

TWO STANZAS ATTRIBUTED TO BHARTṚHARI

Rajah Indrajit of Orchā, son of the Bundelā ruler Madhukar Sāh, wrote between the years 1592 and 1605 a commentary in Brajbhāṣā called *Vivekadīpikā* or *Bhartṛhariṭīkā* which with certainty included the *Nīti-* as well as the *Vairāgyaśataka* and probably also contained (and explained) the *Sṛṅgāraśataka* of Bhartṛhari. Indrajit's work is of considerable importance to our knowledge of older Hindi dialects, since it represents one of the earliest texts in Brajbhāṣā prose. A part of his *Vivekadīpikā*, the commentary on the *Nītiśataka*, has been commendably edited by Dr. R. S. McGregor¹. It follows the Northern Recension quoting and commenting on 106 stanzas altogether. Though this *ṭīkā*, which apparently makes frequent use of another commentary written in Sanskrit², is in fact of secondary importance as regards its purely interpretative merits, some of Indrajit's observations are very interesting and are definitely worth consulting by readers trying to explore not so much early Braj prose, but the poetry composed by or attributed to Bhartṛhari. Such is the case with stanzas 86 and 102 in McGregor's edition in each of which, as is demonstrated by Indrajit, the poet has made use of the figure paronomasia (*śleṣa*). Both poems exemplify a widely used form of, or, to be more precise, two variants of a very popular type of the *śleṣālaṅkāra*. For, as we shall see presently, its application in stanza 86 differs in one respect from that in 102. We shall start by discussing the latter, written in Mandākrāntā metre. It runs as follows:

*dūrād arthaṃ ghaṭayati navaṃ dūrataś cāpaśabdāṃ
tyaktvā bhūyo bhavati nīrataḥ satsabhāpādaneṣu /
mandāṃ mandāṃ racayati padaṃ lokacittānuvṛtṭyā
kāmaṃ mantrī kavir iva sadā khedabhārair ayuktaḥ //*

1. *The Language of Indrajit of Orchā*, Cambridge, 1968.
2. See R. S. MCGREGOR, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

In this poem, the author says that a (good) prime minister of a king is like a (good) poet: *mantrī kavir iva*, or, as Indrajit explains in his *ṭikā*: (*mantrī*)³ *rāja kau mantrī (kavir iva) bhale kavi samāna hai*. For *ju kachū bhale kavi kī gati soī bhale mantrī kī gati*, « As is the procedure of a good poet, so is the procedure of a good minister ».

To assist the reader to grasp the entire contents of the stanza, our Braj commentator continues: *tahāṃ śleṣa racanā kari mantrī ke aru kavi ke ekaī dharama kahata haiṃ*, « Here (Bhartṛhari), while producing a *śleṣa*, states the same quality (or better: qualities) of (both) the minister and the writer ». Needless to say Indrajit's advice is correct. What is further said in our stanza has clearly a double meaning, each statement referring — in two different senses — to both the minister and the classical poet, the *kavi*. When reading the poem, we have thus to interpret most of the words in two ways:

1. « A prime minister, making the sound of his bow (travel) far, produces (constantly) new wealth from afar; he takes much delight in arranging meetings with clever men; he appropriates step by step (new) territory, while paying attention to the will of the people; and thus always remains — like the (good) poet — free from the burden of (utter) distress ».
2. « A poet produces new (poetical) matter from afar⁴, leaving aside vulgar (and/or ungrammatical) expressions; he takes much delight in arranging meetings with connoisseurs; he carefully forms words (or: verse-lines), giving attention to what is liked by the readers⁵; and thus always remains — like the (good) prime-minister — free from the burden of (excessive) labour ».

It does not seem to me necessary to enter into details as far as the Braj paraphrase is concerned. The reader is referred to the appendix attached to this article which reproduces Indrajit's commentary, together with an English translation of both this and the following stanza. We can see from the relevant extract that Indrajit interprets the double meanings quite well. A problem in the Sanskrit text as well as the commentary in Brajbhāṣā is posed by the phrase *dūrataś cāpaśabdam tyaktvā* which, when applied to the minister, appears to mean « letting the sound of his bow(-string) go far ». Indrajit comments on this passage by explaining *cāpu*, *caḍhāī cāpa kī, jīhiṃ ko śabda karikai, dūri dūri ke bhūmīyāṃni ḍarapāikai*, which may be tentatively translated as « the

3. In order to differentiate clearly between the Sanskrit portions and those in Brajbhāṣā, Sanskrit words, etc. followed by a translation or paraphrase in Brajbhāṣā are here put within brackets.

