

## STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT

### WHY ARE SANSKRIT PLAY TITLES STRANGE?

#### 1. Introduction

Many Sanskrit play titles generally have presented problems to translators and lexicographers.

On the one hand, we have such titles as Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava*, which is taken to refer jointly to the play's hero Mādhava and the play's heroine Mālatī, and which is translated, "Mālatī and Mādhava". The translation appears to be supported by Viśvanātha Kavirāja's treatise on dramaturgy, the *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, in *Sāhityadarpaṇa* 6.142-143 <sup>1</sup>. Or we have a title such as Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra*, which is also standardly taken to refer to the play's hero Agnimitra and its heroine Mālavikā. This is translated, "Mālavikā and Agnimitra".

Alternately, we have such titles as Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's *Veṇīsaṃhāra*, which is understood to be a Sanskrit compound meaning, "The Binding (*saṃhāra*) of the Braid of Hair (*veṇī*)". It refers to an incident in the *Mahābhārata* in which Draupadī is humiliated and vows never to braid her hair again until her humiliation has been avenged. Or we have Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita*, which is under-

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1. *The Mirror of Composition, A Treatise on Poetical Composition, Being an English Translation of the Sāhitya-Darpaṇa of Viśvanātha Kavirāja*, transl. by J. R. Ballantyne and P. D. Mitra, Calcutta, 1875, p. 225, nos. 427-429; *Sāhityadarpaṇa of Viśvanātha Kavirāja*, ed. by D. Dviveda, 1922, rpt. New Delhi, 1982, p. 330.

stood to be a Sanskrit compound meaning, “The Later (*uttara*) Deeds (*carita*) of Rāma (*rāma*)”. This play is based on the last book of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and deals with events that occur after Rāma returns to Ayodhyā as king. Or there is Bhāsa’s *Dūtavākya*, a one act play the title of which is understood to mean, “The Speech (*vākya*) of the Messenger (*dūta*)”. It is about Kṛṣṇa’s mission to the Kaurava camp to plead for peace before the battle of the *Mahābhārata*.

Or there is the famous *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, attributed to a King Śūdraka. The first word of this title is the Sanskrit word *mṛd*, which has been altered for reasons of euphonic combination, and which means, “clay”. The second word, before euphonic combination, is *śakaṭikā*. A *śakaṭikā* is a small cart, a child’s cart, or a toy cart. The title means, “The Little Clay Cart”. It is taken from a child’s toy clay cart that figures in the play in Act 6, indirectly in Act 9, and that is alluded to in a fashion in the last act, Act 10. In part on account of the wealth of Prakrit languages that the different characters in the play use, which is more in accord with the precepts of the early treatise on dramaturgy, the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, than are other Sanskrit dramas, and in part on account of its unusual combination of political intrigue and love intrigue, the *Mṛcchakaṭikā* was at one time considered to be perhaps our earliest extant example of a Sanskrit play. It, however, has been shown to be derived from a play attributed to Bhāsa of which we have a fragment only, the *Daridrācārudatta*<sup>2</sup>. The title, *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, is understood to be unusual since it is derived from what is considered to be only a minor incident in the play<sup>3</sup>. It poses no problems to translators and lexicographers, though.

Standing against these titles are the titles of some of our best-known Sanskrit plays. Kālidāsa’s *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*, Bhāsa’s *Svapnavāsavadattā* and *Pratijñāyaugandharāyaṇa*, and the fragment *Daridrācārudatta*, and Viśākhadatta’s *Mudrārākṣasa* are examples. The Sanskrit word *abhijñāna* means either, “a token of recognition”, or “recognition”, and Śakuntalā is the name of the heroine. But the syntactic connection between the two words in the title is not

2. See A. B. KEITH, *The Sanskrit Drama in its Origin, Development, Theory, and Practice*, 1924, rpt. London, 1970, pp. 140-141, 133, 93, 128-131.

3. A. B. KEITH, *The Sanskrit Drama*, p. 140.

clear. The Sanskrit word *vikrama* means, “valor”, and *Urvaśī* is the name of the heroine. But, again, the syntactic connection between the two words in the title is not clear. The Sanskrit word *svapna* means, “dream”, and *Vāsavadattā* is the name of the heroine. But, still again, the syntactic connection is not clear. The Sanskrit word *pratijñā* means, “acknowledgment”, or, “agreement”, and *Yaugandharāyaṇa* is the name of the hero. But the syntactic connection between the two words in the title is not clear. The Sanskrit word *daridra* means, “poverty”, and *Cārudatta* is the name of the hero. But the syntactic connection between the two words in the title is not clear. The Sanskrit word *mudrā* means, “signet ring”, and *Rākṣasa* is the name of the hero. But the syntactic connection between the two words in the title is not clear.

