



OBITUARIES







SILVIA D'INTINO

MADELEINE BIARDEAU
(16 May 1922 - 1st February 2010)¹

Madeleine Biardeau was born in Niort, near Poitiers, West France. Before joining the *École pratique des hautes études* (EPHE), where she was *directeur d'études* from 1960 to 1989, she was student at the *École normale supérieure* (Sèvres), professor of philosophy (*Collège Classique* in Belfort and the *Lycée Jeanne D'Arc* in Rouen, 1952-1954), and *attachée de recherche* at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). Her education in humanities and philosophy was subsequently completed by a cursus in ethnology; and she found in India, in its great tradition, an ideal field of study, a world far enough from Western culture to inspire from the outset a “strong feeling of an extreme difference”². The aim and challenge of her research was thus clear from the beginning: to grant access to the distinctive features of Indian tradition. Very soon she also realised that her work would not have been possible away from India and Indian masters.

Thus, already during her first journey to India, she was trained “at the school of the brahmins” in order to penetrate the high technicality of the philosophical texts she edited and translated into French for the first time. For two years (May 1950-May 1952) she worked in Trivandrum University as lecturer in French language.

¹ It may be useful to remind here the obituaries and tributes already published by Charles Malamoud (*Le Monde*, 17/02/2010; *Newsletter of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies*, 10, 2011), Roland Lardinois (*The Hindu*, 28/02/2010), Raphaël Rousseleau (<http://ceias.ehess.fr/docannexe.php?id=1866>), Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat, "In memoriam. Madeleine Biardeau (1922-2010)", *Journal asiatique* 298,1 (2010), p. 1-4.

² M. Biardeau, “Titres et travaux”, [1978], *s.l.* [untracked offprint]. I thank here Professor Malamoud, who kindly lent me this text.





That was the time in which India and Europe could engage a different dialogue, following the independence: still through fascination – and, among western Indologists, admiration – for Indian culture, to which the recent history added a surge of empathy, and on the ground of a renewed trust. Yet, Biardeau disliked any conventional idea about India – the “land of spirit”, the “mystical India”... The portrait of Gandhi she published in 1954³, her acute analysis of the recent past of India, is eloquent enough about her extraordinary qualities as an historian.

Up to this time, European Indology had been almost practised on this side of the Planet, *en vase clos*, without any contact with the descendents of this great tradition. Louis Renou, whose classes in Sanskrit at the EPHE Biardeau actively attended since 1949, went to India only once. Yet Renou worked mostly on Vedic literature, while Biardeau was soon attracted by the progress of Hinduism out of Vedic times and up to its present developments. At the EPHE Biardeau also attended the classes in Indian philology by Jean Filiozat (who noted, for the year 1956, Biardeau’s important contribution to the interpretation of the *Nādbindopaniṣad*)⁴, and Indian religions by Olivier Lacombe.

Biardeau was again in India, this time as a CNRS researcher, from February 1956 to September 1957, and then, from July 1959 to August 1960, she worked there for the École française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO). The same year she became *directeur d’études* in indian religions at the EPHE - Religious studies. Since 1963, Biardeau spent her life between France and India, staying in India during four or five months every year. In Poona, at the Deccan College, she partook in the prestigious project *Thesaurus of Sanskrit language*. As an associate member of the EFEO, she collaborated for more than thirty years with this Institution, who published many of her books together with the Department of Indology at the French Institute of Pondicherry.

Her Indology, both texts and fieldwork, leans on this fortunate coincidence – more than an intuition, a strong conviction: there is

³ « Gandhi, histoire et légende », *Esprit* 8-9 (1954), p. 176-214.

⁴ *Annuaire de l’EPHE, IV^e Section* (1956), p. 71. See at the address: <http://www.persee.fr/web/ouvrages/home/prescript/fond/ephe>





Madeleine Biardeau and K. Saradmoni, Trivandrum, 1951 (or 1952). Courtesy of Dr K. Saradmoni.

