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# Buddhist and Śaiva Interactions in the Kali Age

## *The Śivadharmasāstra as a Source of the Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*

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### Abstract

In a much-discussed passage of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* it is taught that Avalokiteśvara produced Maheśvara from his forehead. Maheśvara is introduced as a representative of the degenerative Kali age. In this connection, the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* quotes a doctrinal verse about the worship of the *liṅga*, which for a long time has been mistakenly attributed to ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’, but whose source can now be identified in the *Śivadharmasāstra*. After a comparative discussion of this verse in both texts, the article considers the possible broader implications of this quotation, in particular in relation to the question of the origin of the six-syllabled mantra *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ* and its Śaiva counterpart *oṃ namaḥ śivāya*. The article concludes with some observations on distinctive features that characterise Śaiva versus Vaiṣṇava interactions with Buddhism.

### Keywords

*Kāraṇḍavyūha* – *Śivadharmasāstra* – *Skandapurāṇa* – Avalokiteśvara – Maheśvara (Śiva) – *liṅga*

### 1 Introduction

A remarkable passage in the Mahāyāna Buddhist *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* tells how Avalokiteśvara produced several Brahmanical deities from different parts of his body, including Maheśvara from his forehead. The passage at issue has been discussed by a number of Buddhist scholars, most recently by Vincent Eltschinger (2014). In my review of his book for this journal (Bisschop 2015), I was able to identify the *Śivadharmasāstra* as the underlying source of a hitherto untrace-

able verse in this episode. Here I return to this subject once more, to address some of the broader possible implications of this identification.

While the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* was for long held to be a quite late text—Lalou (1938: 400) and Burnouf (1844: 196) date it as late as the 9th–10th c. CE—in more recent years scholars have pushed for a much earlier time of composition. Most notable, Alexander Studholme (2002: 13–14), in his study on the origins of the mantra *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*, has dated it as early as the 4th–5th c. CE.<sup>1</sup> Central doubts remain, however, because the text has in fact come down to us in several versions. The earliest version, surviving in two Gilgit manuscripts, one of which is incomplete but still contains a considerable number of folios, the other consisting of just a single folio, has been edited and published by Adelheit Mette (1997).<sup>2</sup> These two manuscripts have been dated on paleographical grounds to 630 CE, at the latest (Mette 1997: 9). This would give a *terminus ante quem* of the late 6th or early 7th century for the text. The other and more well known version of the text survives in Nepalese manuscripts and was published by P.L. Vaidya (1961) in the collection *Mahāyānasūtrasaṃgraha* on the basis of the edition by Samasrami (1873).<sup>3</sup> Both versions of the text are written in prose. There is also a Sanskrit version in verse form, but this—the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*—is a 15th-century product of Nepal and to be distinguished from the original prose *Kāraṇḍavyūha*.<sup>4</sup>

## 2 The Emission of Maheśvara from Avalokiteśvara's Forehead

The passage about Avalokiteśvara's creation of Maheśvara does not survive in the Gilgit manuscripts, because unfortunately G1, the main source of Mette's edition, lacks the beginning folios of the text, including this portion.<sup>5</sup> This does not necessarily mean that it was not there from the start. Eltschinger (2014: 84, n. 198) discusses the matter and concludes: "I see no compelling reason to

1 In her review of the book, Mette (2004: 16) observes that in his dating Studholme fails to distinguish between the Nepalese version and the earlier version represented by the Gilgit manuscripts.

2 Reviewed in this journal by de Jong (1999).

3 Samasrami's edition was done on the basis of a single unidentified manuscript. Given the huge number of Nepalese manuscripts surviving (Mette 1993: 512), a critical edition of the text is very much needed. See also Tuladhar-Douglas (2006: 77–86) on the variation in the Nepalese manuscript tradition.

4 On the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha* and its relations with the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, see Tuladhar-Douglas (2006, in particular pp. 26–28, 69–71 and 77–79).

5 See Mette (1997: 9).

doubt the presence of this passage in the textual tradition reflected in the Gilgit manuscripts.”

