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The Lost Kālacakra Mūla Tantra on the Kings of Śambhala

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Prefatory Note

The following article was written as a result of work done on preparing a critical edition in the original Sanskrit of the great Kālacakra commentary entitled *Vimalaprabhā*. The *Vimalaprabhā* is the single major source work on Kālacakra available to us, being an extensive commentary on the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra. As may be seen from reading this article, until the *Vimalaprabhā* is critically edited in Sanskrit (and accurately printed), Kālacakra studies will remain on uncertain ground, even with the help of competent Tibetan authorities.

The Lost Kālacakra Mūla Tantra on the Kings of Śambhala by David Reigle, 1985

Though the Kālacakra Mūla Tantra is lost to us, it has been quoted at length in the great Kālacakra commentary entitled *Vimalaprabhā*. One such quotation is the original source on the seven and twenty-five Kings of Śambhala, whose names have been much repeated in Tibetan writings. The importance of this quotation for establishing the true Sanskrit names of the Kings of Śambhala requires no comment.¹ The *Vimalaprabhā*, however, has not yet been edited or published in its original Sanskrit, and our only access to it is by way of a small number of manuscripts.

Before proceeding to adduce the 21½ verse Mūla Tantra quotation on the Kings of Śambhala, edited from eight manuscripts, it will be useful to review briefly some already known information.

According to the literature, the Kālacakra teachings were requested from Gautama Buddha by King Sucandra of Śambhala, who traveled miraculously to the great Stūpa of Dhānyakaṭaka in southern India to receive them. The teaching occurred inside that Stūpa, whose interior was for that purpose transformed into the entire Dharmadhātu, or Sphere of Primordial Reality. After returning to Śambhala, King Sucandra wrote down the teachings in 12,000 ślokas. This text, which is now lost, became known as the Kālacakra Mūla Tantra. As may be seen from quotations, its proper name is the

Paramādibuddha, the “Supreme Ādibuddha.” King Sucandra wrote a commentary on this in 60,000 verses, which is also lost.

Six hundred years later the seventh King after Sucandra, named Yaśas, came to the throne of Śambhala. He prepared a condensation of the Mūla Tantra, which he taught to the Brahma-Rishis of Śambhala. In contradistinction to the Mūla, or Root Tantra, it is called the Laghu, or Short Kālacakra Tantra, consisting of a little over 1,000 verses. For doing this teaching, which unified the four castes of Śambhala into a single Vajra caste, Yaśas became known as “Kalkī,” translated by the Tibetans as “Possessor of the Caste” (Rigs-ldan, pronounced Rigden). This title was retained also by the successors to the throne of Śambhala.

His immediate successor, the Kalkī King named Puṇḍarīka, wrote a commentary on the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra entitled *Vimalaprabhā*, “Stainless Light.” This text, as noted above, includes Mūla Tantra quotations in its explanations of the Laghu Tantra. Both the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra and the *Vimalaprabhā* were brought from Śambhala to India about 967 A.D., and from there to Tibet sixty years later in 1027 A.D. Both are still extant in their original Sanskrit and in Tibetan translations. So when the Kālacakra Tantra and its commentary are spoken

of, it is normally these shorter extant versions that are meant.

The Mantrayāna or Vajrayāna in general, and in particular the Kālacakra system, is considered by modern investigators to be a late addition to Buddhism. As just seen, the Kālacakra teachings first appear in India only many centuries after the time of Gautama Buddha. Of course, even though the Kālacakra texts we possess may have been redacted in the Tenth century A.D., it does not necessarily follow that the teachings contained in this formulation must be of the same date. It has earlier been seen how the tradition traces them back to Gautama Buddha. But this tradition goes further.

In a significant passage from the Kālacakra Mūla Tantra which has so far not received the attention of researchers, these teachings are traced back to the previous Buddha, Dīpaṅkara. It is found among the 58½ verses of the Mūla Tantra which are quoted in the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, a commentary by Nāropa on what is purported to be a section of the Mūla Tantra itself, the *Sekoddeśa*. A Sanskrit edition of the *Sekoddeśaṭīkā*, based on a single palm-leaf manuscript and comparison with a Tibetan translation, was published in 1941, though it has not yet been translated into English. The passage in question consists of two śloka which are part of a longer Mūla Tantra quotation found in that book:²

दीपङ्करेण या पूर्वं मन्त्रयानस्य देशना ।
कृतास्माकं तु कर्तव्या गौतमेनाद्यसाधुना ॥
अथातः शम्भलाख्यातो वज्रपाणिविनिर्मितः ।
सुचन्द्रनृप आयातः स्वद्धर्चा श्रीधर्मधातुकम् ॥

“The teaching of the Mantrayāna which was formerly given to us by Dīpaṅkara is now to be given by the virtuous Gautama. Therefore from the place called Śambhala an emanation of Vajrapāṇi, King Sucandra, came by his magical power to the Dharmadhātu.” Buddhist tradition then, attributes a very high antiquity to the Kālacakra teachings.

As Gautama is the Buddha for our age, it is he who is represented as giving these teachings to King Sucandra, a Nirmāṇakāya of the Master of Secrets, Vajrapāṇi. This being the case, any event later than the time of Gautama Buddha spoken of in the Kālacakra Tantra is necessarily put in the form of prophecies. One of these prophecies concerns the Kings of Śambhala who will successively reign after Sucandra.

