Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana

by David Reigle

While the Tibetan lotsawas of old translated even Sanskrit names in their renowned translations of the Buddhist canonical texts, they left Sanskrit mantras untranslated. This is because the power of mantras is believed to derive from their sounds, sounds that could not be altered if this power was to remain intact. Thus we find that the mantras in the Kālacakra sādhana, like in all sādhana, are in Sanskrit, not in Tibetan.

Yet it is just here that, because of how foreign these sounds are, errors are most likely to creep in. Indeed we find that, over the centuries, the pronunciation of these sounds has altered, and, due to unfamiliarity with the words, even the spellings have been subject to scribal errors. One of the clearest examples of altered pronunciation may be seen in the case of the famous Vajrasattva mantra, widely used on its own for purification, and found as an integral part of many sādhana, including most of the fuller versions of the Kālacakra sādhana.

The 100-syllable Vajrasattva mantra as now pronounced may be seen in recent books on Tibetan Buddhism where it is given phonetically. From these, we see that the word Vajrasattva has become Benzar sato,1 Benzar satto,2 or Bedzra sato.3 These transformations of its pronunciation are largely due to it being pronounced as in modern Tibetan. We see the same thing in English, where Vajrasattva is pronounced as if it is an English word. But it is a Sanskrit word, and as such, the first syllable of Vajra should rhyme with “judge,” and the first syllable of sattva should rhyme with “hut.” If the early Tibetan translators gave such importance to preserving the Sanskrit sounds, we should make an attempt to pronounce them correctly.4

Then there is the question of meaning. The great majority of Sanskrit mantras have clear meanings that were meant to be
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana

understood. Their meanings form an important part of the sādhanas in which they are used, making what is happening there more comprehensible. For example, at the beginning of the full-length Kālacakra sādhana is this mantra:

\[
o\mu \text{ ah } h\text{um ho } h\text{am k}\text{sha prajñ\text{ōp}atyama-k\text{\-}k\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}citta-jn\text{\-}\text{\-}n\text{\-}\text{\-}dhipate mama k\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}citta-jn\text{\-}\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}j\text{\-}ra\text{\-}m\text{\-}tha-svabh\text{\-}av\text{\-}m k\text{\-}uru k\text{\-}uru skandha-dh\text{\-}\text{\-}tv-\text{\-}ayatan\text{\-}\text{\-}dika\text{\-}m ni\text{\-}\text{\-}svabh\text{\-}av\text{\-}m sv\text{\-}h\text{\-}a
\]

It was introduced with the phrase, “the mantra words purifying body, speech, mind, and primordial wisdom (jñāna) are: . . .” Leaving aside the untranslatable syllables, the straightforward grammatical meaning of this mantra is:

\[
o\mu \text{ ah } h\text{um ho } h\text{am k}\text{ha prajñ\text{\-}\text{\-}o p\text{\-}\text{\-}t\text{\-}m\text{\-}a-k\text{\-}y\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}k-citta-jn\text{\-}\text{\-}n\text{\-}dhipate mama k\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}citta-jn\text{\-}\text{\-}a-v\text{\-}j\text{\-}r\text{\-}m\text{\-}tha-svabh\text{\-}a v\text{\-}m k\text{\-}uru k\text{\-}uru skandha-dh\text{\-}tv-\text{\-}ayatan\text{\-}dika\text{\-}m ni\text{\-}svabh\text{\-}a v\text{\-}m sv\text{\-}h\text{\-}a
\]

This meaning would have been fully understood by the Indians who first used these mantras. But when translating the sādhanas in which they are found into Tibetan, the meaning had to be sacrificed for the sake of preserving the all-important sounds. When we know the meaning, the often seen mantra that comes shortly thereafter becomes much more comprehensible:

\[
o\mu \text{ svabh\text{\-}a-\text{\-}suddh\text{\-}a sarva-dharm\text{\-}a svabh\text{\-}a-\text{\-}suddho } \text{ham}
\]

\[
o\mu ; \text{ Naturally pure are all things; naturally pure am I.}
\]

It will therefore be of considerable usefulness to have English translations of the Sanskrit mantras included in the translations of the sādhanas. One can then do the prescribed meditations with greater understanding of what is occurring.
The Kālacakra sādhana that I am drawing from for the mantras discussed here is the full-length Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana by Śādhuputra, the only known Kālacakra sādhana to survive in the original Sanskrit.9 It consists of lengthy direct extracts from the Vimala-prabhā, “Immaculate Light,” the great commentary on the Kālacakra Tantra written by King Puṇḍarika of Śambhala. These were compiled and arranged by Śādhuputra, with brief connecting paragraphs condensed from the Vimala-prabhā. So most of this Kālacakra sādhana, except the middle section that names all the deities of the Kālacakra maṇḍala in metrical verses, is actually by Puṇḍarika, the author of the Vimala-prabhā, rather than by Śādhuputra. As such, it could hardly be more authoritative. Besides this, it has the advantage that it cannot be considered sectarian, since it was written in India, before the various orders of Tibetan Buddhism came into existence. It would therefore be the sādhana of choice as the most original form of the Kālacakra sādhana.

The Kālacakra sādhana has many elements in common with other Buddhist sādhanas, including a number of mantras. When we see elements in one sādhana after another, we know that these must be of basic importance. It will repay our time to try to understand these as fully as we can. Basic to all sādhanas of the highest yoga tantra class, such as Kālacakra, are the ideas of “clear appearance” and “divine pride.” Since these sādhanas consist of the visualization of oneself as a divine being, or devatā, in a divine residence, or maṇḍala, the “clear appearance” part is self-explanatory. One must make these visualizations appear to the mind as clearly as possible. The “divine pride” part means that you identify so fully with the divine being or deity you are visualizing that you feel a “sense of self” (ahaṃkāra) as that deity. So the idea of divine pride is literally “sense of self as the deity” (devatāhaṃkāra).11 Like almost everything else in these sādhanas, including the visualizations from seed-syllables, this is done through the use of mantras. Thus, for example, early in the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana we are instructed as follows: “Then [assert] the sense of self [as a divine form or deity, i.e., ‘divine pride,’ with this mantra]:”12
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana

ॐ sarvā-tathāgata-vajra-kāya-svabhāvātma‘koham

ॐ; I consist of the nature of the vajra body of all the Tathāgatas.

