A Sexual Ritual with Māyā in *Matsyendrasaṃhitā* 40

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1 Introduction

In this short article I revisit the *Matsyendrasaṃhitā* (hereafter MaSaṃ), a Kubjikā-Tripurā oriented tantric yoga text of the Śaḍanvayaśāmbhava tradition, probably from thirteenth-century South India, core chapters of which I edited and translated for my PhD studies under the supervision of Professor Alexis Sanderson. My purpose there was to demonstrate that this text provides evidence for a transitional phase in the history of Śaiva Tantra, revealing aspects of a transition from Kaula practices to early Haṭhayoga. In the present essay I analyse, and partly edit, MaSaṃ chapter 40, in which a unique and somewhat ambiguous variant of a Śrīvidyā-type sexual ritual is described, and which Professor Sanderson was kind enough to read with me in Oxford in 2005. I would like to dedicate this paper to him, offering new interpretations of some key elements, and thus updating my previous analysis (Kiss 2009, 66).¹

My approach is based on textual criticism: by restoring the text using four available manuscripts, I aim at giving an accurate translation and interpretation, which then enables me to draw some modest conclusions regarding the history of Śaivism around the thirteenth century.² I would like to contribute to the contemporary research on Śaiva sexual rituals which focuses on their religio-historical importance. For although it is now generally acknowledged that sexual rituals are a distinctive feature of some of the Śaiva tantric tradi-

1 On the Śaḍanvayaśāmbhava tradition, see Sanderson 1988, 687; 2002, 2–3; 2014, 72–73, 76–77, 80. On details concerning the MaSaṃ, see Sanderson 2014, 80, Kiss 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2020 (forthcoming). All quotations from the MaSaṃ are either from Kiss 2020 (forthcoming) or from my draft edition of the text.

2 I would definitely like to steer clear of some of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century, and contemporary approaches to the topic of tantric sexual rituals, which include, as White observes (2000, 4–5): (1) denial, (2) emphasis on the philosophical reinterpretation of these rites, “while generally denying the foundational importance of transgressivity or sexuality to the traditions themselves,” and (3) the commodification of New Age “Tantric Sex” as a commercial product.

tions, much work remains to be done on this topic.³ Alongside Sanderson's findings in many of his publications,⁴ as well as publications by Dupuche (2003), White (2003) and Biernacki (2007), Hatley's work, especially on the *asidhā-rāvrata* (Hatley 2018, 195–215), a sexual ritual attested in the *Picumata/Brahmayāmala* (BraYā), chapter 40, as well as in the *Niśvāsattattvasamhitā* and the *Mataṅgapārameśvara*, is fundamental and is a source of inspiration and in many respects a model for this essay. Mallinson's exploration of the haṭhayogic techniques of *khecarīmudrā*, *vajrolī* and *amarolī* is closely related to this field of research (Mallinson 2007, 221–223, notes 333–334 and 336–337). My own contribution so far (Kiss 2015) comprises an analysis of the BraYā's relevant teachings in BraYā 45 on sexual encounters that involve the gathering and magical use of sexual fluids.

A detailed overview of the types of sexual ritual found in tantric and haṭhayogic texts is beyond the scope of this short essay,⁵ but a number of their distinctive features can be listed here. This list mainly concerns the variable nature of the female and male partners, and the nature of the sexual act. Note that categorisation of a phenomenon like this is greatly complicated by that fact that many features overlap:

- (1) sexual rituals involving restraint or celibacy;⁶
- (2) a sexual act at the end of which the practitioner applies the *vajrolīmudrā*, “the practice of urethral suction [...] to draw up the combined sexual fluids”;⁷
- (3) sexual rituals producing male and female sexual fluids, which are then used and consumed for magical purposes;⁸
- (4) sexual rituals with one's own wife/partner vs. other partners;⁹

3 As Shaman Hatley also remarks (2018, 195–196).

4 E.g. Sanderson 2005a, 110–114, note 63; 2007, 284–287; 2009, 132 ff., 294, note 699; and 2014, 57.

5 See a similarly non-comprehensive but more detailed list of types of tantric sexual rituals in Hatley 2018, 196–199.

6 E.g. the *asidhārāvrata*, “Razor's Edge Observance,” as taught in BraYā 40, which involves sexual contact with a beautiful woman without the *sādhaka*'s engaging in orgasm. (See Hatley 2018, 195–215.) See also BraYā 45.270–296ab, in which a sexual ritual involving “restraint” (*avagraha*) is taught (Kiss 2015, 49).

7 See Mallinson (2007, 189 note 149). *Vajrolī* is described e.g. in the Vaiṣṇava *Dattātreya yogaśāstra*, vv. 299–314.

8 E.g. BraYā 45, where several variants of a basic type of sexual ritual are described (see Kiss 2015).

9 See for example BraYā 24.32cd, where one's mother, sister, daughter and wife are listed as possible partners (figuratively or otherwise): *mātā ca bhaginī putrī bhāryā vai dūtayaḥ smṛtā[h]*. See also Jayaratha ad *Tantrāloka* 29.102 addressing the question after citing the line *svapatnī bhaginī mātā duhitā vā śubhā sakhī: ityādyuktyā svapatny api atra kasmāt na parigaṇitā ...* (“In

- (5) sexual rituals with one partner vs. several partners;¹⁰
- (6) sexual encounters with human or visionary Yoginīs, or other divine beings;¹¹
- (7) highly æstheticized, philosophic descriptions of Śaiva sexual rituals;¹²
- (8) sexual rituals involving the visualisation of a goddess or the mental projection of the image of a goddess onto the female partner,¹³ and so forth.¹⁴

The passages from MaSaṃ 40 analyzed and presented below seem to represent a variety of the last type listed above, but they are somewhat ambivalent: after mentioning sexual encounters with (human) Yoginīs (verses 38 and 40–41), the text focuses on a somewhat ambiguous sexual ritual which could be read either as involving an exclusively visualised goddess as partner or as prescribing the projection of an image of the goddess onto a human sexual partner. It also teaches the magical use of male sexual fluid (real or imaginary). MaSaṃ 40 is somewhat ambiguous in other aspects as well, and it seems that it is through the analysis of this ambiguity that we may gather clues concerning the history of late Śaiva traditions and the transition between Śaiva Tantra and early Haṭhayoga.

2 Details and Ambiguities

The beginning of the chapter in question, MaSaṃ 40.1–28, stands somewhat apart from the rest of the chapter and does not discuss sexual rituals. Nevertheless, a short analysis of it may be useful here. The text starts (1–6ab) with the proclamation of its topic: the rituals of Kula/Kaula conduct (*kulācāravidhi*) characterised by “the great non-dualist practice” (*mahādvaita*) and “freedom

these kind of statements, why is one's own wife not enumerated?") See also Dupuche 2003, 249 ff.

