

Abstract

On the abhiṣeka ritual of Yamāri cycle

Ken' ichi Kuranishi

Yamāri (enemy of Yama) is one of the fierce deities among the Buddhist tantric tradition. Yama, in origin a non- Buddhist deity, is familiar as the ruler of the underworld. Yamāri dominates this Yama who presides of death. Yamāri has basically two different forms from its characters, black and red. According to the Tibetan tradition, these three, the two Yamāris and Vajrabhairava., are concerned as the main deities of this cycle. There are many texts in the Yamāri cycle including the *Kṛṣṇayamāritantra*, the *Raktayamāritantra*, the *Vajrabhairavatantra*. They are also classified as the Yogottaratantra or Mahāyogatantra in the Indian Buddhist tantric distinction. In spite of the importance of Yamāri cycle, so far few detailed studies have been undertaken.

This paper focuses on the abhiṣeka ritual of Yamāri cycle through the *Yamāriṃaṇḍalopāyikā* written by Śrīdhara. It has only one palm leaf manuscript preserved in the Nepal National Archives(NGMPP B31/26) at present. It seems to be a significant text for the Yamāri cycle because, for instance, it was translated at least twice in Tibetan in different ages. This author, Śrīdhara, is known as the successor of Jñānapāda, the founder of the Jñānapāda school of the Guhyasamāja cycle. Fortunately, it is available to see the Sanskrit manuscript(edition published in Dhīḥ 42) of the ritual manual of Jñānapāda school, the *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi*, preserved in the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen (Cod. MS. Sanscr. 257, ff. 6v4-16v). On comparing both contents, we can easily notice that the *Yamāriṃaṇḍalopāyikā* was composed under the influence of it. Moreover, by means of other abhiṣeka texts of Jñānapāda school, this paper brings out the characteristics of the Yamāri abhiṣeka ritual.