult of Śakti in Tamilnad*, in Sircar, D.C., ed.

⁹² Chattopadhyaya, A., pp. 18-20, “The *brahmacārī*,” says Dīpaṅkara, “cannot receive *guhya-jñāna-abhiṣeka* [secret wisdom initiation], for it is strongly prohibited in the *Ādi-buddha-mahā-tantra*. For the *brahmacārī* receiving this form of initiation means the violation of the prohibitions and hence a fall from the *tapaḥ-saṃvara* [avowed forbearance]. Such a *vratī* [practitioner] will suffer great sin (*mahā-pātaka*) and will certainly fall among the low-born. He will never attain *siddhi*.” This translated from the *bodhi-patha-pradīpa*, his core statement, verses 63-6.

⁹³ Whom *brahmayāmala*, a Śaivite text, would have be the avatar of Lord Viṣṇu; wouldn’t ya know?

⁹⁴ For a full and sympathetic discussion of which, see Gonda, J., p 10 ff.

⁹⁵ i.e. Buddhist, The *Saugata*.

⁹⁶ “self-arising”, this universe.

to and adore divinities. The idea of the void is made to agree with that of adoration and that of charity.”⁹⁷

It is in this light that we may read the Twenty-one Verse Greeting. Commenting earlier in the review Poussin makes sure that there is no mistaking the point that “the doctrines which teach Bhakti are in direct opposition to those called Tantric, in which the female deities play so important a part.” Initially, this was true. Over centuries, *tantra* absorbed *bhakti*. The western scholar who has ventured to touch upon this directly is Alice Getty: “The Tantra forms of Tārā made their appearance when the Northern Buddhist school became weakened by the pernicious influence of the Tantra system.”⁹⁸ These ferocious forms were represented in the three colours: red, yellow, and blue, which, with the white and green pacific forms, completed the five colours of the five Dhyāni-Buddhas of whom they were believed to be the *śakti*.” She continues, “The non-tantra forms of Tārā all wear the bodhisattva ornaments, smiling and graceful. The tantra forms have ornaments and symbols of the Dharmapāla [i.e. wrathful protectors] with their hair disheveled and the third eye.” Close enough. This gives the general idea. The iconography is not consistent, especially the various matchings of the four sisters Lōcanā, Paṇḍarā, Māmakī and Tārā with the second-tier Jina Buddhas. White Tārā, most auspicious, has seven eyes; the third centered in the forehead plus one each in palms and soles, which Getty does note later on the same page. Amitābha in the Greeting is embedded auspiciously in dishevelled hair (*jaṭā bhāra*). Wrathfulness, *per se*, does not imply ‘tantra’. It means ‘Mom’s mad!’ What angers Her is evils (*māra*), evil ways (*śatru*), impediments (*sarvāpada*), and forces which imperil (*ripu*). Make a list. Check it twice.

Tārā, as depicted in the Greeting, is not “your visualization”, *yidam*.⁹⁹ She is the abiding state and impelling force of all creation.¹⁰⁰ *vīre*, perforce *ākule*, She gives all Her energy, *dāna*, *vīrya*, *tapas*. Tantrism acceded to Her everpresent compassion but changed Her, placed Her “beyond it all”, made Her “indifferent”: *upekṣā jñāna-yogena tārā saṃsāra-tāriṇī* gives a powerful conclusion to a brief, metered passage expounding upon the *caturdevī*-collaboration from the fourth chapter of *samputa tantra*, a compiled work that seems to have coalesced contemporaneously with the emergence of the Greeting.

Mahāyāna disappeared from India. Tārā was absorbed by Vajrayāna tantrism during the interval. The tantric masters “offered” Her ‘consort-in-caste’, in the *karma kula*, but the laity never went for it.¹⁰¹ She arrived in Tibet in Atiśa’s robes; *sādhana*, full ritual visualization, in twenty-one aspects, with *bhakti* subsumed, declared complimentary and fully incorporated. Gem rough had become a set stone, a cut emerald with twenty-one facets. The paen: “In Tibet, where men call her Dolma-that is to say, the Star-her nuns go forth on errands of mercy over cloud-capped mountains and wild valleys of the roof of the world to carry healing and comfort to the sick.”¹⁰²

In the Greeting, Tārā is to be perceived acting through the celestial and subterranean forces of nature and is to be invoked through the activating force of *mantra*. Other than depicting exalted attributes, the Greeting does not discuss any of the intricate ramifications of Buddhist hermeneutics, various hierarchical states-of-mind, as Candragomin does in detail; nor is it laden with layers of lush

⁹⁷ de la Vallée-Poussin, Louis, Review of *Matériaux*, JRAS, 1896.

⁹⁸ Getty, A., *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, p.121. Since the mid-seventies it has become ‘politically incorrect’ to challenge the integrity of what now passes for ‘tantra’. Reformers worked to recast this debasement throughout the second millennium in Tibet, integrating it into a more mature Vajrayāna. Choose wisely, grasshoppers.

⁹⁹ As *vajravārāhī*, *bhadrakālī*, *vajrakīlāya*, et al., wrathful to the hilt; initiation required.

¹⁰⁰ *śivaśakti*

¹⁰¹ As consort of *jinabuddha amoghasiddhi*, who may have entered into *sva-bhāva* in the late 7th century work, *sarva-tathāgata tattva-saṃgraha tantra*, “The Essential Compendium of All Those-thus-Gone.” Conze accords, p. 189. *karma kula mukhya*, “action family chief” is given for Tārā in the line before the one quoted above from the *samputa tantra* passage, without naming a consort. See S. B Dasgupta, p. 111, n. 1; p. 150, n. 3.

¹⁰² Broughton, B.L., p. 150.

imagery and doctrine as we find in the *stotram* of 32 Names by Sūryagupta or laced with personal lamentation and recriminations like Sarvajñamitra's effort. The Greeting is a *Ding an Sich*. It does not 'tell you to devote'. It devotes. It never steps back from itself. There is no I-and-Thou, no supplicant, nothing self-referential. It is not of a *persona* but a purse with a cellular taraphone in it. Every Tibetan owns one.

That Tārā is to be invoked through *mantra* is evident. Many *stotra* extol *mantra* generically and leave it at that. The Greeting unfolds and presents the application of *mantra* in vivid detail. The assessment that Buddha Vairocana's vision of Tārā acting through natural forces was a widespread perception in Mahāyāna Buddhism of the medieval period is borne out in a note given by Brian Houghton Hodgson: "Sir W. Jones had, however, in his possession a Sanskrit copy of the *Lallita Vistara*, and had noticed the personification of Diva Natura under the style of Árya Tárā."¹⁰³

And Sir William Jones, "having only read a few pages of a Saugata book, which Captain [William] Kirkpatrick had lately the kindness to give me; but it begins like other Hindu books, with the word Om, which we know to be a symbol of the divine attributes; then follows, indeed, a mysterious hymn to the Goddess of Nature by the name of Árya, but with several other titles, which the Brahmens themselves continually bestow on their Devi. Now the Brahmens, who have no idea that any such personage exists as Devi, or the Goddess, and only mean to express allegorically the *power* of God, exerted in creating, preserving, and renovating this universe, we cannot with justice infer that the dissenters admit no deity but *visible nature*."¹⁰⁴

And yet deities, and spirits and demons, too, do supplicate Tārā in Verses 6) and 19). And yet the demons amongst them are annihilated at the end in Verse 21). And yet do note that singled out for very special attention in Verse 11) are *samanta-bhūpāla*, "all guardians of the earth", whom Tārā may summon. And note note 36), naming the four *śakta cakras* which are fallout from the state of 'perfect cognition': the *khecari* representing ethereal awareness; the *gocari*, inner (self)awareness; *dikcari*, the awareness of externals; and *bhūcari* which identifies the objects of awareness, in 'descending' order, which 'order' impresses Buddha Vairocana not a whit. It is His wit to perceive Tārā in the gathered power of nature, *dikcakra nikara*, upholding, indeed embodying the Turning Wheel of Dharma, natural law.

And *This is not Evidence*:

"...a certaine flowerie *Light*, as it were the *flame* of a *taper*. Very *bright* it was, *Sparkling*, and *twinkling* like the *Day-star*...discover'd a *Curious green Umbrage*, and I found my self in a *Grove of Bays*. The *Texture* of the *Branches* was so even, the *Leaves* so *thick*, and in that conspiring *order*, it was not a *wood* but a *Building*. I conceived it indeed to be the *Temple of Nature*, where she had joyn'd *Discipline* to her *Doctrine*... ...a number of *Nightengales*...peeping through their *leavie cabinets*, rejoyced at this strange *Light*, and, having first *plum'd* themselves, stirr'd the still *Ayre* with their *Musick*. This, I thought, was very pretty, for the *silence of the Night*, suiting with the *solitude* of the *place*, made me judge it *heavenly*."

-Eugenius Philalethes

From her abode here, unnamed, but by its description possibly situated bordering Yulokod's acacia groves, the Turquoise Leifdom of Khadiravani; Thalia addresses Eugenius. Having graciously bestowed her name, she then grants him the vision and begins the teaching:

¹⁰³ *Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Buddhists*, Serampore, 1841, p.181, n.)

¹⁰⁴ Elmes, James, ed., (*Jones'*) *Discourses Delivered before the Asiatic Society*, Vol.II. 2nd ed., printed for Charles S. Arnold, 1824, p.45. "On the Philosophy of the Asiatics" delivered February 2, 1794. Jones' italics.

"*Thou doest here behold the mountains of the Moone,[some pages later further described by Eugenius]....Mountains of the Moone. The Philosophers commonly call them the Mountains of India, on whose Tops grows their secret and famous Lunaria. It is an Herb easy to be found, but that men are blind, for it discovers it self, and shines after night like Pearle....Much indeed might be spoken concerning the Mountains, if it were lawfull to publish the Mysteries, but one thing I shall not forebear to tell you. They are very dangerous places after Night, for they are haunted with Fires and other strange Apparitions, occasion'd (as I am told by the M[agi]) by certaine Spirits; which dabble lasciviously with the sperm of the world, and imprint their Imaginations in it, producing many times fantastic, and monstrous Generations. The Accesse and Pilgrimage to this place, with the Difficulties which attend them, are faithfully and magisterially described by the Brothers of R[osy]. C[ross]."*

We seem to have arrived, alchemically speaking, upon the Tibetan plateau. Flowers light the night crags, demons at the door, tantra on the hearth. Both the Vajrayāna Tantra and the Artis Alchimia concern themselves with that which has been *denatured*, extracted, generated, concentrated and purified. Let us purify *Obscurations*. Let us attend a *Tārā puja*. Pick a color? OK, White. From the *sādhana*:

Having taken refuge, generated *bodhicitta*, recited the Four Immesurables, and made the Seven-Limb, Outer and Inner Mandala Offerings, we then visualize:

Clear on out there is nothing but blazing light.
Five-color ribbons of rainbow spiral together around me.
They merge to form an endless castle of water-crystal (*),
Of a clarity and luminous nature as moonstone.
Spinning, they transform into a white lotus
Upon which rests a shining moon cushion.

Arising, the syllable *taṃ*, the sound, white.
Arising in my mind, the sound.
Arising; Tārā:
In my mind, the sound *taṃ*. *Sitatārā*.

Taṃ and Tārā merge in the lotus. Light suffuses all. Bodhisattvas rejoice in its rays and respond. The lotus and letter meld into Tārā myself, full of lunar radiance, my face smiling peacefully eternal, youthful. A handful of my black hair is gathered atop my gently tilted head. The rest falls down over my shoulders. I am wearing the softest shawl of white silk, pearls and gems. My skirt is hemmed with rainbows. With my long arm's wrist resting upward on my knee, my right hand is in *varada mudra*, granting all desires, open. My left hand is in *vitarka mudra*, the mirror of refuge, thumb and forefinger closed to the stem of a white lotus held forth palm out. My seven eyes, open, alert, concerned, convey all wisdom. My third is between the brows; one is in each open palm, one upon each open sole facing up as I sit in the full-lotus. *om* crowns me. *aḥ* sings at my throat. *hūṃ* fills my heart with light. Rainbows recede and dissolve into this light, my heart, Tārā. Wisdom beings, *jñānasattva*, come and abide in me and become me and empower me. Drops of *amṛta* cascade into my crown, suffuse throughout me and surge upward back out through my crown to form endless light, *amitābha*. At my heart light penetrates and enervates the *amṛta* which instantly conveys immortality...

After this Visualization come the Invocation, Absorbition, Initiation, Consecration, Presentation, Praise, and (the) Recitation (of):

om̐ tāre tuttāre ture mama āyur puṇye jñāna puṣṭim kuru (ye) svāhā

("Early to bed, Tārā; early to rise)...Can my boon be: healthy, wealthy and wise?"

The ritual concludes with the Dedication¹⁰⁵:

Guru Karmodbhava, great torch illuminating Dharma in all directions; may all beings profit by the perfect example of right conduct and clear exposition of our lineage patriarch.

Our own precious Lama Dorje Barma, may the virtues of his refined wisdom extend throughout ten directions to aid all beings. May the *sangha*, brethren and *bhiksuni*, rejoice.

His Holiness Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso, may he receive this blessing, live long and continue to teach.

(*)Bokar Rinpoche gives a Note (p. 161) which will *explicate* this: "Tibetans distinguish between two kinds of crystals. There is the water crystal giving a sensation of freshness when touched by the sun's rays, and the fire crystal that gives off a sensation of heat."

(Let us diverge.) In a latter-day review of *The Cult of Tārā*, Christopher Bell [from The Tibetan and Himalayan Library; Internet, 2004] would take Steve Beyer to task for introducing, " 'Western concepts of schizophrenia, surrealism and alchemy' (p. 82). ... This bizarre departure...isn't very successful...[and] is also inappropriate. ... The most glaring fault of the book, etc."

We do have the 'Eastern concept' of the *yidam*, the shell enclosure, generation and projection of an alternate (*albeit* deified) persona (for *sitatārā*, see above, just given). We may, practicing in the manner of the Hermeticist Giordano Bruno, whose system of mnemotechnics is more carefully structured yet wilder still than the Tibetan method for *yidam* accretion, call this (after Couliano, pp. 75-8, pp. 125-6) a "phantasm, ...endowed with autonomous existence" achieved (p. 125), "through a practice of visualisation". Couliano (p. 66) quotes the "third mnemonic image" from Bruno's *De gl'heroici furori* (London, 1585), here rendered into English by his translator, M. Cook, "...a nude adolescent, stretched out on a green meadow, his head leaning on his arm, his eyes looking up at the sky where, above the clouds, there are edifices comprising rooms, towers, gardens and orchards; there is also a castle made of fire; and in the middle there is an inscription: *Mutuo fulcimur*". Bruno then comments upon this motto (tr. Paulo Eugene Memmo, Jr., 1964): "I build and sustain you up there with my thoughts, and you sustain me here below with hope. You would not exist were it not for my imagination and my thought which forms and sustains you, and I would not be alive were it not for the consolation and comfort I receive because of you." Although not precisely on the same page, we are in the same chapter. Method and aspiration here accord with modern Tibetan practice. Couliano concludes (p. 84), "...Circe the sorceress...represents the terrible aspect of the Great Goddess of nature, Diana. Circe binds, Diana unties...Whereas Diana represents the universe in its unity, Circe is the mistress of magical processes, whose purpose is, precisely, to reunite the parts of the world, to place them in relationship to each other. Without Circe, there would be no Diana: the remedy would not exist without the poison." We are now on the same page. This is *tantra*. Whereas, as well, we have the eyes of Dali and Magritte every bit as perceptive as Tārā's, not to mention the Masons, eye on pyramid, eye in palm. In India we have the

¹⁰⁵ This list and some imagery, blessings, are from the great Jamgon Kontrul's version by way of Kalu Rinpoche and over on into English by Catherine Rathbun, Sonam Olbrecht and Ken McLeod. The ordering of the list often varies somewhat among the various versions, yet seldom drops a component of the whole. The Visualization here is pan-lineage at the author's predeliction, please forgive errors. The Guru and Lama are fictitious. The Fifth Dalai Lama (contemporary with Philalathes) is not.

nātha siddha, alchemists all, both Śaivite and Vajrayāna, who stir up Chinese (from which originates the word) cinnabar and smelt out that *rasa* “quicksilver”; their patriarch-in-common being Nāgārjuna. Bell does not ring. Come out and play.

