

Gudrun Bühnemann (with contributions by H. Brunner, M.W. Meister, A. Padoux, M. Rastelli and J. Törzsök):¹ *Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions*, Brill's Indological Library Vol. 18, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003, EUR 80.-/US\$ 99.- (Hardback).

This collection of papers on maṇḍalas and yantras covers a range of 'Hindu Traditions':² Śaivism³ (the contributions by Brunner and Törzsök and the two by Padoux), Pāñcarātra/Pañcarātra⁴ (Rastelli) and Smārta (Bühnemann's third contribution, 'Maṇḍalas and Yantras in Smārta Ritual', at 63 pages the longest in the book, though 36 of those pages are taken up by black and white illustrations). These papers are preceded by an 'Introduction' and an essay 'Maṇḍala, Yantra and Cakra: Some Observations', the latter 'designed as an introduction to the topic' (p. 8), both by Bühnemann. The last paper in the book, 'Vāstupuruṣa-maṇḍalas: Planning in the Image of Man', by Meister, is something of an odd man out here: unlike the other contributors, who make use primarily of textual sources in Sanskrit (though often supplemented by other material, including drawings and plastic images), Meister, a historian of South Asian architecture and art, is apparently dependent on translations in his references to textual sources,⁵ and his main purpose in this paper seems to be to rebuff S. Bafna's criticism of Meister's earlier work on the use of maṇḍalas in temple architecture.

Among the other contributions, the two by Padoux are a little 'thinner' (by which I mean above all less rich and dense in the quantity of material which they adduce) than the rest. On the whole, however, the level of scholarship throughout the book is, in this reviewer's opinion, high by current standards, and the book can be warmly recommended as a very significant contribution, rich in information, references to textual sources (published and unpublished), and drawings and material objects.

Minor flaws in the details of presentation and treatment of textual evidence

1 A small remark: although Bühnemann's contributions are indeed larger than those of the others, they cover less than half of the book (pp. 1-118). It seems to this reviewer that it would have been more appropriate to have presented the book as 'Edited by Gudrun Bühnemann', all the more since there are clear signs that Bühnemann acted as editor of the volume and of the contributions of the other authors (apart from the survey of the contents of the book on pp. 7-11 most strikingly perhaps the interventions in her own voice in the asterisked note at the beginning of Brunner's article, on p. 153, and in n. 29 and n. 32 of the same article, on p. 166; note also Törzsök's acknowledgement of Bühnemann's corrections of 'awkward points in my argument and style' in the asterisked note at the beginning of her article, on p. 179).

2 Bühnemann explains on p. 11 her choice to use the 'much-debated word Hindu' as a pragmatic one.

3 Including the Śākta within the Śaiva: in her account of the scope of the book's contributions on p. 7 Bühnemann distinguishes the two. It is Padoux's second contribution, on 'The Śricakra according to the First Chapter of the Yoginīhṛdaya', which deals with a Śākta Śaiva tradition.

4 The former orthography is preferred throughout the book under review, and I shall use it in the following.

5 Apart from this dependence on translations, there are other signs too of a certain lack of care with regard to textual sources: the same *Atharvaveda* hymn is ascribed within the space of two paragraphs first to 'early in the first millennium B.C.' and next to 'the second millennium B.C.' (pp. 251-252).

remain (though the proofreading has been good, with relatively few remaining typos), and some more general shortcomings occasionally make themselves felt. As to the former, a list of some corrigenda (with no claim of course of completeness) is added at the end of this review. More generally, it was above all a sense of a certain lack of breadth and control of the larger (historical) picture that made itself felt repeatedly as an underlying weakness. This is no doubt not very surprising in the present state of our knowledge of Indian religious traditions (whether tantric or not), and I do not mean so much to criticize as to comment on the need for further study which takes into account historical developments and the interactions between different traditions.

