

HANS JÖRGENSEN: A PIONEER IN NEVĀRĪ STUDIES

In a recent book, the *Nevārīgītimañjarī* published in 1974, the convenor of this conference, Prof. Siegfried Lienhard, mentions the acquaintance with some of the works of Hans Jörgensen as a factor important to the rise of modern Nevārī literature in times of misery and oppression. Forty-five years before, Jörgensen in the introduction to his edition of a Nevārī text expressed the opinion that the final extinction of the once predominating language of Nepal [strictly speaking: the Kathmandu Valley] was merely a question of time. Since his works have contributed to the survival of the language, it may be appropriate to devote some attention to this almost unknown scholar, and I am grateful to Professor Lienhard for giving me this opportunity to provide the concept « Jörgensen » with the features of a personality who deserves a seat in a corner of Danish Indology.

Hans Jörgensen was born 4 March 1886 in the neighbourhood of Oksböl, a village in the northern part of Als, the island situated off the coast of South Jutland and separated from the mainland by a narrow sound. Though in some respects having its own history in the complicated development determined by the relations between the duchy of Slesvig and the Danish crown, it shared the fate of the dukedom, which was incorporated into Prussia by the end of 1866 to form a single province with Holstein. It was thus as a Prussian citizen that Hans was born as the eldest son of a peasant family, like the overwhelming part of the Alsian population Danish with regard to language, traditions and sympathies. The parents, Jens and Helene, were, perhaps, not a very harmonious married couple; it is said that Helene did not get the man she really loved, and Jens had melancholic tendencies. However that may be, the family lived in good economic circumstances on the farm surrounded by fertile fields; Oksböl is a village which has even today preserved the old-fashioned arrangement with farmsteads situated along the village streets; but « Povlsgård » (the present-day name of Hans Jörgen-

sen's native home) belongs to the few farms that had the buildings removed from the village to the fields, hence the address «Oksböl Mark» known from his prefaces (in German: Oxbüllfeld).

Hans, who had two younger brothers, Paul and Jens, went to the village school at Oksböl. His overwhelming interest was reading, and he continued school at the parsonage, where a private tutor was employed; later on he came to the grammar school at Haderslev, founded in 1567 by the duke Hans the Elder, at the time functioning as a Prussian school, from where he got his maturity certificate in March 1906. At the universities of Kiel, Marburg and Munich he studied classical philology and comparative linguistics. He attended lectures on philosophy and history, devoted a rather intense study to several languages, including Russian and Mongolian, but after some time he concentrated on Sanskrit philology¹. In 1909 Emil Sieg succeeded Heinrich Lüders as professor of Sanskrit at the university of Kiel, and it was under his direction that Hans Jörgensen concluded his studies and wrote his dissertation, an edition of the 2nd prapāṭhaka of the Mantrabrahmaṇa with Sāyaṇa's commentary, a translation of the mantras, notes and a register; the first prapāṭhaka had been edited in 1901 by Heinrich Stöner, also as a doctor's thesis; in the Sāmavedic tradition the two prapāṭhakas containing 249 mantras for the domestic ritual precede the Chāndogyopaniṣad. The doctor's degree was conferred upon him on 7 December 1911 with praise for the learned diligence and acuteness of thought shown in the performance and for the excellent result of the examination, which took place in July 1911.

In 1912 he got a position at the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin (perhaps encouraged to apply for it by Heinrich Stöner, who was employed there). An attempt he made, in 1913, to get an employment at the National Museum in Copenhagen failed. So he stayed in Berlin, where he had the opportunity to combine his task at the museum with the research work for which he had prepared himself, in a way, by his linguistic studies in general, by acquiring a good knowledge of Sanskrit, and by the manuscript studies involved in his dissertation; on the other hand he had to start from the very beginning, when he acquainted himself with Nevārī, having not beforehand studied Tibetan or any other of the languages related to it. One of the oldest existing Nevārī manuscripts, the first book of Hitopadeśa in Sanskrit and Nevārī, was among the manuscript treasures of the Museum für Völkerkunde; other Nevārī manuscripts were kept in the Königliche Bibliothek, and whatever research had been done in the field was accessible to him in the well