The early 20th century Theosophist Manly Palmer Hall (p. 160), quoting Eugenius’ description as above, offers us an extract from the Letter of the Philosopher Actum Leyden, Anno Domini 1662; so below, two paragraphs further *extracted* will provide us with a clear *elucidation* of the *Mountains* of the *Moone* and the Benefits thereof:

“The solar rays descending from the sun carry with them solar sulphur-the Divine Fire. These rays are crystallized by contact with the lunar rays. The solar rays are also met by the emanations pouring upward from the earth’s surface and are thus still further crystallized into a partly tangible substance, which is soluble in pure water. This substance is the “Magical Mountain of the Moon” referred to in the R. C. letter. The crystallization of the solar and lunar rays in water (dew) produces the virgin earth-a pure, invisible substance, uncontaminated by material matter. When the virgin earth crystals are wet, they appear green, when dry, white.”

After the Coagulation, a process of some length, comes the ‘Prescription’:

“Drops of this Water taken inwardly strengthen the understanding and memory, and opens to us such wonderful and sweet things, of which no man hath heard, and of which I dare not further write, because of the Oath I made to God to the contrary. Time and the holy use of this blessed Water will teach us, as soon as you have taken it inwardly such influence will happen to thee as if the whole heavens and all the stars with their powers are working in thee. All Knowledge and secret Arts will be opened to thee as in a dream, but the most excellent of all is, you will perfectly learn rightly to know all creatures in their Nature, and by means thereof, the true understanding of God, the Creator of us, Heaven and Earth, like David and Moses and all the Saints of God, for the wisdom of our fountain of living Water will instruct thee as it did Solomon and the Brethren of our fraternity.”

Just passing through. Blessings.

Kharis Thalia

‘Grace’ Blossoms-in-abundance

“Of thine ankle lightly turn’d:
With those beauties scarce discerned,...
Saving when, with freshness lave,
Thou dipps’t them in the taintless wave;
Like twin water lilies, born
In the coolness of the morn...
Couldst’t thou wish for lineage higher
Than twin sister of Thalia?”¹⁰⁶

-John Keats, A.D. 1817

¹⁰⁶ Nothing could be finer than to be in Carolina...

Hindu Sources for the Twenty-one Verse Greeting to Blessed Tārā

One morning on a mining trip in the mountains with Mike:
 “Did you see the tracks in the mud?”
 “Down by the creek? Yeah, big kitty.”

“The Central day (of the *Sutyās* or “soma-pressing days”) is an *ekaviṃśa* day, (n. one in which all *Stotras* are chanted in the *ekaviṃśa stoma*, or twenty-one verse hymn form)...the *ekaviṃśa* is assuredly the foundation of *Stomas*.”

-*śatapatha brāhmaṇa*¹⁰⁷

“...in the context of cosmogony. The reference to the deities created is in *jaiminīya brāhmaṇa* 3.363.

The names of the deities mentioned are:

The Vasus the Ādityas the Viśvadevas the Maruts the Sādyas and the Āptyas.
 Trivṛt Pañcadaśa Saptadaśa Ekaviṃśa Triṇava and Tryastrimśa are the Stomas.
 Gāyatrī Triṣṭubh Jagatī Anuṣṭubh Pañkti and Aticchandas are the metres.
 Vasanta Grīṣma Varṣā Śarad Hemanta and the Śīśira are the seasons.”¹⁰⁸

Column four, way beyond lotto-luck, take a look.

Only the Marut, the Wind-Bringers, are mentioned by name. The Verses are Ekaviṃśa. The Metre is Anuṣṭubh. The Season of the moon is Śarad. Buddha Vairocana knew where He was, what He was up to and what He was up against.

¹⁰⁷ According to the text of the Mādhyandina School, tr. in 5 vols. By Julius Eggeling, Oxford, Clarendon, 1900, Vol.5, books 11-14, pp.377-8; *Kāṇḍa* 5, *Adhyāya* 1, *Brāhmaṇa* 4. 7th cen. B.C.

¹⁰⁸ *Three Mountains and Seven Rivers*, Essays for Prof. Musashi Tachikawa, ed. By Shōun Hino, Motilal Banarsidass, rep. 2004, “The Divine Origin of Kingship: It is Vedic”, Madhavi Kolhat Kar, (p.525 n.8). The *jaiminīya brāhmaṇa* in relation to the *śatapatha brāhmaṇa* is known as ‘younger sister’.

Singer-songwriters do not live in a vacuum. They listen to each other's songs. They know each others songs. Occasionally, they will gently lift each other's words. They conceal these stolen goods. They know their way through the songbook, the old standards. They learn songs of common interest. Of common interest amongst *śakta*, be they back then Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, would be songs dedicated to Divine Mother.

And Jews know Jingle Bells. Read on.

Thus I have heard: the glorious Buddha Vairocana emerged from his absorption in *nirvāṇa*, in order to benefit beings; caught the *Vimāna* Express Shuttle into town, being *Vārāṇasī*, immersed Himself briefly in Mother Ganges for purification, then kicked around a bit in the Navel of the Universe, hooked up with some *arhats* He knew for tea, did some shopping, running low on saffron and candles; sat in at a *Kinnaras* rehearsal on *sarod*, and checked out the big-city vibes. He saw and heard numerous *bhakti* gatherings out of doors and in open temples large and small, singing devotions or reciting *sūtra* as commerce went on about its way. At one large gathering He stopped to listen. Lacquer-leaf palimpsests were being passed out, the sheet music. He picked one up, wrapped it in cloth and tucked it into His shoulder bag. That evening in the Pure Land Textual Immersion, He set it next to His working manuscript for Greetings to Divine Mother *Tārā*, filled His seven water bowls with fresh saffron water to the width of one grain of rice from the top, set each bowl the width of one grain of rice apart, lit incense and candles at his altar; took nine deep breaths, alternating nostrils; three left, three right, three both, and began to read:

lalitā sahasranāma stotram 1-27

<i>śrīmātā śrīmahārājñī chidāgni kuṇḍasambhūtā</i>	<i>śrīmat simhāsaneśvarī devakārya samudyatā...1</i>
<i>udya(d)bhānu sahasrābhā rāgasvarūpa pāsāḍhyā</i>	<i>caturbāhu samanvitā krodhā kārāṅkuśojjalā...2</i>
<i>manorūpekṣu kodaṇḍā nijārūṇa prabhāpūra</i>	<i>pañca tanmātra sāyakā majjadbrahmāṇḍa maṇḍalā...3</i>
<i>campakāśoka punnāga kuruvinda maṇisreni</i>	<i>saugandhika lasatkacā kanatkoṭira maṇḍita...4</i>
<i>aṣṭamī candra vibrāja mukhacandra kalankābha</i>	<i>dalikasthala śobhitā mṛganābhi viṣeśakā...5</i>
<i>vadanasmara māngalya vaktra lakṣmī parivāha</i>	<i>gṛhatorāṇa cillikā calan minābha lōcanā...6</i>
<i>navacampaka puṣpābha tārākānti tiraskāri</i>	<i>nasadaṇḍa virājītā nāsābharaṇa bhāsurā...7</i>
<i>kadamba mañjari kṛpta tāṭaṅka yugalībhūta</i>	<i>karṇāpūra manoharā tapanoḍupa maṇḍalā...8</i>

<i>padmarāga śīlādarśa nava vidrumabimba śrī</i>	<i>paribhāvi kapolabhūḥ nyakkāri radanaccadā...9</i>
<i>suddha vidyāñkurākāra karpūra vīṭikāmōda</i>	<i>dvijapañkti dvayojjvalā samākarṣiddigañtarā...10</i>
<i>nijasamlāpa mādhyura mandasmita prabhāpūra</i>	<i>vinirbhartsita kaccapī majjatkāmeśa mānasā...11</i>
<i>anākalita sadṛśya kāmeśa baddhamāṅgalya</i>	<i>cibukaśrī virājitā sūtra śobita kañdharā...12</i>
<i>kanakāṅgada keyūra ratnagraiveya cintāka</i>	<i>kamanīya bhujānvitā lolamuktā phalānvitā...13</i>
<i>kāmeśvara premaratna nābhyālavāla romāli</i>	<i>mañīpratipaṇa stanī latāphala kucadvayī...14</i>
<i>lakṣya romalatā dhāra- stanabhāra dalanmadhya</i>	<i>-tā samunneya madhyamā paṭṭabhanda valitrayā...15</i>
<i>aruṇāruṇa kausumbha ratnakinikini kāramya</i>	<i>vastrabhāsvat kaṭṭitaṭī raśanā dāma bhūṣitā...16</i>
<i>kamesa jñata saubhagya māṇikyā mukuṭākāra</i>	<i>mārdavoru dvayānvitā jānudvaya virājitā...17</i>
<i>indragopa parikṣipta guḍhagulphā kūrmaprṣṭha</i>	<i>smaratūṇābha jaṅghikā jayiṣṇu prapadānvitā...18</i>
<i>nakhadīdhiti saṁcanna padadvaya prabhājāla</i>	<i>namajjana tamoguṇā parākṛta saroruhā...19</i>
<i>śiñjāna mañimañjira marālī maṅdagamanā</i>	<i>maṅditaśrī padāmbujā mahālāvaṇya śevadhīḥ...20</i>
<i>sarvāruṇānavadyāṅgī śiva kāmeśvarāñkasthā</i>	<i>sarvābharaṇa bhūṣitā śivā svādhīna vallabhā...21</i>
<i>sumerū madhya sṛṅgāstha ciñtāmaṇi gṛhāntasthā</i>	<i>śrīmannagara nāyikā pañcabrahmāsana sthitā...22</i>
<i>mahāpadmāṭavī samsthā sudhāsāgara madhyasthā</i>	<i>kadamba vanavāsini kāmakṣī kāmadāyini...23</i>
<i>devarṣi gaṇasānghāta bhaṅḍāsura vadhodyukta</i>	<i>stūyamānātma vaibhavā śaktisenā samanvitā...24</i>

sampatkarī samāruḍha
aśvārūḍha dhiṣṭitāśva

sindhura vrajasevitā
koṭikoṭibhi rāvṛtā...25

cakrarāja rathārūḍha
geyacakra rathārūḍha

sarvāyudha pariṣkṛtā
mantriṇī parisevitā...26

kirīcakra rathārūḍha
jvālā mālinikā kṣipta

daṇḍanātha puraskṛtā
vahni prākāra madhyagā...27

Considered among the great canonical *purāṇas*, being collected stories that presume a foundation in sacred tradition, *brahmāṇḍa purāṇa*, emerged into the field with flourish in the late fourth century. The date was determined by the eminent nineteenth century German Sanskritist Johan Georg Bühler to be the point in time of cessation of ongoing dynastic references, being Gupta. Three texts concerning the “Playful” Goddess *Lalitā*, associated with or assimilated into *Tripura Sundarī* “Three Cities of *māyā*, so beautiful”, were, at later dates, opinions varying, incorporated into the final segment: *lalitopākhyāna*, *lalitā sahasranāma stotram* and *lalitā trīṣati*, which latter comes with a commentary attributed to Adī Saṅkarācārya. These verses of LSS and LT, no matter when they were grafted upon this *purāṇa* proper, already existed, and had become both established enough and successful enough to warrant inclusion. This takes time.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Nice, long note now needed, which, too, will take time. Coburn has assigned a 12th century date for LSS; Brooks, post-9th-century; neither offering comparative or correlative cause. Of the many tantric elements, none can be specifically pin-pointed as ‘later tantric’, nor are there *devī*-clustering preconfiguring the *daśa mahā vidyā* (although some Hindu commentators would presume to interpret otherly with invented or imagined/perceived *post hoc* correspondences), as may be found in *lalitāstavaratnam* (attributed to Sage Durvasa of antiquity; most unlikely). *Kurukullā*, Lady of the Lake (of Knowledge, *vimarśa vāpikā*), in *ahankāra prākāra*, “the ego’s fortress” in LP, is noted in Verse 93) of LSS, as is later in the line, *kaula-marga*, “path of noblesse”, here by way of alliteration of the *k*’s and the play of *-kullā...kaula* rather than by any specific association. These *śakti* controlled *prākāra* in LP may represent the earliest association of *Kurukullā* and *Tārā*, both rowing boats made of jewels across sparkling waters. *devī māhātmyam*, called *caṇḍī*, which Coburn (1991 p. 13) assigns, perhaps a bit late, to the 6th century; Brown (p. 77, n. 28), following, the 5th or 6th, most others feel the 4th to be the fit, was certainly in (fresh) print. LSS Verse 145) resolves *caṇḍīkā*, *caṇḍamuṇḍāsura niṣudini*. There is no viable evidence for a later date for LSS than this. It is most unlikely that it would have been attached to *brahmāṇḍa purāṇa* six hundred years after the emergence of this work without a popular outburst of criticism and approbation censuring the attempt. There are enough “Buddhist” names subsumed into *Lalitā* to allow us to reject Coburn’s date entirely. In the 12th century Buddhism was no longer extant in Kanchi, the only claimant to source city. The major point of contention (*vide* Brooks) is the point in time of the emergence of the “equivalence” of *sṛī cakra* with *Lalitā*. In Verse 182:2), the first of the two conclusion-lines, She is *sṛī-cakra-rāja-nīlayā sṛīmat-tripura-sundarī*, which is unequivocal. However, a loosely braided lesser branch of names had been growing cheerfully along on its own alliterating/announcing *a-ā*, extending itself nowhere-in-particular up to Verse 182:1): *anaghā...abhyāsāti...avyāja...ābāla gopa vidhitā sarvan ullangya sāsanā...*, then Crunch! Comes the ending, the branch abruptly severed, the oh-so-perfect conclusion grafted on, editorial staff-at-work, a (very selves-conscious) declaration of doctrine, completely self-contained, an essential equation in a style alien to the manner of the song; a late interpolation. *Lalitā-as-chakra* is directly imparted in Verse 60:1): *chakrarāja nīketanā* and in Verses 26-7) in Her battle with *Baṇḍāsura* (see n. 126 below), both instances of which appear to be integral with an earlier text. The battle ends with Her victory in 32) at which point gears shift. The channel gets changed without any transition. Tradition has it that LSS was ‘channeled’ if you will, by eight *vāgdevī* “speech goddesses”. Do we have a reflection of the knowledge of multiple hands and voices at work? As an example (well-isolated as it be), Sampath Kumar Medavarupa (LSS-A Criticism/2010 at Scribd.org) notes, “One of the nama is ‘Ratnagraiveya *chinthaka* lola mukta phalanvita [see 13:2 above].’ Here *chinthaka* is a telugu word for golden neck ornament, which had come forth in 12th Century.” This points out the insertion of a substitution, perhaps for *gucchaka*, not the date of origin. A neologism, *cintaka*, one may find it such in the

lalitopākhyāna is a prose narrative. It concludes a series of episodes drawn from earlier in the sacred cycles of Indian history and folklore with a succession of great battles between *Lalitā* and *Bhaṇḍāsura*, the mighty demon, who, with a vast army is wreaking havoc upon earth and mankind; culminating with Her great victory and triumphant return to Her “citadel”, *prākāra*. *Tārā*, among others, is given high status, *tārā nāma mahāsakti*. She, called here *Tārāmbā*, is placed in full control of *mānomāyā prākāra*, the “Castle of Mind-over-matter”, wherein find the great Lake (of the Mind), *mānasa vāpikā*, next after and inside of a series of mansions of precious stones, various *maṇimāyā prākāra*.

lalitā sahasranāma stotram, composed as tradition has it in the holy city of Kanchi, meters out *Lalitā*’s Thousand Praise-names. *lalitā trisati* sings Three hundred Praise-names. LSS was an enormous hit. It became an endearing and enduring classic, as popular now as ever with a variety of versions on record, on rainbow-disc, from rural recitations to electronic music. Rockabilly works: G/Em/C/D, G/Em/C(c-e-d-e)/D(d), Em(b)/C(c)/G(b)/D(a), G (g)/Em-Em7/G-D-G. Its narrative content, calendar girl and war story, and its ongoing popularity, belie the belief that it was only read and sung by an educated elite just because it was written in Sanskrit. Several YouTube versions have over a million hits.

