

PANDANUS '06, *Nature in Literature and Ritual*, Institute of South and Central Asian Studies, Prague, 2006.

This volume contains the proceedings of Pandanus international seminar on “Nature in Indian Literature, Art and Religion”, held in Prague in May 2006. The concept of nature in different areas of Indian literatures has been examined in depth during such an occasion. It seems reasonable to divide papers into two main categories, depending on the more specific or general treatment of natural and literary elements and symbols. The topics offered by authors range over all the Indian literary genres and traditions, from the sanskrit poetry, Epic and Grammar, to the Sangam literature and Hindi narrative. Starting with the more general papers, Mimma Congedo initiates the readers to the metaphysical symbols in the aesthetics of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. On the other hand, Gyula Wojtilla and Lidia Sudyka focus, respectively, on natural devices describing female beauty in sanskrit poetry, and on passion represented by seven plants, with seven different meanings.

Daniela Rossella aims to discuss the “interior and outer landscapes in Indian classical poetry”, with a reference to possible relationships between Indian painting and European figurative art in the 18th century. David Smith points out the general and mutual relation between the realm of nature and the realm of humans.

Peculiar aspects of Indian literature and natural phenomena are

underlined by Anna Bonisoli Alquati, who illustrates the dawn in the Raghuvamśa, and by Anna Trynkowska, with regard to the sunrise in Māgha's Śiśupālavadhā XI, 43-67. Cinzia Pieruccini and Chettiarthodi Rajendran treat the topic of forest, the first in the Rāmāyaṇa, the last in Kālidāsa. "A description of the Ocean in Buddhist Poetic Literature: Āryaśūra's Supāragajāṭaka and its Sources" is the paper presented by Camillo Alessio Formigatti, who is interested in showing the buddhist concept of ocean. Professor Jaroslav Vacek and Eva Wilden draw attention to old tamil literature, devoting their works to the dog as a part of description of nature and the agricultural metaphors in Sangam poetry. The volume also presents two papers on classical Hindi. Danuta Stasik describes the 'seasons' in Keśavdās' Kavi-priyā, and Stefania Cavaliere offers her analysis of Rāmacarita-mānasa of Tulsidāsa and Keśavadāsa's Rāmacandrikā. A different approach to the Indian nature's concept has been suggested by Tiziana Pontillo, who bases her work on a linguistical orientation, in her topic "The names of fruits, roots and flowers in Kālidāsa's works and the Aṣṭādhyāyī rules IV, 3, 163-167 with their commentaries".

*Mario Russo*

WILLEM BOLLÉE, *Gone to the dogs in ancient India*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, 2006.

The book by Willem Bollée analyses the different aspect of Indian dog's conception through the ages, since the Indus civilisation, focusing on archaeological remains, such as copper/bronze, soapstone and terracotta (section 1). Dealing with historical times (section 2), the author examines dogs' life and relation with men from Veda *corpus* to upaniṣadic literature as well as purāṇic collection. In order to reconstruct an exhaustive portrait of the Indian dog, Bollée points out the dog's designation (p. 8-17), underlining every word for 'dog' in Indian literary production (such as vedic and sanskrit *śvan*, pāli *sā*, non-aryan *kurkura*, *kapila* and so on), the human vision of dog's and its colour of fur (p. 17-23), the body's parts and their use (p. 23-33). In

this section, he either explains, for instance, the meaning of canine head, eyes, ears and tongue, from the point of view of brahmin society, or the not following habits of common people in eating dog's flesh during a famine. Great relevance is devoted to dog's bodily functions (p. 33-54), such as nutrition, excretions (vomit, urine, faeces), diseases (blindness, rabies, mange), and nature and behaviour (also dogs and their relation with other animals). In section 3 (p. 54-107), many information are given about "cynanthropic" relations, such as treatment of dogs, their use, and the literary evolution of dog's presence with a glance at the pāli sources. Every paragraph of section 3 may be considered as a small canine encyclopaedia, since the reader will collect accurate information about the treatment of dogs by humans, the hunt as well as the dog's use in war, and also the names of dogs and their presence in art, religion, magic and superstition.

*Mario Russo*

*Themes and Tasks in Old and Middle Indo-Aryan Linguistics*, edited by B. Tikkanen and H. Hettrich, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi, 2006.