Again, we see that the meaning of these mantras is crucial to performing the sādhana with full consciousness of what is happening. Most of the mantras that are used to assert or affirm divine pride end with the phrase, svabhāvātma‘koham, “I (aham) consist of (ātmaka) the nature of (svabhāva) . . . .” Sometimes they only end with aham, “I.” Both of these kinds may be seen at the conclusion of the “circle of protection” (rakṣā-cakra) in the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana. All but the shorter Kālacakra sādhana s begin by generating a “circle of protection” within which the visualizations will take place. The Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana has a very extensive circle of protection, making up nearly a third of the sādhana. At its conclusion, one commands the ten wrathful protectors to take their places in the ten directions. To do this, one must first generate the divine pride, the sense or conviction of self as the lord and commander of the wrathful protectors, with the following mantra. This is a particularly clear example:13

ॐ हूँ क्रोधेन्द्रो ‘हम क्रोधानाम अज्ञादायकह स्वाहा

ॐ हूँ; Lord of the wrathful protectors am I, giver of commands to the wrathful protectors, svāhā!

Once again we see the necessity of understanding the meaning of these mantras. Then, after commanding each of the ten wrathful protectors to their places with an individual mantra, one completes the circle of protection portion of the sādhana by asserting and affirming the divine pride or conviction of self as the entire circle of protection, with this mantra:14

sarvā-tathāgata-rakṣācakra-svabhāvātma‘koham

I consist of the nature of the circle of protection of all the Tathāgatas.
Besides clear appearance and divine pride, there are three even more universal elements of Buddhist sādhana. These are found at the beginning of virtually all sādhana. First is refuge, then is generating bodhicitta, and last is dissolving everything into emptiness. At that point the visualizations of the particular sādhana actually begin. For the first of these a formula is often used. It is not a mantra, but can be recited like a mantra. It is:

buddham śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go for refuge to the Buddha (the enlightened one).

dharmaḥ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go for refuge to the dharma (the Buddhist teachings).

saṅghaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go for refuge to the saṅgha (the Buddhist community).

Although “refuge” has become the accepted translation of the word śaraṇa, it here has more the sense of “guidance,” and has also been translated as “safe direction.” The refuge formula cited above is so well known that it is not usually spelled out in the sādhana, which often just instruct the practitioner to go for refuge. They sometimes give alternative versions of the refuge formula, as is the case in the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana. For generating bodhicitta, the thought or determination to lead all living beings to enlightenment, and thereby free them from suffering, the various sādhana sometimes give different verses to recite. As with the refuge formula, the verses used for this are not mantras. Again, because it is so widely done, the sādhana often just tell the practitioner to generate bodhicitta, without spelling out how to do this. The Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana just tells us to recall the three roots (of virtue, or wholesome roots), the first of which is generating bodhicitta. Interestingly, the third of these is abandoning the sense of I and mine. Here, the same word is used that is used in the idea of divine pride, ahamkāra, “sense of self,” or “sense of I.” So we first abandon the sense of I in regard to our personal selves, and then affirm it in regard to the divine forms we visualize ourselves as.
Then, to dissolve everything into emptiness in preparation for beginning the visualizations of the particular  sādhanas, these  sādhanas frequently use the so-called emptiness mantra.20

\[ \text{oµ śūnyatā-śūnā-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'ham} \]

\[ \text{oµ; I consist of the nature of the primordial wisdom vajra of emptiness.} \]

We immediately recognize the characteristic phrase used for asserting and affirming divine pride. The idea here is that, even though we may in fact have only a conceptual understanding of emptiness, while doing this meditation we are to act as if we have a full and direct realization of emptiness. We are to really believe that we see everything as empty. Then we can begin the particular visualizations of our  sādhanas in the proper manner.

But what is the “primordial wisdom vajra”? In these texts, the word “vajra,” literally, “diamond,” refers to the ultimate nature of something. This ultimate nature, like a diamond, is “indivisible” (abhedya).21 Our body, our speech, and our mind each have an ultimate or vajra nature, which is that of a Buddha, and so does primordial wisdom.22 Primordial wisdom is  jñāna, distinguished from wisdom, prajñā, which it includes.23 It is the pure nondual knowledge where there is no distinction between the knower and the known, because all is empty. The primordial wisdom vajra is the overall vajra that includes the other three, the body vajra, speech vajra, and mind vajra. This vajra is therefore the ultimate or vajra nature of the universe; and this is why we identify with it in order to dissolve everything into emptiness. The vajra of primordial wisdom is described in the  Jñāna-siddhi by Indra-bhūti in these beautiful verses:24

46. It is not burnt by a conflagration, nor is it made wet by water. It is not cut by a sharp weapon, even with much effort.
47. Like space, it is without support, [all]-pervasive, and devoid of distinguishing characteristics. This is the highest truth, the unsurpassed vajra [or ultimate] primordial wisdom.
In the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana the emptiness mantra occurs as the first of a group of four such mantras on the four doors of liberation, namely, emptiness (śūnyatā), signlessness (animitta), wishlessness (apranihita), and non-activity (anabhisaṃskāra), as follows:\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{verbatim}
oṃ śūnyatā-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'haṃ ||
oṃ animitta-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'haṃ ||
oṃ apranihita-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'haṃ ||
oṃ anabhisaṃskāra-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'haṃ ||
\end{verbatim}

\textit{oṃ; I consist of the nature of the primordial wisdom vajra of emptiness.}
\textit{oṃ; I consist of the nature of the primordial wisdom vajra of signlessness.}
\textit{oṃ; I consist of the nature of the primordial wisdom vajra of wishlessness.}
\textit{oṃ; I consist of the nature of the primordial wisdom vajra of non-activity.}

Preceding the emptiness mantra the sādhanas often cite a famous verse that also affirms emptiness. Again, like the refuge formula, this is not a mantra. Rather, it is a metrical verse. These are normally chanted by Indian pandits. It goes as follows:\textsuperscript{26}

\begin{verbatim}
abhāve bhāvanābhāvo bhāvanā nāiva bhāvanā
itī bhāvo na bhāvalī syād bhāvanā nōpalabhyate
\end{verbatim}

When there is no existent thing, there is no meditation. Meditation, too, is not meditation. In this way an existent thing would not be an existent thing. Meditation is not [to be] found.