Two relatively simple (to avoid the need for lengthy discussion) examples of the ways in which this slight weakness or limitation manifests itself in contributions which on the whole are excellent. In her useful 'Introduction' (pp. 1-12), which consists of 'General Remarks', an outline of 'Some Problems', a survey of 'Previous Scholarship on Hindu Maṇḍalas and Yantras', an overview of 'The Scope of this Book' (giving brief summaries of all the individual papers), and finally brief 'Remarks on the Transliteration' and 'Acknowledgements', Bühnemann, while summarizing Rastelli's paper on 'The Use of Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Pāñcarātra Tradition',⁶ writes (p. 9): 'The use of maṇḍalas in initiations (*dīkṣā*) is treated elaborately. Some details of the ritual, such as the casting of a flower onto a maṇḍala by the blindfolded initiand, have parallels in Buddhist Tantric initiation rituals' (this is followed by a brief footnote referring, as an example of secondary literature on the initiand's casting of a flower in Buddhist Tantric initiation, to Wayman 1974). This indication of a parallel between the two religious traditions — which is Bühnemann's: Rastelli does not mention Buddhist practice in her paper⁷ —, intriguingly suggestive though it might seem to the reader, may mislead him or her as well, through omission: the casting of a flower or flower-garland is equally paralleled in early Śaiva tradition,⁸ and it is quite probable that it is this tradition which has influenced both the Pāñcarātra and Buddhist tantra.⁹

⁶ This is the title given in the contents page of the book; on the first page of the article itself the title is given simply as 'Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Pāñcarātra Tradition'.

⁷ Rastelli's paper is much to be welcomed, since the Pāñcarātra remains relatively unexplored, and is rich in citations from the Saṃhitās of that tradition, but, it may be remarked, not in references to parallels, of which many close and illuminating ones could have been adduced, from the literature of other traditions (only at one place, on pp. 134-135, does Rastelli point out — helpfully — relevant parallel matter from Śaiva sources). This may well be, of course, at least in part a deliberately self-imposed limitation.

⁸ See, for instance, Törzsök's contribution in this very volume, pp. 187-189.

⁹ For some evidence of Śaiva influence on the Pāñcarātra, and of Śaiva influence on Buddhist tantra, and in general for a magisterial example of scholarship which does show the kind of control of sources and broad as well as deep knowledge of the complex of related traditions of Śaivism, Pāñcarātra and Buddhist tantra, and their history, which is somewhat lacking in the volume under review, see Alexis Sanderson's 'History through Textual Criticism in the study of Śaivism, the Pāñcarātra and the Buddhist Yoginītantras' (in: François Grimal (ed.): *Les Sources et le temps. Sources and Time. A colloquium. Pondicherry* 11-13 January 1997. Publications du département d'indologie 91. Pondicherry: Institut français de Pondichéry/Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001 [appeared 2002], pp. 1-47); Bühnemann herself refers to Sanderson's findings of Śaiva

My second example is from Brunner's article on 'Maṇḍala and Yantra in the Siddhānta', which, though all in all one of the most impressive of the contributions in this volume,¹⁰ is surprisingly imprecise, on several occasions, regarding the 'affiliation' of some Śaiva sources. Thus on p. 155 she says that she has used in addition to, in the first place, Saiddhāntika sources (as her title indeed indicates), 'some Śaiva Tantras of the Trika: Svachanda (SvT), Netra (NT) and Mālinīvijaya'. While the *Mālinīvijaya/Mālinīvijayottara* is indeed a Trika tantra, neither the *Svacchandatantra* nor the *Netratantra* — despite the fact that both received commentaries with non-dualist interpretations by Abhinavagupta's pupil Kṣemarāja — can be fairly called 'Tantras of the Trika' in any sense.¹¹ On the same page a further category of sources is said to be 'some handbooks from the Trika School, such as the *Tantrāloka* (TĀ) of Abhinavagupta and the *Śāradātilaka* (ŚT) of Lakṣmaṇadeśika': again, though the *Tantrāloka* can correctly be called a Trika handbook (indeed might be called the Trika handbook *par excellence*), that the *Śāradātilaka* should also be so labelled is somewhat remarkable.