In a technical article that appeared over twenty-five years ago now, I outlined the solution to the problem of the interpretation of the play titles in question. It is based on alternations in the forms of these play titles that often have been the subject of much controversy among Sanskritists, and on several rules in Pāṇini’s early codification of Sanskrit grammar (perhaps *ca.* 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) that explain the alternations, but which have not been included in our Western grammars of Sanskrit with one exception. In the case of the exception, the rule was included incompletely only. The solution is supported by explicit statements on the structure of these titles that I was able to locate in Kuntaka’s *Vakroktijīvita* (*ca.* 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), and in its commentary, and in Bhoja’s treatise on poetics, the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* (*ca.* 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.). This argument is recapitulated here in a less technical fashion<sup>4</sup>.

The passages in Kuntaka’s *Vakroktijīvita* and its commentary and in Bhoja’s *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* help us to understand better Sanskrit play titles in general. They help us understand better more general passages on the titling of plays in Sāgaranandin’s treatise on dramaturgy, the

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4. See STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, “Kālidāsa’s Compounds *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*” [title misprinted as “Kālidāsa’s Compounds in *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*”], in JOIB 28.3-4 (March-June 1979), pp. 16-35. The article appeared with many misprints and editorial changes that introduced errors that made my argument unintelligible in parts of the paper. For instance, cited Sanskrit forms culled from legitimate sources and quoted to prove a point were altered, with the result that the forms as they appeared did not provide support for the gist of my argument and thereby obscured it.

*Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* (ca. 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), and in Viśvanātha Kavirāja's treatise on dramaturgy, the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* (ca. 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D.). And they demonstrate that from the vantage of the tradition, a title such as *Mrcchakaṭikā* is not unusual.

In the present paper, I further address the question why Sanskrit plays had these strange play titles. It is interesting that plays with these titles are characteristically our most famous Sanskrit plays. It is as if obscurity of title and greatness in drama went hand in hand. Why? The reason is suggested by the *Kāmasūtra*, implied by Bhoja in a passage in the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*<sup>5</sup>.

It must be remembered at the outset, however, that once the grammatical problems posed by the titles in question are understood, and once the tradition of titling plays in this fashion is understood, the titles are not strange from the vantage of Sanskrit as a language. They are in good Sanskrit. They are not anomalous compounds of words, as has at times been suggested. That plays should have been titled in this way remains strange, though, but only until placed in the context of Sanskrit culture.

## 2. The Standing Interpretations of Our Problem Play Titles

Generally, the play titles in question have been explained after consulting the interpretations of a small number of commentators on these plays. The conclusion that was reached was that what we had here were instances of *uttarapadalopa*, or omission of the last member of the first compound. This was seen to be in accord with the commentary of the grammarian Kātyāyana on Pāṇini's Sanskrit grammar, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, with regard to such passages as *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.34, 2.1.35, and 2.1.69, for instance. Kātyāyana's commentary is given, with explanation, in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*. According to Kātyāyana, an omitted member is required in the case of certain compounds in order to provide seman-

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5. When I mentioned the proposed recasting and expansion of my paper to Prof. D. H. H. Ingalls, he suggested that I utilize Dr. V. Raghavan's edition of the first fourteen chapters of Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, which he was proofreading at the time. This posthumous edition has finally appeared.

tic connection between two members that otherwise appear to have none <sup>6</sup>. Other Sanskritists viewed such an interpretation of these play titles to be no more than a face-saving device.

The *uttarapadalopa* argument was most fully developed by modern Sanskritists for Kālidāsa's play titles *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*.

For the *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, the commentators consulted were Kāṭayavema, Śāṅkara, and Candraśekhara <sup>7</sup>. The *uttarapadalopa* argument was taken from Candraśekhara, who was the only commentator among these three to discuss the title <sup>8</sup>. Among modern Sanskritists, the argument was advanced by M. Monier-Williams <sup>9</sup>, by O. Böhtlingk <sup>10</sup>, by T. Benfey <sup>11</sup> followed by J. Wackernagel <sup>12</sup>, by T. Goldstücker <sup>13</sup>, by V. S. Apte <sup>14</sup>, by N. Stchoupak, L. Nitti, and L.