This verse sounds rather nonsensical. But once we know that it comes from the Guhyasamāja Tantra, where it occurs as verse 3 of chapter 2, we can check to see how it is explained in the Pradīpoddyotana commentary thereon by Candrakīrti. Here he explains it in this way:\textsuperscript{27}
In the absence of all subjects, the moving and the unmoving, there is no meditation, because there is no object of meditation. “Meditation, too, is not meditation” means: The meditation [taken as] existing, too, is not meditation, because there is no meditation even without [an object of meditation]. In this way an existent thing having [both] existence and nonexistence could not be [since these are contradictory]. Therefore, neither the object of meditation, the meditator, nor meditation are [to be] found. This is the literal meaning.

Candrakīrti then goes on to explain this verse in three more ways, the first of which relates it to the three (not four) doors of liberation: emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. He does not discuss the fourth door of liberation, non-activity, because this one is found in Kālacakra but not in Guhyasamāja, and his commentary is on the latter.

When everything has been dissolved into emptiness, the visualizations of the śādhanā proper can begin. These are done from seed-syllables, or bija-mantras. The seed-syllable of the main Kālacakra deity is quite unusual, in that it is a “stacked” syllable rather than a single syllable. It is seven letters written in a stack, one on top of the other. These form a single conjunct consonant cluster, and with the inherent vowel and concluding anusvāra, make the seed-syllable, ħkṣmlvryāṃ. Obviously, such a bija-mantra cannot be pronounced. So in the translations of the śādhanās the letters it consists of are usually written out in a string, one after the other, adding to each an inherent vowel: ha-kṣa-ma-la-va-ra-ya. This allows it to be pronounced, leaving only the question of where in this to put the anusvāra.

The anusvāra in Sanskrit is a dot placed above the stacked syllable. It represents an open nasal, which is transliterated as m, even though it does not quite have an m sound. It is sometimes written in phoneticized Tibetan as ng, as in the seed-syllable hung, which is properly transliterated as hūṃ, and rhymes with room. But the ng sound is no closer to the actual pronunciation than the m sound. It should really be somewhere in between the two, a sound that is not found in English. We will here use the
transliteration m. In the Tibetan texts, like in the Sanskrit texts, it is a dot placed above the stacked syllable. This syllable is often written in the sādhana translations, following the pronunciation of modern Tibetan teachers, as: haṃ-kṣa-ma-la-va-ra-ya, where the m is put after the first syllable. However, this is not allowable in Sanskrit, where the m must be placed after the last syllable, because it is the declensional ending; so: ha-kṣa-ma-la-va-ra-yaṃ.

As I have observed and noted elsewhere, at least some Tibetans, who have become familiar with Sanskrit now that they are living in India, have adopted this correct pronunciation.28

When the letters that make up this stacked bija-mantra are used independently, as they are in the Kālacakra sādhana, they must individually have a declensional ending. So Kālacakra is generated from haṃ rather than ha, and the wind mañḍala is generated from yaṃ rather than ya. The stacked seed-syllable of Kālacakra has not only an anusvāra overhead in the form of a bindu, or dot, but also a visarga in the form of a half-moon under this dot. While the anusvāra is transliterated as m, the visarga is transliterated as ḷ. It is a hard breathing that echoes the vowel preceding it. Thus, hoḥ is pronounced something like hoho. It is normally written in Sanskrit much like an English colon, two vertical dots that follow the letter. But in the stacked Kālacakra seed-syllable it is supposed to be represented by the half-moon overhead, under the dot.29 While six of the seven stacked letters take the anusvāra for their declensional ending when they are used independently, haṃ, maṃ, laṃ, vaṃ, raṃ, yaṃ, the other one takes the visarga for its declensional ending, kṣaḥ. These syllables, haṃ, etc., should rhyme with the English word “sum.” On top of all of these is a flame, representing a tenth soundless sound (nāda), thereby making the perfect ten of the Kālacakra mantra.

From emptiness emerge the bija-mantras or seed-syllables, and from these are generated the maṇḍala, i.e., the residence, and the deities who inhabit it. After these are visualized, there follows a key step. The deities who you have visualized are, at this point, your thought constructions, imagined deities called “pledge beings” (samaya-sattva). You now call in the real deities,
called “primordial wisdom beings” (jñāna-sattva), to merge with and vitalize the imagined deities. You do this with the mantra, \( jah \ hüm \ vaµ \ ho˙ \). With the sound \( jah \) you “invite” (āvāhana), or “draw in” (ākāraṇa) the primordial wisdom beings. For this, an implement that you as Kālacakra hold in one of your 24 hands is employed, the \( aṅkuśa \). An \( aṅkuśa \) is an elephant goad. The only thing comparable to this found in Western countries is a cattle prod. But an \( aṅkuśa \) not only has a point at the end, like a prod, it also has a hook near this pointed end. So the elephant can either be prodded forward with the pointed end, or pulled back with the hook. The use of this hooked goad when inviting the primordial wisdom beings makes the invitation, shall we say, more compelling.

Next the invited primordial wisdom beings or real deities are caused to enter (praveśana) the pledge beings or imagined deities with the sound \( hüm \). For this, another of the implements held in your many hands is employed, the \( vajra \). Then they are bound (bandhana) there with the sound \( vaµ \). For this, the rope you hold is employed. Lastly, with the sound \( ho˙ \) you cause them to be satisfied (toṣana) in their new situation. For this, your bell with its pleasing sound is employed. This four-syllable mantra, \( jah \ hüm \ vaµ \ ho˙ \), is used throughout Buddhist tantric practice, whenever the primordial wisdom beings are merged with the pledge beings, just as two of the above-cited mantras are used everywhere; namely, the purity mantra, \( oµ \ svabhāva-≈uddhå˙ \ sarva-dharmå˙ svabhāvå-≈uddho 'ham \), and the emptiness mantra, \( oµ \ śūnyatā-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātmako 'ham \).

