

The Sanskrit text is attractively typeset in Devanāgarī script. My only complaint is that the print should be larger for both the text and apparatus—a constraint perhaps imposed by the press to save paper, but which makes it difficult to study the rich, multi-level critical apparatus, and unnecessarily taxing to read the text itself.

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The Brahmayāmalatantra or Picumata, vol. 1: *Chapters 1–2, 39–40, & 83: Revelation, Ritual, and Material Culture in an Early Śaiva Tantra*. By SHAMAN HATLEY. Collection Indologie, vol. 133; Early Tantra Series, vol. 5. Pondicherry: INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE PONDICHÉRY/ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE D'EXTRÊME-ORIENT/ASIEN-AFRIKA-INSTITUT, UNIVERSITÄT HAMBURG, 2018. Pp. xiv + 695. Rs 1600.

In 2007 Shaman Hatley completed a doctoral thesis entitled “The *Brahmayāmalatantra* and Early Śaiva Cult of Yoginīs,” a work that I consider to be the finest study of the Yoginīs written to date. Hatley never published that dissertation (although it is accessible online), and it is only now that he has brought out his first monograph on the subject of the same *Brahmayāmalatantra* (BraYā). This volume is neither simply one of “three separate projects . . . carried over” (p. v) from his dissertation nor, in spite of its title, a simple edition and translation of five chapters from that massive Tantra. Nor is it simply the first volume (albeit published three years after volume two: Csaba Kiss, *The Brahmayāmalatantra or Picumata*, vol. 2: *The Religious Observances and Sexual Rituals of the Tantric Practitioner: Chapters 3, 21, and 45. A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation* [Pondicherry: Institut Français de Pondichéry, 2015]) of a projected set of three critical editions and translations of portions of the BraYā (p. 22). Nor is it a return to the Yoginīs that were at the heart of the 2007 dissertation. They and their cults are not treated in any of the five chapters edited and translated here; however, as Hatley promises, these will figure prominently in the chapters of the BraYā slated to appear in a forthcoming volume three (p. 23). What one does find here are “heavily revised or re-written” passages excerpted from other parts of the original thesis, appearing as portions of chapter 1 and all of chapter 2 of the present volume’s part I, together with the edition and translation of the BraYā’s first two chapters, and an appendix (A) comprising a list of chapter titles and colophons in the work’s principal manuscript source (NAK 3-370). New here are editions and translations of the BraYā’s chapters 39, 40, and 83, together with Hatley’s extensive general introduction, a set of “topical studies” (chaps. 2 through 6) based on the BraYā chapters edited and translated in the book’s part II, and several additional appendices (B–F). Three of the chapters treated here (1, 39, and 83) “form a coherent group insofar as all three set forth narratives of origin” in contradistinction to the rest of the text, “which is otherwise almost entirely prescriptive in nature.” The subjects of these chapters are the mythology of the “descent” of the BraYā (chap. 1), the origin myth of the “streams” (*srotas*) of the broader Śaiva revelation (chap. 39), and the origin myth of the regalia and practice of the “Great Vow” (*mahāvratā*) (chap. 83). The BraYā’s chapters 2 and 40, prescriptive rather than narrative, treat of the work’s pantheon of mantra deities and the “Razor’s Edge Observance” of ascetic (non-orgasmic) coitus, respectively. I will not pass judgment on the quality of the edition and translation of this highly challenging text, since Hatley’s expertise in these matters surpasses my own. The critical apparatus is a model of erudition, with non-critical readings, grammatical and critical notes, and cross-references to dozens of other (mainly) tantric scriptures provided in remarkable detail. The edited text of the five translated chapters is provided in both Devanāgarī (part II) and romanized (appendix F) scripts.