Bertil Tikkanen, lecturer in Indian Languages and docent of South Asian Linguistics at the University of Helsinki, and Heinrich Hettrich, professor of Comparative Linguistics at the University of Würzburg, edit twelve of the sixteen papers discussed at the 12<sup>th</sup> World Sanskrit Conference (Helsinki, 13-18 July, 2003). Scholars from different countries and various interests present topic on historical phonology of old indo-aryan (Masato Kobayashi, "The development of Proto-Indo-Iranian \*śc into sanskrit /(c)ch/"), vedic morphosyntax (Hans Henrich Hock, "Reflexivization in the Rig-Veda"; Leonid Kulikov, "The vedic medio-passive aorists, statives and their participles: reconsidering the paradigm"), evolutionary aspects of indo-aryan morphosyntax (Vit Bubenik, "On the evolutionary changes in the Old and Middle Indo-Aryan systems of case and adpositions"; Boris Oguibénine, "Notes on the instrumental case of the subject/agent vs. other cases in Buddhist

Sanskrit”), old indo-aryan etymology (Erik Seldeslachts, “Prākṛit-like developments in old indo-aryan: testing the ‘Kölver-principle’”), Iranian loanwords in sanskrit with a glance at dravidian syntax (Hassan Rezai Baghbidi, “Iranian elements in Sanskrit”; George-Jean Pinault, “Further links between the Indo-Iranian substratum and the BMAC language”; Hartmut Scharfe, “Indo-Aryan and Dravidian convergence: gerunds and noun composition”), sanskrit translation of Avestan (Jhon S. Sheldon, “The Sanskrit translation of the Avestan Haoma Liturgy in the light of recent research”), gāndhārī lexicography (Andrew Glass, “A preliminary study of Gāndhārī lexicography”) and computer processing of sanskrit (Gérard Huet, “Lexicon-directed segmentation and tagging in Sanskrit”). Every single paper is provided by a very punctual and rich series of examples from languages considered, with reference to indo-european source and different development in Indian and Iranian areas.

*Mario Russo*

SWAMI TATTVAIDANANDA SARASWATI, *Āditya Hṛdayam*, D. K. Printworld, New Delhi, 2003.

Described as a walking encyclopaedia of Vedānta (Vedas and Purāṇas), Swami Tattvaidananda Saraswati introduces his followers in the deepest meaning of *stotra*, such as *Āditya Hṛdayam*, one of the main part of Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa. The *Āditya Hṛdayam* is a small chapter of Yuddha Kāṇḍa, the war section, in which Rāma and Rāvaṇa demonstrate their own bravery and strength. The author declares the superiority of the Īśvara’s worship, recognised in many forms since the vedic times, when the Lord was worshipped as Agni, the Fire. Īśvara is also the Sun, Savitā, who creates, protects and sustains the Universe, and this is the reason why Īśvara is called Savitā in the *Āditya Hṛdayam*, by means of the Gāyatrī *mantra*. In this book, Swami Tattvaidananda underlines that also women and cowherds are allowed to recite holy *mantra* and, particularly, Gāyatrī *mantra*, according to Vālmiki, who depicts Sītādevī as performing the *sandhyā*

meditation in the Aśoka forest, before her kidnapping. The book is a very useful analysis of Rāmāyaṇa's significance in the hindu society, and the author admits proudly that India would have no existence without Rāma, considered the heart and soul of Indian nationhood and hindu Dharma. The *corpus* of Āditya Hṛdayam is presented in its original version, with a commentary very rich in notes, cultural and religious explanations, in order to mark the text with a hindu point of view, far from Western influences. Based on Swami Tattvavidananda's talks on Āditya Hṛdayam, every word was transcribed and revised by the same author. The last section of this volume is supplemented by the "Reverence to the Sun God with 125 Names", dedicated to god Savitā.

*Mario Russo*

PARSHOTAM MEHRA, *From conflict to Conciliation: Tibetan Policy revisited*, O. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2004.

The book here reviewed is a remarkable attempt to set in order the Tibetan history since the ancient times, drawing attention to the relationship among the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. In the introduction, the author gives circumstantial information about Tibetan geography, traditions, customs and population, firstly underlining cultural and economic exchanges with its two principal neighbours, India and China. As he confirms, his work is dedicated to readers lacking in knowledge of the intricate and, sometimes, obscure, history of Tibet. The present edition is composed of researches and results collected in many years by the author and his friends, helpful to unveil the Sino-Tibetan relations and, in Tibet, the interactions between the buddhist authorities. To start with, he analyses the origins of institutions, such as the Dalai and the Panchen, tracing them back to the Ge-lug-pa or the reformed Yellow Hat sect. Every page of this book is furnished with a useful set of notes and the original 'old bibliography' has been replaced with a new and larger 'bibliographic note'. Focusing, mainly, on the 20th century's history of Tibetan peo-