- 10 E.g. BraYā 45.574cd–557ab, where sexual rituals with four to eight women are taught. See also *Jayadrathayāmala*, Śaṭka 4, National Archives, Kathmandu, MS 1–1468, ff. 206v3–207v5 and Kṣemarāja's *Daśāvatāracarita* 10.26. For these references, see Sanderson 2007, 284–287; and 2009, 294 note 699.
- 11 E.g. the *sādhaka* engages in “great amusement” with Nāga girls and Āsurīs (demonesses) in BraYā 59.107cd (f. 254r): *nāgakanyais mahākriḍā āsurībhiś ca jāyate*.
- 12 E.g. *Tantrāloka* 29 (see Dupuche 2003).
- 13 E.g. *Nityotsava*, p. 60: *atha tāṃ devarūpāṃ vibhāvya ...* (“And visualising her [the sexual partner] in a godly form ...”).
- 14 This list could easily be expanded by using more variables, as Shaman Hatley has suggested (personal communication): partners; place/space/circumstances; roles of mantra, visualization, accoutrements; kinds of meaning given to the practice; aims/goals; fluids; etc.

from conventional practices" (*nirācāra*), both familiar terms from earlier Śaiva *tantras* such as the BraYā.¹⁵ Verses 6cd–16 praise and recommend ritual bathing at a special *śivatīrtha*, in "Śiva's water" or "water embodying Śiva" (*śivamaye jale*). In the context of the MaSaṃ, it is very probable that what is meant here is bathing in or with, and consuming, urine or other bodily fluids. Mallinson (2007, 221–223, notes 333–334, 336–337) has shown convincingly that the practice of bathing with urine was not unknown in Kāpālīka and haṭhayogic traditions.¹⁶ On the other hand, in light of the second half of the chapter, it is not inconceivable that semen is what is hinted at here. In either case, the application of this magical fluid involves transgression and thus should be carried out in a secret place (16cd). Verse 18 names the miraculous fluid as *amarī*, a term echoed in MaSaṃ 27.5 as *amarīrasa*. That chapter, MaSaṃ 27, teaches concoctions of herbs and physical secretions such as faeces, urine, menstrual blood, phlegm (?) and semen (?) (*viñ-mūtra-rajo-recaka-sārakāḥ*) associated with Lokeśa, Keśava, Rudra, Īśa and Sadeśvara, respectively (27.2, see Mallinson [2007, 220 note 328]). In MaSaṃ 27.5a Sadāśiva (i.e. probably Sadeśvara, or rather the substance associated with him, probably semen) is said to be the best among them (*sadāśivo varo jñeyas*). This may indicate that the meaning of *amarī* (and *sudhā*, *amṛta* etc.) is flexible; it may refer not only to urine, but to other bodily fluids as well. *Amarī* should be drunk after reciting the appropriate mantra and should be massaged on one's body (27.21–26ab), similarly to what is taught in MaSaṃ 40.64–65, where it is clearly semen.

The second part of our chapter, MaSaṃ 40.29ff., commences to further describe *kulācāra*, and claims that sexual rituals should be performed either with Yoginīs or with Māyā-type women (verse 38). Here follows an edition and translation of verses 29–38:

[*kulācāranirṇayaṃ*]¹⁷

ataḥ paraṃ śṛṇu śive kulācārasya nirṇayaṃ |
samprāpya siddhasaṃtānaṃ guruṃ daivaṃ sadā yajet ||40.29||

15 E.g. BraYā 3.227, 45.159 and *Kubjikāmatatantra* 2.107 etc.

16 In a similar fashion, the BraYā (e.g. in 45.427 and 45.456) prescribes the praise of urine to be performed by the *sādhaka*.

17 This edition of MaSaṃ 40.1–69 is based on four manuscripts: Ja, Jb, Jc, Well (see the bibliography; Jd is not available for chapter 40). The transcription of the text of the MaSaṃ both in the textus acceptus and in reporting variants involves some inevitable falsification, of which the most important are the following: I have not always attempted to report differences in readings between *akṣaras* that are usually interchangeable in mss (b-v,

gurupūjārato yogī parāṃ siddhim avāpnuyāt |
 guroḥ khaṭvāṃ tathā śāyāṃ vastram ābharaṇāni ca ||40.30||
 pādukāṃ chattram ajinaṃ pātram anyad athāpi vā |
 pādena spṛśate yas tu śire dhṛtvāṣṭakam japet ||40.31||
 gurunindāparaṃ dṛṣṭvā ghātayed athavā śāpet |
 sthānaṃ vā tat parityajya gacched yady akṣamo bhavet ||40.32||
 kulapūjāṃ na nindeta yoginaṃ yoginīm api |
 unmattāṃ puṣṭitāṃ nārīṃ surākumbhaṃ śivaṃ gurum ||40.33||
 nindanād bhraśyate sadyaḥ paratreha ca pārvati |
 paśumārgaṃ na seveta paśucchiṣṭaṃ na kāmāyet ||40.34||
 yoginīmelanaṃ kāryaṃ na seveta paśustriyam |
 nocchiṣṭaṃ paśave dadyāt na nārīṃ nindayet kvacit ||40.35||
 ekībhāvaṃ prakurvīta pṛthagbhāvaṃ na kārayet |
 vṛthā pānaṃ na kurvīta na vṛthā māṃsabhakṣaṇaṃ ||40.36||
 asaṃskṛtaṃ na piben madyaṃ tatpūtaṃ māṃsam āgraset |
 na kuryān mantragoṣṭhīṣu śaucam ācamaṇādikam |
 yadi kuryāt pramādena yoginīśāpa āpatet ||40.37||
 bhuñjīyād yat striyaṃ devi śivaśaktyātmabhāvayā |
 yoginīm sevayen nityaṃ māyāṃ vā pāsāvīm na ca ||40.38||

Witnesses for MaSaṃ chapter 40: MS Ja: ff. 62r–64r, MS Jb: ff. 126v–130v, MS Jc: ff. 132r–136r, MS Well: ff. 89v–91v.

29a śive] J; śide Well (*pāda a is a na-vipulā*) 29b nirṇayam] JaJcWell; nirṇayaḥ Jb 29c siddha°] J; siddhi° Well; cf. *Kubjikāmata* 3.98ab: atraiva siddhasantāne pratyakṣo 'haṃ vyavasthitaḥ 29d gurum] JaJcWell; guru Jb • yajet] J; yatet Well 30c khaṭvāṃ] J; khadvāṃ Well 31b pātram anyad] J; pātramadhyam Well 31a *na-vipulā* 31d tu śire dhṛtvāṣṭakam] *conj.*; tu śirasi ghṛtvāṣṭakam J, u śira ghṛtvāṣṭaka Well; cf. *Kubjikāmata* 3.133cd–134ab [*Manthānabhedapracāraratisaṅgama* chapter]: pādukopānahau chattraṃ śāyāpātto 'tha bhājanam | pādena saṃspṛśed yas tu śire dhṛtvāṣṭakam japet || 32a °nindā°] J; °nidā° Well (Well's reading would result in two laghu syllables) • dṛṣṭvā] J;

v-c, t-n, y-p), but I always report them when both readings are theoretically possible (e.g. *candana-vandana*, *jaya-japa*); I have ignored most instances of gemination of consonants in ligature with semivowels (e.g. *dharmma*); I have treated *anusvāras* and homorganic nasals as interchangeable; I have altered them, as well as word-final *anusvāras* and *m-s*, silently as required by standard orthography; instances of confusion between ś and s are reported only in the non-accepted variants; *avagrahas* are mostly missing in the MSS and I have always silently supplied them in the *textus criticus* and in the *lemmata*, but not when reporting variants; in the apparatus: *em.* = emendation; *conj.* = conjecture; *corr.* = correction; *ac* = before correction (*ante correctionem*); *pc* = after correction (*post correctionem*); †...† enclose corrupted text which I have not been able to improve upon; ° indicates that the word is part of a compound or phrase; × stands for an illegible *akṣara*; Jab = MSS Ja and Jb; Jall = all available Jodhpur MSS (= Ja, Jb, Jc).