I can think of no better concluding words on this general topic of the need for broad, encompassing, study, crossing the 'boundaries' of various traditions, than those of Sanderson, in his paper referred to in n. 9 above: '... such breadth is in any case the royal road to success in scholarship. For ... the critic ... will ... commonly find himself confronting problems which only the cultivation of this breadth can equip him to recognize and solve. Most importantly, to master texts of this kind, written within a highly complex and multiform world of religious practice and doctrine and written for persons engaged in it, the critic must work towards an ever more thorough understanding of that world; and this will lead him from one area of the Tantric tradition to another and will also require him, like the Tantric scholars before him, to have a grounding in the domains that underly and inform the Tantric, such as those of Vaidika observance and hermeneutics in the case of the Śaiva and Pāñcarātrika systems, and of Abhidharma and Vinaya in the case of Tantric Buddhism' (p. 2).

The book has been handsomely produced by its publisher, Brill, with some 103¹² black and white illustrations throughout the book and a concluding section

influence on the Pāñcarātra on p. 27 of this book. Bühnemann's remark elsewhere in the book (p. 7) to the effect that '[i]n the present state of research it is best to avoid generalizations and broad comparisons across traditions that rarely take into account existing differences, and often turn out on closer examination to be inaccurate' was clearly not aimed at this type of detailed and careful investigation of the undeniable relations between these religious traditions.

¹⁰ It is a revised and enlarged English translation — called a 'remake', in the asterisked note at the start of the article, on p. 153 — of Brunner's 'Maṇḍala et yantra dans le śivaïsme āgamique' in: André Padoux (ed.): *Mantras et diagrammes rituels dans l'hindouisme. Table Ronde*, Paris 21-22 juin 1984. Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1986, pp. 11-31. According to the same asterisked note 'It was ... not possible for me to extend my research. Therefore, works on the subject which appeared after 1986 are not taken into consideration'. This is not completely accurate, since on p. 155 n. 2 Brunner refers to Goodall's introduction to his edition of the *Kiraṇavṛtti*, which was published in 1998.

¹¹ The same mis-attribution is repeated on p. 162: 'It is therefore from the Tantras of the Trika, in particular the SvT and the NT, that I draw the characteristics of these objects'.

¹² Depending on whether the 9 'Figures' of the Table 'Constituent Parts of the Bhadra-

with 19 colour plates. That is followed by a combined 'Bibliography and Abbreviations' for all contributions. Some items referred to in the book are lacking in this, e.g. the *Maitrāyaṇīya-Upaniṣad*, referred to on pp. 21-22, and the book *Bhāratiya Tantraśāstra*, edited by V.V. Dwived (= Dvivedi), J. Pandey and S.S. Bahulkar, referred to in n. 8 on p. 76 and in n. 15 on p. 79. The volume is concluded with an 'Index' which is, however, noticeably below the standard that one would desire and that one might — despite the admitted difficulty of indexing a collection of papers by different authors as this one is — expect. Thus many texts referred to have not been indexed at all, including such important works as the *Tantrasadbhāva*, the *Mrgendra(tantra)/Mrgendrāgama*, the *Mataṅga(pārameśvara)*, and the *Samputatantra*,¹³ though others have;¹⁴ in many cases the list of pages on which a term appears is incomplete.¹⁵ Cross-referencing is also not very comprehensive; for instance there are separate entries with no cross references for 'Devīmāhātmya' and 'Durgāsaptaśatī'. A 'Stellenindex' would have been particularly valuable in a book which is so rich in references to textual sources, and it is to be regretted that one has not been provided.

I conclude, as mentioned above, with a list of corrigenda which I have noticed.¹⁶

p. 26 line 8 from bottom: 'Gaefke' → 'Gaeffke'.

p. 34 n. 49: '*dehātmanor yathā bhedo*' should perhaps rather be interpreted as '*dehātmanor yathābhedo*' (i.e. *yathā abhedah*).

p. 132 line 12 from bottom: 'wordly existence' → 'worldly existence'.

p. 137 n. 90: '[disciples]' → '[disciple's]'.

p. 137 n. 90 (in the text of *Sātvatasamhitā* 19.38c): '*apādān mantrahastena*' → '*ā pādān mantrahastena*'. Here Rastelli has not pointed out that the unit quoted (*Sātvatasamhitā* 19.38c-39b) is identical to *Īśvarasamhitā* 21.282c-283b (elsewhere, e.g. in n. 87 on the same page, she has drawn attention to the

maṇḍalas' on p. 87 are counted as a single illustration, as they appear to be on p. x in the 'List of Illustrations'. If so, the total number is 103.