After several introductory sections containing requisite information on the BraYā’s manuscript witnesses, editorial conventions, and so forth, the latter part of part I, chapter 1 provides the reader with what is to date the most comprehensive account of the BraYā’s redactional strata, relationship to other tantric scriptures (both Buddhist and Hindu, extant and non-extant), and, most importantly, the thorny

problem of the work's date. On the first count, Hatley suggests that the BraYā was compiled in three stages, roughly corresponding to chapters 1–50 (“the core of the old text”), followed by chapters 51–86, and chapters 87–104 (p. 65). Concerning the work's original “core,” Hatley notes its “close relationship to a lost text: the *Ucchuṣṣabhairavatantra*” (pp. 66–68, 185–93). Critical discussion of this possibly Buddhist ghost in the machine was studiously avoided by Kiss in his 2015 volume, concerning which I made a number of critical remarks in my review (*JAOS* 138.3 [2018]: 96–98). In the masterful balance of this long chapter, Hatley approaches this work from every possible angle: parameters for dating (pp. 71–76), situating the BraYā in tantric literature, both Hindu and Buddhist (pp. 76–124), internal evidence (pp. 124–28), geographical and social horizons (pp. 128–37), leading up to a final section comprising “provisional conclusions on the dating” of the text (pp. 137–41). Here, Hatley places the work “more or less in the seventh to eighth centuries” (p. 139), with its “old core” dating “perhaps between 650 and 700 CE” (p. 141).

Hatley's second chapter, on the multiple names by which the BraYā has called itself and been called by others, is uneven in terms of both its presentation of the material and the relevance of its content. His treatment of the name *Mūlatantra* (“Root Scripture”) occasions a review of the evolution of the various systematizations of the tantric canon, which culminated in the “normative” five-stream (*pañcasrotas*) model. Here, a set of three stemma representing the “descent of scripture” according to the BraYā and two other early sources (pp. 170–72) will be of interest to textualists. Approaching *Picumata*, the most opaque of these names, from every possible angle, Hatley concludes that this title is best translated as the “Doctrine Tantra of the Divine Phallus and Cosmic Womb.” This he does on the basis of various *niruktis* from the BraYā itself, which, taken together, indicate that *pi* denotes semen, the penis, and Śiva, while *cu* denotes menses, the vulva, and Śakti (pp. 153–59).

Oddly juxtaposed to this important datum is Hatley's chapter three, the least successful of the topical studies in the volume, which is based on the BraYā's fortieth chapter on the *asidhārāvratā* (“sword's edge practice”: Hatley prefers “razor's edge observance”). Devoted to the practice of coitus reservatus, this chapter is an outlier in a scripture otherwise overflowing with sexual emissions, as the title *Picumata* indicates. Hatley's characterization of this as “an inflection of a Brāhmaṇical observance of the same name” (p. 200), what “seems to be the first tantric ritual attested which involves sexual contact” (p. 203), and one of the “practices of Śaiva brahmin ascetics” that “found their way into the Mantramārga or Tantric Śaivism” (pp. 209–10) lays bare a contradiction lying at the heart of a scholarly convention concerning the advent of Śaiva Tantra. In a ritual system in which the *picu* figured “among the most important substances utilized in ritual . . . the *asidhārāvratā*'s focus upon ascetic mastery of sexual arousal and abjuration of orgasm [were] hence anomalous”—an assessment with which Abhinavagupta agreed, when he “viewed it as a form of penance (*tapas*) not specifically tantric in character” (p. 207). Yet, in spite of this, Hatley attempts to make the case that given its historical priority “this observance may have had a profoundly important role in the development of ‘tantric sex,’ and has continuity with a range of later practices emphasizing seminal retention” (pp. 207–8).

None of the works that preceded the Bhairava Tantras or the scriptures of the Mantrapīṭha—neither the orthodox teachings and rituals of the Śaivasiddhānta nor the demonological and magical content of the so-called *bhūta*-tantras and *gāruḍa*-tantras—were tantric. As Alexis Sanderson has shown for medieval Kashmiri royal protection rites (“Religion and the State: Śaiva Officials in the Territory of the King's Brahmanical Chaplain,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 47 [2004]: 251–54), much of the ritual content of these earlier canons simply involves Śaiva overcodings of Atharvanic rituals and traditions. To be sure, in their post-scriptural systematizations, later works would identify these as subdivisions of the greater tantric canon; but in spite of superficial similarities (a form of Śiva as supreme being, cosmology, ritual protocols) between the works of the Atimārga and Mantramārga on the one hand and, on the other, the Yāmala Tantras and Śakti Tantras of the Vidyāpīṭha—of which the BraYā is an exemplary work—the break between the two was not what Sanderson (“Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” in *The World's Religions*, ed. S. Sutherland et al. [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988], 679) long ago termed a “Kaula Reformation.” Rather, it was a paradigm shift, the emergence of a new religion, whose scriptures generally called themselves “Tantras.”