Six Kings follow Sucandra making seven Dharmarājas, then the line of twenty-five Kalkī Kings beginning with Yaśas. Each of these seven and twenty-five Kings reigns for exactly one hundred years. As Helmut Hoffmann remarks, “The neatness of this arrangement makes it quite clear that behind the formality of these figures there must be some definite astrological symbolism which we are not yet in a position to unravel.”³

Already in 1914 a Tibetan text including this list of Kings, the Third Paṅchen Lama’s Śambhala’i Lam-yig, was translated into German by Albert Grünwedel as *Der Weg nach Śambhala*.⁴ Rather than retaining the names of the Kings in Tibetan, Grünwedel attempted to reconstruct their Sanskrit originals for use in his translation.

In 1949 Giuseppe Tucci translated into

English an excerpt from Bu-ston's *Dus 'khor chos 'byuñ rgyud sde'i zab don sgo 'byed rin chen gces pa'i lde mig* including the list of Kings, and published it in his monumental *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*.⁵ He left the names in Tibetan. This excerpt was quoted without change in Lokesh Chandra's 1966 English preface to his Sanskrit-Tibetan-Mongolian edition of the *Laghu Kālacakra Tantra*.⁶

It should be noted that Grünwedel wrongly divided the name of the twenty-fourth Kalkī King of the Pañchen Lama's text, mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal, in two: Ananta (mTha'-yas) and Vijaya (rNam-rgyal). Tucci wrongly compounded the names of several Kings of Bu-ston's text, and also wrongly divided the twenty-fourth Kalkī as Grünwedel had. These errors were due to the fact that it is often impossible to tell where one name ends and another begins in Tibetan writing.

It is clear, however, that the Third Pañchen Lama and Bu-ston are in agreement with each other, and with the many Tibetan sources available today,⁷ that the list of the Kings of Śambhala as understood in Tibetan tradition should read as follows:

The Seven Dharma-rājas (Chos-rgyal)
according to Tibetan Tradition⁸

1. Zla-ba (-bzañ-po)
2. Lha-dbañ
3. gZi-brjid-can
4. Zla-bas-byin
5. Lha-dbañ-phyug
6. sNa-tshogs-gzugs
7. Lha-dbañ-ldan

The Twenty-five Kalkīs (Rigs-ldan)
according to Tibetan Tradition

1. Grags-pa
2. Padma-dkar
3. bZaṅ-po
4. rNam-rgyal
5. bŚes-gñen-bzañ-po
6. Phyag-dmar
7. Khyab-'jug-sbas-pa
8. Ńi-ma-grags
9. Śin-tu-bzañ
10. rGya-mtsho-rnam-rgyal
11. rGyal-dka'
12. Ńi-ma
13. sNa-tshogs-gzugs
14. Zla-ba'i-'od
15. mTha'-yas
16. Sa-skyoñ
17. dPal-skyoñ
18. Señ-ge
19. rNam-par-gnon
20. sTobs-po-che
21. Ma-'gag(s)-pa
22. Mi-yi-señ-ge
23. dBañ-phyug-che
24. mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal
25. Drag-po

Most information of this nature found in Tibetan tradition ultimately derives from an Indian source, i.e., an original Sanskrit work which was translated into Tibetan to form part of the Canon, the Kangyur and Tengyur. Therefore comparison of any number of later Tibetan writings for ascertaining such information is superfluous when the canonical source can be traced.

Unlike other Sūtras and Tantras, which may have several major commentaries apiece written by Indian

masters and found in the Canon, the Kālacakra Tantra has only one, the *Vimalaprabhā*. This is because its authorship is not ascribed to an Indian master, but to a King of Śambhala, Puṇḍarīka, an emanation of Avalokiteśvara. For who would presume to write another commentary in face of this? (Of course, many smaller exegetical works on Kālacakra were written by Indian masters, about fifty of which were translated into Tibetan and are now found in the Canon.) The *Vimalaprabhā* then, is the major source of information on Kālacakra and Śambhala, which virtually all later Tibetan writings drew upon, whether directly or indirectly.

As we have seen, Puṇḍarīka actually had access to the Kālacakra Mūla Tantra and quoted it in his *Vimalaprabhā*, which was translated into Tibetan nearly a thousand years ago. Tibetan writers who obviously did not have access to the Mūla Tantra quoted these quotations, simply indicating them as being from the Mūla Tantra, without reference to the *Vimalaprabhā*. Later Tibetan writers then quoted these quotations from earlier Tibetan writers, again indicating only that they are from the Mūla Tantra. Some of these later Tibetan writings have in turn been quoted or published in full by Europeans. Thus 11½ of the 21½ Mūla Tantra verses which we are concerned with in this article have been published in Tibetan and translated into German or English,⁹ but without knowledge of their source in the *Vimalaprabhā*.

The significance of knowing that their source is the *Vimalaprabhā*, of course, is that the *Vimalaprabhā* is available in the original Sanskrit, though in manuscript

form. Brian Hodgson made known in 1828 the existence of Sanskrit manuscripts of Buddhist scriptures in Nepal. This discovery was to revolutionize Buddhist studies. Through his efforts many of the most important Buddhist texts became available in their original Sanskrit. Yet it was not until the 1970's that hundreds more of these Sanskrit texts, presumed to be lost, were microfilmed in Nepal by the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions and by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, and thus made available.