drṣṭā Well 32d akṣamo] JaJcWell; amo Jb 33ab nindeta yo°] JWell^{pc}; nindeta yogin-
 imelanam kāryam na seveta paśus trayam nocchiṣṭam pasavo dadyāte Well^{ac} (*eyeskip to*
verse 35) 33b yoginim] Jab; yogibhīm JcWell 33c unmattām] J; unmatām Well •
 puṣṭitām] JaJcWell; puṣṭito Jb • nārīm] Jab; nārī JcWell 33d surākumbham] Jab;
 surakumbham Jc, surikumbham Well 34a nindanād] JaJcWell; nindanāt Jb • bhraśy-
 ate] JaJcWell; praśyate[?] Jb 34d paratreha] J; paratredva Well 34d paśucchiṣṭam]
 J; paścacchiṣṭam Well 35b °striyam] corr.; °striyām J, °strayam Well 35c paśave] J;
 pasavo Well 35cd *note the absence of sandhi between the two pādas.* 36a ekī°] J; ekvī°
 Well 37a asaṃskṛtam] J; aṃskṛtam Well • pāda a is hypermetrical. Cf. *Kulapradīpa*
 3.48: asaṃskṛtam piven madyam balātkāreṇa maithunam | svapriyeṇa hatam māmśam
 rauravam narakam vrajet 37c kuryān] Jab; kuryon JcWell • °goṣṭhiṣu] Jab; goṣṭhivu
 Well 37f. yoginīśāpa āpatet] Jab; yoginī śāyatet Jc^{pc}Well, yogānī śāyatet Jc^{ac} 38a bhuñ-
 jiyād] J; bhujiyād Well • yat] Jab; ya JcWell 38b °bhāvayā] conj.; °bhāvaya JaJc, °bhāvaye
 Jb, °bhāvayam Well 38c yoginim] Jab; yoginī Well • sevayen] Jab; sevayon Well 38d
 māyām vā] Jab; māyām cā Jc, māyām ca Well • pāśaviṃ] Ja^{pc}JbJcWell; pośaviṃ Ja^{ac} •
 na ca] J; na ce Well

[The exposition of Kula Conduct]

After this, O Śivā, hear the exposition of the Kula Conduct (*kulācāra*).

After he has joined the tradition of the Siddhas, he should worship his guru as divine. (40.29)

The yogin who is engaged in the worship of his guru can obtain the highest Power (*siddhi*). The guru's bedstead, his bedding, clothes, ornaments, sandals, parasol, antelope-skin, bowl or anything else: if he touches any of these with his feet, he should place them on his head and recite [mantras] eight times. (40.30–31)

If he sees anybody who is abusing the guru, he should beat him or [at least] curse him. Or, if he is unable [to do so], he should leave the place. (40.32)

He should not ridicule the worship of the [Yoginī] clans (*kulapūjā*), or despise yogins or yoginīs, women when they are intoxicated, or nourished,¹⁸ or the wine-pot, or Śiva, or the guru. (40.33)

Contempt [for these] will make him fall immediately here in this world and in the other world, O Pārvatī. He should not follow the path of the *paśus* [i.e. that of the uninitiated] and he should not long for the leftover of *paśus*. (40.34)

He should strive for an encounter (*melana*) with the Yoginīs. He should not have sex (*na seveta*) with uninitiated women (*paśustrī*).¹⁹ He

18 Perhaps: “pregnant.” Alternatively, some kind of sexual interpretation is needed here.

19 See 40.38.

should not give leftovers to the uninitiated (*paśu*). He should never abuse women. (40.35)

He should treat [all phenomena] as one, not as separate.²⁰ He should not drink [alcohol] or eat meat idly [with no ritual purpose]. (40.36)

He should not drink wine without first purifying it [with mantras], and he should consume meat after he has purified it with that [wine]. He should not answer the call of nature, should not sip water, etc., while reciting mantras or in an assembly.²¹ If he does so out of folly, the curse of the Yoginīs will fall on him. (40.37)

When (*yat*) [the yogin] wants to enjoy (*bhūñjīyāt*) a woman, O Goddess, visualising himself as Śiva [and her as] Śakti,²² he should always have sex with a Yoginī or with a Māyā [type of woman], and never with a Pāśavī [i.e. a *paśu*-natured woman, or more precisely someone who has not been initiated]. (40.38)

Noteworthy among the above are verse 31, which is more or less parallel with *Kubjikāmatatantra* 3.133cd–134ab, reconfirming that the cult of the MaSaṃ draws heavily on the Paścimāmnāya;²³ verse 33, which warns against the abuse of women; and verse 35, which seems to mention only Yoginīs (recommended for sexual encounters) and uninitiated women (not recommended), and seems to be silent on any other category, in contrast to verse 38, in which the third type, Māyā, first appears.

The subsequent verses, 40 and 41, define a Yoginī: she follows the Kula path, is initiated, uses alcohol in her rituals, and generally gives the impression of being a human female practitioner. Rather awkwardly, the text does not give any other detail, but goes on defining her antithesis, the Pāśavī: an uninitiated woman, who is hostile to Śaivism and who should be avoided (41cd–42).

A sexual ritual with the third type, Māyā, is what the rest of the text focuses on. It is here that major ambiguities come into the picture. The key aspects mentioned in the description of the Māyā-type woman are: she has all the

20 I suspect that here the principles of non-hesitation (*nirvikalpa*) and freedom from conventional practices (*nirācāra*) are being reaffirmed: the practitioner should not distinguish between right and wrong, pure and impure etc. See 40.1–28.

21 The interpretation of *mantragoṣṭhiṣu* is highly tentative.

22 The compound *śivaśaktyātmabhāvayā* (*conj.*; °bhāvayaJaC, °bhāvayeJb, °bhāvayaṃWell) is rather unusual, and my conjecture is insecure. Perhaps °bhāvayā stands for *bhāvanayā* metri causa. The intended meaning seems to be clear, though.

23 See Kiss 2009, 25 ff.

auspicious characteristics required (*sarvalakṣaṇasampannā*), has neither *rūpa* nor *kula* (*kularūpavivarjitā*),²⁴ and is to be approached by *bhāva* (*bhāvagamyā*, 40.43).²⁵ All of these terms remain rather ambiguous without the help of clarification based upon other passages. Here follows the text and translation of this section:

[yoginī māyā pāśavī ca]

devy uvāca |
kā nārī yoginī deva kā māyā kā ca pāśavī |
etāsāṃ saṃgame doṣaṃ guṇaṃ ca vada bhairava ||40.39||

[yoginī]

bhairava uvāca |
kulamārgagatā nārī paśumārgavivarjitā |
mādhvīmadasamādhmātā paśupāśavivarjitā ||40.40||
madirānandacetaskā yoginī śivaśāsane |

[pāśavī]

vikalpakuṭilā pāpā kulācāraparāṇmukhī ||40.41||
śivanindāparā devī tatsaparyāvirodhinī |
pāśavī sā mayākhyātā māyākhyāṃ śṛṇu suvrate ||40.42||

24 That *kula* and *rūpa* are to be understood as a *dvandva* compound is confirmed in 40.44ab: *yā māyā rūparahitā kulahinā maheśvara*.

25 Elsewhere I have argued (Kiss 2009, 57–60) that while *bhāva* in the MaSaṃ is mostly to be interpreted as “visualisation,” which is a rather common meaning for this word, an additional specification may be required: *bhāva* refers to a particularly emotive process of creating mental images. I suspect that *bhāva* is preferred in the MaSaṃ to *dhyāna* (although *dhyāna*, *dhyāyet* etc. also abound) for its extremely wide range of meanings. One of the basic meanings of *bhāva* is “being, becoming.” Another is “emotion, sentiment” or even “passion, love.” I think that all these rather different senses of the word are condensed in the yogic key term of *bhāva* in the MaSaṃ. It is a creation of something in the mind by the yogin, towards which he should also create a feeling, an empathic attitude, perhaps passionate devotion, which will result in the ultimate condition, the desired state of mind: the union with the object, with the deity, with Śiva, or in our case, with a visualised goddess.