Much of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* is concerned with the teaching of Avalokiteśvara, who is presented as a saviour Buddhist Īśvara with miraculous qualities. In *nirvyūha* 1, *prakaraṇa* 4, we are told how Avalokiteśvara produced several Brahmanical deities and principles from different parts of his body:

- Candra (Moon) and Āditya (Sun) from his eyes
- Maheśvara from his forehead
- Brahmā and others from his shoulders
- Nārāyaṇa from his heart
- Sarasvatī from his teeth
- Vāyu (Wind) from his mouth
- Dharaṇī (Earth) from his feet
- Varuṇa from his belly<sup>6</sup>

The most important deity, and singled out as the center of attention in this episode, is Maheśvara, who is said to have been produced from Avalokiteśvara's forehead (*lalāṭa*). After he has made his appearance, Avalokiteśvara addresses him, the *devaputra*, in the form of a prophesy:

O Maheśvara, you will be there when the Kaliyuga arrives. Born as the primary god (*ādideva*) in the realm of wretched beings you will be called Creator and Agent [of the world]. All beings who will hold the following discourse among the common people (*prthagjana*) will be deprived of the path to awakening (*bodhimārga*):

‘Space they say is the *liṅga*, the earth its pedestal (*pīṭhikā*). It is the dwelling (*ālaya*) of all beings. Because of merging (*līyanāt*) into it, it is called ‘*liṅga*’.<sup>7</sup>

6 KVSū 1.4 (Vaidya 1961: 235, ll. 1–3): *caḥṣuś candrādityāv utpannau, lalāṭān maheśvaraḥ, skandhebhya brahmādayaḥ, hṛdayān nārāyaṇaḥ, daṁṣṭrābhyāṃ sarasvatī, mukhato vāyavo jātāḥ, dharaṇī pādābhyām, varuṇaś codarāt.*

7 KVSū 1.4 (Vaidya 1961: 265, ll. 4–8, with corrections by Eltschinger 2014: 84): *bhaviṣyasi tvaṃ maheśvara kaliyuge pratipanne | kaṣṭasattvadhātusamutpanna ādideva ākhyāyase sraṣṭāraṃ kartāraṃ | te sarvasattvā bodhimārgaṇa viprahīṇā bhaviṣyanti ya iḍṛṣaṃ prthagjaneṣu sattveṣu sāṅkathyaṃ kurvanti ||*

*ākāṣaṃ liṅgaṃ ity āhuḥ prthivī tasya pīṭhikā |*

*ālayaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ līyanāl liṅgaṃ ucyate ||*

*maheśvara*] Elt., *maheśvaraḥ* Ed.; *iḍṛṣaṃ prthag-*] Elt., *iḍṛṣapṛthag-*; *līyanāl*] Elt./Reg.; *līlayā* Ed.

Although the passage has been discussed by many scholars, including Regamy (1971: 427–432), Deshpande (1997: 458), Studholme (2002: 19–35, 123–124), Gonzáles-Reimann (2002: 171–172), Tuladhar-Douglas (2006: 62–63),<sup>8</sup> Ruegg (2008: 32–33) and Eltschinger (2014: 82–85), it remains worth unpacking once more. First of all, we have the production of Maheśvara from Avalokiteśvara's forehead. Why is the forehead the source of Maheśvara? If we look at the other deities and principles, we can observe a number of common associations. The birth of the Sun and Moon from Avalokiteśvara's eyes recalls the famous *Puruṣasūkta* (*R̥gveda* 10.90), in which the sun is born from the eyes of the great giant (the moon is rather born from its mind). The circular forms of the sun and moon are naturally connected to the eyes. The production of Brahmā and other deities from Avalokiteśvara's shoulders may be read as a veiled critique of the *Puruṣasūkta* and its ideology, for there the priesthood, in a later period linked to Brahmā, is born from the giant's mouth and not from his shoulders. The fact that Nārāyaṇa is connected to the heart gives him a prominent place, which is entirely in line with the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*'s treatment of Nārāyaṇa in general. As Regamey (1971) has shown, Maheśvara and Nārāyaṇa are presented as the two main Brahmanical deities in the text. The connection of the teeth and mouth with Sarasvatī and the Wind is also a natural one, just as the Earth with the feet, which provides the basis on which all stand.