The four syllables, \( jah \ hüm \ vaµ \ ho˙ \), are all too often seen in \( sådhana \) translations as \( jah \ hüm \ baµ \ ho˙ \), where \( baµ \) is wrongly written for \( vaµ \). This mistake results from how this mantra is found in the Tibetan \( sådhanas \) as transliterated from Sanskrit: \( dzah \ hüm \ baµ \ ho˙ \). While most translators know that the Tibetan letter \( dz \) transliterates the Sanskrit letter \( j \), even though there is a Tibetan letter \( j \), many do not know that the Tibetan letter \( b \) very often transliterates the Sanskrit letter \( v \), despite the fact that there is a Tibetan letter \( v \) (or \( w \)). Thus they correctly write \( jah \) for \( dzah \), but do not recognize that \( baµ \) is in fact \( vaµ \).
This problem originated in the Indian province of Bengal, where so many of the Sanskrit tantra manuscripts that were translated into Tibetan came from. There, the Sanskrit letters \( b \) and \( v \) are not usually distinguished. The letter \( v \) is written for both, but is pronounced and transliterated as \( b \). This may be seen in the name of the famous Bengali poet, Rabindranath Tagore, where the first part is the Sanskrit word, \( ravi \), meaning “sun,” not \( rabi \). So, when these mantras were transliterated into Tibetan a thousand years ago, the letter \( v \) was transliterated as \( b \).

This fact may quickly and easily be ascertained by checking the transliteration of book titles found in the Tibetan Buddhist canon, where we find “badzra” for “vajra,” etc. The problem of distinguishing \( v \) and \( b \), whether as written or as pronounced, is well recognized by Bengali Sanskrit pandits such as Benoytosh Bhattacharyya (whose first name is actually Vinayatoßa), editor of many Sanskrit Buddhist texts including the \( Sådhanamålå \). In this collection of \( sådhanas \) he distinguishes the Sanskrit letter \( b \) from \( v \) in writing (spelling, for example, \( bîja \) rather than the incorrect \( vîja \)), and always correctly writes \( vaµ \) rather than \( baµ \) for this \( bîja \)-mantra.

A fifth syllable is added to these four seed-syllables in the \( Śrī Kålacakra Sådhana \).\(^{30}\) To the \( bîja \)-mantras \( jaµ hîµ vaµ hoµ \) is added the syllable \( hîµ \). With this syllable the primordial wisdom beings and the pledge beings are made to fuse or become of the “same taste” (\( sama-rasikṣā, sama-rasibhūṭa \)).\(^{31}\) Lovely words, but what are these primordial wisdom beings that you are supposed to make merge with the pledge beings? What does it mean that the primordial wisdom beings are real deities as opposed to the pledge beings or imagined deities? Certainly Buddhism, like all Indian religions, accepted the existence of real invisible beings known as \( devas \), “shining ones,” often translated as gods. Is this what they are? It would seem not.

The deities (\( devatā, \) literally, “shining one-ness, or-hood”) called primordial wisdom beings (\( jñāna-sattvas \)) are described in the texts as the “purities” (\( viśuddhi \))\(^{32}\) of specific elements of our world. For example, the five Tathāgatas, also called Dhyāni Buddhas, are said to be the purities of the five aggregates...
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Śādhanā

(ksṇinda) that make up a human being. Their consorts are the purities of the great elements, earth, water, fire, etc. The Kālacakra Śaktis are the purities of the vital airs (prāṇa); and so on. As seen above, the jñāna-vajra, or primordial wisdom vajra, is the ultimate or vajra nature of the universe, since it includes the other three vajras, symbolically called body, speech and mind. Similarly, the jñāna-sattvas, or primordial wisdom beings, are the ultimate purities of the various things that make up the universe.

Understanding what these are helps us to understand the deity called Vajra-sattva, the “diamond being,” i.e., the ultimate nature of a being. There are the imagined samaya-sattvas, or pledge beings, the “real” jñāna-sattvas, or primordial wisdom beings, and just plain sattvas, ordinary beings such as ourselves. Vajrasattva, as the vajra or ultimate nature of a being, is then, in a certain sense, the ultimate nature of our very selves. But this diamond-nature is that of a Buddha, so Vajrasattva is thought of as the collective purity of the Buddhas.33 It is this that we are to call upon and identify ourselves with. This is done, as we have now come to expect, with a mantra, the 100-syllable Vajrasattva mantra, the great mantra of purification.

Over the centuries, used in a land where its language is foreign, errors have crept into this mantra, so that this great mantra of purification is itself now in need of purification. Of course, when recited with faith, this is not to say that it is not effective. But to have the effects that the Tibetan lotsaws of old tried to retain by carefully preserving its sounds, effects it had in old India where it was pronounced correctly and its meaning was accurately understood, its words must be restored to their purity. The correct spelling and meaning of this mantra are:34

οṁ vajrasattva, samayam anupālaya, vajrasattvatvenōpatiṣṭha, 
dṛḍho me bhava, suśoṣyo me bhava, supoṣyo me bhava, anurakto 
me bhava, sarva-siddhīm me prayacchā, sarva-karmasu ca me 
cittām śreyāḥ kuru hūṃ, ha ha ha hoh, bhagavan sarva- 
tathāgata-vajra, mā me munīca, vajrī-bhava mahā-samaya-sattva, 
āḥ
Om. Vajrasattva, keep [your] pledge. As Vajrasattva, stand near [me]. Be steadfast toward me. Be well pleased with me. Be well fulfilled on account of me. Be attached to me. Grant me all accomplishments; and in all actions make my thought beneficent, hūṃ. Ha ha ha ha ho˙. O Blessed One, Diamond-nature of all the Tathāgatas, do not abandon me. Be of diamond-nature, O great pledge being, āh.

Vajrasattva is a synthesis of the five Tathāgatas, or Dhyāni Buddhas, being their collective ultimate nature. The syllables “ha ha ha ha ho˙” in this mantra are their seed-syllables. Each of the five has a “family” (kula), and the Tathāgata at the head of a family is depicted in the crown of each deity in that family. Kālacakra is crowned with Vajrasattva in the first part of the Kālacakra sādhana, indicating that Kālacakra is here considered to be in Vajrasattva’s family; i.e., that Kālacakra is an emanation of Vajrasattva. This means that for this part you as Kālacakra are also identified with Vajrasattva. In the second part, Kālacakra is crowned with Akṣobhya, indicating that Kālacakra is regarded here as being in the family of the Tathāgata Akṣobhya.

The Kālacakra sādhana in its standard form, such as in the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana, has four parts, not counting the circle of protection that precedes these. The second part repeats what was done in the first part, the main difference being the deity in Kālacakra’s crown. These two parts of the sādhana involve lengthy visualizations, while the last two parts are brief. So the visualizations that are done in the first part, in which Kālacakra is crowned with Vajrasattva, and repeated in the second part, form the primary portion of the Kālacakra sādhana.