[māyā]

sarvalakṣaṇasampannā kularūpavivarjitā |
bhāvagamyā maheśāni yā sā māyā nigadyate ||40.43||

39 devy] JaJcWell; śrīdevy Jb 39a yoginī] Ja^{pc}JbJcWell; yogi Ja^{ac} 39b kā ca pāśavī] JaJc;
kāśavī Jb, kā ca pāśaviḥ Well 39d bhairava] J; bhairavaḥ Well 40a nārī] JbJcWell; ttārī
Ja 40b °vivarjitā] J; °vivarjitāḥ Well 40cd mādhvīmadāsamādhmātā paśupāśavivarjitā
] *em.*; mādhvīmadāsamādhyaṭā paśupāśavivarjitā Jab, JcWell *omit this line* 41b °śāsane
] JaJcWell; °śāsanāt Jb 41c °kuṭilā] J; °kuṭikā Well 41d °parāṇmukhī] Ja^{pc}JbJcWell;
°paxṇmukhī Ja^{ac} 42a °parā] J; °paro Well • devī] JaJcWell; devī Jb 42b °virodhinī]
corr.; °virodhiti J, °virodhinīm Well 42c pāśavi] J; pāśaviḥ Well • sā] J; sa Well 42d
°ākhyāḥ] *corr.*; °ākhyāḥ JWell 43b °vivarjitā] J; °vivarjitāḥ Well

[Yoginī, Māyā and Pāśavī]

Devī spoke:

O God, what kind of a woman is a Yoginī? Who is Māyā and who is
Pāśavī? Tell me, O Bhairava, the pros and cons of having sex with
them. (40.39)

Bhairava spoke:

A woman who is on the Kula Path [of the Yoginī clans] (*kulamārga*),
who avoids the path of bound souls (*paśumārga*) [i.e. the path of the
uninitiated], who is elevated by intoxication induced by liquor, and
is free of the bonds that fetter the soul (*paśupāśa*), and whose mind
is filled with the bliss of wine (*madirā*), is [called] a Yoginī in Śiva's
teaching. (40.40–41ab)

[Pāśavī:] her mental attitude is dishonest, she is wicked, hostile to
Kaula Practice (*kulācāra*). She tends to abuse Śiva, O Goddess, and
to obstruct his worship. This [type], the Pāśavī, has been [now]
taught by me. O Suvratā, hear the one that is called Māyā. (40.41cd–
42)

A woman who possesses all favourable characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) [but]
has neither a [Yoginī] Clan/noble family (*kula*) nor a [human/mate-
rial] form/beauty (*rūpa*), and who is to be approached by empathic
imagination (*bhāva*), O Maheśānī, is called Māyā. (40.43)

The term *rūpa* in 43b may refer to “material form” and a lack of *rūpa* would then
indicate that Māyā, the preferred sexual partner, is solely imaginary. In this case
sarvalakṣaṇasampannā indicates that she is to be visualised as a divine being
with great beauty. But how to interpret “devoid of *kula*” then? The term *kula* is

often used in the sense of “a clan of Yoginīs.”²⁶ Is she then not a member of any Yoginī clan? Does she transcend the clans of Yoginīs, being the supreme Goddess?²⁷ This interpretation is supported and at the same time refuted by MaSaṃ 22.24 (which in fact is a citation of *Nityāśoḍaśikāṛṇava*, alias *Vāmakeśvarīmata*, 4.14):

kulayoṣit kulaṃ tyaktvā paraṃ puruṣaṃ eti sā |
*nirlakṣyaṃ*²⁸ *nirguṇaṃ caiva kularūpavivarjitam ||22.24||*²⁹

That noble lady abandons her family (*kula*) and goes to the highest man, who is invisible, who lacks qualities, and is devoid of *kula* and form.

Here, in the MaSaṃ as well as the *Nityāśoḍaśikāṛṇava*, the supreme soul (*paraṃ puruṣaṃ*) is described as having neither *kula* nor *rūpa*: as being immaterial and formless.³⁰ But the word *kula* is used in a double sense in the case of the female subject of the sentence (*kuṇḍalinī* in fact): she leaves her/the body to unite with the Supreme Soul as a noble lady (*kulayoṣit*) leaves her family (*kulaṃ tyaktvā*) to unite with her husband. This does not make it easier to interpret MaSaṃ 40.43b (*kularūpavivarjitā*): the sexual partner might be a woman who was not born in an eminent family, i.e. is of low birth (*kula-vivarjitā*), and who lacks beauty (*rūpavivarjitā*), “beauty” being a natural way

26 See e.g. Sanderson (1988, 671–672): “All Yoginīs belong to the family (*kula*) or lineage (*gotra*) of one or other of a number of ‘higher’ maternal powers, and in any instance this parentage is ascribed on the evidence of certain physical and behavioural characteristics. An adept in the cult of Yoginīs can identify members of as many as sixty-three of these occult sisterhoods, but is most vitally concerned with the eight major families of the Mothers (*mātr*) Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Indrāṇī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍā and Mahālakṣmī.” See also Hatley (2007, 13–23, 33, 392, etc.).

27 Cf. *Tāntrikābhidhānaśāstra*, vol. I, sv. *akula*: “Dans les traditions (*āmnāya**) du Kula, c’est la Réalité lumineuse suprême, l’absolu inconditionné: *anuttaraṃ paraṃ dhāma tad evākulam ucyate* (*Tantrāloka* 3.143ab),” etc.

28 em.; *nirlakṣyaṃ* Cod.

29 Cf. *Nityāśoḍaśikāṛṇava* 4.14: *kulayoṣit kulaṃ tyaktvā paraṃ puruṣaṃ eti sā | nirlakṣyaṃ nirguṇaṃ ca kularūpavivarjitam ||*.

30 Cf. Jayaratha ad *Nityāśoḍaśikāṛṇava* 4.14: *tadā kulaṃ śarīraṃ apahāya akula-padāvasthitam paraṃ pūrṇam [...]* *kulena śarīreṇa taddharmaṇa rūpeṇa ca vivarjitam nirāvaraṇasvabhāvam, ata eva nirguṇaṃ puruṣaṃ, paraṃ pramātāraṃ, eti tadaikātmyam āśādayatīty arthaḥ* (“Then leaving behind the *kula*, i.e. the body, she goes to the one who is in the realm of *akula*, the supreme, i.e. full [...] Person, the highest authority, who is without a body and without bodily form, with his innate nature manifest and therefore lacking qualities, i.e. she reaches oneness with Him. This is the meaning [of this verse].”)

of translating *rūpa*. In this case, *sarvalakṣaṇasampannā* (40.43a) refers to the form she assumes during the yogin's visualisation, and *bhāvagamyā* (40.43) may suggest that a sexual ritual with her requires this visualisation. Alternatively, the ideal sexual partner might be one who is immaterial and formless (*kularūpavivarjitā*): a visualised goddess, or, as a matter of fact, *kuṇḍalinī*. As we have seen, in the context of the yogin's sexual rituals, first two, then three types of partners are enumerated: one, who is hostile to Śaivism, is to be avoided; initiated human Yoginīs are ideal, but are not dwelt upon in the text, perhaps because they were less and less available at the time of the composition of the MaSam; and as a third alternative, the text either suggests pure visualisation or an uninitiated woman of low birth, without any particular charm, as the locus of visualisation of the Goddess.