So why is the forehead connected with Maheśvara? I would argue that there is a fair possibility that this place of origin of Maheśvara ultimately goes back to a teaching found in the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mokṣadharmaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* (MBh 12.321–339).<sup>9</sup> The *Nārāyaṇīya* includes a number of passages teaching that Rudra arose out of anger from the forehead (*lalāṭa*) of god, who is identified in the *Nārāyaṇīya* with Nārāyaṇa. For example, MBh 12.328.16:<sup>10</sup>

*ahnah kṣaye lalāṭāc ca suto devasya vai tathā |*  
*krodhāviṣṭasya saṃjajñe rudrah saṃhārakārakah ||*

And at the end of the day [of Brahmā], from the forehead of that god who is pervaded by anger a son is born: Rudra, the agent of destruction.

8 Tuladhar-Douglas reports that the episode also features in the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha* and that this text quotes the *liṅga* verse as well (with variation *līlayā* / *līyanāl*).

9 On the composition of the *Nārāyaṇīya*, see Schreiner (1997).

10 Cf. also MBh 12.322.38; 12.327.31ab; 12.327.70; 12.330.59; 12.328.12; MBh 12.326.47\*833.

The forehead as the place of birth of Rudra thus finds a precedent in Brahmanical literature, from which the image must have found its way to the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*. The same idea is picked up again later in a Śaiva context in the opening chapters of the *Skandapurāṇa* (SP 3–4), which tell how Rudra arose from the sweat appearing on Brahmā's forehead while the latter was performing a sacrifice. The name used by the author of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* to refer to Śiva, viz. Maheśvara and not Rudra, is an important indicator of the strong milieu of Śaivism in which he must have been operative, for it expresses a notion of Śiva as 'Great Lord', which is indicative of a mature Śaiva theology. The same is also implied by the fact that Avalokiteśvara tells him that at the time of the Kaliyuga he will be called Creator and Agent of the world. This is a step away from the *Nārāyaṇīya*'s teaching, in which Rudra is only presented as the Destroyer, and much more akin to the strong Śaiva model of a text like the *Skandapurāṇa*. It also recalls the Īśvara doctrine of the Vaiśeṣikas.<sup>11</sup>

### 3 The Source of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*'s Verse on *liṅga* Worship

Following his statement about Śiva as Creator and Agent at the time of the Kaliyuga, Avalokiteśvara cites a verse on the worship of the *liṅga*, the aniconic mark of Śiva, which he introduces with the derogatory remark that, "all beings who will hold this discourse among the common people (*prthagjana*) will be deprived of the path to awakening (*bodhimārga*)". In this way the worship of Maheśvara in the form of the *liṅga* is portrayed as a false and deluding practice, characteristic of the Kali age that is closely linked to the conditions of the time of composition of the text. It indicates, as others have observed before, that Śiva worship must have gained strong recognition and support, as is also suggested by several other references to Maheśvara—and his wife Umā—in the text.<sup>12</sup> To gain a better understanding of the socio-historical circumstances of the composition of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, or at least this part of the text, identification of the source of the verse cited by Avalokiteśvara is essential.