Two palm-leaf manuscripts of the *Vimalaprabhā* were described in Hara Prasad Shāstri's 1917 catalogue of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts held by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.¹⁰ One of these in old Newārī script is incomplete, going only through verse 31 of the first chapter. The other in old Bengālī script is complete except for five missing folios, and includes the end of the first chapter and the entire fifth and last chapter, which are missing in later paper manuscripts. This manuscript is dated around 1100 A.D., near the time the *Vimalaprabhā* was translated into Tibetan.

Six more Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Vimalaprabhā* became available from Nepal in the 1970's as described above.¹¹ Two of these are palm-leaf in old Newārī scripts, and four are paper, three in Devanāgarī script and one in modern Newārī script. Both of the palm-leaf manuscripts are incomplete at the end, so lack colophons from which to date them. Normally the Tibetan translations, made nearly a millenium ago, represent the

oldest readings of a text, and are thus of primary value for editing it. Here however, we have a palm-leaf Sanskrit manuscript of the same period as the Tibetan translations, and three others within the next few centuries.

The 21½ verse Mūla Tantra quotation on the Kings of Śambhala is found in the introductory portion of the *Vimalaprabhā*, before the actual verse commentary begins. It is therefore found

in all four palm-leaf manuscripts, here designated A-D, as well as in the four paper manuscripts, here designated E-H.¹² It is here edited from these eight manuscripts and comparison with three Tibetan editions, the canonical translation in the Peking and Der-ge blockprints, and Bu-ston's revision of same.¹³ I have arbitrarily numbered the ślokas from 1 to 21 for convenience of reference.

आद्याब्दात् षट्शतैर्वर्षैः सम्भलाख्ये भविष्यति ।
 ऋषीणां पाचनार्थाय मञ्जुघोषो यशोनृपः ॥ १ ॥
 अस्य तारामहादेवीपुत्रो लोकेश्वरो ऽब्जधृक् ।
 सुचन्द्र तव वंशे मे शाक्यवंशसमुद्भवे ॥ २ ॥
 वाग्मी वज्रकुले येन तेन वज्रकुली यशः ।
 चतुर्वर्णैककल्केन कल्की ब्रह्मकुलेन न ॥ ३ ॥
 एवं मया श्रुतानेन ऋषीणां धर्मदेशना ।
 परश्रुतान्न सर्वज्ञ इति वादो भविष्यति ॥ ४ ॥
 येन येन प्रकारेण सत्त्वानां परिपाचनं ।
 तेन तेन प्रकारेण कुर्याद्धर्मस्य देशनां ॥ ५ ॥
 योगी शब्दापशब्देन धर्मं गृह्णाति यत्नतः ।
 देशशब्देन लब्धे ऽर्थे शास्त्रशब्देन तत्र किं ॥ ६ ॥
 यथा रत्नस्य मेदिन्यां नामभेदः पृथक् पृथक् ।
 देशदेशवशात् प्रोक्तो रत्नभेदो न च क्वचित् ॥ ७ ॥
 एवं मे शुद्धधर्मस्य नाना संगीतिकारकैः ।
 सत्त्वाशयवशात् प्रोक्ता नाना संज्ञा पृथक् पृथक् ॥ ८ ॥
 तेनेदं लघुसाराथं सर्वज्ञेत्यादि मे मतं ।
 श्रीतन्त्रं स्रग्धरावृत्तैस्त्रिंशच्चाधिकदिकशतैः ॥ ९ ॥

पटलैः पञ्चभिः पूर्णं वादिराट् देशयिष्यति ।
 संगीतिकारकश्चायं टीकाकारः सिताब्जधृक् ॥ १० ॥
 तन्त्रे ऽस्मिन् ऋषिकुलादीनां बुद्धमार्गप्रकाशकः ।
 चन्द्रः सुरेश्वरस्तेजी सोमदत्तः सुरेश्वरः ॥ ११ ॥
 विश्वमूर्तिः सुरेशानो यशः पुण्डरीकः क्रमात् ।
 सूर्यप्रभो गतो राजा विघ्नशत्रुः सनिर्मितः ॥ १२ ॥
 वज्रपाणिः सुचन्द्रस्त्वं क्षितिगर्भो यमान्तकः ।
 सर्वनिवरणविष्वम्भी जम्भको मानकः क्रमात् ॥ १३ ॥
 खगर्भो मञ्जुघोषश्च लोकनाथो यथाक्रमात् ।
 यमार्यादिदशक्रोधा बोधिस्तत्त्वास्तदन्तरे ॥ १४ ॥
 कल्किगोत्रे भविष्यन्ति त्रयोदशान्ये क्रमेण ते ।
 यशःकल्की च गोत्रं च कल्की पुण्डरीकस्ततः ॥ १५ ॥
 भद्रकल्की तृतीयश्च चतुर्थो विजयस्तथा ।
 सुमित्रो रक्तपाणिश्च विष्णुगुप्तश्च सप्तमः ॥ १६ ॥
 अर्ककीर्तिः सुभद्रश्च समुद्रविजयो ऽजः ।
 कल्की द्वादशमः सूर्यो विश्वरूपः शशिप्रभः ॥ १७ ॥
 अनन्तश्च महीपालः श्रीपालो हरिविक्रमः ।
 महाबलो ऽनिरुद्धश्च नरसिंहो महेश्वरः ॥ १८ ॥
 अनन्तविजयः कल्की यशःकल्की ततः पुनः ।
 तस्य पुत्रो महाचक्री रौद्रकल्की भविष्यति ॥ १९ ॥
 म्लेच्छधर्मान्तकृद्वाग्मी परमाश्वसमाधिना ।
 येन सूर्यरथादीनां वाग्मी शास्ता भविष्यति ॥ २० ॥
 सुचन्द्र मूलतन्त्रे त्वं तेन संगीतिकारकः ।
 टीकाकारस्त्वमेवात्र सत्त्वानां परिपाचकः ॥ २१ ॥
 लघुतन्त्रे मञ्जुवज्रश्च टीकाकारो ऽब्जधृक् स्वयम् ।