¹³ As far as I noticed, the *Tantrasadbhāva* has been referred to at least five times (note that if a text is referred to in the main body of a page as well as in notes I only give the page reference and count this as a single reference; if it only occurs in a note I give the number of the note as well; I exclude occurrences in the bibliography, which rather oddly have been indexed in several cases in the book): p. 76 n. 8, p. 190 n. 48, p. 205 n. 95, p. 225, p. 247 n. 21, in the contributions of three different authors; the *Mrgendra* has been referred to at least seventeen times: p. 154 n. 2, p. 157, p. 158 n. 11, p. 159, p. 165 n. 23, p. 166 n. 30, p. 167 n. 33, p. 168 n. 35, p. 171, p. 173 n. 50, p. 174 n. 51, p. 182 n. 12, p. 183 n. 16, pp. 203-204, p. 207-208, in the contributions of two authors; the *Mataṅgapārameśvara* has been referred to at least eight times: p. 154 n. 2, p. 157, p. 165 n. 23, p. 166 n. 29, p. 167 n. 33, p. 173 n. 50, p. 192 n. 56, p. 194, in the contributions of two authors; and the *Samputatantra* has been referred to at least once: p. 44 n. 76.

¹⁴ The inconsistency is not simply explainable as the result of some authors having asked for titles to be indexed and others not having done so.

¹⁵ Only a single page reference (p. xiii) is given for the *Mālinīvijayottaratantra* (= *Mālinīvijaya(tantra)*): in addition to that this tantra is referred to at least nine times: p. 155, p. 186 n. 32, p. 205 n. 95, p. 217 n. 125, p. 223, p. 225-226, p. 229, p. 237.

¹⁶ Occasional infelicities and awkwardnesses in the English have not been noted.

equivalence between passages in these two Saṃhitās).

p. 146-7: 'The *sādhaka* can easily cross female and male rivers or the oceans for many purposes by means of its power, and he does not sink in the water'. The Sanskrit (*Jayākhyasamhitā* 29.174c-175b) is quoted in n. 133 on p. 147: *nadinādān samudrān vā līlayā parilaṅghayet // 174 bahvarthaṃ tatprabhāvāc ca no majjati jalāntare*. Especially because of the following *ca*, *tatprabhāvāt* is surely to be taken with *no majjati jalāntare*, so rather '... for many purposes; and because of its power he does not sink in the water'.

p. 147 line 1: 'is unknown [to him]' for *na ... vidyate* (*Jayākhyasamhitā* 175cd, quoted in n. 133 on the same page). Rather 'does not exist [for him]'.

p. 149 n. 142 (in the text of *Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* 26.86c): '*etat karaṇa-mātreṇa*' → '*etatkarāṇamātreṇa*'. This is translated (on lines 5-6 of the same page) 'Only with this instrument'; rather 'By merely doing this'.

p. 150 lines 10-9 from bottom: 'Who wears this very wonderful divine ornament? If it is worn, I do not notice the power (*śakti*) of anything'. The Sanskrit (*Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* 27.2c-3b) is quoted in n. 148 on the same page: *etad atyadbhutaṃ divyaṃ dhriyate kena bhūṣaṇam // 2 na cāsya dhāraṇe śaktim kasyacit kalayāmy aham*. The second hemistich has been misunderstood: it means rather 'I do not perceive' (or 'consider') 'anyone to have the power to wear it'.

p. 150 n. 148 (in the text of *Ahīrbudhnyasamhitā* 27.4b): '*tanmahādyuti*' → '*tan mahādyuti*'.

p. 165 n. 25 (in the text of *Pūrvakāraṇāgama* 110.17c): '*prāvṛt*' → '*prāvṛt*'.

p. 165 n. 26 (in the text of the *Dikṣādarśa*'s quotation attributed to the *Śāradātilaka*): '*śūdrānām*' → '*śūdrānām*'.

p. 197 n. 74: '*Mādhyamakas*' → '*Mādhyamikas*'.