4. That means, probably, « from his imagination », from the Epics and Purāṇas or events of the past.

5. Literally, « people ».

bow, (i.e.) when (he) has made an attack with his bow(-men), letting the bow(-string) sound far (and thus) threatening far-off rulers ». Here the relative pronoun *jihim* (*ko*) refers clearly to *cāpu*, while the words *caḍhāi cāpa kī* most probably form a short sentence which the author inserts to explain the word *cāpu*⁶. The same passage, when applied to the poet, is to be read as « (a poet) produces new (poetical) matter from afar, leaving aside vulgar (or/and ungrammatical) expressions ». It is evident that in this case *cāpaśabdā*, as is rightly pointed out by our Braj commentator, must be understood as consisting of the two words *ca* and *apaśabda*.

We turn now to the second stanza, number 86 in R. S. McGregor's edition, which, in appearance, is simpler, but in reality has a much more complicated structure than stanza 102. It reads as follows:

ekenāpi hi sūreṇa pādākrāntaṃ kṣamātalam /
kriyate bhāskareṇaiva sphuradvīspḥāratejasā //

The poem is composed in *Śloka* metre and can be translated as firstly: « A single hero, luminous and (full of the) dazzling, wide-spreading (radiance of his) majesty, subdues with his feet the (entire) surface of the earth ». The subject of this poem is, as we see, a powerful king, perhaps a universal ruler, a *cakravartin*, who, single-handed, conquers the earth. Indrajit begins his commentary on this stanza by saying that *aba Bhartṛhari śleṣa racanā kari sūrapuruṣa kī sarāhanā karata haiṃ*, « Now Bhartṛhari, while producing a *śleṣa*, eulogizes the hero ». He discovers a second meaning in the word *pāda*, which, of course, can mean « foot » as well as « ray » (of the sun or moon), but, strangely enough, does not see that the word *tejas*, too, is here used ambiguously. The poet employs the word to denote not only the bright « (radiance of) majesty » of the sovereign, but also the dazzling « light (of the sun) ». Indrajit has made another mistake. He does not read *bhāskareṇaiva*, which is the reading given in the *mūla* and which, naturally, is to be separated into *bhāskareṇa* and *eva*, but adopts the variant *bhāskareṇeva* which in the commentary is correctly split up into *bhāskareṇa* and *iva*. *bhāskara*, too, possesses two meanings, the first being « luminous », the second being « sun ». Indrajit, not knowing the proper reading or not recognizing the ambivalence of the word, takes *bhāskareṇeva* to mean « like the sun ». *bhāskara*, the « sun », is thus made the *upamāna*, i.e. the object with which the heroic king is compared, the whole stanza being understood as « A single hero, luminous and (full of) dazzling, wide-spreading splendour, subdues with his feet the (entire) surface of the earth — (just) like the sun, who, (too), with his rays reaches the (entire) surface of the earth ». The proper reading is undoubtedly *bhā-*

6. MCGREGOR, *op. cit.*, p. 105, renders the same passage as: « an attack by bow(men), by threatening distant kings or landholders with the mention of which...».

skareṇaiva where *bhāskareṇa*, an adjective referring to *śūreṇa* and followed by the emphatic particle *eva*, means — almost exclusively — « shining », « radiant » or « luminous ». Its second meaning, « sun », is, however, not wholly forgotten. As classical poets often do, the author has purposely chosen an equivocal expression in order to bewilder the reader. At first sight, the meaning « sun » tends to suggest itself as the most suitable sense; it is, however, slowly rejected, when the lines are re-read and gradually the subtle relations of each part with the other parts of the poem are detected. The poet has laid a trap in which to ensnare his listeners or readers, and Indrajit, as we see, has promptly walked into it.