Synopsis: First (not relevant and not given here) comes a three quatrain *dhyānam* for Her visualization by devotees and practitioners. The Praise-names themselves commence (1A) by welcoming Divine Mother who (1B) arrives on a lion-throne emanating (1C) from the fire of mind, radiant (2A) as thousand suns. Then (2B-3B) are described the implements She is holding in Her four arms and their purpose. Her universal rosy splendor (3C-D) is extolled. From the fourth stanza through the twenty-first,

Kannada-English Dictionary, not in Monier-Williams. It reflects an element of the absorption of LSS into the fold of Śrī Vidyā, who have cared for it well, but arrived on the horizon centuries after LSS first took form. Brooks (p. 34), bless him, speculates the 6th century here for *śrī yantra*, but, again, he lacks hard data, as do I. The earliest epigraphy noting *śrī yantra* by name, given by de Casparis (p. 30, 34, 41), surprisingly enough is from the Buddhist kingdom of Śrīvija, South Sumatra, seventh century. It is not a big stretch to posit a century for *śrī yantra* to have been absorbed into Buddhist awareness in India, then shipped east. Of course it later figured in the construction of the magnificent Borobudur stupa/complex, mirror of Mt. Meru. Āchārya Gaudapādā, protogenitor of Śrī Vidyā and *paramaguru* “the teacher of the teacher” of Adī Śankarāchārya, in his *śrī vidyā ratna sutras* “radiant truth-jewels threaded” (ca. 750 A. D.) lists and groups the *trikona* for *śrī yantra* and enumerates nine *āvaraṇa*, his breakdown accurate, his total coming to forty-three plus the *bindu*; then notes a multitude of lesser *yantra*. Before the patriarch there is not much to go on in the reduced extant literature. Switch to native geometry. Addressing the subject of *śrī yantra* there is an error in nomenclature that is repeated over and over and has been for centuries, scholar or lay, Western and Hindu the both (don’t want to single anyone out here). Wikipedia (01/13) does us the favor, “Because it is composed of nine triangles, it is known as the *Navayoni Chakra*.” No. Upward pointing *trikona* represent *śiva*, the *linga*. The *navayoni* “nine wombs” *cakra* comprises three interlinked isosceles triangles, two, down; one, up, from which appear eight new-formed small outer triangles and a now-formed central triangle; the nine. What are nine in *śrī cakra* are nine “enclosures” (“enveloping gems” –Mike Magee) *āvaraṇa*, which are concentrically derived *maṇḍala*. The *navayoni cakra* is the young blossom of three triangles that flowers into *śrī cakra*. The *navayoni cakra* is the *yantra* of *bāla sundarī* “the pretty young girl-goddess”. This was the breakthrough, the break-up of equilateral symmetry, which *durgā yantra* retains, that when extrapolated, generates *śrī yantra*. Expand the circumference, extend the line segments and see where it goes. Fit in the next three layers of triangles as they reveal themselves. The hard part is getting it lined up and started, the *navayoni cakra*. The rest is layout labor. *śrī cakra* has generated more interest and praise than all the rest put together. Whenever *navayoni cakra* came into its own, we can be sure that *śrī cakra* was very close behind. What is really needed (begging the question here) is a date for *navayoni cakra*. At this point in time it is ‘no contest’. As for Lady *Lalitā*, the prototype for Her *sahasranāma* is that of Lord Viṣṇu. Her namesake, *sundarī*, is established as the 47th of 108 names of *Durgā* given in *devī mähātmyam*. All elements were in place, tools and supplies; linguistic, both for style and content, and geometrical, both for graphics and architecture. With the surge of Śaktism, it would have been supplying a huge demand. It did. To supply the demand for direct evidence of temporal congruency is part of the purpose of this section. Read on.

where the 'short-version' terminates, She is depicted literally from 'hair to foot', *kesadī padām*, in the most glowing possible terms. Hair, eyes, ears nose, cheeks, throat, lips, neck and carefully on down, flowers and jewels, fragrance and orbs, describe and adorn Her. The twenty-second and twenty-third stanzas list the wonderful mountain and island, grove and forest (one of each) that She inhabits, responding to prayer with great joy. In the twenty-fourth stanza hosts of beings praise Her glory; She with an army of *śaktis* will defeat the ruler of the demons, *Bhaṇḍāsura*, who in LP is wreaking havoc upon humanity and the earth, maliciously causing terrible draught and plague. From this summit of incipient victory the praise-names turn to elephants, horses, chariots and great battle scenes through the thirty-third stanza. This will cover the terrain. To note: some enumerate the verses beginning the second line, others the second verse. I actually concur with the latter of these choices based upon my song arrangement, but have retained the format beginning with *om śrīmātā* in this discussion.

Let a scenario be set: direct cross-comparative source-critical analysis and appraisal. Let us read over Buddha Vairocana's shoulder, in His candlelight. The opening announces Lalitā's panoramic suzerainty, universal; perhaps, even as Her sister Durgā's, "unapproachable, impenetrable":

om śrīmātā! Revered Queen of the Realm.
Honored Mother on a lion's back, Queen.
From the fire-pit of mind, fair birth!
With divine concern, forearmed.

The second verse;

*udyadbhānu sahasrābhā caturbāhu samanvitā
rāgasvarūpa pāśādhyā krodhā kāraṅkuśojjvalā*

Arising rose a thousand suns;
Forearms, four, and such contains
Love's fair form, find now in chains;
With wrath, the blazing hook restrains.¹¹⁰

The second stanza of the Twenty-one Verse Greeting reads:

*namah ° śataśaraccandra-sampūrṇapaṭalanane
tārā ° sahasranikara-prahasatkiraṅōjjvale*

Praise a hundred moons of the autumn (night)
Full round your face, a panoply
Stars, thousands, gathered in (so bright)
Laughing, beaming, blazing away.

Whether the reading is *śata*, "hundred" or *śānta* "tranquil" is not particularly of import. Buddha Vairocana is staking Tārā's claim in precise contradistinction to "a thousand suns rising," with "a thousand stars gathered". Now, note the placement in the stanzas of, respectively,

¹¹⁰ Pāśa the Rein and Aṅkuśa the Hook challenge delusion.

*krodhā kārāṅkuśojjalā
prahasat kiranōjjvale*

Where Lalitā is 'flashing' Her goad that is sending out wrathful 'rays', Tārā, again in most precise contradistinction, is 'flashing' Her best smile, just 'beaming'.¹¹¹ This is not a coincidence. It could well be considered as such were it an isolated example. There are five more coming in quick succession.

Lalitā's charms commence. Buddha Vairocana is not at all charmed. He raises his eyebrows as he reads the beautiful image in stanza 6):

*vadanasmara māngalya grhatorāṇa cillikā
vaktra lakṣmī parivāha calan minābha lōcanā*

Whose sight recalls love's lord; augurs well
In the temple's-arch of Her eyebrows;
Whose face charms; a flowing stream,
Sparkling fish darting through Her eyes.

Lalitā's eyebrows are arched in auspiciousness. In Praise-Verse 11), Tārā's:

*namaḥ ° samanta-bhūpāla -paṭalā-karṣana-kṣame
cala-bhr̥kuṭi-hūmkāra-sarvāpada-vimocani*

Praise all cosmic keepers of earth
Gathered in at your beck and call.
A tremor knits your eyebrows, Hūṃ comes forth
To lift the yoke of everyone in thrall.

are furrowed in wrath, the exact contradistinction. Both, with the retained word (the indicator, the 'clue') are in motion: *calan, cala*. This is a wide word. Monier-Williams gives "moving, trembling, shaking".¹¹² It may ascend to the high treble of shimmering light or descend into the low bass rumble of *hūṃ*. Buddha Vairocana is arranging what he is doing in counter-point. Do notice how your own eyebrows will furrow quite naturally as you say the syllable *hūṃ*.

The next stanza in LSS extols Her nose, which is not so important to Buddha Vairocana as Her eyes and mouth, but Tārā comes into it in the second line:

tārākānti tiraskāri¹¹³ nāsā bharaṇa bhāsurā

Borne at the nose, a stone star-bright;
Beyond bright Venus' blazing light.

¹¹¹ Waddell, in an entirely unrelated (and, therefore, objective with regards to this) context, for no apparent reason other than exposition, notes from the *tārā sādhana*, "Prayers for Blessings" (JRAS, p.75): "And may Thy benign (1) face always beam on us and appear large like the waxing moon.", giving the note; "(1) In contradistinction to 'fury-face' (*khro-bo*, SKT. *krodha*)."

¹¹² Shaking, rattling, rolling. Shake off the demon.

¹¹³ *Tiraskārinika*, astride her steed *tamoliptā vāhana*, is a warrior protectress, the bodyguard of *Daṇḍanāthā* (LP, 271-3; LSS, v.27).

This is quite a compliment. Venus (*bha*, incorporated) is the brightest star.

Buddha Vairocana snorts, “Hūmph(aṭ)!” Tārā, as everyone knows, is “pupil of the eye,” *nayana*. Yet here is our Star studding Lalitā’s nose. In Verse 2) “moon(s) and stars(s)” substituted for “suns”. So, positioned diametrically in the Greeting’s schema, from the second verse to the second-to-last, “moon-and-sun”¹¹⁴ replace “star” in this pattern of contradistinction, retaining the word *bhāsurā* as *bhāsure*, (noting the widespread, perhaps original, variant *bhāsvare*) “here shining, blazing”:

namaś-candrārka-saṃpūrṇa ° *nayana-dyuti-bhāsure*

Praise the moon the sun so full in array,
The splendor of Your eyes shining bright.

“Hrum, Hoom,” murmured the voice, a deep voice like a very deep woodwind.”

-J.R.R. Tolkein

Buddha Vairocana reads down through Lalitā’s pretty face to Her mouth, stanza 10):

śuddha vidyāṅkurākāra dvijapaṅkti dyayojjvalā
karpūravīṭikā mōda samākarṣi(d)digantarā

Whose purest budding biding truth shines forth between both rows of teeth,
Whose sweet camphor-betel fragrance spreads throughout all space beneath.

Thinks Buddha Vairocana, “This is invidious.” What “truth”, *vidyā* emerges from Tārā’s mouth is Her voice, *mantra*. *hūṃ!*

namastuttāra-hūṃkāra ° *pūritāśā-digantare...4*

Praise *tuttāra-hūṃ* calling, filling every corner of space.

daśākṣara-pādanyāse ° *vidyā-hūṃkāra-dīpīte...16*

Ten-count to footsteps flaring up, *hūṃ*’s truth sending out flames.

To every corner of space, *digantare*, the truth, *vidyā*,¹¹⁵ is *hūṃ*. Proclaim it! Not pearly whites and breath mints. From Lalitā’s ‘twice-born’ teeth spring nothing so savory as *vidyā*, “the truth” of *hūṃ*.

He repeats this *hūṃ* immediately following in Verse 17):

¹¹⁴ There is debate here; which eye and which orb? The author prefers to decline entry. Tārā will wink at this on occasion. When She does, we call it an eclipse.

¹¹⁵ *vidyā*, here making its only appearance, is not in any way associated with ‘female tantric partner’; (nor is it so associated in LSS). In the Greeting it is consciously distanced from this interpretation of *vidyā* as *vajra*-consort. To disagree with Wayman once again, it represents only pure *mantra* sound. The context suggests (may I suggest ‘insists upon’) nothing else. MW gives from *Mahābhārata*, “a spell, incantation”. Exactly.

namasture ° pādāghāta ° humkarakāra-jīvite...

Praise, be swift. The foot strikes hard as hasta. Hum resounds, its life awakes.

In LSS 22) we find “the central peak of Mt. Sumerū, Lalitā’s summer home”, *sumerū madhya sṛṅgastha*. Buddha Vairocana, a good Buddhist, thinks, “There is no secure ‘home’, no fixed abode beyond.”¹¹⁶ Tārā contains the Three Worlds. And as for that Mt. Sumerū; throw in a couple more mountains for good measure. Tārā shakes them all up”:

meru-mandāra-kailāsa-bhuvanatraya-cālini

Pike’s Peak Denali Mt. Shasta the whole triple world shakes.

“The poets study rules of verse, and the ladies, they roll their eyes.”

-Lou Reed

And all the adornment of Lalitā’s beauty continues, reaching every corner of space. Speech and smile, neck and necklace, breasts, waist. Lord Kāmeśvara is very much attracted. Buddha Vairocana is not. The second line of stanza 16) reads:

ratnakiṅkiṇī¹¹⁷ kāramya raśanā dāma bhūṣitā

So adorned with a wrap insewn with lovely gems and tiny bells.

Jingling all the Way!

This image is too much for Buddha Vairocana, The feelings that had been building up, boiled over. His scholastic streak could no longer condone this frippery. This is Divine Mother! Tārā has no need of this or any other jewelry at all; no pearls (stanza 9), no rubies (stanza 13), no coral (stanza 15). She has the *triratna* “Three Jewels’ *vibhūṣite* “adorning” with ‘fingers close at heart’ and that will be sufficient. *triratna* is the only *ratna* that Tara “sports here” in all the Greeting. What She is *bhūṣita*, “adorned with” is *dik cakra*, the Universal Wheel. We do not need to name it a ‘gem’. In this unique case, Verse 9), the full range of the stanza appears to have been crafted, with precision and great beauty, in direct, pointed, undeclared response to this line in *lalitā sahasranāma stotram*.

Buddha Vairocana reads on, all the way down to Lalitā’s bejewelled feet, nothing else to get the juices flowing, got it out of His system. The second line of stanza 21) shifts directly to Lord Siva:

śiva kāmeśvarāṅksthā śiva svādhīna vallabhā

Śiva here emanates as Kāmeśa (or Kāmeśvara), Conqueror of Desire, Lalitā’s consort, Who has already be transfixed by Her smile’s radiance (stanza 11 C-D), has placed *mangalasutra*, “holy thread for

¹¹⁶ “Don’t go mistaking paradise for that home across the road.” –Bob Dylan *aneka jāti samsāram...*
...Dhammapada 11:153.

¹¹⁷ This is a popular adornment. Many Hindu and Buddhist goddesses wear these tiny, jeweled bells. Wrathful deities wear tiny, tinkling skulls.

the bride" around Her neck (12 C-D), indulged Himself at Her breasts ((14 A-B), and known, in the biblical sense, Her thighs. She has him roped. *vallabhā*, "beloved above all, desired, dear MW", She, *svādhīna*, "has her husband under her own control MW". Well, that's nice to know. Nonetheless, "Śiva, Śiva, Śiva," He is reading. "Oy, Namaḥ Śivāya," He is thinking. Exasperation sets in. Next come the two stanzas describing 'Home, Sweet Home' in Purelands and Perfected Places, Mt. Sumeru *et al.* In stanza 24) all praise Her glory. The battle will be Hers:

bhaṇḍāsura vadhodyukta śaktisenā samanvitā

Bhaṇḍāsura, She's poised to kill, fully vesting Her Śakti troops.