The first thing to be noticed about this quotation is that, even though it is metrical, the names of the Kings are all individually declined; that is, none of them are found undeclined within a dvandva (dual, or conjunctive) compound. However, when we reach the eighteenth, and according to Tibetan nineteenth Kalkis in the line we have designated 18a, we have the single name "Harivikramaḥ." In order to break it into the two Kalkis *Seṅ-ge* (Hari) and *rNam-par-gnon* (Vikrama) of Tibetan tradition we would have to read "Harir-vikramaḥ," where the first name would be declined as well as the second. But none of the manuscripts attest that reading; on the contrary they are unanimous in giving the former reading.

It is not possible to understand this as a dvandva compound, for besides the fact that none of the other names in the entire quotation are within dvandva compounds, we would have the further anomaly of wrong declension: it is declined in the masculine singular. May we recall that of the two kinds of dvandvas, the *itaretara* dvandva takes the gender of its final member and its number must be either dual or plural according to the quantity of objects stated or intended, while the *samāhāra* dvandva by convention always takes the neuter gender and singular number because it expresses by means of its two or more words a single idea. A compound listing two names would of course have to be an *itaretara* dvandva, and would require declension in the dual number, not the singular number which we have. Even if one assumed a *samāhāra* dvandva here, which is taking things to the point of

absurdity, the singular declension would have to be neuter rather than masculine. To attribute these excessive anomalies to Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit in face of perfectly regular declensions for the rest of the names in the quotation would be highly unrealistic.

We know that there must be twenty-five Kalkis in this list; we cannot afford to lose one. We know also that Tibetan tradition has the advantages of a direct oral transmission of the text and of proximity in time, so cannot be taken lightly. Despite this, as history shows repeatedly, no tradition is infallible. It is noteworthy that from the Tibetan translation alone of this line, "dpal skyoṅ seṅ ge rnam par gnon," there is no way to tell where the names break up. There is nothing here to indicate how the actual translators of this text understood these names. Their division was accomplished by other means, and possibly at a later date.

However, the dilemma of the missing King is solved by reading further, for line 19a can hardly be understood any other way than "Anantavijaya Kalkī, Yaśas Kalkī then again," placing Yaśas between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth Kalkis of the Tibetan list, *mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal* and *Drag-po*. Indeed, Bu-ston in his annotated edition of the *Vimalaprabhā* took pains to note that in the next line, 19b, "his son will be the Great Cakrī Raudra Kalkī," the "his" refers back to *mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal* rather than to the intervening and obvious Yaśas. It was apparently difficult to accept the same name twice in the list, as Yaśas is, of course, the name of the first Kalkī. Yet among the seven Dharmarājas,

Sureśvara is the name of the second and also the name of the fifth, both given in the same line, 11b. There are no variant readings. The Tibetan obscures this identity of names by translating the second as Lha-dbañ and the fifth as Lha-dbañ-phyug.

Based on this unanimous manuscript evidence from the Sanskrit, and until the early Tibetan traditions can be further researched, we are obliged to list Harivikrama (Señ-ge-rnam-par-gnon) as the eighteenth Kalkī, thus eliminating the nineteenth Kalkī of the Tibetan list (rNam-par-gnon) as a separate King, and to restore Yaśas as the twenty-fourth Kalkī between mTha'-yas-rnam-rgyal and Drag-po of the Tibetan list. The implications of this are rather far-reaching, for not only would a thousand years of Tibetan tradition representing the Kings in paintings, in writings, in chronological calculations, etc., require modification, but also comparative studies on the relationship between the Buddhist tradition of Śambhala and the Hindu tradition of the Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu will acquire an important new piece of data.

In approximately half of the Hindu Purāṇa and epic sources on the Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu, he is stated to be the son of Viṣṇu-Yaśas.¹⁴ It is, of course, the twenty-fifth Kalkī of the Buddhist tradition, Raudra, who plays the same role as the Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu: riding out from Śambhala with a large army to destroy the wicked at the end of the Dark Age (Kali-Yuga) and to re-establish righteousness (dharma). These findings, then, would make Raudra the son of Yaśas in the Buddhist tradition as well.