1. What remains of JÖRGENSEN's papers of scientific interest has been handed over to the Oriental Department of the Royal Library, Copenhagen, and was made available for me by Mr. F. MÖLLER-KRISTENSEN, head of the department, after careful arrangement by Miss NANA LUND, assistant librarian. The collection comprises a few personal documents, and scraps of biographical information may be gleaned from note-books and the reverse of lexical slips.

equipped libraries and other academic institutions in Berlin. Much of his work was a lonely occupation, but he seems to have taken upon himself some teaching (a note from a student mentions lectures on Pāli), and he had both German and Danish friends, the latter probably members of the Scandinavian Y.M.W.C.A.²

Then, in 1914, came the war, and towards the end of the year Hans Jörgensen received his calling-up notice. He was sent first to Brandenburg and later to an officers' training camp at Döberitz near Berlin. While he was there, he got a disease in his leg, as a consequence of which he spent some time in a camp hospital — at a distance from military service as well as from his museum and library studies. He spent his time there working out a description of his native dialect, using a phonetic script of his own invention; he had, in fact, never lost contact with his home during the years of study at German universities, but usually went to Als for the holidays; many years later his notes from the camp hospital were turned into a publication on Alsiian grammar. Thus he had not quite lost courage. He was, however, suffering from a nervous disease, and to the strain on his nerves was added his grief, when he learned that Jens, his youngest brother, had fallen in France at the age of 21. On his appointment as lieutenant of the reserve (5 June 1915) Jörgensen was sent to the Russian front to join the 35th regiment, but after a fortnight his disease became acute, and he was sent to a camp hospital at Konitz in West Prussia, from where he was transferred to a military hospital in Berlin³. He was never really restored to health, but he was at least released from military service on his discharge from hospital and could by the end of 1915 return to his task at the museum and take up his interrupted Nevārī studies.

Jörgensen was employed at the Museum für Völkerkunde as « wissenschaftlicher Hilfsarbeiter » engaged in the study of the languages represented in the collections from the Malay archipelago, a task in which he succeeded W. Siegling on 1 October 1912. He worked under the directorship of Albert Grünwedel, who appreciated his linguistic ability and showed him much kindness. Grünwedel did not hesitate to recom-

2. Some letters and postcards from his time in Germany and a few pocket diaries (1927-31) with different entries are still kept in his room at Povlsgård and were lent me by CHRISTIAN and ELLEN MÖLLER, when I visited them in September 1980.

3. HANS JÖRGENSEN'S Danish friends left Berlin one after the other. Among them were two sisters, KIRSTEN and OLGA EICH, daughters of a family that owned a manor house at Bramminge in Jutland, to which KIRSTEN returned about the time when the World War broke out, while OLGA stayed in Germany for some time. To judge from the lines she wrote on postcards she was an amiable and very sensible lady, an impression that was confirmed by her nephew, Mr. PREBEN EICH, whose name I happened to see in a newspaper. OLGA EICH died some years ago; her brother, Mr. ADOLF LINNEMANN EICH, Vejle, and youngest sister, Mrs. AASE EICH BUHL, Vejen, made a search and presented me with a collection of cards written by HANS JÖRGENSEN to OLGA EICH during his months in the army and in hospital (two of them decorated with neat pencil drawings); it appears from them that the disease that caused his breakdown at the front was diagnosed as a nervous heart disease.

mend his application for re-appointment after release from the army, and Jörgensen took up his work immediately after New Year 1916 and stayed in the position till the end of March 1919⁴.