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6. See, for instance, *Patañjali's Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*, Edited with Translation and Explanatory Notes, ed. and transl. by S. D. Joshi and J. A. F. Roodbergen, (Publications of the Centre of Advanced Study in Sanskrit, Class C, nos. 3, 5-7, 9-12, 14-15), vol. II, Poona, 1969, pp. xxii-xxiv, 192-201 and vol. III, Poona, 1971, pp. xxvii, 252-253.

7. *Śakuntalā*, A Sanskrit Drama, in Seven Acts, by Kālidāsa, ed. by M. Monier-Williams, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford, 1876, pp. ix-x. [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1853.]

8. *Śakuntalā*, A Sanskrit Drama, ed. by M. Monier-Williams, p. 4, fn. 2; Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā*, ed. by O. Böhtlingk, Bonn, 1846, p. 147; P. K. GODE, C. G. KARVE et al., Revised and Enlarged Edition of Principal V. S. Apte's *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, vol. I, Poona, 1957, p. 172b [1<sup>st</sup> edition, V. S. Apte, 1890].

9. *Śakuntalā*, A Sanskrit Drama, ed. by M. Monier-Williams, p. 4, fn. 2; M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Practical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford, 1877, p. 342 [2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1857]; M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, new ed., Oxford, 1899, p. 62c.

10. *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā*, ed. by O. Böhtlingk, p. 147.

11. T. BENFEY, *Handbuch der Sanskritsprache*, Erste Abteilung, *Grammatik*, Leipzig, 1852, p. 270, §656V; T. BENFEY, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary...*, (Handbooks for the Study of Sanskrit, vol. IV, ed. by Max Muller), London, 1866, under "Śakuntalā".

12. J. WACKERNAGEL, AG, Band II/1, *Einleitung zur Wortlehre, Nominalkomposition*, 2. unveränderte Aufl., Göttingen, 1957, pp. 244-245, §98c. [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1905.]

13. T. GOLDSTÜCKER, *A Dictionary, Sanskrit and English, extended and improved from the Second Edition of the Dictionary of Professor H. H. Wilson...*, Berlin and London, 1856, p. 242.

14. P. K. GODE, C. G. KARVE et al., *Principal V. S. Apte's ... Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, vol. I, p. 172b.

Renou<sup>15</sup>, by R. M. Bose<sup>16</sup>, and by others as well. The member to be supplied according to this argument is *smṛtā*, the feminine form of a Sanskrit word that means, “remembered”. We thereby obtain for the play title a translation, “Śakuntalā Remembered (or, Recognized) by a Token of Recognition”. The play title, understood in this way, was considered by O. Böhtlingk<sup>17</sup> to be a loosely constructed *karmadhāraya* compound, a compound of words in which the first word modifies the second. The play title, understood in this way, was considered by T. Goldstücker<sup>18</sup> and others as being a *bahuvrīhi* compound, a Sanskrit possessive compound that here would attribute the topic as stated in the title so understood to be an implied subject. Thus, “That (*i.e.*, a play) which has Śakuntalā Remembered by a Token of Recognition”.

The argument also was noted by C. Cappeller as a view of the Indian commentators. Cappeller, however, preferred to understand the compound on the basis of Old Frankish compounds. He took the compound to mean, “Śakuntalā oder das Wiedererkennen”<sup>19</sup>. M. Winternitz<sup>20</sup> gave priority to the *uttarapadalopa* argument, but demonstrated in a footnote that he was not convinced. And M. R. Kale<sup>21</sup>, while he notes this argument and even appears to have explained the compound by this argument, adding as another possibility for the word being omitted the word *jñātā*, which is the feminine form for a word meaning, “known”, also appears to have understood the play title to mean *Abhijñānapradhānam Śakuntalalam*, which he translated as, “The Śakuntala in which the Token Ring Plays an Important Part”.

In practice, the title *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* generally has been translated, as by C. Cappeller, in a copulative sense, but with an inversion

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15. N. STCHOUPAK, L. NITTI, and L. RENO, *Dictionnaire Sanskrit-Français*, Paris, 1932, p. 61a.

16. R. M. BOSE, *Kālidāsa: Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam, A Synthetic Study*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Calcutta, 1970, pp. 11-12. [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1931.]

17. *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā*, ed. by O. Böhtlingk, p. 147.

18. T. GOLDSTÜCKER, *A Dictionary, Sanskrit and English*, p. 242.

19. *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā (Kurzerer Textform)*, ed. by C. Cappeller, Leipzig, 1909, p. 128.