"Oy, Namaḥ Śivāya," Buddha Vairocana is rethinking. "Let us," He uses the royal 'we', "Take care of this right here and now." This consorhood, He wants to rail against. He keeps His peace and comes up with a perfect phrase. Drop *śiva* straight down six lines, dump *senā*, box it and ship it! The penultimate line of the Greeting subsumes the combination into Tārā: *śivaśakti-samanvite!*

samanvitā, "fully endowed with, completely possessed of MW", that place or state in which Tārā, Herself, abides, and is complete within Her is *śivaśakti*. She is not one half of a pair. She is all. Buddha Vairocana dispenseth with lesser claimers.

The Greeting promotes a variety of aspects. Within the larger orchestration one of the concerns is to give a dynamic contrast to *lalitā sahasranāma stotram* in both tone and theme. To gently split a hair here, Buddha Vairocana, in His wisdom, split the difference between what He felt, direct contention, and what He had to practice, skillful means. This division's resultant remainder becomes the subtlety of contradistinction. Excepting that last, *śivaśakti-samanvite*, a direct amalgamation ("We'll just have to chance this one."), it is the common denominator at every point of contact discussed. In each of these cases a word or two is retained and an image is inverted, reversed, altered to its opposite. There is nothing precisely purloined. All is veiled in this hall of mirrors excepting the consistency of the reflections. Cross-referencing the cross-purposes, the veil lifts. The meter of the *stotram* is the same, *anuṣṭubh*. There the resemblance stops. Style and content are not even close to similar. Quite the contrary! LSS is light and lively,¹¹⁸ fit to a time-honored formula, *kesadī padām*; a paen to the serene and lovely Goddess. The Tārā Greeting, fit to no style but its own in its relative brevity, is composed with compressive interlaced attention to a more precise choral majesty, and a more relaxed pace.¹¹⁹

The Greeting was written, in part, to convey that Tārā, Mother of This, is to be exalted in the magnificent beauty and necessarily wrathful power of the universe, not as a lovely, eager maiden for whom a variety of jewelry, flowers and celestial objects are adornment,¹²⁰ offering Herself sensually to Her consort. Buddha Vairocana, a Buddhist, *for His own benefit*, not ours, wanted to take *lalitā sahasranāma stotram*, a Hindu text, turn it on its tail and stand it on its pretty nose.¹²¹ It is true that

¹¹⁸ This is a perky tune. The '*mahā's*' are superb; Murthy, pp. 86-89, #'s 212-234. Of all the words in the entire Sanskrit language, *mahā* is the greater. Most modern Hindu versions have ossified this *sahasranāma* into a dirge with a repetitive monody per line. I feel that it was originally composed in quatrains, with a full melody, involving rise, fall, inversion and completion; the arrangement now lost, no longer extant. A friend commented, "That would be hard to prove." This is true. I do not have to 'prove' it. All I have to do is sing it. The 'proof' is empirical, consistency throughout. My western chorded arrangement has been given. Try it. Rock it. Start the pattern of quatrains from the second couplet: *udyanbhānu...maṇḍalā*. The *kesadī padām* is complete at 21).

¹¹⁹ See note 31.

¹²⁰ Tara's "is adorned with", *vibhūṣite*, the blue lotus, the three jewels and, *bhūṣitā*, the universe itself; nothing else.

¹²¹ Some portion of Buddha Vairocana's motivation might have perhaps been polemical; to get even for lines like *nityāśuddhā-nityabuddhā-niravadyā-nirantarā* (Murthy, 148-151). Of course the word *nirantarā*, "all-embracing"

Lalitā did kick Baddāsura’s ass, to benefit beings. However the problem, as seen through VairocanaVision is that She is just sitting there, radiant and decked out, looking good for sure, but not doing anything. OK, so She grants all prayers. Tārā is *ture! vīre! ākule!* to aid beings in all kinds of aspects, responding to all kinds of situations. Waddell was more precisely aware of this than any translator who has come since: “Ever tireless worker, Thou!” Lalitā sits auspiciously for Her portrait (Now hold still, right there, just like that; perfect!). Tārā is not at arm’s length, alone on a tropic isle or some pristine mountain peak, out of range. Tārā is throwing a party at Her house (*dik cakra*, no fixed abode). The *Kinnaras* are playing. “Let’s do a dance that we all can do!”¹²² That new kid is on banjo. It’s a colt favorite.

Six overlapping points of contact, five of which exhibit similar methodology¹²³, the other a straight transposition, are present within the foliage of only twenty-plus stanzas. We have an adduced source.¹²⁴

There is more in the songbook: When *viṣṇu sahasranāma stotram* made its appearance in the epic *Mahābhārata*, *tāraḥ* was only a word and Tārā was not yet a gleam in Avalokiteśvara’s eye. The word occurs twice:

*aśokas tāraṇas tāraḥ śūraḥ śaurir jāneśvara
anukūlah śatāvartaḥ padmī padmanibhekṣaṇaḥ....37*

*bhūrbhuvaḥ- svastarus tāraḥ savitā prapitāmahaḥ
(yajña...yajña....yajña)...104*

Commenting on *trailokyanātha*, Wayman gives a footnote, “The three worlds in the epic are Bhūrlōka, Buvarlōka and Svarlōka.” O Tārā! He was right there! He spotted the connection but his mind was elsewhere and he did not grasp it, that Buddha Vairocana had also been right there.

*namastāre ° ture ° vīre ° kṣaṇadyuti-nibhekṣaṇe
trailokyanātha-vaktrābaja-vikasatkesarodbhave...1*

In Verse 1), Buddha Vairocana, in precise contradistinction to Lord Viṣṇu’ s *padma-nibhekṣaṇaḥ*, “eyes like lotus” gives Lady Tārā *kṣaṇadyuti-nibhekṣaṇe*, “eyes here like lightning”. Lord Viṣṇu is “valiant”, *śuraḥ*. Sure, Lady Tārā is, too; *vīre*. From the next usage, coupled with this first one, the “World-Tree”, *taru*, is a nice touch, however, Tārā in the Greeting is portrayed as celestial, not earthbound; leaving the Sovereign (*trailokyanātha*) of the Three Worlds (*bhūr, bhūvar, svar*) to be ‘*tāraḥ*’.¹²⁵

In Greeting Verse 13) the apocalypse commences:

namaḥ kalpanta hutabhug jvālāmālāntara sthite

Praise you drinking fire at the end of time, inside a ring of fire you abide.

does not specifically name our Goddess; however, upon reading the line, with the eternal Buddha right there in its midst, did you not immediately draw the association with Tārā?

¹²² Ernie Maresca, “Shout, Shout!” *kinnara*: horse-headed celestials who play stringed instruments. Bokar, p. 163.

¹²³ And see note 126 for a late arrival, making six.

¹²⁴ And a bracketed date; before Candragomin and just after LSS, late sixth or early seventh century.

¹²⁵ See n. 50.

The compound *hutabhug* (from *bhuk*) means “oblation, offering; enjoyment of” and, specifically, “a fire oblation”, usually ghee (clarified butter) ladled into the ritual fire. The word *hutabhug* occurs twice, in successive stanzas, in *viṣṇu sahasranāma stotram*. From the second mention, stanza 95):

*ananto hutabhug bhoktā sukhado naikajo 'grajah
anirviṇṇaḥ sadāmarṣī lokādhiṣṭhānam adbhutaḥ*

we find Lord Viṣṇu *ananto* “unbounded by time, offering of ‘devouring’ fire, *bhoktā* “enjoying”. Tārā, in the most perfect possible contradistinction, is enjoying Hers “at the end of time”, *kalpanta*. To make sure we get the “devouring-fire” part, Tārā, *jvālā* “fiery-beads”-*māla*, *antara*, “inside of; here abides” *sthite*. Again, in perfect contradistinction to *lokādhiṣṭhānam*, “earth (‘this’ place)-upholding, abides”, we find Tārā abides within the destroying element, fire; *jvālā*, “blazing”.¹²⁶

This wraps it up except for one tiny note. Upon first perceiving this private arrangement of contradistinctions emplaced in the 21-Verse Greeting by Buddha Vairocana, my assumption was that concealment was a consideration. Alexis Sanderson explains the reason, “A redactor will tend to revise the text he is incorporating, especially when he is taking it from the corpus of another religion, since then he must take care to remove all that would betray its origin.” However, framed square in between fire oblations:

*vihāyasagatir jyotiḥ surucir hutabhug vibhuḥ
ravir virocanaḥ sūryaḥ savitā ravilocanaḥ...94*

ananto hutabhug bhoktā.....95

O Tārā! He has encircled His name. He has left us a calling card. Kilroy was here. This is precisely why the word-and-image of *hutabhug* was selected for the Greeting, even though, unstretched and ending in a consonant, it throws the meter off, foreshortening it (the count nonetheless remaining correct at eight syllables).

¹²⁶ And see LSS 27:2; *jvālāmālinikākṣipta-vahni-prākāra-madhyagā*, (Lalitā) “(within) scattered fiery-beads (borne by horse or chariot MW into the) abode of fire, (is in) this fortress’ center.” Murthy, p.65. notes that this “suggests the place of *Śrī Lalitā* at the center of *Śrī-Chakra*.” *Jvālāmālinikā* is one of the *nitya devī*, “eternal goddesses,” of the lunar mansions in astrology, both Hindu and especially Jain. *vahni trikoṇa* names the upward-pointing ‘male’ triangles, representing Lord Śiva and inner fire. Tārā, in the next line of Verse 13), ‘on foot’ in the contradistinction of *ālīḍha*, “archer’s stance” quite cheerfully *ripu-cakra-vināśini*. Commentators have had a problem explaining “adversary *cakra*”. Here is a solution offered. We have not a ‘directed malevolent attack’ as in Verse 7)’s *para-yantra*. Rather, Buddha Vairocana is declaiming this greatest of the Hindu *cakras*. Two birds, one stone, times two. Call it a quadruple *entendre*. The afore noted (n. 109) royal Śrīvijayan Telaga Batu stele inscription, crowned with a seven-headed protective *naga*, offers counter-curses against threats that employ the use of various tools of magic, including *śrī yantra* among bowls of blood, potent herbs, *mantra*, ‘eye of newt’, etc. This cannot, of course, confirm the premise that Buddha Vairocana’s “inimical” *cakra* is *śrī yantra* specifically, but it certainly is suggestive. For a concise, poetic description of *śrī cakra* see *ananda lahari*, verse 11). The ‘standard interpretation’ of *ripucakra* is well-expressed by Barzin, “circle of foes”.

In *śrī guru gītā*, the word *tāarakam* is used three times:

<i>guru pādodakam samyak saṅsārāṇava tāarakam...13</i>	compare Verse 15)
<i>gurur viśveśvaraḥ sākṣāt tāarakam brahma niścitam....16</i>	compare Verse 6)
<i>tāarakam sarvadā'padbhyaḥ śrīguruṃ praṇamāmyaham...43</i>	compare Verse 11)

Quik pix: to cheerfully contradict my own evidence for the reading *sukulākule* in Verse 9), we have praise-names 137 and 138 from the later listings in *lalitā sahasranāmam* given as *nirākarā nirākulā* "undifferentiated, unruffled"¹²⁷ (conveniently located in the quatrain containing *nirantarā*, see n. 121) to which Tārā, quite contradistinctorily, just so happens, Herself, to be *svakarākule*. Oh, there is more...

The one word that most frequently describes Tārā's capabilities in our behalf in the Greeting gives Her capacity as a dispeller and destroyer of various evils; to wit, *nāśini*. Five times: it concludes Verse 15), then Verses 18) through 21), this not counting *vināśini* in Verses 8) and 13). Within the highly alliterative and beautifully braided list of Lalitā's Names in the *sahasranāma* a great culmination is reached in the quatrain comprising couplets 56) and 57)¹²⁸ with the naming of Tripura Sundarī. Approaching this; the two quatrains immediately following the one noted that gives *nirākarā nirākulā**nitya buddhā...nirantarā* in this most powerful portion of the *nāmaskāra* read:

niṣkāraṇa niṣkalaṅka nirupadhi(r)-nirīśvarā
nīrāgā rāgamathanī nirmadā madanāśini...46
niścintā nirahaṅkāra nirmohā mohanāśini
nirmamā mamatāhantrī niśpāpā pāpanāśini...47

niṣkrodhā krodhaśamani nirlobhā lobhanāśini
niḥsaṃśayā saṃśayaghñī nirbhavā bhavanāśini...48
nirvikalpā nirābādā nirbhedā bhedanāśini
nirnāśā mrtyumathanī niṣkriyā niṣparigrahā...49

Nothing is precisely purloined from these six in a row with the modulated motif of *nāśini*. However, Buddha Vairocana just could not resist. Opening couplet 54) the Names given are:

mahārūpā mahāpūjyā mahāpātaka-nāśinisee Greeting Verse 15)!

"Let's Dance" by Chris Montez, for whom the Beatles (see Crickets) opened in 1963, was one of the freshest and most joyfully inspiring songs of the early Sixties. Its backbone is the chorus line "The Twist", by Chubby Checker (see 'Fats Domino'), "The Stomp", by that greatest of all songwriters, the one-and-only Trad, and "The Mashed Potatoes", by Dee Dee Sharp, "too; any ol' dance that you wanna do. Let's dance!" No matter that it was 'derivative'! It is a great song! So, in a far larger sense, is the Tārā Greeting! Singer-songwriters do not live in a vacuum. "There is," someone once said in Hebrew a long time ago, "Nothing new under the sun." The Sanskrit for that is *pratīyasamutpāda*.

The larger premise here is that Buddha Vairocana's moment was essentially contemporaneous with the emergence of *lalitā sahasranāma stotram*. Best guess: late sixth century or early seventh, for the both. In terms of written testimony to Tārā's devotion within Buddhism, only Her mantra, *om tāre tuttāre ture svāhā*, is decidedly older. As to its origin, nothing is known.

¹²⁷ Tr. by Murthy, op. cit., p. 78.

¹²⁸ See *Siddha Stotra Mālā*, pp. 28-9.

This borrowing is endless. Especially popular combinations are lifted directly:

durlabho durgamo durgo.....83...vss.

durlabhā durgamā durgā.....50...lss.

Others are hunt-and-peck, poke around, pick-and-choose:

atīndriyo mahāmāyo mahotsāho mahābalaḥ //.....18
mahābudhir mahāvīryo mahāśaktir mahādyutih//.....19...vss.

mahāmāyā mahāsattvā mahāśaktir mahāratih //.....54
mahābhogā mahaiśvara mahāvīrya mahābalā/
mahābuddhi mahāsiddhi mahāyogeśvareśvari //.....55...lss.

From a Buddhist song, *pīṭhastavaḥ*, we have Verse 2), Line 2), describing *gaṇapati* as:

devaputraṃ mahāvīryam mahābalamparākramam

“The Lord’s (i.e Śiva’s) son, such great courage, bulk and strength; prepared to stomp foes.”

Here, the secondary meaning “bulk” helps describe our elephant-lord, but not so for Lalitā, we certainly hope. *vīrya* and *bala* go together, “brave” and “strong”.

And from the same song lines like:

cāmuṇḍā caṇḍikā caṇḍī pracaṇḍasurasundari / caṇḍaṭṭahāsā caṇḍakṣī pracaṇḍacaṇḍanāśini /9:1-2

This is an example of what Godefroy de Blonay, referring to the Greeting and the 108 Names of Tārā, seeming somewhat less than enthralled, has called, “a litany of colourless epithets easily transferred from one divinity to another” and Steve Beyer, more cheerfully disposed, “pyrotechnic virtuosity in the handling of stock metaphor”.¹²⁹ Beyer comments, “...scant literary merit from the Western point of view.” *Syād vād*. Hard to take a head count: *lalitā sahasranāma* is, odds on it, the most popular *sahasranāma* in India. To acknowledge the stock of stock metaphor, it comes from good stock. It has not the cylindrical swirl and swift intricacies of *ananda lahari*, for it is a weave of words, a great orchard, crafted rows, not a wave.