So far, no Buddhist scholar working on the text has been able to identify the source of the *liṅga* verse. Regamey and Studholme, following a lead by Alain Daniélou, in vain tried to trace it in editions of 'the *Skandapurāṇa*'. This is because Daniélou in his popular anthology *Le polythéisme hindou* (1960), published in English under the title *Hindu Polytheism* (1964) and again later as *The*

11 Cf., e.g. Chemparathy (1965).

12 Cf. Regamey (1971), Studholme (2002), and Eltschinger (2014: 141–144).

*Myths and Gods of India* (1991), had attributed it to the *Skandapurāṇa*, without, however, providing a textual reference.<sup>13</sup> It does not seem to be altogether unlikely that he would have done so on the basis of information from the Pandit he was working with. Studholme (2002: 19–20, 28–29) devotes several pages to his failed search for the verse in the *Skandapurāṇa*, but he ends up accepting it nonetheless, and builds an entire house of cards out of it, presenting the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* as a text that directly engages with ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’ throughout.<sup>14</sup>

Studholme’s theory, however, rests on a basic misunderstanding of what is referred to as ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’. As work on the critical edition of the *Skandapurāṇa* published over the past two decades has convincingly shown, the text for which that name was claimed, and published by the Venkatesvara Press in 1910 in seven volumes, was actually never a single text, but rather a disparate collection of individual compositions called ‘Khaṇḍas’ composed over a long period of time in different parts of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>15</sup> As such, to quote materials from different Khaṇḍas while referring to ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’ as a single historical source, as Studholme does, is misleading and, ultimately, even deceptive. It creates an impression of textual unity that does not at all conform to the historical circumstances of the production of these essentially individual texts. Moreover, there can be no doubt that the Khaṇḍas that make up the Venkatesvara Press’s edition of ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’ were in fact all composed during the second millennium, and so most certainly post-date the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*. Any attempt to trace in them the source of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*’s quotation is therefore bound to fail. If any such source were to exist, the only possible candidate would be the original *Skandapurāṇa* that is the subject of the critical edition on the basis of Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts and whose time of composition has been dated to around the 6th–7th century CE.<sup>16</sup> But it does not occur there either. The lead by Daniélou must be considered spurious.

However, this does not mean that no Śaivite source exists. We must turn to a different text instead: the *Śivadharmasāstra*. The *Śivadharmasāstra* is an early anonymous Śaiva text that has been long neglected by scholars. It has, however, become the subject of several studies in recent years.<sup>17</sup> Its importance for the study of the formation and development of early Śaivism can hardly be overes-

13 Also again Daniélou (1995, 35): “Space is the lingam; the earth is its yoni. Within it dwell all the gods. It is the “sign,” because all dissolves into it (*Skanda Purāṇa*).”

14 See in particular Studholme (2002: 19–35).

15 See the prolegomena to the first volume of the critical edition of the *Skandapurāṇa*.

16 For a review of the evidence, see Bakker (2014: 137–138).

17 See, e.g., Kafle (2013), Bisschop (2014, 2018), and De Simini (2016).

timated; the text survives in at least 80 manuscripts from different parts of the Indian subcontinent, including Nepal, Kashmir, Bengal, and the South of India. And it is here that we discover the verse we are looking for. This verse occurs in chapter 3 of the text (*ŚiDhŚ* 3.17),<sup>18</sup> a chapter whose subject is precisely the praise of the *liṅga* as the ultimate object of worship and the source of all and everthing. It occurs just after the narration of the myth about the origin of the *liṅga* (*liṅgotpatti*), which tells how Brahmā and Viṣṇu tried in vain to find the root and end of the *liṅga*, and ended up worshipping it. In fact, as far as we can tell, the *Śivadharmasāstra*'s version may very well be the earliest source of this quite famous myth.<sup>19</sup>

The wording of the verse (*ākāśaṃ liṅgam ity āhuḥ pṛthivī tasya pṛthikā | ālayaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ līyanāl liṅgam ucyate ||*) corresponds to that of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*. The same was not the case for the verse attributed to the *Skandapurāṇa* by Daniélou. For Daniélou's untraceable verse, as he quotes it (and recall, he cites no source, so we can rely only on what he gives us) has two variants compared to the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, reading *sarvadevānāṃ* instead of *sarvabhūtānāṃ* and *lāyanāl* instead of *līyanāl*.<sup>20</sup> According to Studholme, who follows Regamey in this matter, the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* "changes *lāyanāl* to *līyanāl*, a unique Buddhist hybrid word derived, like the other, from the Sanskrit root *lī-*, "to dissolve" (Studholme 2002: 19–20). The ablative *līyanāt* was in fact a conjecture for the edition's *līlayā* by Regamey.<sup>21</sup> However, now that we have identified the source of the verse in the *Śivadharmasāstra*, there is no need to assume Buddhist hybridization, for the manuscripts clearly attest the form *līyanāt*.<sup>22</sup>