20. M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, transl. from the German with additions by Subhadra Jhā, Delhi, 1963, p. 237. [Original, 1922.]

21. *The Abhijñānaśakuntalā of Kālidāsa*, transl. by M. R. Kale, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, Delhi, 1969, notes, p. 1. [2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edition, 1902.]

of the members of the compound. For example, Sir William Jones titled his early translation, “Śakuntalā; or, The Fatal Ring”<sup>22</sup>, and M. Monier-Williams titled his translation, “Śakoontalā or the Lost Ring”<sup>23</sup>. H. Kellner translated the title as it appears in the play’s prologue as, “Sakuntala oder der Wiedererkennungsrings”<sup>24</sup>. And A. Ryder translated the title in the same places as, “Shakuntala and the ring of recognition” and “Shakuntala and the ring”<sup>25</sup>. Very often, the problem has been avoided by titling the play simply, “Śakuntalā”, as is done often in Sanskrit literature itself. See, for example, the titles of some of the editions and translations cited above, the poem about *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* cited by M. Winternitz<sup>26</sup>, and references to the play in Viśvanātha Kavirāja’s *Sāhityadarpaṇa*.

That an explanation of the play’s title by an argument of *uttara-padalopa*, or omission of a word the sense of which is understood, gained such prominence is a fluke in the history of scholarship. Only three commentaries were consulted, and one of these just happened to contain such an argument. In researching this topic, I consulted an additional twelve commentaries regarding this play title. All but two of these, like two of the three commentaries consulted originally, are silent regarding the formation of the title<sup>27</sup>.

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22. Reprinted in *Śakuntalā; or, The Fatal Ring; A Drama. By Kālidāsa, “The Shakespeare of India”*. . . ., ed. by T. Holmes, London, 1902.

23. *Śakoontalā or The Lost Ring*, transl. by M. Monier-Williams, New York, 1885.

24. *Sakuntala, Drama in sieben Akten von Kalidasa*, transl. by H. Kellner, (Universal-Bibliothek, no. 2751), Leipzig, 1890, pp. 11-12.

25. *Kalidasa Translations of Shakuntala and Other Works*, transl. by A. Ryder, 1912, rpt. under the title *Shakuntala and Other Writings*, New York, 1959, pp. 3-4.

26. M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 239.

27. The commentaries consulted were C. by Ajñātakarṭṭkā (Adyar D. V. 1298), *Anvayabodhinī* (MT. 2479), *Carcanā* (?) (MT. 2778), *Ṭippaṇa* (MT. 2778), *Diṇmāradarśanī* by Abhirāma Bhaṭṭa (MT. 140), *Kumāragirirājīyā* by Kāṭayavema (Adyar II, p. 31a and Adyar D. V. 1299, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303), *Sandarbhādīpikā* by Candrasekhara (I.O. 4117, 4118), C. by Dakṣiṇāvartanātha, son of Sūrya (MT. 2775[b]), *Prākṛtavṛtti* (Adyar D. V. 1296), C. by Nilakanṭha (Adyar D. V. 1306), *Govindabrahmānandīya* (MT. 2987), *Viśiṣṭapūrṇacandrikā* by Mṛtyuñjaya Niśśanka Bhūpāla of Sangamavalasa, Vizagapatam Dt. (Ptd. 1804; I. O. Ptd. Bks. 1938, p. 16), *Arthadyotaniḱā* by Rāghava Bhaṭṭa, son of Pṛthvidhara Bhaṭṭa (Gov. Or. Libr. Madras 94), *Sāhityasāra* or *Sāhityaṭīkā* by Śrinivāsa Bhaṭṭa, Vaikhānasa (Adyar D. V. 1307).

Of those that do discuss the title, one, the commentary noted with a question mark in the NCC to be titled, “*Carcanā*”<sup>28</sup>, understands the play title to be a Sanskrit *dvandva*, or copulative compound. The title hereby would be translated, “The Ring and Śakuntalā”. An inversion of the members of the copulative compound, as is done by Western translators, would not be warranted by Sanskrit grammar.