The mnemonic keys are internal rhyme and heavy alliteration, carefully planned, with all the room in the world, a thousand names. From the outset of the listing of attributes after Lalitā defeats Baṇḍāsura, effective translation to the meter for song becomes close to impossible. Here, in a conversation between Lord Bhairava the Big-rig Driver and Hayagrīva the Hitchhiker, is how it works from the Country-and-Western point of view:

¹²⁹De Blonay, pp. xi-x; Beyer, p. 59. Enough pandits exhort the necessity for contemplating and coming to an understanding of each named attribute; not just memorizing your passage; that one can perceive that there is a real problem with this: that it is the culminations, combinations and congruences of the sounds alone that seem to produce the result desired. We may call this state *avidyānanda*, “ignorance is bliss”: ‘spun-out bliss-ninny basket-case space-cadet; knows every set.’ This is not *mokṣa* but it alliterates well.

"I've been to Moree, Taree, Jerilderie, Bambaroo
 Toowoomba, Gunnedah, Caringbah, Woolloomooloo
 Dalveen, Tamborine, Engadine, Jindabyne
 Lithgow, Casino, Brigalow and Narromine
 Megalong, Wyong, Tuggerawong, Wangarella
 Morella, Augathella, Brindabella, I'm the fella'
 I've been everywhere, man. I've been everywhere"...Geoff Mack (1959)/Lucky Starr (1962), Australia

"Yes, but have you been to...
 Pittsburg, Parkersburg, Gravelburg, Colorado
 Ellensburg, Rexburg, Vicksburg, Eldorado
 Larrimore, Atmore, Haverstraw, Chattanika
 Chaska, Nebraska, Alaska, Opelika
 Baraboo, Waterloo, Kalamazoo, Kansas City
 Sioux City, Cedar City, Dodge City, what a pity!
 I've been everywhere....".....adapted for America by Hank Snow; rec. Johnny Cash, Lynn Anderson....

The *stotram* includes a *dhyānam*: visualize Oodnadatta Road or if in America substitute a road with the same conditions and number of syllables, Winnemucca. Now multi-lineage and multi-lingual, the tradition has been incorporated into New Zealand, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Alaska, and Scotland (Wikipedia).

Tārā, Herself, by way of example, has kicked around a bit at *meru*, *mandāra* and *kailasa*, famous trio of mountains. Later on Gaṇapati (*i.e.* Gaṇeṣa) just went tearing up the same slopes and peaks:

*meru-mandāra-kailāsa-taṭa-kūṭa-prabhedaṇaḥ*¹³⁰/.....31.....*vyapohana stava* from *liṅga pūraṇa*

As for this author: Road rage, just once. An internationally acclaimed interpreter of *mādhyamaka*, David Seyfort Ruegg informs us that a pair of words that describe Lalitā also show up describing Prajñāpāramitā in Her *stotra*. She is, "beyond dichotomizing conception (*nirvikalpa*) and discursive development (*niṣprapañca*)." ¹³¹ This is intellectual slobber. She is "changeless" and "transcendent". A couple couplets later, look: *na paśyantyantaram sāntaścandra-candrikayoriva*, "To not behold within its fold the tranquil moon as moonlight's mould" which, sublime 'though it be, is not changeless and transcendent, certainly not 'beyond dichotomizing conception'. So what! It is a song! There is the old philosopher's fantasy of the pretty young lady who can keep up with Schopenhauer (I kant): The Greek Sophia just like Prajñāpāramitā of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Couliano (p. 17) quotes Ibn Arabi, "Now this

¹³⁰ There is a vast *double entendre* here, way off the subject, that is too much fun to not note: The word *prabheda*, in addition to its common usage, "rip-snortin' wrathful" also identifies, during the period of the Asian bull elephant called *musth*, from the Persian for "drunken", when its testosterone levels go off the map and it can go berserk in a flash; a black, oily fluid which swells into and exudes from the temples runs down the cheeks and into the mouth and tastes horrible. The elephant's temples, themselves, are called *kaṭa*. Upon these, this *prabheda* "spreads over", *tata*. [*taṭa*, "slope"; *kūṭa*, "peak", *prabhedaṇaḥ*, "tearing up".]

¹³¹ Potter, ed., p. 236, [and *niravadyā* and *nirlepā* and *nirañjanā*] For the text of *prajñāpāramitāstotram*, see Pandeya, p. 126). Which came first, LSS or PPS? The author-designate of PPS, Rāhulabhadra, is associated as either the teacher or the student of Nāgārjuna, whose date, and even singularity, ranging over possible centuries, is subject to ongoing debate, completely outside of this writer's ken. *mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* skirts the issue by claiming he lived for 600 years.

sheik had a daughter...slender and willowy...scholarly and pious". Ruegg proves the point. Eugenius' Thalia, bless Her anyway, gives voice to the abtruse metaphysics of alchemy in Philalathes' waking dream. Buddha Vairocana's Greeting to Tārā is not of this ilk.

Here: There is the story of the lama and the snitty young monk who asked him, "What is full realization?"

The lama answered, "(Such-and-Such)."

Awhile later the lama asked the kid the same question. He parroted back, "Such-and-such!"

The lama said, "That's not it at all!"

The monk exclaimed, "But that's what you just said!"

The lama replied, "When I said it, I was right. The way you say it, you're wrong."

To the Rueggs of the world: I will refrain from translating philosophies. You steer clear of songs.

Cross-religion pilfering of course works in both directions. It has long since been pointed out that *bhavānī sahasranāma stotram*, appended to *rudrayāmala*, has incorporated Buddhist deities:

prajñā pāramitāprajñā tārā....11

It has not been pointed out that *bhavānī sahasranāma stotram* has also incorporated Buddhist phraseology; specifically, the words of Buddha Vairocana's famous fifteenth stanza, here reworked into the *opening* lines:

om mahāvidyā jaganmātā mahālaksmī śivapriyā

viṣṇumāyā śubhā śāntā...

trailokyanātha vaktrābja

The observations that follow here will be a tough call for those who take this as an appellation of *avalokiteśvara* on faith. The 'obvious' equation of *trailokyanātha* with *avalokiteśvara* provided by Sūryagupta and assumed by all is not assured.

The most noteworthy example of *trailokyanātha* found elsewhere in Buddhist literature (a rare occurrence)¹³² comes in the interspersed title line of *dhvajāgra-keyurā-dhāraṇī* which invokes the wrathful protection of Goddess "Ring atop a banner-upper arm bracelet MW". Verhagen¹³³ translates Her name, "Shoulder-ornament of the Top of the Victory Banner". Her incorporated *dhyānam* gives Her four arms, heads and implements. She is described as *lambodare*, "O, pot-bellied one!" Chandra, listing Her name as the 104th of 108 Names of Lokeśvara, p. 41, offers an illustration from a Korean hymnal in which She appears auspiciously (one gentle head, two arms) proceeding with Her standard, p. 154. Translated into Tibetan in the 9th century, this *dhāraṇī* has become popular on prayer flags¹³⁴, banners-that-they-are.

The *dhāraṇī* commences *namo ratnatrayāya*, "Praise the Three Gems", and, indeed, later in the *dhāraṇī*-proper all three, *buddha*, *dharma* and *saṃgha* are asserted to be *satyena*, "instruments of truth". The closing line opens, *buddhāvalokite rakṣa rakṣa mama* ("to buddhāvalokite, devotion, devotion, my") *bhagavāvalokite svāhā* in very much the same sense that prayers addressing and adoring the Virgin Mary are recited *pro forma* to accord with doctrine "in the name of Christ Jesus". Within the Roman Catholic Church there are those whose primary practice is Adoration of the Virgin. This aberration, titled Mariolatry, is considered a 'deviation' and is tolerated. It cannot be declared a heresy outright because it is too well-insinuated and too widespread in the heartland, southern France and northern Spain. Throughout Mexico and the American Southwest She is adored as the Virgin of Guadalupe. Those few Tārā practitioners (the author included) lately inhabiting these regions will frequently have altars seen to sport (*vibhūṣite*) Her starry, green-robed image printed colorfully around a glass candle-container.

¹³² also find it buried in the middle of *lokeśvarastotram*, again from Pandeya, p. 200; sixth stanza in no special context, *trailokyanāthamamarairapi*; and see *gaṇḍīstavaḥ*, attributed to Āryadeva, 3rd cen. CE, p. 62, line 13, *buddhaṃ trailokyanāthaṃ suranaranamitam*; then skip to *vajrasattvastotram*, p. 218, which lifts this selfsame line one letter shy of intact (as well the next three lines, 14 through 16, perhaps 'quoting', by way of the layout), later offering *namastāre ture vīre tuttāre bhayanāśini / ture sarvātūre kāle svāhākāraṃ namāmyaham //*, being a variation upon the 'short version' of the Greeting, compare Willson, p. 121; then flip back to *mahābodhi-vandanāṣṭakam*, p. 136, and read *trailokyanātham varabodhiratnam*, "precious wisdom jewel" in the fifth stanza; then *ratnamālāstotram*, p. 172, this being dedicated to *lokeśvara*, for *trailokyanāthamasasam* "unequaled" in the 10th couplet; and *śrīśāradāṣṭakastrotram*, p. 238, dedicated to "autumn" (a lady's name; *Sarasvatī*, on Her lotus floating downstream, *kamala-patra*), in the 8th and final couplet, *trailokyanāthauditārkasama*, "shining attractively". Overall, we have a mixed bag here. Lord Viṣṇu is named *trailokya nāthāya* in the powerful healing *dhānvantari mantra*. The one consistently considered *trailokyanātha* is Prince Vardhamāna, patriarch and consolidator of the competition, who in valiant combat vanquished *saṃsāra*; thus His title, Mahāvīra; the One Victorious, the Jain. There might be something to it, *syād vād*.

¹³³ Verhagen, *Expressions of Violence...*, pp. 277-8.

¹³⁴ of *lung-ta*, "the windhorse"; *ibid*.

But I digress. The line in the *dhāranī*-proper that is of concern here is:

*dhvajāgra keyure tiṣṭhat tiṣṭhat triṣṭha ulkā dhāraṇi trailokyanātha vidhvaṃśaya para sainya...*¹³⁵

“O! Standard-bearing One! Come here! Stay here! Tear it up! Just flare! Hold the Line¹³⁶! O, Three-world’s Ruler! Destroy the opposing legions!...”

We have the direct association of *trailokyanātha* with *dhāraṇi*, named *dhvajāgra keyurā*. Somewhat later is recited an exhortation to action (*kuṭṭa...kuṭṭaya*) and a list of adoring (*mānaya*) dieties:

lambodhari kuṭṭa kuṭṭa kuṭṭya kuṭṭya rudra mānaya viṣṇu mānaya candra surya mānaya trailokya ādhi patya mānaya sarva devo mānaya sarva yakṣa rākṣasa ghandarva kinnara mahoraga mānaya...

Here we find apparent synonym *trailokya ādhipatya* demoted to devotee of the ‘pot-bellied one’ along with *rudra* and the rest. *trailokyanātha*, given prominent placement in this *dhāranī*, is not directly associated with *buddhāvalokita*, even as ample opportunity to do so is manifestly present.

trailokyanātha is a generic term. Let it be said: sex unspecified.

In the case of *dhvajāgrakeyurā dhāranī*....

And in the case of *ekaviṃśatistotram*....

“By the light, by the light of the silvery moon.”

-Edward Madden

Only in Sūryagupta’s commentaries upon the Greeting (by then, Praises) and in many of the latter-day, post 11th century Tibetan commentaries following does Avalokiteśvara have a “lotus face”. The popular *avalokiteśvarastavaḥ* composed by Candrakāntā Bhikṣuṇī (Ven. Lady Moonstone)¹³⁷ in all the detail of *kesadī padām*, with ethereal luminosity, has this most beneficent diety being praised in the three worlds *bhuvanatraya-vandita*. We find His aspect white like a conch or snow, a golden lotus adorning his left hand, lotus-eyed, with arms spread like a lotus pond, lotus petal skin, standing upon a lotus. From Pandeya’s compilation, the second half of the first couplet in the third stanza reads:

śaśi-bimba-samujjvala-pūrṇa-mukham

hare-moon(disc)-shining-full-face

Blessings. The entirety of Tibet has been misled by Sūryagupta’s improvised, assumptive, unresearched, off-the-cuff commentaries, however adoring and well-intended they may have been. In Verse 8) of the Greeting it is surely Tārā who has a here wrathful *vaktrābja*, “lotus face”.

¹³⁵ Transliteration supplied by Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, Nepal. Sponsor: University of the West, Rosmead, California, Proof reader: Milan Shakya. Verhagen, *ibid.*, gives a partially overlapping excerpt from what appears to be a slightly different recension, with: *bhāñja bhāñja | parasainyam vidhvaṃśaya | sarvaśatru nāśaya | dhvajāgrakeyūre | ...Break, break! Destroy the enemy, annihilate each foe, oh Dhvajāgrakeyūrā!* (tr. Verhagen). The end of the line preceeding the one cited here reads *...bhāñja bhāñja sarva śatruṇām |*

¹³⁶ This *double entendre* is as literal as I can make it. *dhāraṇi* stems from the root *dhṛ* “to hold” and , itself, means “a line, a row”. Alternately, “Bear these words!”.

¹³⁷ Pandeya, p. 35. Mitra, cat. entry, p.175, appended to a Nepali manuscript. entitled *paramārthanāma sañgīti* “Sacred song of highest praise”, recovered by Hodgson, undated.

Buddha Vairocana was most conversant with the Hindu songbook. Where else in the literature do we find *vaktrābja*? From the paramount text of all Śaktism, the *devī māhātmyam*, the *caṇḍi pāṭha*, seven hundred verses to *ma durgā*; Chapter 11), Verse 2), the Goddess having defeated the demons utterly, the devas questioning and praising Her (here fierce Kātyāyani) are all smiles “blooming with cheer” ...

.....*kātyāyanim tuṣṭuvarīṣṭa lābād vikāsi vaktrābja vikāśitaśa*//

... just *vikāsa* ...lil’ kitty tracks...

kurukullā

Among the most popular of all wrathful goddesses in Vajrayāna, often associated with Tārā, in *sādhana* as *tārodbhava*, “Tārā arising (as)”, we find Kurukullā in *thangka* poised in archer’s stance, stark naked but for a belt-and-sash of tiger skin buckled with severed heads, scarlet flowered arrow knocked, bow drawn taut, wearing a tiara of matched skulls, blood red, bristling with energy and bewitching everyone in sight with Her fiery, fierce, fixed, three-eyed stare.

In *lalitopakhyana* she bears no resemblance to this at all. She, as is Tārā, is captain of a flotilla of small śakti-powered craft, here rowing about *vimarśa vāpikā*, “Reflecting Lake”¹³⁸, appearing “dark like the *Tamāla* tree and wears a dark bodice”, as rendered by Shastri, or “dark of hue, wearing blue armor”, as Natha has more recently translated. Shastri gives the devanāgarī, here transliterated, *tamāla-śyāmalā-kārā* ° *śyāmam-kacuka-dhāriṇī*. She is “powerful”, Shastri gives us the vocabulary choice, with an “ever-increasing intoxication, or exhilaration”.¹³⁹ Called upon, come here, line three: *devī kurukulleti*.

At the mid-point in between Tārā’s *prākāra* (Natha giving synonym *sāla*) and Kurukullā’s, we find, “the Buddhi Sāla [Compound Focus]...*ānanda vāpikā* [Bliss Lake]...the sheen [of which] is golden. Here also there are swans...[and] śakti maidens...Their chief is Vāruṇi Devī herself, who sits on a magnificent boat of gems surrounded by her hand maids watching the movements of the myriads of other boats moving on the lakes, as in the case of Tārāmbā on the Mānasa Lake. One look from this three-eyed Devī will enchant all and make them tipsy as if drunk. Red and effulgent as the sun with blushing cheeks, suffused with blood, with [crimson] *parijata* [coral bush] flowers in her hair, and looking into the eyes of her Lord who is ever ready to please her, she spends her time in Japa [mantra repetition].” (tr. Natha).

