Śaiva Verses Redacted from Buddhist Ones:
Found in the First Chapter of the *Tantrasadbhāva*

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1. Introduction

The *Tantrasadbhāva* (hereafter TaSa) one of surviving Śaiva Trika literature has been handed down to us through three Sanskrit manuscripts in Nepal.¹ This text is labelled as belonging to the Goddess-oriented Vidyāpīṭha cult which was developed from the Bhairava-oriented Mantrapīṭha cult. As for an aspect of textual transmission of Tantric texts, the current version of TaSa contains abundant information about textual interaction with other Śaiva traditions, e.g., Śaivasiddhānta (e.g., the Niśvāsa, Kālottara corpus, etc.), Mantrapīṭha (e.g., *Svacchandatantra*), and Kaula texts (e.g., *Kubjikāmatatantra*), and even with Vajrayāna, especially with Śamvara works.²

To further an understanding of the Śaiva-Vajrayāna interaction, this short paper aims to examine three verses found in the first chapter of TaSa, as they might have been strongly influenced or deliberately revised from Buddhist sources.

2. Verses about ultimate liberation from the non-dual Śaiva view

In short, the first chapter of TaSa contains considerable number of parallel passages with the fourth chapter of the *Svacchandatantra*, the thirty-second chapter of the *Niśvāsakārikā*, the *Kulasāra*, etc. And its opening part with Devī’s question to Bhairava seems to be redacted from the opening of the *Svacchanda*. Compared to TaSa’s intertextuality with other Śaiva works, the verses which I would like to examine in this paper are few; however, they show several interesting doctrinal points which illustrate the manner in which the Śaiva compilers and redactos adapted Buddhist passages to their own purposes.

2.1. Non-dual: there is neither *samsāra* nor *nirvāṇa*

The following passages appear in the context of teaching about non-dual Śaiva doctrine
wherein TaSa claims that non-conceptualisation (nirvikalpa) of soul (ātman) is, not the highest state, since all tattvas are ultimately absorbed into Śiva, the highest tattva. Therefore, it mentions the following verses:

\[
\text{saṁsāraḥ savitur yāgaś candrayāgas tathā parah} \parallel \\
\text{ubhau yasmāt tatau tasmān naṣṭau vijñānasāgare} | \\
\text{na saṁsāro na nirvāṇaṁ manyate tattvadarśināḥ} \parallel \text{TaSa 1.400c–401}^4
\]

Saṁsāra is the rite of the Sun, and the opposite [i.e., liberation] is the rite of the Moon. Since both have appeared, therefore, both will disappear in the ocean of consciousness. Those who see reality think of neither saṁsāra nor nirvāṇa.

The underlined passage is found in a Vārajayāna text, viz. Cittaviśuddhiprakaraṇa 24 (saṁsāraṁ caiva nirvāṇaṁ manyate 'tattvadarśināḥ | na saṁsāraṁ na nirvāṇaṁ manyante tattvadarśināḥ ||) whose authorship is generally attributed to a tantric Āryadeva. However, this verse is based on the Mādhyamika Nāgārjuna’s Yuktisaṣṭikākārikā (hereafter YṢK) 5 (nirvāṇaṁ caiva lokam ca manyante 'tattvadarśināḥ | naiva lokam na nirvāṇaṁ manyante tattvadarśināḥ ||), whose composition is generally dated to around the 2nd century.

TaSa describes transmigration and liberation metaphorically with rites of the Sun and the Moon to emphasise the dichotomy of consciousness. In other words, when consciousness is absorbed into the highest tattva, the soul is truly freed from transmigration and liberation. In regards to this doctrine, the next parallel passage is as follows:

\[
\text{sthūlasya yā parā koṭiḥ koṭir mukteś ca yā parā} | \\
\text{na tayor antaram kinct susūkṣmam api vidyate} \parallel \text{TaSa 1.418c–4019b}^6
\]

There is the highest point of the coarse [form of existence] (sthūlasya), and there is the highest point of liberation; [however], there is not even the slightest difference between the two.

This verse clearly reminds us of Mūlamadhyamakakārikā 25.20 (nirvāṇasya ca yā koṭiḥ koṭih samsaranaśasya ca | na tayor antaram kinct susūkṣmam api vidyate ||). As the variants in bold show, although TaSa mentions the coarse form of existence (sthūla) in the same sense of transmigration, all of two parallels agree that there is no difference between two highest points (koṭi) of existence and liberation at the ultimate level.

2.2. The highest secret vs. ultimate truth

Consequently, the last example shows an interesting modification from the parallel Bud-
dhist verse as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
nāndhaḥ paśyati rūpāṇi anyacittas tathaiva ca \\
smaritavyābhicāritvāt samudāya ’pi nāsty atāḥ \\
na cakṣuḥ paśyate rūpaṃ na manas samudāyakah \\
etad dhi paramaṃ guhyam yatra loko na gāhate
\end{align*}
\]

TaSa 1.419c-421b

A blind person cannot see forms, even thus is a person whose mind is fixed on something else [cannot see things in front of him]. Since it is contradicted by what should be remembered (smaritavyābhicāritvāt); there is thus no aggregation (samudāya). Neither do eye[s] see forms, nor mind nor the aggregate [see]. For this is the highest secret into which ordinary people cannot enter.

Since the verses of TaSa are elliptical, my understanding of the word smaritavyābhicāritvāt is still tentative. However, the latter part of the quoted verses echoes a verse of the Bhavasaṃkrāntisūtra (hereafter BhSS): (na cakṣuḥ paśyate rūpaṃ mano dharmān na vetti ca | etad dhi paramaṃ satyaṃ yatra loko na gāhate \^[8\)]). BhSS is composed in proses and verses. In general, the verse section is regarded as a later interpolation to the prose part. BhSS was translated into Chinese three times around the sixth-seventh centuries, and all the versions contain the verse section, including this parallel verse. Also, because some verses were cited in the Prajñāpāramita literature, it is assumed that the present BhSS took its form in the middle of the fourth century. That is, this verse must have been be circulated earlier than the one in TaSa.