The other commentary, the *Anvayabodhinī*, appears at first to take the compound to be formed by omission of a member. The member that would appear to be omitted here would be the word *pradhāna*, which means, “the chief thing”, or, “the most important part”. It takes this omitted member to be in composition with the first member of the compound in an appositional *bahuvrīhi* compound. This is a Sanskrit possessive compound in which the two members are in apposition to one another: *abhiññānapradhānaṃ*, or “(that) having a ring as the chief thing”. A parallel formation occurs among Patañjali’s examples for Kātyāyana’s *Vārttika* 8 to *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.69, *yaṣṭimaudgalyaḥ < yaṣṭipradhāno maudgalyaḥ* “Maudgalya who is chiefly characterized by his staff”<sup>29</sup>. The *Anvayabodhinī*, though, may be offering not a different *uttarapadalopa* argument, but rather a word-for-word explanation of each of the two members of the Sanskrit compound that serves as the play’s title. The first member refers to “that having a ring as the chief thing, or its most important part”, and the second member, *śakuntalā*, is to be understood as *śākuntala*. The import of the latter member cannot be discussed now, but will be discussed in detail below when outlining the relevant Pāṇinian rules regarding our play

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Abbreviations used are those of V. RAGHAVAN *et al.*, NCC, vol. I, rev. edition, Madras, 1968. I would like to thank the Adyar Library for transcriptions of the relevant passages and the India Office Library for film of the relevant manuscripts and loan of the *Viśiṣṭapīrṇacandrikā*. I would especially like to thank Dr. R. N. Sampath, formerly Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Presidency College, Madras, for personally making transcriptions for me of the relevant passages from the manuscripts in the Government Oriental Research Library, Madras.

28. V. RAGHAVAN *et al.*, NCC, vol. I, rev. edition, p. 285.

29. See Patañjali’s *Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*, ed. and transl. by S. D. Joshi and J. A. F. Roodbergen, vol. II, pp. 252-253; STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, “Sanskrit *uttarapadalopa* Compounds and Tamil Grammatical Tradition – Echoes of Tamil Grammatical Tradition in Kātyāyana’s *Vārttikas*”, in JTS 67 (June 2005), p. 60.



titles. The import of the explanation of the first member will be discussed when discussing the comments in Kuntaka's *Vakroktijivita* and its commentary and in Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* that discuss play titles. The explanation of the *Anvayabodhinī*, apparently, is the additional interpretation of the play title referred to by M. R. Kale<sup>30</sup>. Kale's suggestion, however, is not clear. The *Anvayabodhinī* may not explain the construction of the title. Rather, it may explain the significance of each member of the compound.

The argument of Candraśekhara's *Sandarbhādīpikā*, of course, is the *uttarapadalopa* argument that has received far too much prominence. It would have us interpolate an omitted member *smṛtā*, "remembered".

For *Vikramorvaśī* the *uttarapadalopa* argument comes from R. Lenz, who propounded it on the basis of analogy with Candraśekhara's argument for *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*<sup>31</sup>. It has had similar success in the academic community, but has met greater resistance than did the same argument for *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*.

One reason for the greater resistance is the commentator Kāṭayavema's explanation of the compound as a *dvandva*, or copulative compound meaning, "Vikrama and Urvaśī". In Kāṭayavema's opinion, Vikrama is used in the title as an epithet of the play's hero, Purūrasas. This argument would place the title with such standard and understandable compounds as *Mālaīmādhava* and *Mālavikāgnimitra*<sup>32</sup>.

Another reason for the resistance has been speculation that the title contains an allusion to King Vikramāditya. This has led S. P. Pandit to suggest that the title be translated, "The drama of Urvaśī, dedicated to or written under the patronage of Vikrama"<sup>33</sup>.

30. *The Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, transl. by M. R. Kale, notes, p. 1.

31. R. LENZ, *Apparatus criticus ad Urvasiam, fabulam Calidasi quem, tanquam sual ejus libri editionis appendicem, Londini, Berolini, 1834*, pp. 8-9.

32. With regard to this interpretation of the title, see, for instance, *Vikrama and Urvaśī: A Drama by Kālidāsa*, edition published by The Committee of Public Instruction, Calcutta, 1930; M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 244, fn. 2; *The Vikramorvaśīyam of Kālidāsa*, transl. by M. R. Kale, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, Delhi, 1967, notes, p. 1 [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1898].

33. M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 45, fn. 6.

E. B. Cowell refers to a wide assortment of speculation<sup>34</sup>.

The *uttarapadalopa* argument, however, was supported wholeheartedly in this case by M. Winternitz<sup>35</sup>. It has found its place in the Sanskrit dictionaries of Benfey<sup>36</sup>, Böhtlingk and Roth<sup>37</sup>, Stchoupak, Nitti, and Renou<sup>38</sup>, and Monier-Williams<sup>39</sup>. It has been cited in the Sanskrit grammars of Monier-Williams<sup>40</sup>, Benfey<sup>41</sup>, and Wackernagel<sup>42</sup>. And it has been accepted in translations and editions such as those of K. G. A. Hofer<sup>43</sup>, F. Bollensen<sup>44</sup>, and H. D. Velankar<sup>45</sup>.