In keeping with the red theme here, the *prākāra* next inside Kurukullā’s, *sūrya bimba*, “sun disc” *māyā prākāra*, presided over by Mārtaṇḍa “Sun-lord” Bhairava¹⁴⁰ and illuminated by the sun, has for its backdrop ruby-red *kuruvinda* flowers.

Mix’n’match. Just passing through. Blessings.

¹³⁸ See note 109). Same words, different translation. Translation is fun. ‘Mirror Lake’. Reflect upon that (with your mind).

¹³⁹ Shastri, pp. 6-7.

¹⁴⁰ Often associated: e.g. *śrī bhairava tāra jaga tāraṇī*, -*Durgā Chālīsā*.

Compiled Transliteration of the Twenty-one Verse Greeting

This transliteration is a personal attempt to reconstruct the original text. It may not supply the 'popular' readings, some of which are contra-indicated by the context, nor necessarily reflect the best of certain (disputable) constraints of grammar or *sandhi*. All variants which I feel need to remain in consideration will be noted below. All words and breaks appear in some combination of existing texts.

namastāre ° ture ° vīre ° kṣaṇadyuti-nibhekṣaṇe
trailokyanātha-vaktrābja-vikasatkesarodbhave...1

namaḥ ° śataśarac(1)candra-saṃpūrṇa-paṭalānane
tārā ° sahasra-nikara(2)-prahasatkiraṇōjjvale...2

namaḥ ° kanaka-nīlābja-pāṇipadma-vibhūṣite
dāna-vīrya-tapaḥ-kṣānti-titikṣā-dhyāna-gocare...3

namastathāgatōṣṇīṣa-vijayānanta-cāriṇī
āśeṣa-pāramitā-prāpta ° jina-putra-niṣevite...4

namastuttāra-hūṃkāra-pūritāśā-digantare
sapta-loka-kramākrānta ° aśeṣākaraṣaṇa-kṣaṇe(3)...5

namaḥ ° śakrānala-brahma-marud-viśveśvarārcite
bhūta-vetāla-ghandarva-gaṇa-yakṣa-puraskṛte...6

namastra-tri-tri-phaṭkāra ° para-yantra-pramardani(4)
pratyālīḍha-pādanyāse ° śikhi-jvālā-kulojvale(5)...7

namasture ° mahāghore ° māra-vīra-vināśini
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-vaktrābja-sarva-śatru(6)-niṣūdini...8

namastriratna-mudrāṅka ° hṛdyāṅguli-vibhūṣite
bhūṣitāśeṣa-dik-cakra-nikara ° sukulākule(7)...9

namaḥ ° pramuditāṭopa-mukuṭākṣipta-sāriṇī
hasat-prahasat-tuttāre ° māra-loka(8)-vaśāṅkari(9)...10

namaḥ ° samanta-bhūpāla-paṭalākaraṣaṇa-kṣaṇe(10)
cala(11)-bhṛkuṭī-hūṃkāra ° sarvāpada-vimocini(12)...11

namaḥ-śikaṇḍa-khaṇḍēndu-mukuṭābharaṇōjvale(13)
amitābha-jaṭā-bhāra ° bhāsvare ° kiraṇa ° druve...12

namaḥ ° kalpānta-hutabhug-jvālā-mālāntara ° sthite
ālīḍha-muditā(14)baddha-ripu-cakra-vināśini...13

namaḥ ° kara-talā-ghāta-caraṇāhata-bhūtale
bhṛkuṭī-kṛta-hūṃkāra-sapta-pātāla-bhedini(15)...14

namaḥ ° *śive* ° *śubhe* ° *śanté* ° *śānta-nirvāṇa-gocare*
svāhā ° *praṇāmya* ° *saṃyukte* ° *mahāpātaka-nāśini*...15

namaḥ ° *pramuditābaddha-ripugātra* ° *prabhedini*
daśākṣara-pādanyāse(16) ° *vidyā-hūṃkāra-dīpīte*...16

namasture ° *pādāghāta* ° *hūṃkārakāra-jīvite*
meru-mandāra-kailāsa-bhuvanatraya-cālini(17)...17

namaḥ ° *surā-sarākāra-hariṇāṅka-kare* ° *sthite*
hara-dvirukta-phaṭkāra ° *aśeṣa-viṣa*(18)-*nāśini*...18

namaḥ ° *sura-gaṇā-yakṣāsura-kinnara*(19)-*sevite*
ābaddha-mudita-bhoga-kari ° *duḥ-svapna-nāśini*...19

namas-candrārka-saṃpūrṇa(20) ° *nayana-dyuti-bhāsure*(21)
tārā ° *dviruktottāre* (22) ° *viṣamajvara-nāśini*...20

namas-tritattva-vinyāse ° *śivaśakti-samanvite*
graha-vetāla-(23)*yakṣādya-nāśani*(24) ° *pravare* ° *ture*...21

(1) *śāntasara* (2) *vikalpa* (3) *kṣame* (4) *pramardini* (5) *kulojjvale* (6) *duṣṭa* (7) *-svakarākule*

(8) *lola* (9) *bhayaṃkari* (10) *kṣame* (11) *cara* (12) *vimocani* (13) *abharaṇōjjvale* (14) *mudrita*

(15) *nāśini* (16) *pada* (17) *cārini* (18) *vighna* (19) *kiṃnara* (20) *namaḥ* ° *candrārka* ° *saṃpūrṇa-*

(21) *bhāsvare* (22) *dvirukta-tuttāre* (23) *vetāla* ° (24) *nāśini*

English translation for song of *āryatārānamaskaraikaviṣṭatistotram*

Tārā, praise! Be swift! Avail grace! Be lightning quick, just like Your eyes(1)!
Three-world's sovereign! Lotus face! Spring from the corolla, arise!...1

Praise a hundred moons of the autumn night, full-round Your face a panoply.
Stars thousands, gathered in so bright; laughing, beaming, blazing away...2

Praise the blue lotus glowing gold, at hand a lotus showing this:
Splurging- urging- purging takes hold: an all-enduring field of bliss...3

Praise the waves of glory, unceasing; triumphant, crowning Those-thus-gone.
All transcendence releasing to Your service Victor's Sons so drawn...4

Praise *tuttāra hūṃ* calling, filling every corner of space.
Seven realms, so attacked, falling; all quickly(2) coaxed to Your embrace...5

Praise Lords of Sky, the Source and Fire; of Wind, of All; all pray o're You.
Phantoms, vampires, celestial choir; lotsa flocksa yakṣādore You...6

Praise weapon *tri tri phaṭ* hurled true, disrupting (3) designs that turn dire.
Left leg arched, coming down; dance through clustered blāzing points all afire...7

Praise. Be swift! Great in wrath, glowering. Fair maras You'll lay dead'n'still (4).
Every foe slain; Your face flowering into such a glance that could kill...8

Praise the Three-gem sign and seal. Your fingers grace Your heart just right.
Your full gown gathered, the Wheel of Life! Busy Girl! Cut from cloth so bright!...9

Praise the pluming joy, Your array; a crescendo's swell You unroll.
Laughing, just laughing *tuttāre*; evil's haven under control...10

Praise all cosmic keepers of earth, gathered in at Your beck and call.
A tremor knits Your eyebrows, *hūṃ* comes forth to lift the yoke of everyone in thrall...11

Praise the crescent moon, the crown-knot. Your crown bears blazing light.
Amitābha in dreads tied taut; fixed forever, beaming, shining bright...12

Praise You drinking fire at the end of time. Inside a ring of fire You abide.
Right leg arched, joyward bound You climb; hostile turnings(5) swept aside...13

Praise! Palm and sole, strike what's under! With all Your gathered force, it hits.
Fierce, furled eyebrows; *hūṃ* like thunder; seven hells, shattered into bits...14

Praise You! Happy! So blest! Now, rest! With prairie-perfect peace at heart(6)!
Homage and love's fair gift team best. Stumbling blocks come crumbling apart! ...15

Praise You rapt in joy raring up. Every enemy it maims.
Ten-count to footsteps flaring up; *hūṃ*'s truth sending out flames...16

Praise, be swift! The foot strikes hard as hasta. *huṃ* resounds, its life awakes.
Pike's Peak, Denali, Mt. Shasta. The whole triple world shakes...17

Praise, distil the outline of the ocean. You cup the full moon between tides(7).
hara comes twice. *phaṭ* gives motion. Every obstacle(8) subsides...18

Praise, supernal beings serve You singing. Celestial fiddle-pickers start to play.
Bound for joy, Your sustaining yield bringing; bad dreams dissolve away...19

Praise the moon the sun so full in array, the splendor of Your eyes shining bright.
tārā twice, then *tuttāre* puts flocks of fever to flight...20

Praise the Triune Truth You connect! *śivaśakti*'s Your middle name!
Grabbers, ghoul, goblins right now checked! *Tārā*! Hurry here! Supreme!...21

- (1) or *d'après* Wayman: 'A twinkling flash'. (2) if *kṣame* then 'calmly'. (3) lit. 'crushing down'.
(4) lit. 'reduce to nil'. (5) or *d'après* Barzin: 'circling foes'; perhaps metaphor, "spinning wheels".
(6) if *nirmāṇa* (see Hodgson Ms. 6), then "transforming peace/...meet their surcease".
(7) lit. 'the full moon in your hand, abides'. (8) f. *vighna*; if *viṣa*, then "kind of poison".

The customary couplet colophon that commences Verse 22), which is the last line chanted in most Tibetan *sādhanas*, recapitulates the situation: *matramūlam idaṃ stotram namaskāraikaviṃśakam*, “mantra-root(s), this (these) verses (of) greeting, twenty-one, yes”.

The list requests sincere devotion, offering insight in return, and enlightenment. It opens auspiciously with wisdom but ends ignominiously with wealth, eliminating sin along the way, no trappings of *samsara*, no fear, no suffering, and for the womenfolk promotes successful childbirth. This is a well-intended, contrived formula. It has been copied idiosyncratically. There are variants. Not only are the couplets independent of each other and fully interchangeable, but in the texts of GD/LC the order has been, as de Blonay notes between his two texts, completely scrambled. There are none of Buddha Vairocana’s signature locatives.

Here is Wayman’s text with (only) vocabulary variants from Darmadra’s Pack and Pandeya noted:

yaḥ paṭhet(1)-prasanna(2)-dhiman(3) devyam bhakti-samanvitah...22

*sāyaṃ vā pratar-utthāya smaret-sarvābhaya pradam
sarva-pāpa-praśamanaṃ sarva-durgati nāśanam(4)...23*

*abhiṣikto bhavet-tūrṇaṃ saptabhir-jina-koṭibhiḥ
(5)asmin-mahattvam āpadya(6) so’nte bauddha(7)-padaṃ vrajeta(8)...24*

*viṣaṃ tasya mahāghoraṃ sthāvaram vātha(9) jaṅgamam
smaraṇāt-pralayaṃ(10)-yāti khāditam pītam-eva vā...25*

*graha-jvara(11)-viṣārtināṃ paramārti(12)-vināśānām
anyeṣāṃ caiva sattvānām dvi-tri-saptā 13)-bhivarttinām(14)...26*

*putra-kāmo labhet-putraṃ dhana(15)-kāmo labhed-dhanam
sarva-kāmānavāpnoti na vighnaiḥ pratihanyate...27*

(1) paṭhet JY (2) prayato MW, JY, VJ; prātaḥ/prāyataḥ JP (3) himan JY (4) nasam LW

(5) māsamātreṇa caivāsau sukhaṃ JP (6) āsādyā MW, JY, AL, VJ

(7) vrauva? JY, noting, “last quarter unintelligible” (& see n. 47), buddha VJ

(8) prajeta LW (9) catha JP, vastha AL, VJ (10) smaraṇāna padaṃ JP (11) jola/jāla JP

(12) parastri JP (13) dvisaptama JP (14) vinasanat VJ (15) ghana JP

Here, by way of contrast, is de Blonay's transliteration; Chandra's text in agreement:

yaḥ paṭhet prāyaśo dhīmān devyā bhaktisamanvitaḥ...22

*so yaṃ vā prātar utthāya smaret sarvābhayapradam
sarva-pāpa-praśamanam sarva-durgati-nāśanam...23*

*abhisiktobhaya tūrṇam asmin mahattām āsādyā
viṣam tasya mahāghoram smaraṇāt pralayam yānti...24*

*grahajvala-viṣārtānām anyeṣām caiva satvānām
putrakāmo labhet putram sarvakāmān avāpnoti...25*

*saptabhir jinakoṭibhiḥ so nte bauddhapadam vrajet
sthāvaram vātha jaṅgamam sād idam pīdam eva ca...26*

*paramārti-vināśanam dvitrsaptābhivartinām
dhanakāmo labhed dhanam na vighnaiḥ pratihanyate...27*

There are few variants. The readings *prāyaśo* (=prayato) from Verse 22) and *āsādyā* (=āpadya) from Verse 24b to 24c may be noted. Ending Verse 24), *yānti* replaces *yāti* from Verse 25c). Opening Verse 25), the reading *grahajvala* replaces *grahajvara* from Verse 26a) in the Pack exactly as *visamajvala* replaces *vsamajvara* in Verse 20), indicating a 'branch', which then grew a bad 'limb', *grahajola(jala)*, in Pandeya's text. In Verse 26d), *sād idam pīdam eva ca* replaces *khāditam pītam eva vā* from Verse 25d), which change appears to be oral miscommunication.

As to the reordering of the verses, at first glance no pattern emerges. Assume Darmadra's Pack in order with four half-couplets per verse, beginning with Verse 24), where the confusion enters in:

24) 1 2 3 4	then locate	24) 1 9 2 10	now align the verses	24) 1 9
25) 5 6 7 8	de Blonay/	25) 3 11 4 12	vertically, in pairs;	2 10
26) 9 10 11 12	Chandra's	26) 5 13 6 14	(which form <i>stotram</i>	25) 3 11
27) 13 14 15 16	placement :	27) 7 15 8 16	do take):	4 12
				26) 5 13
				6 14
				27) 7 15
				8 16

Read down the columns. It is some kind of cut-and-paste operation; origami, refolding the lotus. It obviously works in either direction. A *thyāsaphu*, a Nepali folding book (accordion-style, called *leparello* in the west) may have been involved at some point in the transmission. These small books, notes Min Bahadur Shakya of the Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, "are mainly employed in circumstances requiring ease of use, such as various rituals, Dhārani recitation and the singing of Stotra or hymns."

tārā-mūla-mantra-sāra

A Speculation

Here is an hypothesis upon the origin of the word *tuttāre*. Sanskrit words are often run together. Tārā's *mantra* run together would appear *om̐tāretuttāreturesvāhā*. Visualize Tārā "from on high, still higher", *uttara*, much in the sense of *parā[-śakti]*. Speak the *mantra* with *sandhi*, thus, *om̐tāre(t)uttāreturesvāhā*.¹⁴¹ However, it would be written so that the flourish of the opening vowel *u* shrinks to a lower curlicue hooked upon the now-added consonant *t* to read *-tu-*. With the quite common conjunct, *-tā-*, stretched, following, the orthography misleads.