There are several good reasons to consider the *Śivadharmasāstra* to be the source of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*'s citation. First, the *Śivadharmasāstra* is a relatively early text (ca. 6th–7th century CE; see below), certainly much earlier than any of the '*Skandapurāṇa*' references provided by Studholme. Second, the text's main teaching is in fact *liṅga* worship. This forms the quintessence of the *Śivadharmasāstra*, and so the author of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* would not have quoted it at random. The verse stems from a chapter that most strongly advocates the worship of the *liṅga*. Third, the *Śivadharmasāstra* was a key scrip-

18 Numbering of the e-text prepared by Anil Kumar Acharya, based on the text printed in Naraharinatha 1998, checked against a number of manuscripts by myself.

19 Kifle (2013).

20 See Studholme (2002: 19–20).

21 See Eltschinger (2014: 84, n. 198), referring to Regamey (1971: 431).

22 Cf. also *Pañcārthabhāṣya ad Pāśupatasūtra* 1.6: *līyanāl liṅganāl liṅgam*. For other *niruktis* connecting it to *layanāt* instead, see Hikita (2005: 245).



ture of early Śaivism—more than 80 manuscripts survive, including 17 early Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts, and the teachings of the Śivadharma have been referred to as far as Southeast Asia—and would have been a prominent scripture from its very early days. Fourth, it is a text that does not address a circumscribed ascetic community of initiates, but is rather targeted specifically to a lay community of Śiva worshippers, having an emphatic broad appeal. As such its teachings would have easily traveled beyond the confines of this community. Finally, the name Maheśvara is the most commonly used name to refer to Śiva in the *Śivadharmaśāstra*, just as it is in the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*.

The date of the *Śivadharmaśāstra* is still a matter of debate. R.C. Hazra (1954), the first to have studied the text, argued for a time of composition in the Gupta period, but it is more likely to be dated a little later, towards the end of the 6th or at the latest the early 7th century CE.<sup>23</sup> With the Gilgit manuscripts of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* being dated to 630 CE at the latest, it is not altogether unlikely that their times of composition would have been more or less contemporaneous. There is also still the possibility that the verse did not feature in the early version of the Gilgit manuscripts, and was only added later in the transmission that has come down to us from Nepal. A more secure dating of both texts will be of crucial importance for future work on both text traditions, for their implications will work both ways.

#### 4 The Mantras *oṃ namaḥ śivāya* and *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*

If the *Śivadharmaśāstra* is indeed the source of the *linga* verse, this may also have implications for another central teaching of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, and one that had a great impact upon the subsequent history of Buddhism, in particular in Tibet (and Mongolia), namely the mantra *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*. Studholme, who dedicated an entire book to it, posited the hypothesis that this mantra, which is referred to as ‘*śaḍakṣarī vidyā*’ in the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, might have been a Buddhist adaption of the Śaiva mantra *namaḥ śivāya*. As support for this supposition, he quotes several verses from different Khaṇḍas of what he refers to as ‘the *Skandapurāṇa*’, which refer to the *namaḥ śivāya* mantra as the ‘*pañcākṣara mantra*’.<sup>24</sup> However, the supposed connection with the *Skandapurāṇa* is false, as we have seen, and if there is indeed a connection

<sup>23</sup> Bisschop (2018: 9–25).