ple and country, Parshotam Mehra underlines the importance of Dalai Lama's visit in Beijing in 1908 and the political and religious effects of it. Many confidential documents are available in the whole book, found in the American and British archives. The author pursued the idea that the historical and subterranean conflict among the two institutions of Dalai and Panchen, both at the apex of the monastic and religious pyramid, determined the last hundred years of Tibetan life and history, although none of them admitted it at all. It is noteworthy the large Appendix, which reports fundamental documents, such as the Panchen Lama's instructions to his followers (26 December 1923), Dalai Lama's message to the Panchen Lama (26 January 1924), Panchen Lama's rejoinder (July 1924), Dalai Lama's response (12 June 1926), Dalai Lama's letter to the Panchen Lama (9 October 1932), Agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Local Government of Tibet (23 May 1951) and Dalai Lama's Letters to General Tan Guansan (March 1959).

*Mario Russo*

BRUNO DAGENS, *Traités, temples et images du monde indien*, études d'histoire et archéologie. Articles rassemblés par Marie Luce Barazer-Billoret et Vincent Lefèvre, IFP, Pondichéry, 2005.

The book represents a fundamental and well-considered contribution to the comprehension of the 'Indian world' concept. As the authors state, mindful of their teacher's words, Bruno Dagens, 'Indian world' starts with Afghanistan and includes countries as Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand, places where Indian thought and artistic feeling created examples of eternal beauty, such as Angkor temples. The deep root of this volume is represented by the great sanskrit architectural treatise, the *Mayamata*, perfectly known by Dagens, who supervised a translation in French. The collection of studies, articles and field researches here reviewed has been intended as a homage to Bruno Dagens, whose life has been dedicated to the preservation of many Indian temples and sites in Northern and Southern Asia.

Particular attention is paid to the temples' iconography and to statements found in the classical treatises. The volume is composed of three parts, dealing extensively with India and South-eastern Asia (first part, pp. 1-37, with a serious analysis of Indian history of art and its diffusion), the temple's architecture and its regulations in the treatises (second part, pp. 79-181), sites and monuments in South-eastern Asia (third part, pp. 203-316, with a glance at the French role and politics in Indo-China). The authors provide also eight bibliographic pages of Bruno Dagens' works, from the beginning of his career to recent times. A second and more general bibliography is inserted in the last part of the collection, supplemented by an accurate sanskrit dictionary of technical terms, a list of sanskrit and pāli texts and a large list of principal sites and monuments, easily understandable also for uninitiated readers and students.

*Mario Russo*

GUDRUN CORVINUS, "*Prehistoric cultures in Nepal. From the Early Palaeolithic to the Neolithic and the Quaternary Geology of the Dang-Deokhuri Dun Valleys*", vol. I and II, O. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2007.

After several attempts, without any valuable results, by Indian archaeologists (1964, 1969) to investigate the Nepal's prehistoric past, in the Kathmandu valley, in the Narayani river valley and in Nawal Parasi, finally the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft financed the research in the 'Geo-archaeological Project in Nepal' (1983). The direction of the project was given to Dr. Gudrun Corvinus, a very keen specialist on prehistory and palaeontology, brutally murdered in Poona on new year's day 2006. The book reviewed here is the final *compendium* of the twenty years' fieldwork in Nepali territory, especially in the Siwalik foothills of Himalayas, and represents a large attempt to give the readers an idea of the great quantity of data, results and stratigraphical details found in the field of archaeological sites during their explorations. This remarkable and serious study has been concentrated into two volumes (I, II). Volume I consists in nine sec-

tions: Introduction, with a noteworthy analysis of Nepal's kingdom and its populations in prehistoric and historical times (I), Geographical data of the studied area (II), Geological and stratigraphical observations (III), The prehistoric sites, their location and geological context (IV), The cultural material of the prehistoric sites (V), The chronological sequence of cultures in their stratigraphical context (VI), Discussions on the stratigraphical, archaeological and environmental data and its interpretation (VII), Comparison with cultural traditions outside Nepal (VIII), Significance of the Nepal data within the framework of Asian Palaeolithic prehistory (IX). On the other hand, Volume II may be considered as an unpriced source of information, since it is enriched with more than two hundred pictures, aerial, in the field, black-and-white as well as coloured: Plates 1-201 Artifacts, Plates 202-256 Photos of the sites. Furthermore, in attachment to the book it is also available the CD-ROM of all photos of the sites and additional material, in memory of the unfortunate author.