The coupling *tārām uttāra locanām*, "Tārā, from on high, the eyes"; late, 11th Cen. (see Part 2, n. 28) gives a proximate usage, here in the accusative, which eliminates the need for *sandhi*. The stretched *ā* in *uttāra* is problematical, possibly (and easily) oral transmission. It is the vowel that one naturally wants to stretch in the line, with stretched *tārām* preceding for impetus. De Blonay translates *uttāra* "des yeux dont saillent les pupilles", perhaps following Kielhorn, whose article in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XVII this writer has not been able to peruse (neither William Hoey's version in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXI, Part 1, Extra No., p. 60 ff.).¹⁴² MW defines, "an eye from which the pupil is taken out". The (solitary) reference given by MW comes from *bhāgavata purāṇa*, 6.14.46, describing a dead child, eyes turned upward under the lids, only the whites showing. However, Huet defines *uttāra*, "traversée; délivrance", among other entries less common and less applicable. Without the vowel stretch, *uttara*, this vast word's primary meaning is "(still) higher (yet)" with a variety of applications. It is extremely doubtful that Tārā, whose name, single-stretched as *tāra*, may in certain contexts mean "pupil of the eye"; would be missing said pupil in an epigraph extolling Her attributes with adoration. The one thing that Tārā does *not* do is 'turn a blind eye'. The brief Sikh song/prayer Japji Sahib, Pauri 1 (of 38) gives in the second line *liv taar*, with the note from SikhWiki, "*liv...absorbition, deep meditation, devotion; adoration, love, desire; constant repetition (of God's name)..."taar...fixity' usually as in liva tara 'unbroken adoration' or locana tara 'the eyes (maintain their) fixed look'.*" In Vajrayāna Buddhism Goddess Locanā is associated with or assimilated into Mother Tārā, which seems entirely natural. The pupil centers the eye, absorbs the incoming imagery.

Evidence for the plausibility of this reading of the *mantra* includes Verse 5) from the Greeting where *tuttāra hūṃ* fills all space, being *digantara*, from points inside the same neighborhood (i.e. *antara*, *uttara*) and Verse 10) where the laugh of *tuttāre* would seem to form or stream (*sāriṇi*) in joy (*pramudita*) and, swelling forth (*atopa*), emerges, being cast outward (*akṣipta*) from the crown (*mukuta*), high up there.

How would Tārā's *mantra* then translate, hypothetically? "Peace. Tārā. From on High. Hurry. Homage." Incorporated in the meaning, following Huet; "from on high, deliver/transport (me/us)".

The combination *tāre...ture* is by no means unique to Tārā's *mantra* and the Greeting. We find it thus, here in the ablative, *apādāna*, "to take away, remove, 'to bleed off'", in the sweet Hindi prayer to Ma Ganges, the *ārti gaṅgā*:

Verse 4), concluding line 2: *turata tārata sukha son.....swiftly carry me away into delight...*

¹⁴¹ e.g. *hasa(t)prahasat-tuttāre*. This is intriguing, plausibly indicative. Drop the spare *t*: *hasa(t)prahasa(t)tuttāre*.

¹⁴² De Blonay omits from his translation that portion of the line following that reads *girvānavāninām*.

Under the wire, just received direct from an angel at Oxford, this brief emendation, being translations and footnotes photocopied from the papers of Kielhorn and Hoey. In a note to the Journal (June, 1895, p. 176) Kielhorn communicated and commended Dr. Hoey's effort, *Set Mahet*, but gave a slightly faulted bibliographical reference (see above) which should read [Extra No. 1892.]; and should have begun a page or two prior. Page 60) presents the second half of the devanāgarī and commences translation. The introduction (?) and the lines needed on page 59) were not

Kielhorn's transliteration, with a dash here substituting the circumflex used throughout, is:

Saṃsār(5) -āmbōdhi-tārāya Tārām=uttāra-lōchanām /
vandē girvāṇa-vāṇinām Bhāratīm=adhidēvatām //

(5) Metre, Śloka (Anuṣṭubh).

His translation and note (p. 63) are:

"To cross the ocean of worldly existence, I adore the saving Bhāratī, whose eyes have protruding pupils, (21) the goddess presiding over the attendance of the gods."

(21) The original contains a play on the word *tāra*; and there is clearly an allusion to the *Tāras*, or wives (*saktis*), of the Dhyāni Buddhas, one of whom is called Lōchanā. See Kern, *ib.* [*Buddhimus*] German Edition, Vol. II, pp. 215 and 216; and *e.g. ante*, Vol. X, p. 187.

Hoey's translation and notes are:

"I invoke the guiding Bhāratī, (5) the deity tutelary of the diction of the gods, whose eyes are superbly brilliant (6) as the stars, to put me o're the ocean of transmigratory life."

(5) Bhāratī is the goddess Sarasvatī. The word rendered 'guiding' is *tārā*, 'one who puts across,' and may be considered as a play on *tārā*, and means 'radiant.' There is a further play on the word as it is the name of a later Buddhist goddess.

(6) *Uttāralochana*: ut + *tāra* + *lochana*, excessively + brilliant (or stars) + eye. This may be also 'eye toward stars,' which would mean 'with eyes turned up to the stars.' If *tārā* be taken as 'pupil of the eye,' *the* meaning would be 'with protruding pupils,' but as this would hardly be complimentary to a mortal, it would be less complimentary to a deity. A play on words may also be detected in the name *lochana*, applied to a Buddhist goddess, but it is too far-fetched to have been contemplated by the author.

De Blonay, adding *Tārā* by name (why not; if *Bhāratīm*, then *Tārām*), otherwise just put Kielhorn's translation into French: "Pour traverser l'océan des existences, j'adore la sauveuse Bhāratī, Tārā, qui a des yeux dont saillent les pupilles, la déesse souveraine de paroles des dieux." Both *Tārām* and *Bhāratīm* belong with the 'accusative', translatable, supplying context, naming no goddess *per se*. No issue, either way the subject is obvious. 'You traverse across,' my wording, might well (after Hoey) express, 'You take us across'. Hoey seems unaware of 'the fierce aspects' with eyeballs popping out of their heads. However, the full of the epigraph here is a laudatory eulogy to the good king. This brief *śloka* admits no other element of wrath, which in-and-of itself is enough to keep the eyes auspiciously secure in their sockets.

For overall protective purposes '*śrī-Sākya -siṃhō...*', the Noble Lion Prince, is invoked in the line preceding, a powerful choice. '*...jagad=vō(bō)dhim prāpya cha* [i.e. *ca*, cf. *lōchanā* above] *Vu(bu)ddhatām=abhigataḥ sa tvām pariṭrāyatām // Samsār...*', 'world, wisdom reached and mind('s)dwelling-place approached; verily, in your (i.e. the king's) behalf, protect!' Note the corresponding dwellings, *buddhatām* and *devatām*. The line to *śrī-Sa-*, where it breaks, reads:

uddharttuṃ yatatē sma yaḥ karuṇaya śrī-Sa-

'To deliver, striving ever; join compassion..., O Pri[ncl]y Lion, (...to the) world,...]' etc.

The respective translations revolve within the *tārāmāla-baddha* (...belt) *abhihāra-brhaspatim/*

Hoey's reading for *uttāra*, applied to my *mūlamantra* interpretation, would render the *mantra* highly superbly reiterative:

"Peace. O Tārā! Brilliant star! Hurry here! Homage."

// śubham //

No one has utilized or referenced the Greeting version contained in this text since before it was obtained in Nepal by Brian Houghton Hodgson. The 1905 *Catalogue* dates it to A.D. 1819, recent at the moment of acquisition, perhaps five years in existence, if this is of the group acquired in 1824. The one who entered it into the *Catalogue*, most likely the redoubtable Arthur Berriedale Keith, plucked its title from the colophon and appears to have miscatalogued it by one page, hitherto unnoticed. The one who microfilmed it in 1985 just turned the pages. It gives me great pleasure to here thank Gillians Evison (Head Librarian) and Grant (Director of Imaging) at the Bodleian Library for making this text available to me. Presented below is its description with notes and commentary.

This text of the Greeting is included without fanfare in a much larger compendium, a songbook in which the songs roll out one after another with a star-burst spacer inked in between entries. Some words are split at a line's or page's end. Some line ends are cramped, occasionally individual letters, also. The text itself, quite neat, appears casual and arrayed at ease. This is an illusion. Crystals are growing from the forest floor. Our Tārā text commences: *Oṃ-namāstārāyaiḥ//namaḥ stāreturevīre*. The line above this line, closing the preceding hymn, centers in the center of the page *mahākāla*, positioned pyramidally, caparisoned archly, perched like a gargoyle:

.....// *Oṃmahākāla*.....
Oṃnāmostārāyaiḥ//namaḥ stāreturevīre.....

mahā- is over *-yaiḥ*, *-kāla* over *nama-*, blocked in tight, planned. This is either arbitrary cleverness or some kind of secret code, "Calling Captain Midnight!", magic in the lazy look of the layout.

There are eight lines per page, written, as the *Catalogue* notes, upon both sides of "thick yellow paper", thus most likely coated with *haritalika*, a preserving paste made from yellow orpiment. The orthography is in an idiosyncratic Rañjanā cursive. The text is clear, only occasionally scuffed, smudged or blotted. The style is brisk, consistent, yet it may become a touch slovenly only to recover, with no pattern, perhaps one reason. Some readings are precise: *śiveśubheśante*; others, not so, *sivasakti*. Those words where precision is required are precisely incised with careful strokes. The nature of what may be 'required' involves prior popularity on the one hand and the copyist's whim on the other. *śiveśubheśante* is an example of the former, even as it is split at line's-end *śi-veśubhe* in the text.

Four lines of text are missing (20b-21a) where a seemingly seamless merge occurs at: *namaḥ ° ścandrārka-sampūrṇa ° sivasakti-samanvite*. Verse 2) also also doubles that *ṇ*; gracefully, by design. Not of import.

There are more than sixty readings at variance with Darmadra's Pack, several of which correspond with or, as will be shown, indicate, other Nepali readings.

As the example of *sivasakti* demonstrates, dentals, cerebrals, and palatals are often confused: *s*, *ṣ*, and *ś*, *t* and *ṭ*, *d* and *ḍ*, *n* and *ṇ*. Verse 2) opens: *namaḥ satasaraścandra*. Verse 3) gives *tiṭikṣa*; Verse 17): *mandala*, not the more accurate *maṇḍala* as we find in GD/LC, which is ruled out, anyway, in favor of Mt. Mandara. Occasionally, to detriment, *r* is dropped. The *mm* and *ṇṇ* do not occlude meaning.

The *l-r* switch incursions are rife. By Verse we have: Verse 2), *patarā*, *kilanojole*. Verses 3) and 15), *gocale*. Verses 7) and 13), (*praty*)*āridha*. Verse 8), *mālavīla*. Verse 10), *mārini*, *mālaloka*. Verse 11), *hūṃ-kāla*. Verse 14), *karatarā*, *bhūtare*, *cara bhṛkuṭi*. Verse 16), *hūṃ-kāla*. Verse 17), *hūṃ-kāla-kāla*, *melu-mandala-kelasa*, *cāraṇi*, Verse 18), *harithāhūmkāla*. Verse 19), ° *kali-duḥsvapna*; and penultimate to perfection, Verse 21), *pravale ° ture*.

Amidst this unpatterned plethora, two stand out:

Verse 11): *cala-bhṛkūti-hūṃ-kāla*

Verse 14): *cara-bhṛkūti-hūṃ-kāra*

calakāla carakāra claw crawl *Vāk!* The juxtaposition is impeccably atrocious, also *svabodhi*. Self-conscious, it indicates somewhat humorously, snicker, chucker, full awareness of the problem; here satirized from his overview by our orbiting satellite copyist, the Tarstel. The meaning then changes slightly from, “moving eyebrows’ frown, *hūṃ* comes forth”, in Verse 14) to, “moving eyebrows’ frown, *hūṃ* keeps time,” in Verse 11). Tap, taptap; it is nice; nice and new.

To connect: Twice, with regard to readings otherwise unique to GD/LC, either our copyist of Hodgson Ms. 6 or someone prior in this branch (Sherlock says this copyist) has carefully arranged to split the difference involving disparate wordings, meaning be dimmed, and dumber. In Verse 2) Darmadra’s Pack read *nikara* where DB/LC read *vikalpa*. In Hodgson Ms. 6 we have *nikalpa*, no meaning. In Verse 9) for the Pack’s reading *svakarākule*, GD/LC give *sukulākule*. Ms. 6 with noticeably precise articulation (Sherlock sees copyist’s whimsy), gives *svakulākule*, “of noble family...”, blessings, preceded by a carefully scribed *niṣkala* °, “indivisible” replacing, *nikara* “gathered”, here used again, which in this line certainly takes care of any perceived collectivity problem. The tampering with *nikara* links the readings.

This sort of manipulation from the same mind (may I presume) that gives *cara; kāra* and *cala; kāla*¹⁴³, spreading the split, involving some wit, malice aforethought, indicates the familiarity of the copyist-in-question with two different versions of the Greeting in circulation, unreferenced, from which to make choices. Cutting and splicing the baby: Solomon and Sherlock know, “It is not our girl.” This style has not the flair of Pandeya’s texts’ redactor. It is technical. Nothing is proved. Two versions: this copyist, in his way, weighed them equally.

Mop-up. Here are a mélange of other variants and readings contestable between other recensions, by Verse, with notes *nikara*, noting that as with *l* and *r*, the *y* on occasion is given as *j*; eg. For *yakṣa* the text in both instances of use reads *jakṣa*. The devanāgarī *v* is orthographically identical with the rañjanā *b*. This version of the Greeting often intermingles the two. Knowing the contents and context from the nine other texts, I rather doubt (perhaps erroneously) that the copyist intended *bināsani* for *vināsani*. I don’t buy it, I vye it. *sarva*, he gets, also, *sva*.

Verse 1) *nibhā*, *tailokenātha-baktābja*, *keśarodbhava* (MW’s reading, the *ś*).

Verse 2) and in Verse 20) *sampūrṇṇa; sahaśra* (a neologism, that *ś*, like *kailāśa*).

Verse 3) *nilābja*, *vibhūṣita*, *kṣanti*, crystal clear.

Verse 4) *rāriṇi*: the first *r* filled in from the outline forming *c*, concealing *anan(tarā)riṇi*; and Verses 9) and 18) *aseṣa* (being proper); *putroniṣevite*, oral transmission ‘*sandhi*’-supplied.

Verse 5) *namastutāre-hūṃ-kare* °, *digantaram*, *loke* (*lokai?* or tear to page?), *vamākrāntā*, *aseṣā* (not so...), and in Verse 11) *kṣane* “quickly, now” (GD/LC’s reading, but here without the cerebral *ṇ*)

Verse 6) *sakrālaya*, a celestial *siddhi*; (*braṃ*)(*hṇā*) second conjunct confusing, *viśvesoraścitā* (?), a pleasant mess. This latter misreading, coupled with Jampa Yeshi’s, would seem to completely eliminate the Tibetan interpretation ‘*lśvara*’; *jakṣa*, *pu-?* (consonant blotted, vowel *u* clear).

Verse 7) *namastaditphatkara*, *parajaṃtra* (dot above the bar above the *j*)-*pramadani* “-providing pleasure to” (watch out, no *r*; see what happens..), and Verse 16) *padanyāse* °; *jvālākulojvale*.

Verse 8) *baktābja*, *niśudani*.

Verse 9) *hṛdyaguli*, *vibhuṣite*, but then *bhukhitā*.

¹⁴³ Which supports the premise that *calabhṛkūti* is original, not *caladbhṛ-*, even as the word is here spelled *-bhṛkūti*.

Verse 10) *mukutā*(*dbhi*-?) “lustrous” , (*-bdhi*-?) “possessing, beginning to bear fruit”, (*-bghi*-?) “indeed”, unsure of conjunct ; *-pramāriṇi* (and not the more proper *-māriṇi*, GD’s variant) “causing death”; *prahasam*.

Verse 12) *śrākhanda* (compare JP *śrīkhaṇḍa*), *abharaṇajvale*, *bhāsvare* ° *kiranodhruvam*.

Verse 13) *hu*(*tbhu*)(*tkā* °) ? unsure of conjuncts, perhaps for *ktā*? and see JY –*bhuka*, *javālāmālātare*.

Verse 15) *santa-nirmāna*, from *nirmāṇa* “transforming”; see Burnouf, p. 544. Possibly original.

Verse 16) *ābuddha* (as in JP, Verse 19).

Verse 17) *namaḥ śurapadāghāte*, *bijīte*, *cāriṇi*.