The full Kālacakra sādhana includes a very large number of mantras. These all necessarily come from the great Kālacakra commentary Vimala-prabhā, “Immaculate Light.” These mantras are more or less corrupt in all existing sādhanas, due largely to copyists’ errors. The three known Sanskrit manuscripts of the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana abound with clerical errors. The good news is that several older Sanskrit manuscripts of the Vimala-prabhā exist, including a highly accurate palm-leaf manuscript
in Old Bengali script. This is a superb manuscript from near the time of the Tibetan translations. With these and the help of the early Tibetan translations, it is now possible to restore to full accuracy all the mantras of the Kālacakra sādhana. Since the corrected mantras can now be saved as electronic files, they no longer need to be hand copied. This is the step in which most of the errors were introduced, whether it was the copying of an earlier manuscript to a later one, the copying of a manuscript to a woodblock for carving, or the setting up of an edited text into type for printing. The sādhana in which to do this is the Śrī Kālacakra Sādhana, because it consists mostly of direct extracts from the Vimala-prabhā, already arranged as a sādhana. Once this is done, the mantras in all Kālacakra sädhana anywhere in use can be corrected on the basis of those found in this sädhana.

NOTES


4. For correct pronunciation of Sanskrit, the vowels are the most important. The short “a” is pronounced like English “u” in the word “but.” The long “â” is pronounced like “a” in “father.” The short “i” is like in “kit.” The long “î” is pronounced “ee” as in “feet.” The short “u” is like in “put,” not like in “united.” The long “û” is pronounced “oo”
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Śādhanas

as in “boot.” The vowel “ᵣ” is kind of like the “ᵣᵢ” in trip, but is trilled. The vowel “ᵣᵢ” is kind of like the “le” in “able.” The “ₑ” is pronounced like English “ay” as in “day.” The “ai” is like the vowel in the word, “tie.” The “o” is like in “go.” The “au” is like the vowel in the word “cow.” For consonants, the main things are: The “c” is pronounced “ch.” The “th” and “ฤ” are pronounced “ta,” and aspirated. They are not like the English “th” sound. The “ś” and “ṣ” are pronounced “sh.”

5. That the meanings of the mantras used in the śādhanas were meant to be understood may be seen, for example, by the statement in the Abhisamayāmanoṣṇi of Śubhākara Gupta, ed. by Samdhong Rinpoche and Vrajvallabh Dwivedi, Sarnath, Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1993, p. 5, “having recited ‘oṃ śūnyatā-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātma ‘ham’ with recollection of the meaning” (oṃ śūnyatā-jñāna-vajra-svabhāvātma ‘ham ity arthāntarṣimaṇaḥocaya).

6. Kālacakrabhagavatsādhanavidhiḥ, p. 129. See note 9 below for full bibliographic data.

7. kāya-वक-citta-jñāna-world-mantra-pādāni bhavanti.

8. Kālacakrabhagavatsādhanavidhiḥ, p. 130. See note 9 below for full bibliographic data.

9. This was published as “Kālacakrabhagavatsādhanavidhiḥ of Dharmākaraśaṇṭi,” in Dhiḥ: Journal of Rare Buddhist Texts Research Project, Sarnath, vol. 24, 1997, pp. 127-174. But as pointed out by Yong-hyun Lee, this is actually the Śrī Kālacakra Śādhana by Śādhoputra, found in the Tibetan Tengyur (Tohoku no. 1358; Peking no. 2075). According to the colophon in this Tibetan Tengyur translation, which is much earlier than the late Nepalese manuscripts where it is ascribed to Dharmākaraśaṇṭi, it was written for Dharmākaraśaṇṭi, not by him. See: The Nippannayogāvalī by Abhayākara-gupta: A New Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Text (Revised Edition), by Yong-hyun Lee, Seoul: Baegun Press, 2004, p. xii, fn. 28. I have used this śādhana since the 1980s, when I obtained microfilms of Sanskrit manuscripts of it from libraries in Nepal and Japan.

10. Although the title Vimala-prabhā has now become more widely known in its translation as “Stainless Light,” I have preferred the no less accurate “Immaculate Light.” This I have adapted from Edward Fitzgerald’s “Immaculate Lustre,” found in his English translation of Helmut Hoffmann’s book, The Religions of Tibet, 1961, pp. 129, 162.
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana

11. For the term devatāhaµkåra, see, for example, Saddhanamålå, ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, vol. 1, Baroda: Central Library, 1925; Gaekwad’s Oriental Series no. 26, p. 258.


15. The Buddhist Catechism, by Henry S. Olcott, 44th ed., 1915, fn. to para. 149, citing a letter from Wijesinha Mudaliyar, “This word has been hitherto very inappropriately and erroneously rendered Refuge by European Pāli scholars, and thoughtlessly so accepted by native Pāli scholars. Neither Pāli etymology nor Buddhistic philosophy justifies the translation. Refuge, in the sense of a fleeing back or a place of shelter, is quite foreign to true Buddhism, which insists on every man working out his own emancipation. The root Sri in Sanskrit (Sara in Pāli) means to move, to go: so that Saranam would denote a moving, or he or that which goes before or with another—a Guide or Helper. I construe the passage thus: Gachchhāmi, I go, Buddhām, to Buddha, Saranam, as my Guide.”


18. The generating of bodhicitta is often done in association with the four immeasurables: loving kindness (maitrī), compassion (karuñā), sympathetic joy (mudita), and equanimity (upekṣā). So the verse or verses recited for this may include these, as is the case in the Kālacakra Six-Session Guru Yoga by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

19. The three roots of virtue, or wholesome roots (kusala-mūla), are listed in Nāgārjuna’s Dharma-saµgraha, 15, as: (1) the generation of bodhicitta (bodhicittotpāda); (2) the purification of [one’s] intentions or motivations (aśaya-viśuddhi); and (3) the abandoning of the sense of I and mine (aḥaµkāra-mamakāra-parityāga).