The text goes on to give instructions on visualisation needed for the sexual ritual. The yogin should visualise himself as Śiva in the form of Kāmeśvara, and his partner as a goddess:

[māyā saṃgaḥ]

devy uvāca |
yā māyā rūparahitā kulahīnā maheśvara |
yoginaḥ saṃgamas tasyāḥ kathaṃ bhavati tad vada ||40.44||
bhairava uvāca |
śṛṇu devī pravakṣyāmi māyā saṃgam adbhutam |
yad amoghaṃ maheśānī durvijñeyam utāparaiḥ ||40.45||
yogasiddhivihīnaiś ca yogibhiḥ suranāyaki |

44 uvāca] JaJc; u- Jb, uvā- Well 44a yā] J; omitted in Well (pāda a is a na-vipulā) 44b maheśvara] Well; maheśvaraḥ J 44c yoginaḥ] JaJc; yogina Jb, omitted in Well 44d kathaḥ] conj.; vāthaḥ J, cāthaḥ Well • vada] Jab; vadaḥ JcWell 45 uvāca] JaJcWell; u- Jb 46a °vihīnaiś] JaJc; vihitāiś Jb, vihinaiḥ Well 46b yogibhiḥ] J; yogibhiḥ Well • suranāyaki] JaJcWell; suranāyakiḥ Jb

[Sexual ritual with Māyā]

The Goddess spoke:

Tell me, O Maheśvara, how should the yogin sexually approach the one who is called Māyā, who has neither form/beauty (*rūpa*) nor a clan/noble family/body (*kula*)? (40.44)

Bhairava spoke:

Listen to me, O Goddess, I shall teach you the extraordinary intercourse (*saṃga*) with Māyā. It is fruitful, O Maheśānī, and difficult to learn

by others and yogins without yogic Powers (*siddhi*), O Suranāyākī.
(40.45–46ab)

[*parameśvaradhyānam*]

sugupte mandire mantrī mṛdvāsanaparigrahaḥ ||40.46||
bhāvayec ca svam ātmānam parameśvaravigraham |
kāmeśvaram ivādyantaṁ sūryāyutasamaprabham ||40.47||
cārumaṇjīrakeyūrakuṇḍalāṅgadabhūṣitam |
mudrikāchannahīradikiriṭamukuṭojjvalam ||40.48||
prasannavadanaṁ kāntaṁ tāmbūlāpūritādharāṁ |
madirānandacetaskāṁ paramānandavigraham ||40.49||
navayauvanasampannaṁ sarvalakṣaṇabhūṣitam |
svavāmbhāgavinyastamahājagavakārmukam ||40.50||
dakṣabhāgojjvalatpañcaśaram indīvaradyutim |
nīlotpalalasanmālābhūṣitoraskam īśvaram ||40.51||
madena kṣubdhahṛdayaṁ īśāsmītamukhāmbujam |
evaṁ dhyāyec ciraṁ yogī svaśarīraṁ śivātmakam ||40.52||
candanāgarukarpūrakuraṅgayakuṅkumaiḥ |
adhivāsitasarvāṅgaṁ cāruvaktravirājitam ||40.53||
ratnadvīpāyutayutaṁ gehe sattalpamadhyagam |

46c sugupte mandire] J; sugupto māhdere Well 46d mṛdvāsana°] J; mṛddhāsana° Well
47b °eśvara°] JaJb^{pc}JcWell; °eśva° Jb^{ac} 47d °sama°] J; omitted in Well 48b °kuṇḍalāṅ-
gadabhūṣaṇam] Jab; °kuṇḍalāṅgadabhūṣitam Jc, °kumbhalāṅgadabhūṣitam Well 48d
°ojjvalam] Jc; °ojvalam JabWell 49a prasannavadanaḥ] JaJc; prasaṇṇaḥ vadanah Jb,
prasannavadanaḥ Well 49b tāmbūlāpūritādharāṁ] JabWell; tā×būlāpūritādharāṁ Jc^{ac},
tā×būlāpūritādharāṁ Jc^{pc} 50d °mahājagava°] conj.; °mahadaikṣava J, °mahavaivakṣa°
Well 51a dakṣa°] J; rakṣa° Well • °ojjvalat°] corr.; °ojvalat° JWell 51c nīlotpala°]
JbJcWell; nīlo×la° Ja • °lasan°] J; °lasam° Well 52a kṣubdha°] JaJc; kṣucca° Jb, kuṣu[?]°
Well 52b īśāsmīta°] J; īsmīta° Well • mukhāmbujam] JaJcWell; mukhāḥ Jb 52a na-
vipulā 52c ciraḥ] J; ciraḥ Well 53a °āgaru°] J; °āgara° Well • °karpūra°] JaJcWell;
°karpūraḥ Jb 53d cāru°] J; cāruḥ Well • °virājitam] J; °virājitahḥ Well 54a na-vipulā
54b gehe sattalpa°] Ja; gehe satralpa° JbJcWell

[*Visualisation of Parameśvara*]

In a hidden sanctuary, the mantra master should sit on a soft cushion³¹
and should visualise himself as having the body of Parameśvara, as if

31 The element °*parigrahaḥ* in the compound *mṛdvāsanaparigrahaḥ* is suspicious. A word meaning “seated” would fit the context better.

[he were transformed into] Kāmeśvara,³² having no beginning and no end, shining like millions of suns. (40.46cd–47)

He is adorned with nice anklets, armlets, rings and bracelets, and he shines with small toe rings (*mudrikā*),³³ *channahīras*,³⁴ etc., and diadems and a crown. (40.48)

His face is gracious, beautiful, his lips are smeared with betel leaves. His mind is filled with the joy of wine,³⁵ and his body is supreme bliss [itself]. (40.49)

He is in the prime of his youth and has all the auspicious characteristics.

He has the great Ajagava³⁶ bow placed on his left side. (40.50)

On his right, he has five glowing arrows. He is shining like a blue lotus.

On his chest there is a glittering garland of blue lotuses. He is the Lord. (40.51)

His heart is agitated with sexual desire. His lotus face displays a faint smile.³⁷ This is how the yogin should visualise his body for a long time, as transformed into Śiva. (40.52)

All his limbs are perfumed with sandal, aloe, camphor, musk³⁸ and saffron. He has a beautiful face. (40.53)

He is surrounded by millions of gem islands, in a chamber on a fine bed.³⁹ (40.54ab)

32 Note that Kāmeśvara features as Śiva or the central deity in the pre-Śrīvidyā Dakṣiṇām-nāya tradition, with which the MaSaṃ is clearly affiliated. See Sanderson (1988, 688), and Kiss (2009, 18 and 42–43).

33 This is somewhat tentative. See *mudrikā* as an ornament in *Brahmayāmala* 21.63cd: *mudrikām aṅgulīś caiva pādau laktakaraṇjītau* (Kiss 2015, 219).

34 A *channahira*, or rather a *channavira*, is made up of two sacred threads (*yajñopavīta*) worn over the two shoulders and across the chest. Bunce (1997) provides two definitions: “Channavira–(Ind.: channa-vīra) A Hindu iconographic object for bodily adornment. The term channavira refers to a chain worn by both male and female deities. It is made up of two chains crossed over the chest, a disc covers the front crossing” (Bunce 1997, 58). “The term chhannavira refers to two sacred cords similar to yajñopavīta. One is placed over each shoulder, crossing on the chest and back and looping as low as the hips” (Bunce 1997, 63). See also Rao 1914, vol. 1.2, xxxi (Addenda), where it is defined as a double *yajñopavīta*. See *channavira* mentioned in e.g. *Rauravāgama*, *Kṛtyāpāda* 10.52d.

35 Note that here intoxication is something only to be visualised.

36 Note that *mahājagava* is a rather insecure conjecture for *mahadaikṣava* and *mahavai-vaṣṣa*. Other variants of the name of Śiva’s bow are *ajakava* and *ajikava*.

37 Note the slightly odd form *īśāsmīta*^o metri causa for the standard *īśadasmīta*^o.

38 I take *kuraṅgajaya* in the sense of “musk,” although I have not found any evidence for this compound being used instead of the well-known *kuraṅganābhi*.