Each of the Kings of Śambhala is an emanation of a particular Bodhisattva or of a particular Krodharāja ("Wrathful King"—a Protector). Ten are named in lines 12b-14a of the Mūla Tantra quotation, indicating which Kings are their emanations. These ten are: Vighnaśatru, Vajrapāṇi, Kṣitigarbha, Yamāntaka, Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhī, Jambhaka, Mānaka, Khagarbha, Mañjughoṣa, and Lokanātha. Yaśas as the first Kalkī is an emanation of Mañjughoṣa, or Mañjuśrī, and is often referred to as Mañjuśrī-Yaśas, frequently wrongly Sanskritized as Mañjuśrī-kīrti. Note the similarity between Mañjuśrī-Yaśas of the Buddhist tradition and Viṣṇu-Yaśas of the Hindu tradition.

In the other half of the Hindu Purāṇa and epic sources on the Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu, he is stated to be Viṣṇu-Yaśas himself.¹⁵ The Tibetan tradition apparently does not count Yaśas a second time in this list of the Kings of Śambhala because Raudra is considered to be a reincarnation of Yaśas, i.e., Mañjuśrī.¹⁶ Thus the occurrence of the name Yaśas immediately preceding Raudra in the list is explained by this tradition: Raudra is here considered to be Mañjuśrī-Yaśas himself, reborn.

The dual Hindu tradition, then, of the Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu being either the son of Viṣṇu-Yaśas, or Viṣṇu-Yaśas himself, is paralleled by the Buddhist tradition of the Kalkī Raudra, who is either the son of Yaśas and an emanation of Mañjuśrī, or is Mañjuśrī-Yaśas himself. In either case, the Buddhist Kalkī Raudra is an emanation of Mañjuśrī, just as the Hindu Kalkī is an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

There are in the Purāṇas, connected with the Kali-Yuga and Kalkī Avatāra prophecies, computations utilizing the cycle of the Great Bear, or Big Dipper.¹⁷ The Great Bear, or as it is known in Sanskrit, the Seven Rishis (Saptarṣi), are said to revolve around the circle of the twenty-seven asterisms (nakṣatra-s), staying in each of them for one hundred years. Each asterism is 13° 20' in extent. This cycle is considered to be mythological, since astronomically the fixed stars do not have any such movement. At best they can be considered to move at the rate of the precession of the equinoxes, approximately one degree in seventy-two years. This unusual cycle is strikingly reminiscent of the one hundred year reigns of the seven Dharmarājas and twenty-five Kalkīs of Śambhala.

Before proceeding to the list of these Kings, there yet remains a problem with the eleventh Kalkī. From the Tibetan translation, rGyal-dka', we would expect Ajaya, "Unconquered." However, all eight manuscripts read Aja, "Unborn," for which we would have to have something like "Ma-skyes-pa" in Tibetan. The meter is faulty here and lacks a syllable, making a perfect setting for restoring Ajaya. But as may be noticed in this whole quotation, the meter is often faulty, and it is clear that the author didn't mind being a syllable off, plus or minus. Indeed, Puṇḍarīka informs us that his own text was purposely written with little regard for rules of grammar, in order to destroy the pride of those attached to perfected form rather than to the meaning.¹⁸ So again, for the moment we are obliged to retain

Aja as the eleventh Kalkī rather than the Ajaya indicated by the Tibetan rGyal-dka'.

Here, then, is the list of the true Sanskrit names of the Kings of Śambhala, taken from the lost Kālacakra Mūla Tantra, the *Paramādibuddha*, as quoted in the *Vimalaprabhā*, and provisional renditions of same into English, now made accessible for the first time:

The Seven Dharma-rājas
according to Sanskrit manuscripts

1. (Su)candra—The (Auspicious) Moon
2. Sureśvara—Lord of the Gods
3. Tejī—Possessor of Splendor
4. Somadatta—Given by the Moon
5. Sureśvara—Lord of the Gods
6. Viśvamūrti—He Whose Form is the All, i.e., the Universe
7. Sureśāna—Ruler of the Gods

The Twenty-five Kalkīs
according to Sanskrit manuscripts

1. Yaśas—Renown
2. Puṇḍarīka—White Lotus
3. Bhadra—Auspicious
4. Vijaya—Victory
5. Sumitra—Good Friend
6. Raktapāṇi—He Whose Hand is Red
7. Viṣṇugupta—Hidden by Viṣṇu
8. Arkakīrti—He Whose Fame is like the Sun
9. Subhadra—Very Auspicious
10. Samudravijaya—He Whose Victory is like the Ocean
11. Aja—Unborn (Tib.—Unconquered)
12. Sūrya—The Sun
13. Viśvarūpa—He Whose Body is the

All, i.e., the Universe

14. Śaśiprabha—The Light of the Moon

15. Ananta—Infinite

16. Mahīpāla—Protector of the Earth

17. Śrīpāla—Protector of Fortune

18. Harivikrama—He Whose Courage is like a Lion's

19. Mahābala—Great Strength

20. Aniruddha—Unobstructed

21. Narasiṃha—Man-Lion

22. Maheśvara—Great Lord

23. Anantavijaya—Endless Victory

24. Yaśas—Renown

25. Raudra—Fierce

NOTES

1. From a Theosophical perspective names such as these are considered to be composed of logograms. See *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, London: 1888, vol. 2, p. 335.