Unlike the exoteric Śaiva scriptures that preceded them, these esoteric works were, in the main, non-dualist and deeply invested in the “culture of the cremation ground,” subordinating forms of the male Śiva to all-powerful goddesses whose entourages were dominated by circles of yoginīs and elevating transactions in sexual emissions to the forefront of their ritual programs. This new religion—Tantra—whose traditions are recorded in the Vidyāpīṭha scriptures nonetheless acknowledged its (mainly) Mantramārgic foundation. This does not, however, authorize a teleological projection, back onto those earlier Śaiva ritual works, of the tantric moniker. A close analogy to this is the canon of the Christian Bible, whose “Old Testament” is none other than the scripture of another religion, Judaism—yet no responsible historian would claim the Jewish Bible to be a work of early Christianity.

Another scholarly convention to which Hatley subscribes, yet for which there is no hard data, concerns the “elusive Atimārga Kāpālikas” (pp. 248, 274), “whose texts are almost entirely lost” (p. 215) and for which there exists virtually no inscriptional evidence. To be sure, human and divine skull-bearers abound in Śaiva mythology and iconography (the subject of Hatley’s chap. 4), but these data do not constitute proof for the existence of the Kāpālikas as an “ascetic order” (p. 215). In my judgment, the tradition of the skull-bearing ascetic was a literary trope and, perhaps, the reflection of a period in the ritual life of the individual tantric practitioner, in which he followed a specific “great vow” (*mahāvratā*) in imitation of the great god Bhairava. This notwithstanding, Hatley’s treatment of the mythology of the origins of the skull and skull-staff is, from the standpoint of literary criticism, exemplary. The same may be said of the topical studies comprising Hatley’s chapters 5 and 6, devoted to the origin myth and description of another signal element of the regalia of tantric gods and practitioners, the skull-topped staff known as the *khaṭvāṅga*. Of especial interest in these chapters are Hatley’s hypothetical model of the staff (p. 293, fig. 6.1), which he bases on textual sources, the visual record, material culture (pp. 287–92), and “a degree of speculation” (p. 280).

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Zur Didaktik mittelindischer Sprachen. By KLAUS MYLIUS. Beiträge zur Kenntnis südasiatischer Sprachen und Literaturen, vol. 23. Wiesbaden: HARRASSOWITZ, 2013. Pp. 100. €24.

In the same series, with the same author and publisher:

Lehrbuch der Ardhamāgadhī. . . . , vol. 24. . . . , 2014. Pp. 110. €29.

Māhārāṣṭrī: Grammatischer Abriss und Wörterbuch. . . . , vol. 25. . . . , 2016. Pp. 131. €29.90.

Śaurasenī: Grammatik und Glossar. . . . , vol. 27. . . . , 2018. Pp. 89. €29.90.

Māgadhī: Grammatik, Textproben und Glossar. . . . , vol. 29. . . . , 2019. Pp. 74. €29.

The linguistic, literary, and religious riches of the various Middle Indo-Aryan languages are difficult of access for beginners, once they detour off the well-trodden path of Pāli. Although these languages have attracted scholars of remarkable skill—just to mention a few of the early giants like Jacobi, Pischel, and Weber and their worthy successors such as Alsdorf, Bloch, Caillat, von Hinüber, Lüders, Norman, again naming just a few. But tools that will allow a tyro to make a start on the study of these vernaculars, even a tyro with solid Sanskrit and Pāli, are harder to find. The still standard grammar, that of Richard Pischel (*Grammatik der Prakrit-Sprachen*, 1900), though packed full with matter, is extremely difficult to use; Mylius refers to it several times as “antididaktisch” (e.g., 2013: 5; 2018: 3), an assessment with which I wholeheartedly concur. Among other things, the word index in its original German version is barely over ten pages, despite the thousands of forms treated in the dense volume: one essentially has to know what the form is and what phonological changes it exemplifies to find it—rather defeating the purpose. Only in the English translation of Subhadra Jha (1957) do we find an adequate—or at least considerably better—index of approximately 150 pages. Oskar von Hinüber’s *Das ältere Mittelindisch im Überblick* (1985, 2nd enl. and rev. ed. 2001) is invaluable—and much easier to navigate than Pischel—but it is not, nor was it intended to be, a primary pedagogical tool.