20. This mantra has been called the “śūnyatā-bodhako mantraḥ,” the mantra awakening one to emptiness; see: Saddhanamålå, vol. 1, p. 315.
21. The word “vajra” is regularly defined as “indivisible” (abheda) in the Buddhist tantric literature. For example, Advaya-vajra cites this definition from the Hevajra Tantra (1.1.4) in his Sekatānvaya-saṅgṛaha or Sekatātparyasamgraha, with the words: abhedyam vajram iti hevajre. See: Advayavajarasaṃgraha, ed. Haraprasad Shastri, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927; Gaekwads Oriental Series no. 40, p. 37. This was re-edited in: “Advayavajarasaṃgraha—New Critical Edition and Japanese Translation,” ed. Mikk-Seeiten Kenkyukai (Study Group for the Buddhist Tantric Texts), Part 2, Annual of the Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University, no. 11, March 1989, p. 231 (114).


23. Translators are always faced with the question of how to deal with closely related words such as jñāna and prajñā. The translation “wisdom” for prajñā has become widely accepted, as in the “perfection of wisdom” (prajñā-pāramitā), although a few translators use “insight” for it instead. But what, then, do we do with jñāna, which also means wisdom? Here there is no general consensus among translators. Some prefer “knowledge,” its basic meaning in common Sanskrit. But in Buddhism it is a technical term, as was recognized by the early Tibetan translators, and shown by their rendering of it as yešes. In this word, yeśes translates the Sanskrit root jñā, “to know,” qualified by ye, meaning primordial or pristine, or exalted or sublime. Thus, it was understood to mean not just knowledge, but pristine or sublime knowledge; and modern translators often add these qualifying words. Many translators (including myself) prefer “wisdom” over “knowledge” for jñāna, even though “know” is linguistically cognate with “jñā.” In English, you can have knowledge of how to make gunpowder, or how to pick a lock, for example, but this would not be considered wisdom. Some translators have adopted the also linguistically cognate “gnosis” for jñāna. This word, however, is little used in English, being primarily a technical term of the now defunct Gnostic sects, and few people know what it means without looking it up in the dictionary. By contrast, jñāna is
widely used in Sanskrit, and even as a technical term in Buddhism it still retains its well-known meaning of knowledge. Other words that have been used to translate *jñāna* are “cognition” and “awareness,” with or without qualifying words such as pristine, and also “intuition.” All of these provide helpful insights into the meaning of *jñāna*, but in my opinion unduly restrict its meaning more to aspects of knowledge or wisdom rather than providing the central idea itself. Therefore, to distinguish *jñāna* from *prajñā*, as the Tibetan translators always did, and which has proven so helpful over the last thousand years, I have chosen “primordial wisdom” for *jñāna*. I note that Alan Wallace uses this in his translation of Gen Lamrimpa’s book, *Transcending Time: The Kālacakra Six-Session Guru Yoga*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1999.

24. The *Jñāna-siddhi* was published in *Two Vajrayāna Works*, ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1929; Gaekwad’s Oriental Series no. 44, where these two verses occur on p. 36:

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dahyate nāgni-skandhena plāvyate na jalena ca l
bhidyate nahi śāstreṇa tikṣṇenāpi prayatnataḥ l 46 ll
apratiṣṭhāṇa yathākāśaṃ vāpi laksana-varjitaṃ l
idaṃ tat paramaṃ tatvaṃ vajra-jñānam anuttaram l 47 ll
```

Even though this Sanskrit edition has been available for more than 75 years, there still seems to be no English translation of it. The first of these verses is reminiscent of *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.23: “Weapons do not cut this; fire does not burn it. Water does not wet it; nor does wind dry it.”


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dngos po med la bsgom [sgom] pa med
sgom pa sgom pa nyid na yin
de ltar dngos po dngos min pas [mi 'gyur]
sgom pa dngigs su med pa’o
```

27. This is in: *Guhyasamājatantraprādīpodyotanaṭīkā-ṣaṭkāṭīvyākhyā*, ed. Chintaharan Chakravarti, Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research
Institute, 1984; Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series no. 25, p. 31. The text found in this edition differs somewhat from the Tibetan translation. My translation is of the Sanskrit, but I have had to correct it in three places with the help of the Tibetan. These are given in brackets below. The two longer bracketed phrases in my translation are based on the differing Tibetan text, which is also given below in full.

`sthira-bala-[cala]-sarva-padārthānām abhāve satī bhāvanāyā abhāvaḥ bhāvyābhāvāt | bhāvanā nāiva bhāvanēti | yāpi sato [satī] bhāvanā sā na bhāvanā, vināpi bhāvanāyā [a]vidyamāntvāt iti līthāṃ bhāvābhāvāyukto yo bhāvaḥ sa na syāt | tasmād bhāvyaḥ bhāvako bhāvanā nōpalabhyate | aksarakārttakaḥ l`

`brtan pa dang g.yo ba’i dngos po thams cad kyi ngo bo nyid ni med pa yin na ni sgm pa med pa ste bsgom par bya ba med pa’i phyir ro l bsgom par bya ba bsgom pa min l zhеs bya ba ni l gang yod par bsgom pa de yang bsgom pa ma yin te l bsgom par bya ba dang bral bas yod pa ma yin pas so l de ltar zhеs pa ni dngos po med pa dang dngos po yod par ’dod pa dang ldan pa gang yin pa de ni dngos po med pa nyid de phyogs gnyi ga dang ’gal lo l de bas na bsgom par bya ba dang sgm pa po dang bsgom pa dngigs su med pa ste yi ge’i don to l`


“The founder and former longtime Director of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies is Samdhong Rinpoche, currently Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Although I knew that Tibetans studying there had to learn Sanskrit pronunciation, it was still a pleasant surprise to me to hear Samdhong Rinpoche pronounce the Kalacakra heart mantra in the Sanskrit fashion. He did this during a break in our 1997 discussions on his ideas of how to have a nonviolent society. When he pronounced the nasal after the last syllable, as is required in Sanskrit, rather than after the first syllable, as is the current practice among Tibetan Lamas, I expressed my surprise. He replied that of course he followed the Sanskrit pronunciation. Why wouldn’t he when the original is now available?”

29. Vimalaprabhāṭīkā, vol. 1, p. 56: `visarga ardha-candrākāro,” “visarga is in the form of a half-moon.”`

20  Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana

evaṃ pañca-prakāraṃ jaḥ-kāreṇākṛṣṭam, hūṃ-kāreṇa praviṣṭam, vam-
kāreṇa baddham, hoḥ-kāreṇa toṣitam, hiḥ-kāreṇa sama-rasikṛtaṃ | vajrānkuśena vajreṇa vajra-pāṣena vajra-ghanṭayā vajra-daṇḍenēti | evaṃ jñāna-cakraṃ saṃpūja pūrvavat samaya-cakraṃ sama-
rasibhūtaṃ bhāvayed iti niyamah |

See also: *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā* 3.79, vol. 2, pp. 78-79.