2. *Sekoddeśaṭikā of Naḍapāda (Nāropā)*, edited by Mario E. Carelli, Gaekwad's Oriental Series, XC, Baroda: 1941, p. 2.

3. *The Religions of Tibet*, by Helmut Hoffmann, New York: 1961, p. 125.

4. published in *Abhandlungen der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 29, no. 3, München: 1915, see pp. 74-78.

5. *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, by Giuseppe Tucci, Rome: 1949, vol. 2, pp. 598-599.

6. *Kālacakra-Tantra and other Texts*, Part 1, edited by Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra, Śatapiṭaka Series, 69, New Delhi: 1966, pp. 5-6.

7. e.g., "A Geography and History of Shambhala," by Gar-je K'am-trül Rinpoche, *Tibet Journal*, 3:3 (Autumn 1978), p. 8; *A New Tibeto-Mongol Pantheon*, edited by Lokesh Chandra and Raghu Vira, New Delhi: 1972 (illustrations of Kings reprinted in *Kalachakra Initiation: Madison, 1981*); *The Kālacakra Empowerment*, by Kalu Rinpoche, San Francisco: 1982, p. 8; to say nothing of the Tibetan writings of kLoñ rdol bla ma, Thu'u bkwan blo bzañ chos kyi ñi ma, etc.

8. as given in the *Vimalaprabhā*, found in *The Tibetan Tripitaka*, Peking Edition, vol. 46, Tokyo-Kyoto: 1958, p. 131, fol. 5; and found in *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Part 1, New Delhi: 1965, fol. 352, line 5, to fol. 353, line 4.

9. *Der Weg nach Šambhala*, by Albert Grünwedel (see note 4 above), pp. 74-75, contains our verses numbered 1-2, 11-19 and half of 20; *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, in English*, by Alexander Csoma de Körös, Calcutta: 1834, p. 193, contains our verses 1-2.

10. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanscrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection, under the care of The Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 1, Buddhist Manuscripts, by Hara Prasad Shāstri, Calcutta: 1917, pp. 73-82.

ms. no. 4727, palm-leaf, old Newāri script, incomplete, goes through verse 31 of first paṭala only.

ms. no. 10766, palm-leaf, old Bengāli script, complete except five missing folios near beginning.

11. Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions:

ms. no. MBB I-24, paper, Devanāgarī script, first paṭala goes through verse 92 only, lacks fifth paṭala, otherwise complete.

Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project:

ms. no. 5-238, reel no. B 81/16, palm-leaf, old Newārī script, incomplete, is first paṭala only, that with seventeen missing folios.

ms. no. 5-240, reel no. A 48/1, palm-leaf, old Newārī script, incomplete, starts approx. verse 36 of first paṭala and ends approx. verse 45 of fifth paṭala, with many intervening missing folios.

ms. no. 5-241, reel no. A 142/8, paper, Devanāgarī script, incomplete, goes through verse 35 of first paṭala only.

reel no. D 46/7, paper, Devanāgarī script, incomplete, with sections out of order, includes first paṭala through verse 92 only, and portions of second, third, and fourth paṭalas, lacks fifth paṭala.

reel no. E 618/5, E 619/1, paper, modern Newārī script, first paṭala goes through verse 92 only, lacks fifth paṭala, missing one folio, otherwise complete.

It should be noted that mss. nos. 5-240 and 5-241 above are incorrectly catalogued as being the Kālacakra Tantra.

12. These are as follows:

A — ASB no. 10766, 9B/4-10A/2

B — NGMPP no. 5-240, broken folio at beginning of film

C — NGMPP no. 5-238, 26A/1-27A/3

D — ASB no. 4727, 18A/4-18B/6

E — IASWR no. MBB I-24, 14B/2-15A/4

F — NGMPP reel no. E 618/5, E 619/1, 19B/2-20A/8

G — NGMPP reel no. D 46/7, 14A/6-14B/8

H — NGMPP no. 5-241, 14B/4-15A/5

13. *The Tibetan Tripitaka*, Peking Edition, vol. 46, Tokyo-Kyoto: 1958, p. 131, fol. 4, line 3, to p. 132, fol. 1, line 2; *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Part 1, New Delhi: 1965, fol. 351, line 4, to fol. 353, line 5; *The Sde-dge Mtshal-par Bka'-gyur*, vol. 102, Delhi: 1977, and *Sde-dge Bstan-'gyur Series*: vol. 11, Rgyud 'Grel, vol. 10, Delhi: 1982.

14. Edwin Bernbaum, unpublished thesis, University of California, Berkeley: 1980, *The Myth of Śambhala in Buddhist and Hindu Mythology*, pp. 20, 54:

Kalki Purāṇa 2.12

Viṣṇu Purāṇa 4.24.98

Bhāgavata Purāṇa 12.2.18

Matsya Purāṇa 47.248

Agni Purāṇa 16.8

15. Edwin Bernbaum, loc. cit.:

Mahābhārata (crit. ed.) 3.188.89

Harivaṃśa 31.148

Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa 2.3.73.104

Vāyu Purāṇa (ref. omitted)

16. see addenda.