39 I am grateful to Harunaga Isaacson for his assistance with this passage.

[śaktidhyānam]

tatra svavāmbhāgasthām śaktim bhuvanamohinīm ||40.54||
 sarvalakṣaṇasampannām navayauvanagocarām |
 nīlākasaṁbaddhamālālolupaṣaṭpadām ||40.55||
 kastūrīsāndrakarpūratilakām kamalekṣaṇām |
 kuṇḍalāṅgadakeyūragraiveyādivibhūṣitām ||40.56||
 akalāṅkaniśānāthasadrśaśrīmukhāmbujām |
 tāmbūlāpūrṇavadanām svarṇakumbhopamastanīm ||40.57||
 divyānulepavatrāḍhyām vistīrṇajaghanāntarām |
 cārurujaṅghām saundaryasārasarvasvavigrahām ||40.58||
 sarvalāvaṇyasaundaryasārasarvasvavigrahām |
 mañjīrāñcitapādāḍhyām divyamālyānulepanām |
 madirāsvādamuditām madanāviṣṭavigrahām ||40.59||
 vilāsavibhramām kāntām dhyāyet śaktim maheśvari |

54c sva°] JaJcWell; *omitted in* Jb 55b °gocarām] J; °gaucarām Well 55c nilā°] *conj.*; lilā° JWell • °baddha°] J; °baddhaḥ Well 55d °mālā°] J; °māla° Well • °lolupa°] *conj.*; °lotuya° JWell 55d°padām] *em.*; °padam JWell; 56a kastūri°] JaJc; kastū° Jb, kastūra° Well 56b °tilakāḥ] J; °tilaḥkāḥ Well • °ekṣaṇām] Jab; °ekṣaṇam JcWell 56c °keyūra°] J; °keyūraḥ Well 57a °nātha°] J; °nāthā° Well 57b °mukhāmbujām] JcWell; °yukhāmbujāḥ Ja, °yukhāmbujāḥ Jb 57d °opamastanīm] Ja; °opastanīm Jb, °opamastakīm JcWell 58a °āḍhyāḥ] *conj.*; °āḍyāḥ JabcWell 58b °jaghanā°] *em.*; °jayanā° JWell; *see Kaunḍinya's commentary on Pāsupatasūtra* 1.9: adhomukhenādamaṣṭreṇa jaghanāntaracāriṇā 58b °ntarām] JaJcWell; °ntaram Jb 58c saundarya°] J; soṁdaryam° Well 58d °vigrahām] Jab; °vigraham JcWell 58c *ma-vipulā* 59a °pādāḍhyām] Ja; °pādādyām JbJc^{pc}, °pādāḍām Jc^{ac}, °pādāyām Well 59b °mālyānulepanām] Ja^{pc}Jb; °mālyānulepanam Ja^{ac}, °mālānulepanām JcWell 59d madanāviṣṭa°] Jab; madanā° JcWell 59a *na-vipulā* 60b dhyāyet] Ja^{pc}Jc; dhyā Ja^{ac}, dhyāye Jb, madhyāt Well • śaktim] J; sakti Well

[Visualisation of Śakti]

On his left side, [he should visualise] Śakti, who infatuates the world.
 (40.54cd)

She has all the auspicious characteristics. She is in the prime of her youth. She has bees longing for the garland tied in her black locks.
 (40.55)

The tilaka-mark on her forehead is made with musk thickened with camphor. She has lotus-eyes. She is adorned with rings, armlets, anklets, necklaces etc. (40.56)

Her beautiful lotus face resembles the spotless moon. Her mouth is filled with betel. Her breasts are like golden jars. (40.57)

She is anointed with divine ointments and she is dressed in divine clothes, with her loins exposed.⁴⁰ Her thighs and shanks are beautiful. Her body is the ultimate essence of gracefulness. (40.58)
Her feet are embellished⁴¹ with anklets. She wears divine garlands and [has been anointed] with divine ointments. She is delighted by the wine she is enjoying. Her body is filled with passion. She is restless with wantonness. [This is how the yogin] should visualise his lover (*kāntā*) as Śakti, O Maheśvarī. (40.59–60ab)

The appearance of Kāmeśvara and the mention of a gem-island (*ratnadvīpa*) in the above verses suggest an affiliation with the Śrīvidyā tradition and with love magic, perhaps with that of the pre-Śrīvidyā Dakṣiṇāmnāya tradition.⁴² Verse 46cd (“in a hidden sanctuary”) may also be revealing: if the whole ritual were purely imaginary, it would be less important to perform it in a secret place.

Going further in our text, MaSaṃ 40.60cd–68 may also suggest that a real sexual encounter is being described by using words such as *āśliṣya* (“embracing”), *samācaret* (“he should perform”), *bahiḥ* (“outwardly”), *kṣipet* (“place [his hand]”), *vimuñcati* (“ejaculates”), by giving instructions in 40.61 to stimulate the partner, and also by avoiding words that would refer to visualisation, except *dhyāne*, probably hinting at the fact that the whole process is accompanied by a projection of the image of the Goddess onto the female partner. On the other hand, the formulation of verse 40.65 may cast some doubt upon the real-life presence of the female partner: the yogin should rub his semen on his body, and there is no mention of the female partner’s sexual fluids or her receiving or consuming any of the magical mixture, a common practice in Śaiva sexual rituals.⁴³ Here follows the end of the chapter, describing the sexual ritual:

40 Ex em. Compare Kauṇḍinya’s commentary ad *Pāśupatasūtra* 1.9 (p. 14): *adhomukhenā-daṃṣṭreṇa jaghanāntaracārīṇā | sarvaśāstrācīkītyena jagad daṣṭam bhagāhinā ||*, which is translated by Hara (1966, 196) as “The world is bitten by a snake whose mouth is below, toothless, who has crawled between the loins and whose poison can be cured by no science. Its name is the vulva.” The passage can also be interpreted as “The world is bitten by the snake of the vagina whose toothless mouth points downward, and who moves in the genital area, and for which there is no antidote.”

41 I have translated *añcita* as “embellished,” suspecting that the word may need some emendation (*añkita/rañjita*?).

42 See Sanderson 1988, 688–689 and 2009, 47 ff.

43 See e.g. BraYā 45.201–202ab (Kiss 2015, 142, 258): *upaviśyāpayet tatra cumbanādyāvagūhanam | kṛtvā kṣobham samārabhya pavitraṃ grhya sādhakah || prāśayitvā tu tau hrṣṭau yāgadravayāni prokṣayet* | “The Sādhaka should make [her] sit down there. He should start kissing and embracing her and stimulating her. He should collect the purifying [substance, i.e. the sexual fluids]. Overjoyed, they should consume [the fluids] ...”

[saṃgaḥ]

āśliṣya cumbanādini yogī samyak samācaret ||40.60||
 dhyāne bahiḥ susaṃsnigdhaṃ tayā saṃgaṃ samācaret |
 gajahastaṃ kṣipet tasyāḥ śrīmanmadanamandire ||40.61||
 mantraṃ enaṃ smared yogī madam yāvad vimuñcati |
 bhautikavyoma †lā aiṃḍi† kevalārṇas tu bhautike ||40.62||
 aparo vahni vāmākṣi bindu yukto maheśvari |
 CALEpadaṃ CALAPadaṃ CITREpadaṃ anantaram ||40.63||
 RETOpadaṃ MUÑCAPadayugaṃ pūrvabijā vilomagāḥ |
 evaṃ krameṇa yo yogī māyāsaṃgaṃ samācaret ||40.64||
 tadvīryaṃ svarṇakarpūrakunkumādiviloḍitam |
 svadehaṃ mardayet kāntiś candravat samprajāyate ||40.65||
 samūlāṃ brahmamaṇḍūkīṃ chāyāśuṣkāṃ prasādhayet |
 mṛdvikārasasaṃmiśrāṃ śarkarāghṛtamelitām ||40.66||
 trimāsaṃ bhakṣayet kālātrayaṃ akṣapramāṇakam |
 annapānaṃ payah pītvā nāsyā śukraḥ kṣayaṃ vrajet ||40.67||
 śatavarṣasahasrāntaṃ yadi saṃgaṃ samācaret |
 nāsyā prakṣiyate satyaṃ navatvāptyai tanoḥ priye ||40.68||
 rasāyanam idaṃ guhyam anyeṣāṃ na prakāśayet |
 etad rahasyaṃ vyākhyātaṃ durlabhaṃ siddhasaṃtatau |
 gurukāruṇyasamlakṣyaṃ kiṃ bhūyaḥ śrotum icchasi ||40.69||
 || iti śrīmatsyendrasamhitāyāṃ catvāriṃśaḥ paṭalaḥ ||