a living tradition of knowledge in India, uninterrupted, transmitted down from master to disciple, generation after generation, in order to keep alive the Vedic lore as well as the different Indian philosophical schools. Among the Indian pandits Biardeau met at that time there are V.A. Rāmasvāmi Śāstrī, K.K. Kuñjuni Rājā, K.A. Śivarāmakṛṣṇa Śāstrī⁵, and Subramanya Śāstrī. They are acknowledged in her edition of Vācaspatimiśra's *Tattvabindu* (1956, revised edition in 1979), Mandanamiśra's *Sphoṭasiddhi* (1958) and *Brahmasiddhi* (1969), and the *Brahmakaṇḍa* of Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* (1964). In 1964 came out Biardeau's impressive PhD thesis, entitled *Théorie de la connaissance et philosophie de la parole dans le brahmanisme classique*, which is a wonderful handbook of Indian philosophy of language, and its metaphysical implications. In this work Biardeau underscores also the social implications of the philosophical ideas, always produced by the Brahmanic elite, and yet reflecting a more general view of Indian society. Thus, in the introduction to this book, while criticizing their western assumptions, Biardeau shows interest for the methods developed by the "sociology of knowledge", and structur-

⁵ See the "Avant-propos" of her thesis *Théorie de la connaissance et philosophie de la parole dans le brahmanisme classique*, Paris, 1964, p. 9. To the memory of Prof. Rāmāsvāmī Śāstrī, who was the Head of Sanskrit Department in Trivandrum University, and the responsible of a recent edition of the *Tattvabindu* (1936), is dedicated Biardeau's edition of the *Tattvabindu* (Pondicherry, 1956).





alism. It was Louis Dumont – whom Biardeau succeeded in 1969 as the director of the current *Centre d'études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud* (CEIAS), a small team at the time (LA 118 CNRS-EHESS) – who introduced her to structuralism. Dumont's work, and particularly his leading essay *Homo hierarchicus* (1966) greatly influenced Biardeau's approach to Indian society and culture.

The structuralism of Dumont was a decisive key to access Indian philosophy, religion and anthropology. Biardeau perceived that “controversies between philosophers – writes Charles Malamoud – give out their full meaning when they are illuminated by prescriptive and narrative works which deliver the doctrinal rules for the «aims of human existence», as well as for the organisation of society and cosmos”⁶. While working on the texts of classical Indian philosophy, Biardeau already points out the debate between Brahmans and Buddhists. Notwithstanding a common framework – a shared technique of argumentation –, this debate deeply oriented the progress of Indian thought. Thus, in the Vth century, the famous Buddhist logician Dīnānāga deeply changed the history of Indian philosophy. On another scale, the opposition between Brahmanism and Buddhism is a central argument in Biardeau's interpretation of Indian epics, which is regarded as a Brahmanic “reaction” to the rise of Buddhism.

There is a continuity, if not a formal intimacy, between Indian mythology and epic discourse. When Biardeau joined the EPHE, this thread was already the centre of her interest. In the cosmogonic myths of the *Purāṇas* Biardeau tests her methodology. It is around few plots that more and more sophisticated conceptions take place. They are looked upon as an elaborate expression of Indian “rationality”, a sort of counterpart of Indian philosophical discourse. In fact, the particular cosmogonic model stemming out from a multiplicity of narratives presents itself as the basis of the concurrent philosophic speculations, both having the same theoretical reference: Vedic Revelation. Puranic cosmogonies show a prodigious interconnection between ritual values – the “logic” of sacrifice – and those of “renunciation”, the latter encompassing the former to shape the world of “devotion” (*bhakti*). This is the matter of Biardeau's *Études de mythologie hindoue – Tome 1: Cosmogonies puraniques* (initially

⁶ Ch. Malamoud, “Professor Madeleine Biardeau (1922-2010)”, *op. cit.*, p. 44-45.





published in *Bulletin de l'EFEO* 54, 55, 58) and *Tome 2: Bhakti et avatāra* (*Bulletin de l'EFEO* 63 and 65) –, which gathers her studies on the subject starting from 1968, and reprinted in two volumes in 1981. These values, bridging cosmic and social order (*dharma*), produce the tension between, on one side, the man of ritual and sacrifice, having his place in social hierarchy and committed to maintain the global order, and on the other, the renouncer stepping aside from society to achieve salvation. This tension is at the heart of the theory of sacrifice in ancient India, whose evolution has been exposed by Biardeau in another remarkable book, written in collaboration with Charles Malamoud, *Le sacrifice dans l'Inde ancienne* (Paris, Presses universitaires de France 1976, reprinted in 1996).