<sup>24</sup> Studholme (2002: 61–76).

between these two mantras we should now rather look for it in the *Śivadharmasāstra*, which is, as argued above, almost certainly the source for the verse on *liṅga* worship. Since we may reasonably expect that the author of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* knew this verse of the *Śivadharmasāstra*, it is not a very daring suggestion that he would also have been familiar with other parts of its teaching. And here things become even more interesting, for the *Śivadharmasāstra* indeed teaches the Śaiva mantra and it is, to the best of my knowledge, the earliest source that gives detailed instructions on the repetition of *namaḥ śivāya*.<sup>25</sup> However, it does not refer to it as *pañcākṣara* ‘five-syllabled’, but just as the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* does with respect to its *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*, it calls the Śaiva mantra *ṣaḍakṣara* ‘six-syllabled’, and it does so because it emphatically also includes the starting syllable *oṃ* as part of the mantra. The full form of the mantra as taught in the *Śivadharmasāstra* is therefore *oṃ namaḥ śivāya*. The mantra forms the subject of chapter 7 of the text:

*jñeyo namaḥ śivāyeti mantraḥ sarvārthasādhakaḥ |*  
*sarvamāntrādhikaś cāyam oṃkāradyaḥ ṣaḍakṣaraḥ || 41 ||*<sup>26</sup>

The mantra ‘*namaḥ śivāya*,’ beginning with the sound ‘*oṃ*’, six-syllabled, should be known as accomplishing all aims, and it is superior to all [other] mantras.

*sarveṣāṃ śivabhaktānāṃ aśeṣārthaprasiddhaye |*  
*mantram āha śivaḥ saram aśeṣārthapravardhanam || 58 ||*<sup>27</sup>  
*sabījaṃ sarvavidyānāṃ ādyaṃ brahma parāparam*<sup>28</sup> |  
*sarvārthasādhakaṃ mantraṃ śivasūtraṃ ṣaḍakṣaram || 59 ||*  
*bhāṣyam asyaiva sūtrasya sarvajñena svayambhuvā*<sup>29</sup> |  
*pāścāt parāparāṇi*<sup>30</sup> *vyaktārthaṃ*<sup>31</sup> *gaditāni tu || 60 ||*

25 On the *namaḥ śivāya* mantra, referred to as *pañcākṣara*, in the *Liṅgapurāṇa*, see Rocher (1989: 179–180). Cf. also Sanderson (2012–2013: 88).

26 Numbering of the e-text prepared by Anil Kumar Acharya, based on the text printed in Naraharinatha 1998. I have checked Naraharinatha’s edition (Ed.) for these verses against two early Nepalese palmleaf manuscripts: (Ko) Asiatic Society Kolkata G 4077, dated 1035–1036 CE; (Ka) National Archives Kathmandu 3/393 (= NGMPP A 1082/3), dated 1069 CE. Ka reads *oṃkāradyaṃ ṣaḍakṣaram* in 41d.

27 Variants: *śāntam* (Ko); *-nibandhanam* (Ko), *-prabandhanam* (Ed.).

28 Variant: *parātparam* (Ed.).

29 Variant: *sarvajñānāni amśunā* (Ko).

30 Variant: *parāpariḥa* (Ko; unmetr.).

31 Variant: *vyaktārtha-* (Ed.).

*tasmād anena mantreṇa prakurvīta śivārcanam |  
saṃdhyāyāṃ japed enaṃ*<sup>32</sup> *sarvāpāpaviśuddhaye*<sup>33</sup> || 61 ||

For the accomplishment of all aims of all of Śiva's devotees, Śiva spoke the cardinal mantra that promotes all aims, furnished with the seed-syllable (*om*), the first of all *vidyās*, the higher and lower Brahman, accomplishing all aims, the mantra that is the six-syllabled Śivasūtra. The omniscient Svayambhu expounded this Sūtra. Subsequently the higher and lower meanings have been taught here for clarification. Therefore one should perform Śiva's worship with this mantra. One should mutter it at the twilight rite for the purification of all sins.<sup>34</sup>