60c cumbanā°] J; cumbunā° Well 60d samyak] JaJc; samyā[?]k Jb, samyas Well •
 samācaret] Ja^{ac}JbWell; samācare Ja^{ac} 61a dhyāne] Jab; dhyāye JcWell • bahiḥ] corr.;
 bahi J, vadi Well • °snigdhaḥ] Jab; °śligdhaḥ Well 61d śrī°] J; ślī° Well 62b vimuñcati]
 JaJcWell; vimuñtica Jb (*metathesis*) 62d kevalārṇas] J; kaivalārṇas Well • tu bhautike] J;
 tv abhautike Well 62 *marginalia in f. 64r of Ja (top)*: HRAIM TVAIM RIM CATE VATA CITTE
 RETO MUÑCA 2 RIM KLAIM HRAIM. 63a vahni°] Well; vahvi° J 63b bindu°] J; bindud°
 Well • maheśvari] J; maheśvari Well 63c cale°] J; cile° Well • cala°] J; calā° Well 64a
 muñcapada°] corr.; muñcapadaṃ J, mucapadaṃ Well 64a *hypermetrical* 64b °yugaṃ
] J; omitted in Well 65a °vīryaṃ] JaJcWell; °bijam Jb • °karpūra°] Well; °karpūram
 J 66b chāyā°] JaJcWell; chāyām° Jb • °śuṣkāṃ] J; °śuṣām Well 65c mardayet] J;
 marddhayet Well 66c °miśrām] J; °miśrom Well 66d °melitām] JaJcWell; °melikām
 Jb 67a trimāsaṃ] J; trimāse Well • kālā°] JaJcWell; kā° Jb 67d °pramāṇakam] Jab;
 °pramāṇakraṃḥ Well 67c °pānaṃ] J; °pātam Well 68b saṃgaṃ] corr.; saṃga JWell
 68c nāsyā] Ja; nākṣasya Well • satyaṃ] JbWell; °yam Ja 68d navatvāptyai] JaJcWell;
 navātvāstha Jb 69a guhyam] J; guhyam Well 69d °labhaṃ] J; °lebham Well 69e
 °kāruṇya°] JabWell; °kāruṇyam Jc 69f. bhūyaḥ] J; bhūya Well • śrotum] JaJcWell;
 śrītum Jb **Colophon**: catvāriṃśaḥ] J; catvāriṃśat Well

[The intercourse]

The yogin should embrace and kiss her, etc., properly. (40.60cd)
[Then] he should have sex with her outwardly, very gently, while
[performing] visualisation. He should apply the “elephant trunk”
[method]⁴⁴ on her divine love temple [i.e. her genitalia]. (40.61)

The yogin should recall this mantra when he ejaculates: Bhautika
[Aī], Vyoman [H], [...], TU verbatim and Bhautika [Aī; i.e. HRAIṢ
TVAIṢ].⁴⁵ (40.62)

Moreover: Vahni [R] and Vāmākṣi [Ī] with a Bindu [Ṣ; i.e. RĪṢ], O Mah-
eśvarī, the words CALE and CALA and immediately CITRE [CITTE?],
(40.63)

the word RETO, MUṆCA twice,⁴⁶ and the previous seed-mantras back-
wards [RĪṢ TVAIṢ HRAIṢ]. The yogin who has had sex with Māyā
should rub his semen mixed with gold, camphor and saffron on his
own body: [his] beauty will become moon-like. (40.64–65)

He should dry *brahmamaṇḍūkī*⁴⁷ together with its roots in the shade.

He should mix it with grape-juice, candied sugar and ghee. (40.66)

He should have it three times [a day] for three months in portions mea-
suring a dice as food and drink and he should drink milk. His semen
will not deteriorate in millions of years if he practises sex [with
Māyā]. His [semen] will never ever wane. It is for the rejuvenation
of the body, O Priyā. (40.67–68)

This is the secret of alchemy. He should not reveal it to others. This
secret of the Siddha tradition, which is difficult to obtain, has now
been taught. It is to be revealed through the compassion of the guru.
What else do you wish to hear? (40.69)

Here ends the fortieth chapter of the *Matsyendrasaṃhitā*.

44 See p. 443 below.

45 If the decoding of this mantra in the marginalia in f. 64r of MS Ja (top, HRAIṢ TVAIṢ
RĪṢ CATE VATA CITTE RETO MUṆCA 2 RĪṢ KLAIṢ HRAIṢ) is more or less correct, the
puzzling syllables *lā aiṇḍi* must stand for R. Note the slight differences between the code
in the text and the mantra given in the marginalia. The reconstruction of the mantra is
somewhat tentative.

46 See *Kaulāvalīnirṇaya* 5.51: AMUKĪṢ DRĀVAYA SVĀHĀ vinyaset sādhaḥkottamaḥ | vāmāyā[?]
CAPALACITTE RETO MUṆCAdvayaṃ paṭhet.

47 Clerodendrum Siphonantus?

Rubbing one's own semen on one's body (verse 65) is an old custom, and was probably not considered a transgressive practice at all. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 6.4.4–5 describe a practice to be followed in case one discharges semen:

bahu vā idaṃ suptasya vā jāgrato vā retaḥ skandati || 6.4.4 ||
 tad abhimṛśed anu vā mantrayeta—yan me 'dya retaḥ pṛthivīm
 askāntsid yad oṣadhīr apy asarad yad apaḥ | idaṃ ahaṃ tad reta
 ādade | punar mām aitu indriyaṃ punas tejaḥ punar bhagaḥ | punar
 agnir dhiṣṇyā yathāsthānaṃ kalpantām | ity anāmikāṅguṣṭhābhyām
 ādāyāntareṇa stanau vā bhruvau vā nimṛjyāt || 6.4.5 ||

In Hume's translation (1921, 168–169):

"[If] even this much semen is spilled, whether of one asleep or of one awake, [5] then he should touch it, or [without touching] repeat:—
 'What semen has of mine to earth been spilled now,
 Whate'er to herb has flowed, whate'er to water—
 Again to me let vigour come!
 Again, my strength; again, my glow!
 Again the altars and the fire
 Be found in their accustomed place!'
 Having spoken thus, he should take it with ring-finger and thumb and rub it on between his breasts or his eye-brows."⁴⁸

As can be seen from this passage, semen was probably never considered so impure as to forbid its magical application on the body, and this practice was recommended to regain strength—exactly as in MaSaṃ 40.68 (*navatvāptyai tanoh*). The question is inevitable: is the somewhat similar practice in MaSaṃ 40.65 recommended for a similar situation, namely for ejaculation in a state of mind comparable to sleep, i.e. visualisation? Does this similarity between the two instructions suggest the absence of the female partner in the MaSaṃ?