32. *Kālacakra Sādhana and Social Responsibility*, by David Reigle, Santa Fe: Spirit of the Sun Publications, 1996, pp. 42-43: “The primary sources on this are, of course, the *Kālacakra Tantra* and the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary. The symbolism is generally introduced in the commentary by the words, ‘Now the purification of . . . is stated’ (*idānīḥ . . . viśuddhir ucyate*). Much of it is given in the latter part of the third section (*uddeśā*) of the fourth chapter (*patala*) of the *Vimalaprabhā*, ‘Generation of the Life and the Deities’ (*prāṇa-devatā-utpāda*), verses 95-109. Other references include chapter three, verses 52-55, 160-164, 167-168, etc.”

33. See: *The Tantric Path of Purification: The Yoga Method of Heruka Vajrasattva*, Lama Thubten Yeshe, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, pp. 141-142 (2nd ed., 2004, with new title: *Becoming Vajrasattva: The Tantric Path of Purification*): “Who is Heruka Vajrasattva? We consider him to be a manifestation of the unity of fully developed male and female energy, the complete purity of the state of enlightenment. Out of their great compassion and limitless love, the buddhas and bodhisattvas have manifested their collected purity in the archetypal image of Vajrasattva so that we can identify ourselves with him. We have to understand that the qualities of Vajrasattva are already within us. But our realizations, method, and wisdom are limited. They have to be developed through identification with the limitless, pure energy of the archetype.”

34. This is from my unfinished article, “The Vajrasattva Mantra: Sanskrit Edition and English Translation,” for which I have utilized many Sanskrit and Tibetan sources. For example, I have noted eight occurrences of the Vajrasattva mantra in the *Sādhanaṃalā*, and these occur seven times in the two old palm-leaf Sanskrit manuscripts that were reproduced in facsimile by Gudrun Bühnemann in the *Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde*, vol. 32, 1994. One of
the manuscripts came from Bu-ston’s Ža lu Monastery in Tibet. These same Šādhanamālā occurrences of this mantra are found fourteen times in the Tibetan Tengyur, and in four Tengyur editions. So a fair number of sources have been checked to establish the correct form of this mantra. The most common error in modern books is taking the second occurrence of Vajrasattva as a vocative; that is, as addressing Vajrasattva twice. In fact, this word is Vajrasattvatvena, having the -tva suffix, and declined in the third or instrumental case. This declined suffix, literally “by being,” means “as being”; thus, “as Vajrasattva.” Even though mantras are not normally translated into Tibetan, a few translations were made, and these confirm this word, giving: rdo rje sens dpa’ nyid, where the nyid translates the Sanskrit suffix -tva. There are many other errors in modern English translations of this mantra, which translations should be compared with the one given here.

35. This manuscript is found in the library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, where it is no. 10766. The usefulness of this manuscript may be seen by the following. Abhayākara-gupta in his Niśpannayogāvali gives the Kālacakra heart mantra or seed-syllable (hṛd-bīja). It is given as hūṃ in the 1949 edition by Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, published in the Gaekwad’s Oriental Series, no. 109, from Baroda, p. 93. For more than half a century, this was the only edition. Then in the 2004 new critical edition by Yong-hyun Lee (see note 9 above) it is given as hram instead (p. 113). The editor adopted this reading on the basis of the printed edition of the Vimalaprabhāṭikā and only a single old palm-leaf manuscript, as against several other later manuscripts and even the two Tibetan translations of the Niśpannayogāvali. In a footnote on p. xv he notes that, “There is a possibility that the editor of the VP misread the reading of the most excellent manuscript Ca.” This refers to the variant readings given in the Vimalaprabhāṭikā, vol. 2, p. 80, where the manuscript designated Ca, the Calcutta manuscript in Old Bengali script that we are discussing, is listed as reading hūṃ rather than hram. In fact, this most excellent manuscript reads hram, as I have verified from a microfilm of it in my possession. Thus, it confirms that the true Kālacakra heart mantra or seed-syllable (hṛd-bīja) is hram, despite the large number of later sources giving it as hūṃ.

[Note, November 2010: This is an error. The correct seed-syllable is in fact hūṃ (or hūṃ), not hram. See the following for details.]
Correction Regarding the Kålacakra Heart Seed-syllable:

Abhayākara-gupta in his Nīspanna-yogāvalī describes 26 Buddhist tantric maṇḍalas for visualization in meditation, of which Kålacakra is the 26th. He tries to give the heart seed-syllable (ḥṛḍ-ḥīja) for the primary deity of each of the 26 maṇḍalas. For Kålacakra, he gives this as hūṃ (long u), as found in almost all known Sanskrit manuscripts and Tibetan blockprints. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya’s 1949 printed Sanskrit edition of this text, based on three Sanskrit manuscripts, also gives it as hūṃ (long u) in accordance with them. Then in 2004 a new critical edition of the Nīspannayogāvalī was published, based on more and older Sanskrit manuscripts, and also several Tibetan blockprints. The editor, Yong-hyun Lee, calls attention to the problem of the heart seed-syllables, especially in regard to Kålacakra, in his Introduction, p. xv:

Probably the most formidable textual problem of the NPY [Nīspannayogāvali] is restoring the correct seed-syllables and heart-mantras which are prescribed mostly at the end of each chapter of the NPY. A satisfactory resolution of this problem seems at first sight to depend on their identification in the tantras related to the NPY. Even the use of all available Sanskrit MSS and the Tibetan translations would not help us without this work. There are, however, two problems for this identification: First, it is not easy to find them in the tantras; second, there is no guarantee they are the correct seed-syllables and heart-mantras, unless the tantras have been critically edited. Moreover, even though we have critically edited Sanskrit texts, some seed-syllables and heart-mantras may be disputed; the seed-syllable of Kålacakra seems to be one of the best examples, i.e. hṛṇḍ̄ versus hūṃ.

Here Yong-hyun Lee adds a footnote:

I would prefer hṛṇḍ̄ to hūṃ, following the critical edition of the Vimalaprabhā (VP II) and the oldest Sanskrit MS of the NPY. See verse 82 of the third chapter of the KCT (VP II 80, 14 & 22) . . .
There is a possibility that the editor of the VP misread the reading of the most excellent manuscript Ca. On *hraṃ*, the seed-syllable of Kālacakra, see also Tanaka 1994: 60.