The *Mahābhārata* had been the subject of Biardeau's seminar at the EPHE starting from 1968. The reading of *Mythe et Épopée* I, just published by Georges Dumézil – the ideology of functions, and Dumézil's way of decoding the *Mahābhārata* by enlightening characters and events through their social implications – encourages Biardeau in her own approach. The first results of her enquiry on Indian epic tradition can be found in the introduction and notes to the anthology of the *Mahābhārata* translated by Jean-Michel Péterfalvi (Paris, Flammarion, 1985-1986). In 1999 Biardeau edited with Marie-Claude Porcher a collective translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in the prestigious collection of the Pléiade. Yet in the *Mahābhārata*, where everyone has his own place and function, the “structure” of the epic is clearly much more articulated. In this context, the main key of Biardeau's “historical” interpretation does not refer to a “content” of the epic – a real war in a far past which could not have been, she says, more than a marginal event on a local scale – it has to be found in the time and context of its composition, regarded as a reaction of Brahmanic India to the affirmation of Buddhism. We are at the utmost of a religious crisis. The meaning of the fratricide war in this epic is thus entirely religious and symbolic: a big sacrifice in order to re-establish *dharma* – no longer a “function”, but an “all-encompassing and ultimate value of society” – where every one has to perform his duty, as violent as it may be, according to the values of the *bhakti*, the faithful devotion to the divinity expressed by a “detached” action. Thus the study of the two great epics was a way to shed light on the principles which control the relation between the





gods and the world (the society) – in other terms, the complementarity between the two gods of salvation, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

An aspect of Biardeau's work as important as the study of texts is the ethnological investigation. The interpretation of texts constitutes a prelude to the ethnological enquire. The contrary is also true. It is impossible to really separate these two aspects in Biardeau's work, their association underpins each of her enterprises. And this is already true from the time of her thesis. As we have seen, she punctuated her life travelling through India. It was the occasion to explore different regions of the sub-continent, to visit main and minor temples and observe local cults. Thus, she could appreciate the transformations that occur between the "textual" version and the "local" variants of the myths, as well as of the cult. The study of the regional temples devoted to different forms of Viṣṇu or Śiva allows a better understanding of the Goddess's function, as the consort of the sovereign gods, or as the sovereign herself (in many minor temples exclusively devoted to her). Here the cult shows few meaningful reminiscences of the Vedic sacrifice, and it is part of a common heritage. This is the main thesis of the collective volume about the Hindu Goddess she edited in 1981 (*Autour de la Déesse hindoue*, "Puruṣārtha": 5), and of her monograph *Histoires de poteaux. Variations védiques autour de la Déesse hindoue* (EFEO, 1989), translated into English in 2004 (University of Chicago Press). This book holds a particular place in Biardeau's work – and she had a special regard for it. Indeed, it is a book full of treasures, audacious in its method, a rewarding reading.

Biardeau took part in many collective works on Indian philosophy and religion (although she seemed not paying much attention to colloquia and conferences), and was also involved in few comparative projects promoted at the EPHE by her colleague and friend Jean-Pierre Vernant⁷. The success of Biardeau's work is also tied to the effort she made to render it accessible to the non-initiated. Her book *L'hindouisme. Anthropologie d'une civilisation* (Flammarion, 1981) was reprinted numerous times and translated into

⁷ Vernant was the founder (in 1964) and first director of the Centre Louis Gernet for Comparative Studies on Ancient Societies. In 1971 Biardeau was invited to present a *dossier* on the sacrifice in ancient India ("Le sacrifice comme principe structurant de la société hindoue"). The book *Le sacrifice dans l'Inde ancienne* may be regarded also as a fruit of this interdisciplinary dialogue.



English, Italian, Spanish, etc. In 2003 Biardeau was awarded the “Émile Senart Foundation” prize by the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* “for all of her contribution in the field of Indology”. From text to fieldwork, all Biardeau’s work reflects her approach, all at once subtle, rigorous, deeply considered.

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⁸ The following list does not include the reports of Biardeau’s teaching, published in the *Annuaire de l’École pratique des hautes études. Section des sciences religieuses*, available on line (<http://www.persee.fr/web/ouvrages/home/prescript/fond/ephe>).