17. for a convenient composite edition and translation of the Purāṇic accounts see: *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, by F. E. Pargiter, 1913, reprint: Delhi, 1975, pp. 57-63, 74-76.

18. *Vimalaprabhā*, ms. D, fol. 21B-22A, ms. E, fol. 17B:

तेषां च सुशब्दवादिनां सुशब्दग्रहविनाशाय
अर्थशरणतामाश्रित्य । एवं टीकायामपि
सुशब्दाभिमाननाशाय लिखितव्यं मयार्थशरण-
तामाश्रित्येति । ।

VARIANT READINGS

In editing these verses I have taken no account of orthographic provincialisms, such as the doubling of consonants after “r”, the spelling “satva” for “sattva”, or the interchange of “s” (dental) for “ś” (palatal), nor have I recorded them in the variant readings except incidentally. Neither have I taken account of or recorded the use of anusvāra for the five nasals and vice versa. However, it should

be noted that all manuscripts spell Śambhala with the dental sibilant: Sambhala. On names, I have not retained the spellings Arkakīrtti (mss. D,F: Arkkakīrtti), Viśvamūr̥tti, Sūryya, etc., for the same reason that I have not retained sarvva, dharmma, pūr̥ṇṇa, etc. I have also disregarded obvious omissions and repetitions of letters, which are frequent in mss. C and D.

- 1a E,F .. सम्भलाख्यो ..
 2b C सुचन्द्र तद्वंशे ..
 3b C चतुर्वण्णे कल्केन ब्रह्मकुलेन क न ।
 A .. ब्रह्मकुलेन × । E .. ब्रह्मकुलेन च ।
 4b G परश्रुत्वान्न ..
 5b C,E .. देशना ।
 6a H योगि ..
 6b D .. लब्ध र्थे .. E .. लब्धे ऽध्वे ..
 F .. लब्धे ऽध्वे ..
 8b H .. प्रोक्तो ..
 9a F .. लघुसाराथं ..
 9b G श्रीतंत्रस्रग्वरा .. H .. दिच्छतैः ।
 10b C .. कारकाश्चायं .. F .. सिताङ्गधृक् ।
 11b G .. तेजा ..
 12a F .. यशपुण्डरीकः .. G .. यसपुण्डरीकः ..
 12b E,F,G,H .. विघ्नशक्रः ..
 D .. सुनिर्मितः ।
 13a C वज्रपाणिसुचन्द्रस्त्वं ..
 13b C .. मानवकः ..
 15a A,C कल्की .. H .. त्रयोदशान्य ..

- 15b G .. कल्कीरगोत्रं ..
 16b B,E,F,H सुमिन्द्रो ..
 G सुमिन्द्रो वज्रपाणिश्च ..
 17a C अजकीर्त्तिः .. D .. समुद्रविजयो
 ज्जकः । (where the क is a scribal
 error repeating the क of the follow-
 ing कल्की, as is so often the case
 with this manuscript.)
 G .. समुद्रविजयौ ज्जः ।
 H .. समुद्रविजय अजः ।
 17b G .. विश्वरूपसशिप्रभूः ।
 18b F महामलो ..
 19a C अनन्तविजयकल्की ..
 20a G .. परमास्वसमाधिनी ।
 20b E,F .. शास्त्रा ..
 21a C omits त्वं
 22a F,G,H .. मञ्जुघोषश्च ..
 E .. मञ्जुघोषः टीका ..
 H .. टीकाकाराब्जधृक् ..

ADDENDA

I sent a draft copy of this article to John Newman, presently in India, who has been researching the early Tibetan Kālacakra traditions as reported by Bu-ston (1290-1364 A.D.) and mKhas-grub (1385-1438) in connection with translating the first portion of the Kālacakra Tantra and *Vimalaprabhā*. He kindly sent me a long reply containing much new information, which I summarize below:

There was considerable controversy over this list of Kings among early Tibetan scholars. There was some question as to whether Raudra should be included in the group of twenty-five Kalkīs; i.e., whether he was the twenty-fifth Kalkī, or whether he came after the twenty-five Kalkīs, making him the twenty-sixth Kalkī. It is reported by both mKhas-grub (*Dus 'khor 'tik chen*, in *Yab sras gsun 'bum*, mKhas-grub, vol. kha, fol. 150, line 6, and fol. 437, line 6) and Bu-ston (*Rin chen gces pa'i lde mig*, in *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, Part 4, fol. 55, line 5) that "some" "former lamas" (un-named) held that the twenty-fourth name, Anantavijaya, should be two Kalkīs, Ananta and Vijaya, and that there were twenty-six Kalkīs altogether.

It is also reported that of the two main Kālacakra transmission lineages into Tibet, Rwa and 'Bro, the Rwa tradition counted Śrīpāla and Harivikrama as two Kalkīs, and the 'Bro tradition counted Śrīpālaharivikrama as one Kalkī (*'Tik chen*, 438/2-3; Bu-ston's annotations, *Collected Works*, Part 1, 353/3-4). Concerning this, Bu-ston says (*lDe mig*, 59/5-6), "Making the Kalkīs Śrīpāla,

Hari, and Vikrama as one Kalkī is unacceptable. Since Śrīpāla, and Hari, and Vikrama are said to have different case endings in the Indian manuscript(s), they should be accepted as different." (rigs ldan dpal skyoñ/ señ ge/ rnam rol [sic] rigs ldan gcig tu mdzad pa ni/ mi 'thad de/ dpal skyoñ dañ señ ge dañ rnam rol [sic] rnams rgya dpe las rnam dbye tha dad du gsuñs pa'i phyir tha dad du 'thad do). Later Tibetan tradition, of course, followed Bu-ston in counting three Kalkīs here, against Rwa's two and 'Bro's one.