Whether or not there is indeed a connection between the naming of the two mantras remains to be investigated further on the basis of the passages that deal with the mantra in the *Śivadharmasāstra*. In this connection, it may be significant that the Nepalese version of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* includes a narrative about the Bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin's quest for and initiation into the mantra by a *dharmabhāṇaka*, with a Śaiva-like ascetic appearance, who resides in the city of Vārāṇasī. This may hint at an awareness of this interreligious exchange.<sup>35</sup> While the *om maṇipadme hūṃ* mantra is taught in the text of the Gilgit manuscripts as well, that recension does not contain the episode about Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin.<sup>36</sup>

## 5 Buddhism in the *Śivadharmasāstra*

The material discussed so far has made it abundantly clear that the author of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* was operating in an environment in which the burgeoning Śaivism was a serious force to be reckoned with. Is it also possible to

32 Variant: *deva* (Ko).

33 Variant: *viśuddhayet* (Ko).

34 There are a number of unclear things in the text, in particular in relation to the exposition or commentary of Svayambhu. The designation of the mantra as the 'Śivasūtra' is noteworthy. The Pāṇinian tradition holds that it was Śiva who inspired Pāṇini to compose his *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, and that it was the same god who revealed to him the *Śivasūtra*, the first fourteen sūtras teaching the fourteen classes of sounds. Madhav Deshpande (1997) has reconstructed this tradition of the *Śivasūtra*. In this context he also discusses the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* passage on the origin of Maheśvara out of the forehead of Avalokiteśvara.

35 Cf. Studholme (2002: 81–82) and Eltschinger (2014: 137–138).

36 See Mette (1997: 7–8) and Mette (2004).

find indications of the presence of Buddhism in the *Śivadharmasāstra*? Evidence for this is in fact more limited. There are only two references to the Buddha in the text, and these are not even attested in all manuscript traditions.

The first reference occurs not much after the *liṅga* verse quoted by the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*. The Buddha features here in a long section whose main point is to illustrate how each deity is committed to the worship of the *liṅga*, and how they have each come to acquire their position thanks to this worship. The text specifies that each deity worships his own personal *liṅga*, which is made up of a different material. Thus Brahmā worships a stone *liṅga*, Indra a crystal *liṅga*, etc. The Buddha is said to worship a golden *liṅga*:

*buddhenāpy arcitaṃ liṅgaṃ jambūnadamayaṃ śubham |*  
*tena buddhatvam āpnoti sadā śāntam avasthitam || 31 ||*<sup>37</sup>

A *liṅga* is worshipped even by the Buddha, bright, made of gold. Thereby he obtains the state of Buddha, always remaining at peace.

The passage represents an attempt to integrate other deities under the heading of the Śaiva religion advocated by the text. All the gods turn out to be worshippers of Śiva and to have gained their position thanks to this worship. I refer to this notion as Universal Śaivism (Bisschop 2018: 41–43). The gods mentioned include (in order of appearance): Brahmā, Indra, Kubera, the Viśvedevas, Vāyu, Viṣṇu, the Vasus, the Aśvins, Varuṇa, Agni, Sūrya, Buddha, Arhat, and Soma. The mention of the Buddha and Arhat<sup>38</sup> in this otherwise strongly Brahmanical list is noteworthy.

We come across another reference to the Buddha in chapter 6 of the text. Known as the *Śāntyadhyāya*, this chapter consists of a long string of invocations of all gods and cosmic powers for appeasement (*śānti*). The Buddha is mentioned in an inserted passage found in several manuscripts (after ŚiDhŚ 6.32):<sup>39</sup>

37 Text of my draft edition of chapter 3, based on six manuscripts and Naraharinatha (1998). The verses about the Buddha and Arhat are missing in a manuscript from Pondicherry (Institut Français de Pondichéry, T 32).

38 With Arhat the text refers to the perfectly calm Tirthaṅkara of Jainism.

39 Numbering of the text according to the edition in Bisschop (2018), based on nine manuscripts and Naraharinatha (1998). The verses on the Buddha only occur in three of the sources that I have used (National Archives Kathmandu 1/1376; Oriental Research Library Srinagar, 1467; Naraharinatha 1998) and display considerable variation. I have printed here the text as it appears in the Śāradā manuscript from Srinagar, with a correction *bauddhaḥ* to *buddhaḥ*.