*Mario Russo*

DABASISH CHAKRABARTY, *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra of Kaṇāda*, DK Print-world, New Delhi, 2003.

Edited and translated by Shri Debasish Chakrabarty with the aid of Śāstra Group of Centre of Linguistic and English at Jawaharlal Nehru University, the Kaṇāda's Vaiśeṣika Sūtra may be said the basic text for every dissertation and study on Indian philosophy, and firstly on physics and on Nyāya as well as Navya-Nyāya system, in a particular manner. The translator provides three different textual versions: sanskrit *devanāgarī* original text, roman transliteration and, at the end of each verse, an English translation. Furthermore, he also completes his own commentary, enriching philosophical concepts and technical expressions with clarifying footnotes. The Prefatory Essay of this book is dedicated to readers and students scarcely acquainted with Indian Thought and Philosophical Systems, as Chakrabarty traces the origin of *darśana* since the ancient times and, then, he does explain

every single word and concept in manner of philosophy. He also describes the different philosophical systems, Ontology and Epistemology, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Yoga, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya, and, last but not least, Vaiśeṣika. In the Introduction to Vaiśeṣika Sūtra, Chakrabarty arranges his work in sections, beginning with a general overview, in which great relevance is due to upaniṣadic tradition and knowledge. Then, he gives information about the text's date, the author and the structure. Although Dabasish Chakrabarty manifests his own pride in declaring the Indian authenticity and footstep of the present translation and commentary, the entire work seems adapted to and based upon the Western textual and critical tradition.

*Mario Russo*

MARIE LUCE BARAZER-BILLORET, BRUNO DAGENS, VINCENT LEFÈVRE, *Dīptāgama*, Tome I, Chapitres 1 à 21, IFP, Pondichéry, 2004.

The Dīptāgama edition by Banazer-Billaret, Dagens and Lefèvre, with a relevant contribution of the Pandit S. Sambandha Śivācārya, is included in one of the most important projects of the 'Institut français de Pondichéry', namely the publication of the entire *corpus* of Āgama's texts. The Dīptāgama, written in Sanskrit, consists of 6000 verses, which is why it has been resolved by the authors on publishing it in three volumes. The book here reviewed is the Tome I (Chapters 1-21), with a useful and minute Introduction (p. 1-25) on Āgama in general and Dīptāgama in a particular manner. Nevertheless, the kernel of this work is the second section (p. 27-328), that is the original āgamic text, without any roman transliteration, but provided with a very large and explanatory series of footnotes, in order to account for the textual variants that may be found in some other else manuscript. A further section (p. 329-369) is devoted to the first Dīptāgama's chapter (verses 59-182ab), for the sake of showing how same verses are quoted in every manuscript. According to the authors, the last part of the book (p. 371-441) cannot be regarded as a translation at all. As they state, it is a detailed résumé of the 21 chapters, and they hope that a real translation will be prepared soon. This edi-

tion of Dīptāgama is a good source for non-sanskritists (for instance, anthropologists or readers interested in Indian art) intending to approach the Southern Indian religion and observances.

*Mario Russo*

BRONKHORST J., *Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, Interaction and Continuity*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi, 2007.

According to the editor, the main subject of this book is the evolution and the development of the Indian Thought in the second half of the first millennium, when philosophical debates and, sometimes, contrasts between various school were well-known and particularly strong. During this period, two quite different schools and systems were at the apex of Indian philosophy: Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta. Modifications and evolutions in thought matured by both the schools, carried out interesting contacts among the philosophers versed in them. Although it often happened, doctrinal differences and interpretations were completely opposite, such as the role of liberation and the spiritual and ritual way to reach it. The work edited by Bronkhorst contains six papers presented at the 12th World Sanskrit Conference held in Helsinki in 2003. As he states in the Preface, those six contributions have been selected as they well underline the relations, mutual exchanges and transitions occurred among Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta and their prominent personalities, first of all Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. The first topic is by the same editor, Johannes Bronkhorst, “Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta”, namely a deep analysis of these two schools. The other articles are by Marcus Schmücker (“Debates about the Object of Perception in the Traditions of Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta”), Walter Slaje (“Yājñavalkya-brāhmaṇas and the Early Mīmāṃsā”), John Taber (“Kumārila the Vedāntin?”), J. M. Verpooten (“Mīmāṃsā- and Vedānta-sentences in Padmāpada’s Pañcapādikā”) and Kiyotaka Yodhimizu (“Kumārila’ Reevaluation of the Sacrifice and the Veda from Vedānta Perspective”).

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