To return to 40.61cd, where stimulation of the partner is probably hinted at: this gives the instruction to "cast an 'elephant trunk' on the partner's divine love temple" (*gajahastaṃ kṣipet tasyāḥ śrīmanmadanamandire*). This again is ambiguous. *Gajahasta* could be a *mudrā* to be shown during the ritual,⁴⁹

48 I find Olivelle's translation (1996, 88) slightly less accurate at this point, although the differences are minor.

49 See e.g. *Kaulāvalīnirṇaya* 17.133–135ab: *eṣā tu paramā mudrā sarvasaṅkṣobhaṇī matā* |

but could as well be the technique mentioned in Jaśodhara's commentary ad *Kāmasūtra* 7.2.2:

*ratasyopakrame sambādhasya kareṇopamardanaṃ tasyā rasaprāptikāle
ca ratayojanaṃ iti rāgapratyānayanam |*

Commentary: *ratasyeti | samprayogasya upakrama iti | ayam ārambhe,
yady api mando rāgo rate pravartayati stabdhalingatvāt, tathāpi pratha-
mataḥ sambādhasya bhagasya kareṇopamardanaṃ gajahastena kṣobha-
naṃ kāryaṃ ...*

[When you are] about to practise sex, [first you should] rub her genitalia with your hand, and when there is dampness, the sexual act can be commenced. This is the restoration of passion.

Commentary: “about to practice sex”: at the beginning of the sexual act. This is at the start [of the sexual act]. Even if the passion is weak with regards to sex because the penis is inert, first “her genitalia,” i.e. her vulva, should be rubbed with his hand, should be stimulated with the “elephant trunk” [method] ...

The possible hint in MaSaṃ 40.61cd at a Kāmasāstric technique again suggests that we are dealing with the description of a sexual ritual involving a human female partner. Or should this also be only visualised?

3 Why All These Ambiguities?

I think it is safe to say that the teaching of MaSaṃ 40 is ambiguous to an extent that makes it rather difficult to decide on one or another exclusive interpretation. The question to answer is rather: why is it so ambiguous? Is it deliberately so? Is it so due to bad writing, to sloppy composition? Are essential details left out because they were well-known to gurus and pupils at the time of composition of the text? Did revisions/insertions during the course of transmission cause the ambiguity (deliberately or accidentally)? Is the text

*kṣobhayed athavā mantrī gajahastākhyamudrayā || adhomukhaṃ dakṣapāṇiṇi nidhāyā-
ṅguṣṭhake same | niḥkṣiped aṅgulih sarvā gajatuṇḍākr̥tir yathā || gajahastā mahāmudrā
kathitā siddhidāyikā |.*

ambiguous because of the uncertainty of its redactors, i.e. they were rephrasing old teachings but were not sure of the details? Is this ambiguity the result of the redactors' diffidence in expressing secret teachings on sexuality? Could this ambiguity be seen as indicative of some major change in the tradition?

The first possibility, namely that the text is ambiguous deliberately, would imply that the author(s) or redactor(s) wanted to hide their secret teaching from unauthorised eyes. This is possible but not as typical as one would think. For instance, while they are difficult for the modern reader to decipher, the BraYā's radical teachings on sexual ritual are relatively straightforward concerning what is real and what is imaginary, and while there are technical terms which are not openly discussed in the text,⁵⁰ and its language is far from being standard Pāṇinian Sanskrit, it is generally possible to understand how sexual rituals were supposed to be performed.

The next possibility hinted at above, i.e. the effect of bad writing, is possible, but the MaSaṃ is far from being a very cryptic or confused text. It would have required minimal effort and ability on behalf of the redactors to clarify details that we miss: a few lines on how to acquire or invite a Māyā woman, similar to the BraYā's instructions on finding a partner,⁵¹ a verse on her role and position during the ritual, or a clear remark stipulating the yogin's solitude would have been enough.

On the other hand, one should not forget that texts like the MaSaṃ were definitely not written with an outsider reader in mind who would try to understand them several hundred years later. Essential details could have been left out because they were obvious to the redactors.

As regards possible revisions and insertions, there are signs that MaSaṃ 40 is made up of at least three distinct parts. Verses 40.1–28 constitute a small chapter in themselves with weak links to the rest of the chapter. What they have in common is the mention of "Kaula conduct" and bodily fluids. 40.29–37 and the rest of the chapter are more closely related. Both mention and discuss sexual rituals, but the first section, while mentioning sex with Yoginīs, is silent on Māyā, the focus of the second part, i.e. verses 40.38–69, which seem as if they were an alternative and additional teaching. But this additional section may again be made up of passages drawn from various sources. The visualisation of Kāmeśvara and his partner (40.46cd–60ab) may come from a source different from that of the instructions on the sexual act itself, and this in itself would provide some explanation for discrepancies in the text. The text may

50 E.g. the term *avagraha* ("restraint") or *pīṭha* ("external genital organ of the female partner"). See Kiss 2015, 49, 47–48.

51 See BraYā 45.185cd–189ab.

have originally described a sexual ritual with a human partner, but during the transmission of the text some passages teaching new ideas (such as a visualised partner) were inserted, thus making the text ambiguous.

This may lead us to another possibility, namely that at some point the redactors of the text became uncertain of the exact details of the ritual and when they tried to solve the problem they may have ended up obscuring it even further. Finally, the possibility of diffidence may also have played some role, especially if the female partner was meant to be purely imaginary, but other details of the ritual were not.

It seems that a wider perspective may be required to see what this chapter of the *MaSaṃ* signifies. The ambiguity between actual sex and visualisation in chapter 40 may have its roots in the tension between sexuality and asceticism which is clearly manifest in the frame story of the text (chapters 1 and 55). The frame story contains a unique version of the legend of Matsyendra and Gorakṣa: Matsyendra occupies the body of a dead king and indulges in sensual pleasures. It is Gorakṣa, his disciple, who “rescues” Matsyendra from the trap of sexuality and power, and leads him back to an ascetic life.⁵² Taking into account this wider context, it is possible to discover the same tension in the teaching of *MaSaṃ* 40 between a sexual ritual that may have originated in an earlier tantric strata of the cult, and its probably later haṭhayogic layers.

As I suggest elsewhere,⁵³ the *MaSaṃ* could provide clues about the transition of a tantric cult from Kaula practices, often involving transgressive elements, to early Haṭhayoga, often associated with brahmacārin practitioners. The text may be echoing or quoting old tantric texts with such descriptions of sexual rituals that aim at obtaining sexual fluids, but the redactors of the *MaSaṃ* were perhaps in a transition towards more ascetic or *brahmacaryā*-oriented teachings, and as a result, they come up with a fairly obscure variant of the figure of the tantric Yoginī: Māyā, first described as only a phantom, resembles the wholly mental visualisation of goddesses, but at the same time takes part in a human sexual ritual. The redactors may have had reservations about a sexual ritual with a low-caste woman, and tried to conceal this with instructions on visualisation to such an extent that even the presence of a human partner is now doubtful. They may also have had *kuṇḍalinī* in their thoughts: the

52 See Kiss 2009, 222–233 and 317–321.

53 Kiss 2009, 9: “[...] the *MaSaṃ* provides some clues for, among other things, the understanding of the transition from the early Indian yoga traditions (Pātañjala and Śaiva) to the late and fully developed *haṭha*-yogic teachings as well as of the transition from the early Kula traditions to the later Kaula teachings associated with the figure of Matsyendra.”

text as it stands now could be a metaphor for meditation on her. The manner in which they reconcile two (or three) attitudes, in this case those of explicit sexuality and of brahmacārin yogins' mental worship of a goddess (or of *kuṇḍalinī*), is, as so often in tantric texts, less than convincing. But this imperfection, this ambiguity, is exactly the feature which seems to tell us something about the history of the cult, its transition from one phase to another.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Judit Törzsök, Dominic Goodall, Harunaga Isaacson and Gergely Hidas for their constant help and support. I am especially grateful to Shaman Hatley and Gergely Hidas for reading and commenting on a draft of this article.

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