*jitendriyaḥ samādhistaḥ pātracīvarabhūṣitaḥ |  
 varadābhayaḥ pāṇiś ca jñānadyānarataḥ sadā ||  
 yogadr̥ṣṭisamāyuktaḥ śivajñānaparāyaṇaḥ |  
 śāntim karotu me buddhaḥ sarvasattvāḥ rataḥ ||*

In control of his senses, absorbed in intense concentration, adorned with a vessel and a monk's robe, his fingers in the gestures [that is, *mudrā*] of granting a boon and freedom from fear, always delighting in knowledge and meditation, furnished with yogic perception, devoted to the knowledge of Śiva—let the Buddha, delighting in what is beneficial for all beings, bestow peace on me!

These two verses follow the style and format of many of the other invocations in this chapter: starting with an iconographic description and listing some characteristic features of the Buddha, it is followed by a mention of his devotion to Śiva, and ends with a request for his appeasement. All deities are invoked under the heading of their worship of Śiva, who is thus presented as the ultimate lord and master of the universe.

## 6 Differences in Representation of Buddhism in Early Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava Literature

Aside from the two references above, the *Śivadharmasāstra* is remarkably silent about the phenomenon of Buddhism. This state of affairs is characteristic of early Śaiva literature in general. It stands in sharp contrast to the attitude displayed in several early Vaiṣṇava texts, which are much more aggressive in their treatment of Buddhism, as well as of Jainism. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and the *Viṣṇudharma* in particular are full of denouncements of the teachings of the heretics (*pāṣaṇḍins*). References to their behaviour and doctrines typically occur in the context of descriptions of the evils of the Kali age.<sup>40</sup> The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* also initiates the notion of the Buddha as an *avatāra*, with the story of the heresiarch called Māyāmoha who comes to earth to delude the Asuras with his heretic doctrines, first disguising himself as a Jain ascetic and then as a Buddhist monk.<sup>41</sup> A comparison of the *Śivadharmasāstra* and the *Viṣṇudharma* is very telling in this respect: while the *Śivadharmasāstra* only contains the two ref-

<sup>40</sup> See Eltschinger (2014: 35–72).

<sup>41</sup> On this episode, see (Schreiner 2013: 592–594) and Eltschinger (2014: 57–66).

erences just mentioned, the *Viṣṇudharma* is full of passages castigating the Buddhists and their false teachings. In some cases they are also identified according to more specific school designations, as in *Viṣṇudharma* 105.39ab, which mentions 'corrupted Buddhists, delighting in the Mahāyāna' (*utkocāḥ saugatās caiva mahāyānaratās tathā*). These *Viṣṇudharma* passages have not yet received the attention they deserve from Buddhist scholars.<sup>42</sup>

The conservative ideals expressed in these early Vaiṣṇava sources, preoccupied with defining the boundaries of Brahmanical orthodoxy, may well reflect their dominant position in and around the Gupta period, when they received strong support from the major political players of the time. They would have had very good motives to present the Buddhists as a threat to the Brahmanical status quo. The case of Śaivism was markedly different, for while there is much evidence for the popularity of the Śiva and *liṅga* cult already before this period,<sup>43</sup> Śiva worship was still finding its way into the Brahmanical system and had only just started a process of identity and canon formation. The *Śivadharmā* played a major part in this process. The fact that early Śaiva sources do not explicitly refer to Buddhism, or do not engage with it, does not therefore mean that Buddhism had no impact on them. To the contrary, the success of the Śaiva religion may well have been partly due to its remarkable capacity to adopt and integrate ideas and models already well tested and tried in other religious traditions before it.

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42 See in particular chapter 25 of the *Viṣṇudharma*, which is full of denouncements of Pāṣaṇḍins.

43 See Sanderson (2013: 222–223).

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