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MIRJA JUNTUNEN

SIEGFRIED LIENHARD
(29 August 1924 - 6 March 2011)*

A passionate and a true scholar of Indology, Nepalese studies and Buddhology, Professor Emeritus Siegfried Lienhard passed away in Stockholm on 6 March 2011 aged 86. He left behind his wife Madeleine, relatives in Austria, and a large number of former students and colleagues in Sweden and other parts of the world, not least in India and Nepal. Professor Lienhard continued his research until the very last year of his life. We saw him regularly coming to the Department of Oriental Languages at Stockholm University with a piece of paper in his hand. Often it was a reference to be checked in a book or a passage to be found in one of the texts we kept in our departmental library in Stockholm. Both we younger colleagues and his former students felt honoured to have him among us. He used to take the long walk to the department from the university metro station, a practise that testified to his extraordinary physical condition even at an old age. We were all amazed how he kept his body and mind fit.

Professor Lienhard was born on 29 August 1924 in St. Veit an der Glan in Austria. After matriculation examination from the Gymnasium in Klagenfurt in 1942 he started studying Indology, Comparative Indo-European Linguistics and Philosophy at the University of Vienna. He earned his Dr. Phil. in 1949. He was the holder of a scholarship grant from the French Government for two years in 1950-51 (Boursier du Gouvernement Français) and he continued with his post-doctoral studies at the Univer-

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sity of Paris (Sorbonne) and the *École pratique des hautes études*. The major part of the 1950s he worked as an assistant to Professor Ernst Waldschmidt at the Department of Indology, Göttingen University. However, between the two periods of work at Göttingen, he went to teach the German Language at Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi. It was also in Varanasi where he met his life-companion to be, Madeleine Lagerfelt, a student of psychology at that time. They married and Siegfried moved to Stockholm, initiated the teaching of Indology at Stockholm University and was appointed Professor of Indology, especially Modern Indian Philology, and Head of Department in 1967.

He had earned the title of Professor already in 1962 when he was appointed Professor of Indology at the University of Kiel. In due course in the following years, Professor Lienhard was honoured by several titles of Professor, among them Honorary Professor of South Asian Languages and Literatures, especially medieval and modern, at the University of Vienna, Dr. h.c. at La Nouvelle Sorbonne in Paris and Dr. h.c. (*Vācaspati*) at Sanskrit University, Tirupati. From the 1980s onwards he was elected as a member of numerous scientific academies around the world: Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (1981), Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Literature, History and Antiquities (1982), Distinguished Member of the Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, Lucknow (1985), Member of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters (1986), Member of the Academy of Sciences of Turin (1988), Member of the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen (1988), Honorary Member of the Kalidasa and Max Müller International Sanskrit Society, India (1989), Member of the Academia Europaea (1989), Member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (1991), Honorary Member of the Academy of Mediterranean Studies, Sicily (1993), Member and Chairman of Board of the Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen (1981), Member of the Bureau of the Union Académique Internationale (1995) and Member of the Institut de France (1998).

The number of his books and articles, the wide range of themes and the depth of his knowledge are impressive and inspiring. He sparked off his academic career by translating into German

language the Love Manual of Kokkoka (*Kokkoka: Geheimnisse der Liebeskunst (Ratirahasya)*, aus dem Sanskrit übertragen', Schmiden bei Stuttgart, 1960). Already in the years preceding the publication of this book, he had shown an interest in the Indian *kāvya* compositions and in court poetry. He published an article on the types of *nāyikā* in the Indian *kāvya* literature in 1955 ('Typen der *nāyikā* im indischen *kāvya*', WZKM 52,1955) and on Dhoyī's *Pavanadūta* in 1958 ('Der Pavanadūta des Dhoyī', *Orientalia Suecana* 7 (1958). The articles of Professor Lienhard went on then dealing with 'Palai Poems in Sanskrit and Prakrit' (in *Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri Felicitation Volume*, Madras 1971), 'Akapporul and Sanskrit Mukta Poetry' (in *Compte-Rendu de la Troisième Conférence Internationale, Association Internationale des Études Tamoules, Publications de l'Institut Français d'Indologie* 50, Pondichéry, 1973), 'Summer Poems in Sanskrit and Prakrit' (*Indologica Taurinensia* 5, 1977), 'On the Textual Structure of *Kāvya*' (in K. *Kunjunni Raja Felicitation Volume*, Adyar Library Bulletin 44-45, 1980-81), 'Carmina figurata dans la poésie sanscrite', *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes* 10, 1992, to name a few articles in the field of Sanskrit and Prakrit poetry. The scholarship that he showed in these articles was later on elaborated in the monumental work, *A History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit-Pali-Prakrit* (A History of Indian Literature III.1. ed. by J. Gonda, Wiesbaden 1984).