Bu-ston also reports the views of the Paṇḍit Vibhūticandra (*lDe mig*, 56/1; see also mKhas-grub's *'Tik chen*, 151/3): "Vibhūticandra says Harivikrama is one, and Anantavijaya is one. Then, differentiating Yaśas and Raudra, he asserts twenty-five (Kalkīs). This should be scrutinized." (bi bhū ti tsandra na re/ señ ge rnam gnong gcig/ mtha' yas rnam rgyal gcig tu byas nas/ de nas grags pa dañ drag po tha dad du byas nas ñi śu rtsa lñar 'dod de/ brtag go). Thus it would appear that Vibhūticandra's position is in agreement with the findings of the foregoing paper.

Bu-ston and later Tibetan tradition did not agree with differentiating Yaśas (the second) and Raudra, apparently because of a prophecy in the *Tanrottara* (Toh. no. 363, Pek. no. 5) in which Yaśas (the first) says he will return in eighteen hundred years to destroy the barbarians. mKhas-grub understands this as meaning that Raudra is the "return" (slar byon pa), i.e., the reincarnation of Yaśas. The relevant half-verse of the *Tanrottara* is

cited by mKhas-grub from a different translation than that found in the Peking edition of the Kangyur. mKhas-grub cites (*Tik chen*, 152/3-4): “de la bco brgyad lo yis rgya phrag bsgyur te brgya yis 'phags pa'i yul gyi ma kha la sogs par// kla klo rnam kyī grags pa gañ dañ gañ zig mun can gyur pa de rnam bdag gis druñs phyuñ ste.” The corresponding half-verse is found in the Peking edition, Japanese reprint, volume 1, page 180, folio 3, lines 6-7.

Moving on to some other points, in connection with the above-mentioned prophecy mKhas-grub thinks that the reigns of two of the Kalkīs must be longer than one hundred years (*Tik chen*, 153). He adds 82 years to the reign of Samudravijaya, making 182 years, and adds 121 years to the reign of Aja, making 221 years. These two reigns together add up to 403 years, a number forming the basis of chronological calculations, found in chapter 1, verse 27, of the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra. Bu-ston, however, thought that Samudravijaya and Aja each reign for one hundred years (*IDe mig*, 55/3).

On Aja versus Ajaya, the form Aja is confirmed by its use in the prose commentary on chapter 1, verse 27, of the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra. Yet the

meaning “unconquered” is also confirmed, by an alternate Tibetan translation from the Rwa tradition, “ma-pham-pa” (Bu-ston’s annotations, *Collected Works*, Part 1, 353/3).

On the date of the introduction of the Kālacakra teachings into India, there is evidence that this did not occur until the beginning of the 11th century A.D., rather than the more widely accepted date of circa 967 A.D. See *The Wheel of Time: the Kalachakra in Context*, by Geshe Sopa, Roger Jackson, and John Newman, Deer Park Books, Madison, Wisconsin, 1985, page 65 and notes.

Finally, on Sureśvara as the second Dharmarāja being translated Lha-dbañ, and as the fifth, Lha-dbañ-phyug: It is possible that the Lha-dbañ of the first instance was chosen as an abbreviation of Lha-yi-dbañ-po, the translation of Sureśa in chapter 1, verse 156, of the Laghu Kālacakra Tantra, where Sureśa is the form used for Sucandra’s son, Sureśvara, the second Dharmarāja. Or again, it could simply have been due to the strict exigencies of Tibetan meter. (For whatever reason it was done, it still does obscure the fact that the names being translated are identical in the Sanskrit.)

ये परमादिबुद्धं न जानन्ति
ते नामसंगीतिं न जानन्ति
ये नामसंगीतिं न जानन्ति
ते वज्रधरज्ञानकायं न जानन्ति
ये वज्रधरज्ञानकायं न जानन्ति
ते मन्त्रयानं न जानन्ति
ये मन्त्रयानं न जानन्ति
ते संसारिणः सर्वे वज्रधरभगवतो मार्गरहिताः
एवं परमादिबुद्धं मोक्षार्थिभिः सच्छिष्यैः
श्रोतव्यं सद्गुरुणा देशयितव्यम्

They who do not know the *Paramādibuddha* [the Kālacakra Mūla Tantra] do not know the [*Mañjuśrī-*] *Nāmasaṅgīti*.

They who do not know the *Nāmasaṅgīti* do not know the Wisdom-Body of Vajradhara.

They who do not know the Wisdom-Body of Vajradhara do not know the Mantra Vehicle.

They who do not know the Mantra Vehicle are all in and of saṃsāra, separated from the path of Bhagavān Vajradhara.

Thus the *Paramādibuddha* should be listened to by true disciples striving for liberation, and should be taught by the true teacher.