What allows us now to declare with assurance that the correct reading at the end of the third *pāda* is *bhāskareṇaiva* and not *bhāskareṇeva*? Both readings are permissible as far as metre is concerned. The answer is easy. The poet is, in fact, comparing the heroic king with the sun, but he does not state the compared object in the expression *bhāskareṇeva* or *bhāskareṇaiva*, which, as we have seen, is used as a trap. The author hides skilfully the object of comparison by means of the figure paronomasia. He employs the lexeme *śūra* to mean in the first place « the hero », but denotes under the disguise of the word also the *upamāna*, namely *śūra* or *śūra*⁷, « the sun ». Thus, when trying to translate the whole stanza, we have to render the poem in two versions:

1. « A single hero, luminous and (full of the) dazzling, wide-spread-
ing (radiance of his) majesty, subdues with his feet the (entire)
surface of the earth », and
2. « The sun alone, luminous and (having) dazzling, wide-spreading
sunlight, reaches with her rays the (entire) surface of the earth ».

Although the *Nīti* genre of the *muktaka* did not yield so easily to highly artistic creation, the two poems we discussed may be regarded as good examples of a more elaborate and imaginative poetry belonging to *Nīti*. The two poems make use, as I said at the very beginning,

7. In his commentary on the Amarakośa Bhānuji Dikṣita gives for *śūra* also the variant *śūra*; cf. *The Nāmaliṅgānuśāsana (Amarakośa) of Amarasimha. With the Commentary (Vyākhyāsuḍhā or Rāmāśramī) of Bhānuji Dikṣit*, edited by Pt. Śivadatta, revised by W. L. Sh. Paṅsīkar, Bombay, 1915⁴, p. 40 (sub *śūreti*). It is generally assumed that Bhartṛhari was a native of the North. There is, unfortunately, no evidence that our stanza really was written by him. If, however, it was, the bringing together of *śūra*, « hero », and *śūra/śūra*, « sun » in one *śleṣa*-expression would possibly prompt the conclusion that our poet descendend from an Eastern area, probably Bihar or Bengal. We find several instances in Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda*, which we know was composed in Bengal, where *ś* and *s* are indiscriminately used in one and the same rhyme.

mantrin

kavi

śūra

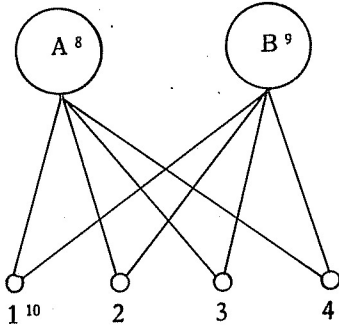


Figure I

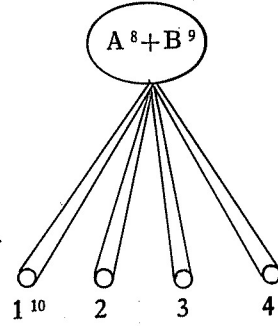


Figure II

of two very characteristic types of the *śleṣālaṅkāra*. While in the first stanza both the *upameya* and *upamāna* are mentioned (*mantrī kavir iva*) and the statements made by the poet refer to the one as well as the other (fig. I), the latter poem, too, contains sentence parts endowed with ambiguous meaning, but, by employing the figure paronomasia, fuses the *upameya*, the subject to be compared, and the *upamāna*, the object compared, into one single expression, namely *śūreṇa* (fig. II).

It seems unlikely that either of the two poems was composed by Bhartṛhari himself. They are not contained in D. D. Kosambi's edition¹¹ and are probably the work of a much later poet than the famous author of the *Satakatraya*.

APPENDIX

Indrajit's commentary with an English translation

Stanza 102¹²:

- (1) MAMTRĪ¹³: *rājā kau mamtrī KAVIR IVA: bhale kavi samāna hai.*
 (2) *ju kachū bhale kavi kī gati soī bhale mamtrī kī gati.* (3) *tahām śleṣa*

8. A: *upameya*.

9. B: *upamāna*.

10. 1 (2, 3, 4): statements referring to A as well as B.

11. *Satakatrayādi-subhāṣitasamgraha: The Epigrams attributed to Bhartṛhari*, Bombay, 1948.