His Nevārī studies had nothing to do with his position at the museum; but he had time enough to go on with them and turned to account all that he had at his disposal to become familiar with the language and prepare its description and the edition of texts. Besides the above mentioned Hitopadeśa manuscript kept in the museum he had access to four manuscripts in the Royal Prussian Library; one of these was a Nevārī recension of the Vetālapañcaviṃśatikā, of which Jörgensen edited two tales with a German translation in his « Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des Nevārī », which appeared in ZDMG 75 (1921). In vol. 45 (1891) and 47 (1893) of the same journal had already appeared the two contributions by *August Conrady* (Leipzig) « Das Newārī. Grammatik und Sprachproben » and « Ein Sanskrit-Newārī-Wörterbuch. Aus dem Nachlasse Minayeff's herausgegeben » which, with the survey of Nevārī and the cognate languages in the Linguistic Survey of India III, 1 (1908) by *Sten Konow*, served as the introductory courses to the language, which had to be mastered through a patient work with the manuscripts in comparison with Sanskrit parallels.

The state of affairs after the war made it necessary for Jörgensen to make a decision, taking his failing health into consideration. On application he was released from his position and returned in the spring of 1919 to Als, which became Danish in 1920. It was not a happy return to the native farm. After his partial recovery he had had a relapse of a serious character, and he was for some years in a very poor state. The same year in which he came back his father died, and Paul took over the farm. Hans got his share in the inheritance invested in securities, which gave him a small yearly income, to which was added the pension he received as a disabled soldier. His relations with the brothers had always been cordial, and he could easily arrange to live on the farm, but he was painfully aware of the fact that his relatives did not understand what his disease meant. After a stay at a mental hospital, however, his capacity for work returned. He did not succeed in obtaining any

4. The « Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde » was situated at Königgrätzer Strasse, renamed Stresemann Strasse. In spite of the devastations, documents from the years when HANS JÖRGENSEN was employed at the museum have been preserved, and through my friend Dr. G. BHATTACHARYA I received accurate information from Prof. HERBERT HÄRTEL, Director of the Museum für Indische Kunst (Dahlem), correcting some of my impressions. To what was mentioned above may be added that JÖRGENSEN was granted leave of absence for eight weeks in 1914 before the war and for three weeks in 1917, both times after consulting a Berlin neurologist; in his letter to GRÜNWEDEL of 10 February 1919 he gave as the reason for his resignation that he wanted to be attached to the Royal Library in Copenhagen.

position⁵, but he set to work on the many notes he had brought with him from Berlin.

Based on them he produced his « Versuch eines Wörterbuches der Nevārī-Sprache », which appeared in 1927 in *Acta Orientalia* (vol. 6); he had first sent the manuscript to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, but Vilhelm Thomsen and Dines Andersen found it better suited for a journal like *Acta Orientalia*. It was lucky for Hans Jörgensen that he had been brought into contact with Dines Andersen, who was then still professor of Indian Philology apart from being for several years the editor of the Academy; he encouraged the awkward and unsuccessful scholar in every respect and supported his application to the Carlsberg Foundation for a grant that would cover expenses connected with a stay in England to investigate Nevārī manuscripts kept there. The recommendation was supported by Professor Jakob Nielsen, the mathematician, Jörgensen's fellow-countryman in a narrow sense, being from the same Alsiian parish — a more robust nature, who served in the Prussian navy from 1913 to 1918 without mental or bodily harm.

In May 1927 Hans Jörgensen received his grant from the Carlsberg Foundation⁶, and in June he went to England to spend two or three months in Cambridge working with great energy in the University Library, copying manuscripts and making excerpts. It seems that he had got back both his working capacity and his interest in life. No doubt his stay at German universities and his task in Berlin had taught him good working methods, and he very accurately noted down all that was necessary for his work at home. He went to interesting places in the surroundings, visiting for example Ely and Devil's Ditch, and on Sundays he attended service in one church after another. In a later year he went to London to work in the British Museum and the India Office Library. Throughout his life the Carlsberg Foundation renewed his grants, and being not without personal means he could arrange to live in

5. Mr. P. K. IVERSEN, Keeper of the Public Records for South Jutland, obtained permission for me to read a letter kept in the archives which HANS JÖRGENSEN wrote in May 1924 to H. P. HANSSON, the well-known South Jutland politician. He mentioned that he was recovering and was engaged to be married, and asked for support to get a position at a popular library or a similar institution, for which his general education made him suited, since there was hardly any chance for him to obtain employment at the Royal Library or the University Library, where his abilities might have been turned to account.

