

4. Kārttikeya-Maṅjuśrī in the *Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa*

In Chapter ii of the *Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa* – the Maṅḍalavidhīrdeśapari-varta – there appears the entity named Kārttikeya-Maṅjuśrī, a curious divine figure who as it were embodies a *mantra*. In this work, later classified as a Kriyātantra belonging to the *tathāgatakula*, this figure is described (p. 33) as a boy (*kumāra*), and as an attendant (*anucara*) and executor (*sarvakarmika*) of the Bodhisattva Maṅjuśrī Kumārabhūta, otherwise referred to in the same text as Maṅjuḥoṣa. This figure is found in a passage alluding *inter alia* to the *Atharvaveda*, and also mentioning Brahmā, Garuḍavāhana Cakrapāṇi, and Mahāmaheśvara together with the latter's son Skanda (= Kārttikeya). Further on, in his iconographical description in a passage (p. 43) which also mentions Brahmā Sahāpati/Sabhāpati and Īśāna, Lord of the *bhūtas*, and Umā, this Kārttikeya-Maṅjuśrī is described as mounted on a peacock. Elsewhere (e.g. at p. 62), in keeping with his appearance also as a boy, the Bodhisattva Ārya-Maṅjuśrī is represented as adorned with the ornaments of a prince (*kumārālaṃkāraḥ*) and as wearing his hair dressed in five locks (*pañcacīrakaśiraska*) as was customary for a boy. In a Maṅḍala of this important Kriyātantra, several great Indian divinities have been associated with their respective *mantras*. And the Bodhisattva Kumārabhūta Maṅjuśrī is connected with an embodiment known as Kārttikeya-Maṅjuśrī, who shares divine iconographical features with Śiva's son Kārttikeya/Skanda/Ṣaṅmukha.⁶⁰

Other chapters of the same Tantra contain further references to *mantras* pronounced by Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, etc., and which are incorporated in the ritual (*kalpa*) of the *Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa*.

⁶⁰ Part of chapter ii of the Tantra was studied by Ariane Macdonald(-Spanien), *Le Maṅḍala du Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Paris, 1962). Kārttikeya is discussed there on pp. 118 and 122–3 (an equivalent of the Skt. form Kārttikeya-Maṅjuśrī is, however, not reflected exactly in the denominations found in the Tibetan translation of this text, namely gDoñ drug gi bu žes bya ba'i 'jam dpal gžon nu/gŽon nu smin drug gi bu). – On Maṅjuśrī *pañcacīraka* (Tib. *zur phud lña*), Pañcaśikha, and Brahmā Sanatkumāra, see M. Lalou, *Iconographie des étoffes peintes* (Paris, 1930), chap. v; and E. Lamotte, 'Maṅjuśrī', *T'oung-Pao* 48 (1960), pp. 2–3.

Verse ii.31 of the same text refers in an interesting manner to *kalpas* set out in Vaiṣṇava Tantra:

*ya eva vaiṣṇave tantrē kathitāḥ kalpavistarāḥ/
upāyā vaineyasattvānāṃ maṅjuḥhoṣa bhāṣitāḥ//*

Those numerous rituals described in Vaiṣṇava Tantra are salvific devices for beings to be trained once pronounced by Maṅjuḥhoṣa.

Whether (ritual) ECLECTICISM is the most appropriate description of these processes, as suggested by Phyllis Granoff in her valuable study of ‘Indian eclectic religious culture’, may be a matter of definitions.⁶¹ And whether DOCETISM and EMANATIONISM are in play here is also not quite certain. At all events, the idea conveyed can perhaps be best understood in the light of the Kriyātantra theory that – in a process of ‘conversion’ and ritual transformation of the Laukikas belonging to the sixth *kula* ‘clan’ – these divinities of the mundane level offer up their respective *mantras* to a Buddha (see below, p. 63 f.). Here in the *Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa* it is Maṅjuḥhoṣa, a Bodhisattva of the highest stage (*bhūmi*), who is represented as promulgating *kalpas* belonging to Vaiṣṇava Tantra.

⁶¹ Passages from several chapters of the *Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa* have been examined by P. Granoff, ‘Other people’s ritual: Ritual eclecticism in early mediaeval Indian religions’, *JIP* 28 (2000), pp. 399–424 (see also id., ‘My rituals and my gods: Ritual exclusiveness in mediaeval India’ *JIP* 29 [2001], pp. 109–34).

In discussing ritual eclecticism in the earlier of these two articles, Granoff however states (p. 404 and n. 5) that she considers that the contrast *laukika* : *lokottara* amounts to the opposition Hindu : Buddhist. There no doubt exists a link – perhaps even a sort of isomorphism – between these two sets of oppositions. But that, in Buddhist Tantra, the category *laukika* cannot be exactly coterminous with what is usually called Hindu would seem to follow from the fact that the *laukikakula* of the Buddhist Kriyātantra (see below, pp. 63–67) is not entirely made up of specifically Hindu gods. It would be possible to equate *laukika* with Hindu only were one to define as ‘Hindu’ all the divinities and numina not included in the Buddhist *lokottara* category – a definition that would, however, probably be both over-wide and somewhat circular.