Verse 18) *namaḥ sārasarākāra* (“moving waters’ form/essence”)-*harithāhūmkāla*[?!](perhaps for *harita*, “green”?), *hara*, *vikha* for *viṣa* (compare Verse 9), *nāsini* (all others, *nāsani*, note not ś).

Verse 19) *śuragaṇādhyakṣa*; *surakimnara* (MW’s reading), *bhogah*.

Verse 21) We find the *yakṣa* to be *jakṣandrā*. This scurvy synonym is a spin on *sāndra*: “vehement, viscid, unctuous, oily; thick, solid, dense, compact; cluster, heap; crowded with MW”. We have fill-in-the-blank synonym-syndromes run rampant: *gaṇa*, *ogha*, *ugra*, *oṣma*, now *sandrā*. This is all second guessing. It is also most unkind. The *yakṣa* are primarily characterized as *puṇyajana*, “the good guys”. Now, *adya*....provides impact right where needed. Right now!

Verse 22) Colophon: *mantra-mulam-midam-stotram*//*namaḥ* ° *stāraikaviṃsati*, “Mantra root here versified. Praise tara[s] one-and-twenty”, [coll.]; unless this is (likely) in err, for *namaskāra* -

The *phala śruti* follows the order of Darmadra’s Pack, however harboring its variants.

Separated by a bracketed four-dotted floral burst is the attribution of authorship:

iti-śrī-samyaksambuddha-vairocana-bhaṣitaḥ ° *bhagavatyāryatārā-devyā* ° *namastāraikaviṃsati-stotram* ° *saṃpūrṇa* ° *samāptaḥ* //

which, excepting three or four minor changes, *s* for *ś*(*ati*) in “one-and-twenty”, where, also *tārai*... should read *kārai*...(see Verse 22 above); *ḥ* for *ṃ* endings, and the consistent *saṃpūrṇa*, is (minus the final //śubham//), otherwise congruent with GD/LC. Then, more-or-less mid-page, there follows, centered in a gap of about three or four spaces on each side, the starburst. The next song begins:

oṃ-namā-lokanāthāyaḥ//

Not hitherto being conversant with the script here transliterated, I found the *Raṅjanā* ‘popular script alphabet’ provided by Min Bahadur Shakya, which may be found at [ranjana.pdf](#), to be of utmost (*uttara*) value, although this text’s lettering does not consistently conform with it.

॥ भगवत्यार्यतारादेव्या नमस्कारैकविंशतिस्तोत्रम् ॥
 नमस्तारे तुरे वीरे क्षणद्युतिनिभेक्षणे ।
 त्रैलोक्यनाथवक्त्राब्जविकसत्केसरोद्भवे ॥ १ ॥
 नमः शान्तसरच्चन्द्रसम्पूर्णपटलानने ।
 तारे सहस्रविकल्पप्रहसत्किरणोज्ज्वले ॥ २ ॥
 नमः कनकनीलाब्जपाणिपद्मविभूषिते ।
 दानवीर्यतपःक्षान्तितितिक्षाध्यानगोचरे ॥ ३ ॥
 नमस्तथागतोष्णीषविजयानन्तचारिणि ।
 अशेषपारमिताप्राप्तजिनपुत्रनिषेविते ॥ ४ ॥
 नमस्तुत्तारहूँकारपूरिताशादिगन्तरे ।
 सप्तलोकक्रमाक्रान्ता अशेषाकर्षणक्षणे ॥ ५ ॥
 नमः शक्रनरब्रह्ममरुद्धिश्वेश्वरार्चिते ।
 भूतवेतालगन्धर्वगणयक्षपुरस्कृते ॥ ६ ॥
 नमस्त्रिनिफटकारे परमन्नप्रमर्दनि ।
 प्रत्यालीढपादन्यासे शिखिज्वालाकुलोज्ज्वले ॥ ७ ॥
 नमस्तुरे महाघोरे मारवीरविनाशिनि ।
 भृकुटीकृतवक्त्राब्जसर्वदुष्टनिःसूदनि ॥ ८ ॥
 नमस्त्रिरत्नमुद्रांके हृद्यांगुलिविभूषिते ।
 भूषिताशेषदिक्चक्रनिकरे सुकुलाकुले ॥ ९ ॥
 नमः प्रमुदिताटोपमुकुटाक्षिप्तसारिणि ।
 हसत्प्रहसत्तुतारे मारलोकभयंकरि ॥ १० ॥
 नमः समन्तभूपालपातालाकर्षणक्षणे ।
 भृकुटीकृतहूँकारे सर्वापदविमोचनि ॥ ११ ॥
 नमः शिखण्डरवण्डेन्दुमुकुटाभरणोज्ज्वले ।
 अमिताभतथाभारे भास्वरे किरणद्युवे ॥ १२ ॥
 नमः कल्पान्तहुतभुग्ज्वालामालान्तरे स्थिते ।
 आलीढमुदिताबद्धरिपुचक्रविनाशिनि ॥ १३ ॥
 नमः करतलाघातचरणाहतभूतले ।
 भृकुटीकृतहूँकारसप्तपातालनाशिनि ॥ १४ ॥

नमः शिवे शुभे शान्ते शान्तनिर्वाणगोचरे ।
 स्वाहा प्रणम्य संयुक्ते महापातकनाशिनि ॥१५॥
 नमः प्रमुदिताबद्धरिपुगात्रप्रभेदनि ।
 दशाक्षरपादन्यासे विद्याहंकारदीपिते ॥१६॥
 नमस्तुरे पादाघाते हंकारकारजीविते ।
 मेरुमण्डलकैलाशभुवनत्रयचारणि ॥१७॥
 नमः सुरासराकारहरिणीककरे स्थिते ।
 हरद्विरुक्तफट्टार अशेषविषनाशिनि ॥१८॥
 नमः सुरगणयक्षासुरकिन्नरसेविते ।
 आबद्धमुदिताभोगकरि दुःस्वप्ननाशिनि ॥१९॥
 नमश्चन्द्रार्कसम्पूर्णनयनद्युतिभास्वरे ।
 तारद्विरुक्तोत्तारे विषमज्वलनाशिनि ॥२०॥
 नमस्त्रितलविन्यासे शिवशक्तिसमन्विते ।
 ग्रहवेतालयाक्षाघनाशनि प्रवरे तुरे ॥२१॥
 मन्त्रमूलमिदं स्तोत्रं नमस्कारैकविंशतिम् ।
 यः पठेत् प्रायशो धीमान् देव्या भक्तिसमन्वितः ॥२२॥
 सायं वा प्रातरुन्ध्याय स्मरेत् सर्वाभयप्रदम् ।
 सर्वपापप्रशमनं सर्वदुर्गतिनाशनम् ॥२३॥
 अभिविक्तोभय तूर्णमस्मिन् महत्तामासाद्य ।
 विषं तस्य महाघोरं स्मरणात् प्रलयं यान्ति ॥२४॥
 ग्रहज्वलविषार्तानामन्येषां चैव सत्वानाम् ।
 पुत्रकामो लभेत् पुत्रं सर्वकामानवाप्नोति ॥२५॥
 सप्तभिर्जिनकोटिभिः सोऽन्ते बौद्धपदं व्रजेत् ।
 स्थावरं वाथ जंगमं षडिदं पीडमेव च ॥२६॥
 परमार्तिविनाशनं द्वित्रिसप्ताभिवर्तिनाम् ।
 धनकामो लभेद् धनं न विघ्नैः प्रतिहन्यते ॥२७॥
 इति श्रीसम्यक्संबुद्धवैरोचनाधिभाषितं भगवत्पार्यतारादेव्या
 नमस्कारैकविंशतिस्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णं समाप्तम् ॥ शुभम् ॥

(Note)

CORRECTIONS

INTRODUCTORY :

Verse

- NOT नम, but न,मो not त,रे but त,रा
- „ 1. not त्रैलोक्य but त्रैलोक्य, not व,क्त्रब्ज but वक्त्राब्ज
- „ 2. not सपूर्ण but संपूर्ण, not ज्ज्वले but ज्ज्वले
- „ 3. not तितिक्षाद्ध्य,नगोचर but तितिक्षाद्ध्य,नगोचरे
- „ 4. not चरिणि but च,रिणि cant halp mitre in 2nd line
- „ 5. not सप्त.... न्ति अ.... में but सप्त.... न्तिनिः शेषक,र्षणक्षम
- „ 6. not म,न्वि but मरूद्विभ्रवे
- „ 7. not प्र,त्य,ल,ढ but प्रत्य,लीढ, not ज्ज्वले but ज्ज्वले
- „ 8. not भकट, but भृकुटी, not वक्त्रब्ज but वक्त्राब्जे, not निष्
but निष्
- „ 9. mitre defect in 2nd line may be..... संकुले
- „ 10. cant halp slight defect in metre in 2nd line. At the end not री but रि
- „ 11. not समन्त but स,मन्त, not टी but टि
- „ 12. not खण्डे but खण्ड, not ज्ज्वले but ज्ज्वले
not अमित,भा but अमित,भ, not जट but जटा, not णैध्रवे but णैध्रवे
- „ 13. not कज्वल, but क्ज्व,ल,
not अ,लीड but अ,लीढ The next word is confusing.
- „ 14. not हन but हत
- „ 17. not प,द,घात but पद,घात not हंक,रक,र but हंककूराक,र
not मेरू but मेरू
- „ 18. First line unintelligible - not फुटक,र but फुट्क,र, not अ but निः
- „ 19. not दुस्वप्न but दुःस्वप्न
- „ 21. Second line - not यक्षयन but यक्षाद्यन,शनि
- „ 22. not त्र but त्रं, not कवि but कविं
Second line quite faulty.
- „ 23. not सयं but स,यं, not प्रद but प्रदं
- „ 24. not सप्त,भरिजन but सप्तभिर्जिनकोटिभिः last quarter unintellegable
- „ 25. not स्यवरं but स्थावरं, not ख but खा, not पित but पीत
- „ 27. not प्ज,ति but प्जोति
not त,रे but तारा, not देव्यं but देव्य,, not कविं but कविं
not स्तोत्र but त्रं, not समाप्त but समाप्तम्

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ārti gangā (Hindi)
 āditya hridayam
 ānanda lahari
 āryatārābhāṭṭārikānāmāṣṭottaraśatastotram
 āryatārānamaskāraikaviṃśatistotram
 āryatārāsrāgharāstotram
 avalokiteśvarastavaḥ
 avalokiteśvarāṣṭottaraśatanāmastotram
 bhavānīśahasranāmastotram
 catuḥṣaṣṭiśaṃvarastotram
 durgā chālīsā (Hindi)
 durgā saptaśati
 gaṇḍīstavaḥ
 gopigītā
 lalitāsahasranāmastotram
 lalitāstavaratnam
 lalitātrīśati
 lokesvarastotram
 mahābodhivandanāṣṭakam
 mahālaksmī aṣṭakamstotram
 mahogratārāstutiḥ
 pīṭhastavaḥ
 prajñāpāramitāstotram
 rādhāsahasranāmastotram
 ratnamālāstotram
 śāradāṣṭakastotram
 śatapañcaśatka
 śivaśtottarastotram
 śivapañcakṣarastotram
 śivaśadakṣarastotram
 śivasahasranāmastotram
 śrīgaṅgāstotram
 śrīgurugītā
 śrī sūktam
 śrī vidyā ratna sutras
 tārādevīstotrapuṣpamāla
 vajrayoginīḥ piṇḍārthastutiḥ
 vajrayoginīpraṇāmaikavi(m)śikā
 vajrasattvastotram
 vidyākṣarastotram
 viṣṇusahasranāmastotram
 vyāpohanastava

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The wind is a Lady with
bright slender eyes(who

moves)at sunset
and who—touches—the
hills without any reason

(i have spoken with this
indubitable and green person “Are
You the wind?” “Yes” “why do you touch flowers
as if they were unalive,as

if They were ideas?” “because,sir
things which in my mind blossom will
stumble beneath a clumsiest disguise,appear
capable of fragility and indecision

--do not suppose these
without any reason and otherwise
roses and mountains
different from the I am who wanders

imminently across the renewed world”
to me said the)wind being A lady in a green
dress,who,touches:the fields
(at sunset)

-edward estlin cummings, & [AND], “Post Impressions” 1925 A.D.

unbroken chain no need for a page number full circle waddell, such great love for Her he had:

Adoration to Arya Tārā
And Avalokita (her spiritual father),
Rich in power and the store-house of pity!

Hail! Rever'd and sublime Dölma!
We adore Thee!

Hail! Dölma! Thou ever-ready heroine!
Born, like a lightning-flash, from the pitying tear
Shed for humanity by The Lord of the three worlds,
The Lotus-born!

Hail! To Thee whose face is shining
As a hundred harvest moons
Lit by the splendid light of
A full thousand fulgent stars!

Hail! O! Thou whose hand is decked with
The Blue and Golden water-lotus!
Thou beneficent and zealous Soother of difficulties,
Thou monopoliseth the realms of woe, as well as action.

Hail! O! Thou adorned by Tathagata
Conqueror of the Universe!
Thou hast overcome Thine enemies without exception
And shown Thyself a saintly Victor.

Hail! By Thy mystic '*Tut-ta-ra-hung.*'
Thou possesseth the realms of earth and sky.
Thou treadest underfoot the seven worlds
And makest one and all to bend!

Hail! The mighty gods adore Thee—
Indra, Agni, Brahma and the Lord of the Winds;
The risen ghosts and the dread 'Ti-za';
The horde of harmful spirits praise Thee!

Hail! By thy mystic '*tré*' and '*phāt*'
Thou destroyest the cunning schemes of thy opponents.
With Thy right leg flexed and the left extended,
Thou consumest Thine enemies with devouring fire!

Hail! With Thy awful word '*tu-re*'
Thou banishest the bravest of devils!
With the mere frown of Thy tear-born face
Thou completely routeth enemies!

Hail! Thou emblem of The Three Holies!
With lovely hand posed on Thy breast
And shining with a glorious halo
Thou confoundeth Thy enemies with dazzling light!

Hail! In Thy placid mood
Thy glory gains brilliancy from Thy gems
And laughing in Thy '*Tutu-ra tutu-ra*'
Thou enslavest the hearts of man and fiend!

Hail! Oh! Owner of all the earth.
Thou maketh the mighty bend their head
And quake beneath Thy angry frown
While all the poor Thou cherisheth!

Hail! With crescent moon as diadem,
And adorned with every jewel,
And O-pag-med in Thy plaited hair
Thou sheddeth excessive light!

Hail! Thy necklace glows
Like the fire of the last *kalpa*
And wreathed in smiles and with right foot extended
Thou wholly vanquisheth Thy enemies...13

Hail! Happy virtuous Soother!
Thou actively sootheth our every woe
By '*Swa-ha Om!*' and Thy immaculateness
Thou cleanseth from foulest sin!...15

Hail! With glorious dazzling halo,
Thou overpowereth all Thine enemies.
Thou coined for us the ten mystic words
And by '*Hung*' Thou solved all knowledge!

Hail! With bent foot and Thy '*Tu-re*'
Thou possesseth the realm of '*Hung*'
O! Omniscient one!
And Thou shaketh the three worlds!

Hail! Holding in uplifted hand
The marked beast of the heavenly lakes
With Thy 'Tara' and 'Phat'
Thou purgeth from all poison!

Hail! Thou teacher of Indra,
The king of the gods, and the goddesses,
With Thy wealth of charming armour
Thou saveth from evil dreams and strife!

Hail! Thou cleanseth the mist
From off the eyes of sun and moon!
By saying 'Tā-ra' and 'Tu ta-ra'
Thou saveth from the most fearful plague!

Hail! Thou forceth the three worlds to admit
Thy benign use of godly power,
With Thy potent 'Tu-re'
Thou routest the host of ghosts and devils!

We proclaim the might of Thy mystic spells.
All hail to these—
Thy one-and-twenty forms!

From *Lamaism in Sikkim*, article in 'The gazeteer of Sikkim', Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1894,
pp. 316-319.