6. From the archives of the Carlsberg Foundation Mrs. BENTE GAD prepared for my investigation the papers concerning the support granted to HANS JÖRGENSEN through the years. The brief accounts he gave in the applications of his life and studies were my guide to further information. A pro tem. address given by him led me to communicate with Dr. HERMAN RENDTORFF, chief physician of the psychiatric hospital at Dianalund where HANS JÖRGENSEN spent some months in 1938 before the final elaboration of the most difficult of his works; Dr. RENDTORFF kindly looked through the case records; it is not permitted to disclose, even to a devoted biographer, much of what they contain, but he was able to furnish me with some data to supplement my previous knowledge.

Copenhagen part of the year in a pension to work in the Royal Library. On the farm he had a room, where he worked most of the time with his notes, and occasionally he lent a hand at practical work. In 1946 Paul died. The new owners of the farm, Christian and Ellen Möller, were related to the family; they had small children, who liked to accompany their neighbour in the pensioners' wing on his walks. His mother (« Aunt Lena »), an impressive woman, who maintained old-fashioned rural virtues, lived till 1950. None of the sons married.

The first result of Jörgensen's studies in England was his « Vicitrakarnīkāvadānoddhṛta. A Collection of Buddhistic Legends », published in London in 1931 by the Royal Asiatic Society; it is the first complete Nevārī text ever printed, and it revealed him as a mature scholar; the nine stories are translated, there is a glossary, and the introduction gives a brief account of the Nevars, their language and the few earlier treatments.

Soon after, however, he fell ill again. The participation in a Mediterranean cruise in the autumn of 1931 did not have the soothing effect that might have been expected; when the boat reached Naples, he had had enough of the boisterous ports and returned to Denmark by land to be sent to hospital soon after. He was ill for some years, but recovered and got his Carlsberg grant renewed with a view to elaborating a dictionary comprising the great word material of the manuscripts he had utilized through the years; it was accepted for publication by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and appeared with the title « A Dictionary of the Classical Newārī » in 1936, the same year that his « Linguistic remarks on the verb in Newārī » (containing comparisons with other Tibeto-Burmese languages based on Linguistic Survey of India III, 1) appeared in *Acta Orientalia* (vol. 14). The Academy also published his bulky work « Bātīsaputrikākathā. The Tales of the thirty-two Statuettes » (a Nevārī recension of *Siṃhāsanadvātriṃśatikā*, differing widely from previously known recensions) and his final Nevārī publication, « A grammar of the Classical Newārī », 1941, in which he made the arrangement of all the facts of the language represented in the manuscripts he had studied — classical in distinction to the spoken language mostly represented in the early reports (Kirkpatrick, Hodgson), but revealing to some extent the language changes that had taken place in the course of the about 500 years between the time of the oldest and the latest manuscripts⁷.

From the list of literature utilized by him for his « Bātīsaputrikākathā » it appears that he had become something of a specialist in the narrative literature of the East. His linguistic studies were extended to include other Himalayan languages and Tibeto-Burmese languages on

7. His three works published by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters have the designations *Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser* XXIII, 1 (1936), XXIV, 2 (1939), XXVII, 3 (1941). Dr. ERIK DAL, the editor of the Academy, kindly looked up the notes about their acceptance (mentioning HOLGER PEDERSEN, the famous Danish linguist, as recommending it).

the whole, and he may have contemplated a comparative study to supplement the descriptive treatment of Nevārī; but the only work that appeared from his hand in the later years is « Alsisk formlære », an elaboration of the description of his Alsiian dialect written in 1915 in the camp hospital; he had continued making dialect observations and now handed his little book over to a research institution, which published it in 1950 (Udvalg for Folkemaals Publikationer, Serie A, Nr. 9. Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfunds Skrifter Nr. 354). Philologists with whom he got on friendly terms in connexion with his dialect studies still remember him as a competent scholar, who was devoted to his work and, after some time, would become less reserved in the company of those who shared his interests.