12. R. S. MCGREGOR, *op. cit.*, p. 73. My arrangement of the text differs, however, considerably from that made by McGregor.

13. The portions of the text in Sanskrit are here in capital letters, while the parts in Brajhbhāṣā are in italics. Explanations in Brajhbhāṣā of a Sanskrit word or passage are preceded by a colon as, for example, in *GHAṬAYATI: banāvatu haiṃ*, where *GHAṬAYATI* is a Sanskrit expression explained by *banāvatu haiṃ* in Brajhbhāṣā.

racanā kari maṁtrī ke aru kavi ke ekaī dharama kahata haiṁ. (4) maṁtrī kahā karatu hai. (5) CĀPASABDAM TYAKTVĀ: cāpu caḍhāi cāpa kī, jihīṁ ko śabda karikai, dūri dūri ke bhūmīyāṁni ḍarapāikai, taba. (6) DŪRĀD: dūri dūri ke (7) NAVAM ARTHAM: naaiṁ naaiṁ dhanahiṁ GHATAYATI: ḍaṁḍu maṁgāvatu hai. (8) aba kavi kaiṁ pakṣa inahiṁ padani kau yaha arthū jānivau. (9) kavi phuni CĀPASABDAM: CA āgaiṁ APASABDA tā kau CĀPASABDA aiso bhayau. (10) su apaśabdahiṁ DŪRATAH TYAKTVĀ: lagatau nāṁhī jātu. (11) aru apanaiṁ kavitva viṣaiṁ. (12) NAVAM ARTHAM: apūrva apūrva arathahiṁ (13) GHATAYATI: banāvatu haiṁ. (14) bahuri maṁtrī kahā karatu hai? (15) BHŪYAH: vāraṁ vāraṁ SATSABHĀPADANEṢU NIRATAH: kacchū vicāru karive kahūṁ bhale bhale mahāpuruṣa aru baḍe baḍe manuṣyani kī sabhā joratu hai. (16) aru kavi phuni vāra vāra apanauṁ kavitva sunāive kahūṁ (17) SATSABHĀPADANEṢU NIRATAH: bhale bhale śrotāni kī sabhā joratu haiṁ. (18) bahuri maṁtrī kahā karatu hai? (19) LOKACITTĀNUVRTTYĀ: jaisau jaisau loka ke cit(t)ahiṁ vasya karatu hai taisau taisau (20) MAMDAM MAMDAM: haraiṁ hī haraiṁ (21) PADAM RACAYATI: parāyau thauru apanyāutu haiṁ. (22) aru kavi phuni (23) LOKACITTĀNUVRTTYĀ: je pada loka ke cittahiṁ nīke lagahiṁ ese padani maṁda maṁda racatu haiṁ. (24) bahuri maṁtrī kaisai hai? (25) KHEDABHĀRAIH: duṣabhārani¹⁴ kari (26) AYUKTAH: asaṁyukta rahatu haiṁ. (27) kabahūṁ ṣedahiṁ¹⁵ nāṁhī pāvatu. (28) aru bhalau kavi phuni kavitta hī anāyāsa hiṁ karatu haiṁ, (29) ṣedahiṁ¹⁵ nāṁhī pāvatu.

« (1) A minister, (i.e.), the minister of a king, is like a good poet. (2) (For) as is the procedure of a good poet, such is the procedure of a good minister. (3) By here creating a *śleṣa*, (Bhartṛhari) ascribes one and the same nature to (both) the minister and the poet. (4) What does the minister do? (5) (When) making the bow resound, (i.e.), the bow of victory, (when) making it sound (and thus) frightening far-off rulers, then (6) from a far distance, (i.e.) from afar, (7) he produces (constantly) new wealth, (i.e.), demands the payment of tribute. (8) Now as regards the poet, the sense of these words is to be taken (like) this. (9) (What is) *cāpaśabda* in the case of the poet? *apaśabda* preceded by *ca* has become *cāpaśabda*. (10) (The poet) does not use, (i.e.), avoids, such vulgar (or: ungrammatical) expressions. (11) And in his own poetry (13) (he) produces, (i.e.), creates, (12) new (poetical) matter, (i.e.), ever new (poetical) matter¹⁶. (14) And what does the minister do? (15) He often, (i.e.), again and again, takes delight in arranging meetings with the learned, (i.e.), arranges a meeting with great and eminent men to take counsel. (16) And the poet, on the other hand, for reciting his poetry, (17) often takes delight in arranging meetings with connoisseurs, (i.e.), arranges