Another area of interest that he had developed already early in his career was the literature, art, language and religion of the Newars. His 'Mañicūḍāvādānoddhṛta: a Buddhist Re-birth Story in the Nevārī Language' was published in 1963 in Stockholm (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Oriental Series* 4, Stockholm-Göteborg- Uppsala). He conducted extensive field-work in Nepal, particularly in the Kathmandu Valley, where he spent several months each time often accompanied by a research assistant from Stockholm University. His stays resulted in several pioneering books on Newar poetry, folksongs and paintings. 'Nevārīgītimañjarī: Religious and Secular Poetry of the Nevars of the Kathmandu Valley' appeared in 1974 (*Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Oriental Studies* 10, Stockholm-Göteborg-Uppsala), 'Songs of Nepal: An Anthology of Nevar



Folksongs and Hymns' came out in 1984 (Asian Studies at Hawaii 30, Honolulu; First Indian edition in 1992, Delhi). He prepared a beautiful volume with a painted scroll depicting the legend of Prince Viśvantara for the Museum of Indian Art in Berlin (*Die Legende vom Prinzen Viśvantara: Eine nepalesische Bilderrolle*, mit 27 farb. Tafeln, 30 Abbildungen, Zeichnungen; Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Indische Kunst Berlin 5, Berlin 1980) and another one on the adventures of the merchant Siṃhala (*Die Abenteuer des Kaufmanns Siṃhala: Eine nepalesische Bilderrolle*, mit 29 farb. Tafeln, Abbildungen, Zeichnungen; Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Indische Kunst Berlin 7, Berlin 1985). Still another important outcome of his stay in Kathmandu resulted in the catalogue, *Nepalese Manuscripts: Nevārī and Sanskrit* (with the collaboration of Thakur Lal Manandar, *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* 33, Wiesbaden 1988). Professor Lienhard worked at the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project in the 1980s. He covered Buddhist religious practices in Nepal in several articles. He wrote on religious syncretism, the survival of Indian Buddhism in Nepal, on the monastery and the secular world, on rites and customs of the Newars like birth, menstruation and death, and on art practices in Newar Buddhism (see *Sauhr̥dyamaṅgalam: Studies in Honour of Siegfried Lienhard on his 70th Birthday*, ed. by Mirja Juntunen et al., The Association of Oriental Studies, Stockholm 1994, for a list of publications of Siegfried Lienhard).

Professor Lienhard also contributed to scholarship of Modern Indian Studies and particularly to Hindi grammar. His work on the use of tense and the formation of Aktionsarten in Modern Hindi is still a book which is used and referred to by scholars and advanced students of Hindi (*Tempusgebrauch und Aktionsartenbildung in der modernen Hindī*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Oriental Studies 1, Stockholm-Göteborg-Uppsala 1961).

We remember Siegfried Lienhard as a scholar of Indian and Nepalese Studies. We also remember him as an organiser of international conferences. On several occasions he brought famous Indologists and Nepalologists to Stockholm and we were always very excited to listen to and interact with these scholars. We were also amazed by Siegfried's multilingual capacity. Not only did he





know many ancient and modern languages of Nepal and India, he also wrote articles and books in English, German, Italian, French and Swedish.

We all were proud and delighted when he was elected a member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, The Italian National Academy. Siegfried had the love and the perception as accurate as that of the lynx. We gave him the nickname 'sūkṣmadṛṣṭi'. The scholar-poet Mr Mats Lindberg composed a verse in Sanskrit to honour Professor Siegfried Lienhard on his 70th birthday. Let Mats' śloka keep Siegfried alive in our memory:

līyate hṛdayo yasya līnahṛt sa udīritaḥ,
harati suhṛdāṃ hṛtsu sulīnaṃ hṛdayākulam.

*'Līnahṛt' his name declared whose heart is ever melting,
He steals away from hearts of friends the heart's despair well
hidden.*