If he did not finish any further work, he, no doubt, had pleasure in getting acquainted with *Robert Shafer's* comparative investigation « Nevārī and Sino-Tibetan », which appeared in *Studia Linguistica* (VI, 1952, Lund and Copenhagen), and in which the greater part of the Nevārī material is stated to be taken from Hans Jörgensen's works. His editorial work was continued by *Siegfried Lienhard*, who in 1963 published the edition and translation of « Mañicūḍāvadānoddhṛta. A Buddhist Re-birth Story in the Nevārī Language » (Stockholm Oriental Studies 4), dedicated to the memory of Hans Jörgensen, who had studied the manuscript in Berlin. In 1961 Lienhard had mentioned him as the pioneer in Nevārī research in a lecture which appeared in Italian in 1962 in the series « Le civiltà asiatiche » (« Dal Sanscrito all'Hindī. Il Nevārī ». Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, Venezia-Roma). In his « Nevārī-gītimañjarī. Religious and Secular Poetry of the Nevars of the Kathmandu Valley » (Stockholm Oriental Studies 10, 1974) Lienhard affords access to another aspect of the literary activity of the Nevars; at the same time the book functions as a guide to Nevārī studies, dealing with the history and present-day position of the Nevars, giving a survey of research undertaken, discussing linguistic problems (including principles of transcription), and containing a detailed bibliography. In Nepal Lienhard acquired a familiarity with the language that could not be obtained in European libraries; he had contact with artistic groups as well as with erudite Nevars of our day, who were encouraged by seeing Western scholars treating their language and are ready to assist visiting linguists in the attempt to give an adequate description of it. Lienhard mentions among others *Thakur Lal Manandhar*, to whom *Ulrike* and *Bernhard Kölver* dedicated their « On Newārī Noun Inflection » (*Zentralasiatische Studien* 9, 1975), an investigation which is based on Jörgensen's grammar, but aims at a re-formulation in a more satisfactory structural pattern.

Hans Jörgensen died 6 February 1954, better known in Nepal than in Denmark, where it was not till 1958 that some attention was paid to his name, when Karl Eskelund, the well-known author of travel books, mentioned him in his book about the Kathmandu Valley (« Den glemte

dal ») and in an article in a popular weekly (Hjemmet No. 26, published by Gutenberghus); Eskelund had had to disappoint the Nevars who hoped to learn something from him about his « famous » fellow-countryman, who had restored their neglected and contempted language. Hans Jörgensen was not a man of many words, and inquiries made at Oksbøl brought to light few details of his life to be added to the data of the parish register and the short curriculum vitæ of his first application to the Carlsberg Foundation⁸. Some lines he quoted in a pocket diary about time for speaking and time for keeping silent may be read as a comment on his reserve. The Very Rev. Erich P. Alshauge, who became parish priest at Oksbøl in 1943 and now lives at Sønderborg, to some extent gained his confidence, and as an elderly man Hans Jörgensen felt at ease when he occasionally paid a visit to the parsonage and spent some hours with him and his wife without contributing much to the entertainment⁹.

8. Mr. ASGER LOMHOLT, for many years keeper of the archives of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, found the correspondence between Prof. JAKOB NIELSEN and Mrs. KAREN HELENE Blichfeldt, the widow of the parish priest at Oksbøl between 1921 and 1943; « Dr. phil. » had been a welcome visitor to the parsonage and used to find some encouragement when depressed by talking with her husband or herself. Memories of HANS JÖRGENSEN in his Alsian surroundings have been collected by BOYE ANDERSEN in his beautiful article, *Sprogforskeren Dr. phil. Hans Jörgensen*, written for *Alsisk kalender* (II, 1969).

9. A special Danish letter has been printed as Ö, ö.