14. For *du(h)kha*.

15. For *kheda*°.

16. This is of course the *apūrvavastu* so often referred to in later works on Sanskrit poetics.

a meeting with very good listeners. (18) And what does the minister do? (20) Slowly, (i.e.), gradually, (21) (he) appropriates, (i.e.), makes other people's territory his own, (19) while paying attention to the mind of the people, (i.e.), by subjugating the mind of the people. (22) And the poet, on the other hand (23), forms carefully words/verses by giving attention to the mind of the people, (i.e.), (uses) words that are liked by the people. (24) And what is the minister like? (26) (He) is free, (i.e.), remains free, (25) from the burden of (utter) distress, (i.e.), the burdens of sorrow. (27) He is never confronted with (utter) distress. (28) And the good poet, on the other hand, creates (his) poetry without (excessive) labour, (29) (i.e.), is never confronted with (excessive) labour ».

Stanza 86¹⁷:

(1) *aba bhartṛhari śleṣa racanā kari sūrapuruṣa kī sarāhanā karata haiṃ.* (2) *SŪREṆA EKENĀPI: sūrapuruṣa jau akeloū hai tau* (3) *KṢA-MĀTALAṂ: samasta bhūtalaiḥ PĀDAKRĀMTAṂ KRIYATE: apanaiḥ caraṇa kari ākramatu haiṃ, sakala pṛthvīḥ apanaiḥ caraṇa tara harā karatu hai.* (4) *BHĀSKAREṆA IVA: jaisaiḥ akelo sūrya saba bhūtalaiḥ apanaiḥ pādākrāṃta karatu hai.* (5) *PĀDAśabda hī mahāṃ śleṣa hai.* (6) *PĀDA kahetaiḥ caraṇa aru PĀDA kahetaiḥ kiraṇa jānive.* (7) *su sūra kai pakṣa PĀDAśabda kau arthu caraṇa jānivau.* (8) *tātaiḥ aba yā kau yaha artha jānivau* (9) *ki jaisaiḥ sūrya apanaiḥ kiraṇani kari sakala bhūtalaiḥ ākramatu hai* (10) *taisaiḥ hī sūrapuruṣa sakala bhūtalaiḥ apane caraṇani kari ākramatu hai.* (11) *tahāṃ kaisai sūrapuruṣa hai aru kaisau sūrya hai?* (12) *SPHURADVISPHĀRITEJASĀ.* (13) *SPHURAT kahetaiḥ dedīpyamāna hai* (14) *aru VISPHURAT kahetaiḥ jagadvidita hai, teja jā kau.* (15) *aisau sūrapuruṣa hai aru aisau sūryu phuni hai.*

« (1) Now Bhartṛhari, while producing a *śleṣa*, euologizes the hero. (2) A single hero, (i.e.), a hero who is alone, (3) subdues with his feet the entire surface of the earth, (i.e.), conquers with his feet the whole earth, (4) like the sun, (i.e.), as the sun with his rays reaches the whole (surface of the) earth. (5) There is a *śleṣa* in the word *pāda*. (6) (For) one should know that (Sanskrit) *pāda* means "foot" as well as "ray (of the sun or moon)". (7) In the case of the hero the word *pāda* is to be understood in the sense of "foot". (8) From this (follows that) the meaning of this (passage) is to be taken (thus): (9) (just) as the sun with his rays reaches the entire surface of the earth, (10) thus a single hero, (too), subdues with his feet the whole surface of the earth. (11) Now, what is the hero like and what is the sun like? (12) Luminous (and full of the) dazzling, wide-spreading (radiance of his) splendour. (13) *sphurat* means shining intensively (14) and *visphurat* means well-known in the world, (here referring to) (his) splendour. (15) Such is the hero, on the one hand, and such is the sun, on the other.

17. R. S. MCGREGOR, *op. cit.*, p. 64.