As the variants between TaSa and BhSS marked in bold show, it may be supposed that the idea of the word samudāya/samudāyaka in TaSa could allude to the soul (ātman) from the Śaiva perspective and also to the Buddhist concept five aggregates (pañca skandhāḥ). While Buddhists claim that there is no permanent substance like an ātman in beings, but five aggregates, TaSa teaches that the soul (ātman) is an evolute in a range of thirty-three tattvas, that is to say, the soul is expressed as samudāyaka, an aggregate of tattvas. The consciousness of ātman without any conceptualisation is not yet in its ultimate state unless it is united with Śiva, the highest tattva. Subsequently, TaSa claims that this aggregate cannot be the ultimate agent. Therefore, it is remarkable that the reading paramaṃ guhyam, “the highest secret” is introduced as implying the ultimate level in TaSa. This is a deliberate re-daction from the reading paramaṃ satyaṃ “the highest truth” in BhSS whose denotation is equivalent to absolute truth (paramārthasatya) in the two truths doctrine of the Madhyamaka school. In other words, TaSa might adopted the idea of this Madhyamaka verse about
emptiness in the relation to absolute truth and modified it to explain the absolute state of ultimate Śiva (paramaśiva) in which all tattvas are ultimately dissolved.

3. Conclusion

Apart from these examined passages, several shared verses between Śaiva and Vajrayāna texts can be seen. For instance, Jayaratha quotes a verse in his commentary on Tantrāloka 5:

\[
\text{yena yena nibandhyante jantavo raudrakarmaṇā} | \\
\text{sopāyena tu tenaiva mucyante bhavabandhanāt} ||
\]

By a terrifying magical rite, living beings are bound; by the same [action], they can be definitely freed from the binding of existence.

Indeed, this verse is found in Hevajratantra II.2.50 with one minor variant is \textit{hi badhyante} for \textit{nibandhyante}. Certainly this verse is more frequently quoted by Vajrayāna commentators, and it is associated with a significant proclamation of Tantric Buddhism, viz. \textit{rāgena badhyate loko rāgenaiva vimucyate} (“By passion, people are bound; precisely by the passion, they can be freed”). Jayaratha quotes this passage to support Śaiva doctrine, i.e., the bound state (ātman) can be liberated because of its state of being bound. Therefore, we can assume that there are certainly some ideas shared between two traditions and one could have borrowed the words of the other if it is not deviated from its own doctrine. In this case, however, TaSa has deliberately redacted words in order to suit the needs of TaSa’s non-dual Śaiva perspective.

Notes

1) Detailed information of the manuscript can be found in the bibliography [Sigla A, B, C]. Therein, the earliest manuscript is dated in the late eleventh century. As for the date of TaSa, according to its association with other texts, I assume that the current version of TaSa was redacted/compiled probably around no later than the tenth century.

2) More details of the intertextuality of this text with other Śaiva and Buddhist tantras are discussed in my unpublished dissertation. For example, an extensive passage and chapters were adopted from the Svacchandatantra, and adapted by a later Kaula work, the Kubjikāmata. AS for the textual borrowing with Vajrayāna texts, TaSa shows some close relationship with Śamvara literature, e.g., Vajrākā, Dākārṇavatantra, etc. See. Bang 2018.

3) TaSa 1.400c–401: 400c \textit{saṃsāraḥ} | A C, \textit{saṃsā} B; 400d \textit{tatau} | \textit{em. tatas} Σ; 401a \textit{naṣṭau} | \textit{em. naṣṭo} Σ; 401a \textit{manyante} B, manyate A C.

4) Candrakīrti quotes this verse and glosses the word \textit{lokaṇḍ} in YŚK 5 with \textit{saṃsāra} in his commentary.

5) TaSa 1.418c–419b: 418d \textit{koṭir} | \textit{em. koṭi} Σ; 418d \textit{mukteś ca} | \textit{conj. muktā ca} Σ; 419a \textit{na tayor} | \textit{conj.}
anayor Σ

6) TaSa 1.419c–421b: 419c paśyati | B C, paśyati A; 420a smaritavya- | em. smaritavyā- 420d manas samudāyaḥ | A B, manah samudāyaḥ C; 421b loko | em. līno A C, lī[ko] B

7) In the Tibetan version, this verse is numbered as 17th or 18th, while the Sanskrit text in Vinīta’s edition (2010, 444) is counted it as the 7th.

8) As for the discussion of the dates of the present BhSS’s formation and its Chinese translations, see Hakamaya 1977.

Abbreviations

[ ] uncertain aksaras are enclosed by [ ]
conj. conjecture
em. emendation
* lacuna
Σ all manuscripts
NAK National Archives, Kathmandu
NGMPP Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project
TaSa Tantrasadbhāva. See Bang 2018; Mss. A: NAK 5–445 NGMPP A 44–2, palm-leaf, dated Saṃvat 217, complete; B: NAK 1–362 NGMPP A 4–1, palm-leaf, incomplete; C: NAK 5–1985 NGMPP A 188–20 to A 189–1, paper, complete.
BhSS Bhavasaṃkrāntiśūtra. See Vinīta 2010.
YṢK Yuktisaṭṭikākārikā: editions of the Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese Versions, with commentary and a modern Chinese Translation. Ed. Li Xuezhu and Ye Shaoyong. Shanghai: Zhogxi Book Company, 2014.

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