Yong-hyun Lee did indeed accept *hraṃ* as the correct reading for the Kālacakra heart seed-syllable (*ḥād-bīja*) in his critical edition of the *Nīśpannayogāvalī*, where it is given on p. 113. He there says in a footnote that this was emended in accordance with N 1, an abbreviation for what is by far the oldest and best Sanskrit manuscript we have of the *Nīśpannayogāvalī*, and that Bh, N 2, K, KT, N 3, N 4, S, and T all have *hūṃ* (long u). These are abbreviations for the other Sanskrit manuscripts and Tibetan blockprints that he used. Then he refers us to “verse 82 of the third chapter of the KCT (VP II 80, 14 & 22) in which *hraṃ* is found.”

When Yong-hyun Lee kindly sent me a copy of his book, I did check the reading of “the most excellent manuscript Ca,” i.e., the very old palm-leaf manuscript of the *Vimala-prabhā* preserved at the library of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, which I have a microfilm of. Dr. Lee was right in saying that “There is a possibility that the editor of the VP misread the reading” of this manuscript, on verse 82 of chapter three. Contrary to the footnote to “*hraṃ*” in line 22 on p. 80 of vol. II of the printed edition of the *Vimalaprabhā*, saying that manuscript *Ca* has “*hūṃ*,” this manuscript in fact has “*hraṃ*” there. At this point, having little leisure to check this any further, I accepted that Yong-hyun Lee’s adoption of *hraṃ* as the Kālacakra heart seed-syllable was correct. This led to my statement in the last backnote of my article in *As Long as Space Endures*, p. 315, that now needs to be corrected.

On Aug. 3, 2010, Edward Henning emailed me, questioning my statement given there. He wrote:

I wonder why you consider the “*hraṃ*” on p. 80 to be the seed? It is certainly the basis of the second or third most important mantra for Kālacakra, but I do not see why it should be called the seed.
Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Śādhanā

In the couple of lines following the sentence that concerns “hraṃ,” we are told that the seed of Viśvamātā is “phreṃ,” that the mantra of both deities together is “ḥkṣumīrṇyāṃ” and that the awareness-seed for the generation of Kālacakra himself is “huṃ” (as is so often the case, the Tibetan has a short huṃ and the Sanskrit a long one). Are you suggesting perhaps that “hraṃ” is the seed for both deities together?

Also, on p. 59-21, we have “huṃ” identified as the seed (sa bon, bija) of Kālacakra, and as the character which is to be drawn in the centre of the maṇḍala. No separate one is given for the consort here.

Also, during the śādhanā (p. 177-25), after Kālacakra and the retinue dissolve into a ball of light, when requested by the goddesses to reappear, the ball of light changes into a “huṃ” and then a vajra. Surely, that is exactly what we mean by a seed? (Again, for these two, most Sanskrit ms. have long, Tibetan has short.)

In answer to the first question that Edward raised, I relied on Abhayākara-gupta in Yong-hyun Lee’s critical edition of his Nīspanna-yogāvalī when calling hraṃ the Kālacakra heart seed-syllable (hṛd-bija), thinking that Abhayākara-gupta had a much wider knowledge of Kālacakra than I do. But I, too, had wondered why this was not more clear in the Vimala-prabhā. Edward’s questions led me to then look more carefully at the hraṃ in verse 82 of chapter 3 of the Kālacakra Tantra and the Vimala-prabhā commentary thereon. At the time I received Yong-hyun Lee’s edition, I did not have time to thoroughly look into what he wrote therein, but only checked the reading of the Calcutta manuscript of the Vimala-prabhā at the place he referred to. Looking later, I see that the hraṃ refers to the six mantras that are placed on the six “limbs” (aṅgā) starting with the heart, also found on p. 33, lines 12-14, all beginning with “hr.” Further, the Vimala-prabhā commentary on the next verse calls the six “hr” syllables the upahṛdaya, not the ḫṛdaya or heart mantra. It is possible that Dr. Lee (and K. Tanaka?) did not realize that. So hraṃ would not be the Kālacakra heart seed-syllable.
The following verse, chapter 3, verse 83, as Edward said, tells us that हुम is the awareness or wisdom (ज्ञान) seed-syllable of कालाक्राक. This agrees with the other reference he gave, to p. 59, line 21 (verse 57), where the हुम syllable is the seed of कालाक्राक. These provide strong evidence in favor of the हुम (long u) reading found in almost all of the known निष्पांनायोगावलि manuscripts. The हुम (long u) reading is also found in all the Tibetan editions cited and reported by Yong-hyun Lee, four of which I was able to check myself (the Tibetan translation of the निष्पांनायोगावलि made by सक्या-श्री-भद्रा found in the Peking, Narthang, Derge, and Co-ne editions of the Tengyur). In the absence of support for ह्राम from the कालाक्राक Tantra and विमला-प्रभाक, the only remaining source for this is what is described as being by far the oldest and most correct Sanskrit manuscript of the निष्पांनायोगावलि. This manuscript had been reproduced in the 1991 book, निष्पांनायोगावलि: Two Sanskrit Manuscripts from Nepal. But I did not have it, and I waited for three months to try to see it.

Then, since the evidence against ह्राम was already quite sufficient, I decided that I should not wait any longer to post the correction. So I contacted Edward to let him know and to get his permission to quote him, and the next day I received from him not only his permission but also a scan of the folio in question! As I suspected might be the case, this good old palm-leaf manuscript actually has हुः as the कालाक्राक heart seed-syllable, not ह्राम. In old Newari script, the short उ is hard to distinguish from the subjoined र. The difference is often minute, and it is very easy to misread these. With the lack of support from this last remaining source, the case for ह्राम as the कालाक्राक heart seed-syllable has evaporated. We no longer have to use the qualifying word “almost.” We can now say that Abhayākara-gupta in all known Sanskrit manuscripts and Tibetan blockprints of his निष्पांनायोगावलि gives हुः as the कालाक्राक heart seed-syllable (हुः-बिज).

The only question now remaining is whether it is हुः (short उ) or हुम (long उ). This old Sanskrit manuscript is our sole निष्पांनायोगावलि witness for हुः (short उ), as even the Tibetan translations of this text all have हुम (long उ). But this is another question for another time.