p. 201 n. 87 (in the text of *Siddhayogeśvarīmata* 25.16d): '*manavikalpanā*' is probably (I am unable to check the text at present) a typo for '*mānavikalpanā*'.

p. 208 n. 105 (in the text of Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha's commentary on *Mṛgendratāntṛa kriyāpāda* 8.39): '*bhuktimuktiviṣayānām*' → '*bhuktimuktiviṣayānām*'.

p. 227 lines 6-10: 'Abhinavagupta goes as far as to identify the maṇḍala and the supreme deity in TĀ 37.21 where he says: "because the term *maṇḍa* [forms the word] maṇḍala this word expresses the essence, it means Śiva" (*maṇḍalaṃ sāram uktam hi maṇḍaśrutyā śivāhvayam*)'. The addition in square brackets '[forms the word]' ought to arouse suspicion, and considering the whole of the passage, *maṇḍalam* of *Tantrāloka* 37.21a should not be construed, as Padoux evidently has construed it (in a somewhat contorted fashion), with what follows. Rather *maṇḍalam* belongs with *tadāpyāyanakārakam* in 37.20d, and a new sentence starts with *sāram*: 'for (*hi*) the essence called Śiva is expressed (*uktam*) by the word *maṇḍa*' (i.e. 'for *maṇḍa* means "essence", and *maṇḍala* means that which grasps (*lāti*)¹⁷ the essence called Śiva').

¹⁷ Padoux, on this same page, translates *lāti*, which as he points out Jayaratha commenting on this passage uses in his explanation of the implied *nirukti*, with 'gives'; though this is not impossible, *lāti* more commonly (in general, and in *niruktis* of the word *maṇḍala*) is glossed with

p. 227 line 13 (in the text of Jayaratha's commentary on *Tantrāloka* 37.21): 'lāṭīyārtha' → 'lāṭīy arthaḥ'.

p. 228 line 14 from bottom (in the text of *Tantrāloka* 15.452ab): 'tad-āveśavaśāc cchiṣyas tanmayatvaṃ prāpyate' (which would have been bad sandhi, bad metre, and bad grammar) → 'tadāveśavaśāc chiṣyas tanmayatvaṃ prapadyate'.

p. 230-231 (in the text of *Tantrāloka* 21.20ab): 'anāhute 'pi dṛṣṭam sat samayitvasādhanam' → 'anāhūte 'pi dṛṣṭam sat samayitvapasādhanam'.

p. 231 line 3 (in the text of *Tantrāloka* 21.21cd, though this is not indicated): 'ākṛtir dīptārūpā yā mantras tadvat' → 'ākṛtir dīptarūpā yā mantras tadvat sudīptikaḥ'.

p. 263 line 6 from bottom: 'Bafna 2001' → 'Bafna 2000'.

One final comment, prompted by the fact that the usefulness of electronic texts is clearly beginning to be reflected in work on Sanskrit sources: Törzsök's remark, in n. 6 on p. 181, that 'no firm conclusion' (about whether the *Svacchandatantra* and *Netratantra* ever use the word *cakra* for an actual drawing) 'can be drawn until all these texts are available in electronic form to facilitate such terminological searches' is (apart from the fact that to speak of 'drawing conclusions' in a matter like this seems slightly odd) quite wrong. Thank goodness, electronic texts are not necessary to determine whether a limited corpus contains a word in a particular sense or not; indeed, lest we become too dependent on them, I think we should rather remind ourselves that a merely electronic search should not be the basis of a conclusion in such a matter (unless perhaps there is very good reason indeed to believe that the electronic texts concerned have been prepared and proofread with much more care than is the case, I suspect, with any electronic texts of Sanskrit works widely available today). Valuable, near-indispensable, adjuncts though they have become, the use of e-texts cannot replace the work of reading carefully and critically 'in the old-fashioned way' through the body of literature that forms the most important primary evidence for so much of pre-modern Indian culture.

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gṛhṇāti; Bühnemann, in n. 1 on p. 13, at the beginning of her contribution 'Maṇḍala, Yantra and Cakra: Some Observations', referring to the same passage in Jayaratha's commentary translates the verbal root *lā* 'to take'.