The member to be supplied here is *praptā*, in its feminine form agreeing with *Urvaśī*, and meaning, “obtained”. That this word was never suggested by a commentator does not appear to have been pointed out since R. Lenz first suggested the word until I did so in 1979<sup>46</sup>.

In addition to Kāṭayavema’s *Kumāragirirājīyā*, two other commentaries have been available to me for consultation regarding the *Vikramorvaśī*<sup>47</sup>. One, Raṅganātha’s *Vikramorvaśīprakāśikā*, says nothing about the compound. The other, Koṇeśvara’s *Vikramorvaśītoṭaka*, advances an *uttarapadalopa* argument, but suggests as the omitted member not the term *praptā*, but the term *labdhā*, a feminine form agreeing with *Urvaśī*, and meaning, “seized, taken”. We thus would

34. *Vikramorvaśī*, *An Indian Drama*, transl. by E. B. Cowell, London, 1867, p. vi.

35. M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 244.

36. T. BENFEY, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, under “vikrama”.

37. O. BÖHTLINGK and R. ROTH, *Sanskrit Wörterbuch*, vol. VI, St. Petersburg, 1871, p. 995a.

38. N. STCHOUPAK, L. NITTI, and L. RENO, *Dictionnaire Sanskrit-Français*, p. 647a.

39. M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 955c.

40. M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Practical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford, 1877, p. 342. [2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1857.]

41. T. BENFEY, *Handbuch*, Erste Abteilung, *Grammatik*, p. 270, §656V.

42. J. WACKERNAGEL, AG, Band II/1, *Nominalkomposition*, pp. 244-245, §98c.

43. *Urvaśī, der Preis der Tapferkeit, ein indisches Schauspiel von Kalidasa*, transl. by K. G. A. Hofer, Berlin, 1837.

44. *Vikramorvaśī; das ist, Urvaśī, der Preis der Tapferkeit, ein Drama in fünf Akten*, ed. and transl. by F. Bollensen, St. Petersburg, 1846.

45. *The Vikramorvaśīya of Kālidāsa*, ed. by H. D. Velankar, New Delhi, n.d., p. 49.

46. STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, “Kālidāsa’s Compounds *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*”, p. 16, fn. 2 and p. 19.

47. See *Vikramorvaśī of Kālidāsa, with Three Commentaries*, (Sanskrit Academy Series, no. 14), Hyderabad, 1966.

obtain for the title a translation, “Urvaśī seized by valor”. Kāṭyave-  
ma, as noted above, suggests that *vikrama* is to be taken as an epithet  
of Purūravas, and that the title is to be understood as a *dvandva*, or  
copulative compound.

The seemingly tempting solution of taking these compounds as  
*tatpuruṣas*, compounds in which the first member is in syntactic rela-  
tionship to the second, here with the second member in relationship to  
the first, has been avoided generally. It has occurred, however. See,  
for example, V. Henry, *La reconnaissance de Śakuntalā*, for  
*Abhijñānaśakuntalā*<sup>48</sup> and *Urvāsīae Incessus* for *Vikramorvaśī*<sup>49</sup>.

This departure from standard Sanskrit grammar has also been  
used widely for translation purposes of parallel compounds such as  
*Svapnavāsavadattā*, *Pratijñāyugandharāyaṇa*, *Daridrācārudatta*,  
and *Mudrārākṣasa*. Thus, A. L. Basham translates “The Vision of  
Vāsavadattā”, “Yugandharāyaṇa’s Vows”, and “The Minister’s  
Signet Ring”, as well as “The Recognition of Śakuntalā” (but “Urvaśī  
Won by Valour”)<sup>50</sup>.

For the *Mudrārākṣasa*, it should be noted, we also have been sup-  
plied with an *uttarapadalopa* argument that would have us interpolate  
the word *jita*, “conquered”<sup>51</sup>. This would give us a translation for  
this play title, “Rākṣasa Conquered by a Signet Ring”.

### 3. The Solution to the Problem

The solution to the interpretation of these problem titles lies pri-  
marily in an explanation of an alternation that occurs in our manu-  
scripts in the second member of these compounds. For Kālidāsa’s  
*Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, the alternation is between *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*,  
*Abhijñānaśakuntala*, and *Abhijñānaśakuntala*. For the *Vikramorvaśī*,  
the alternation is between *Vikramorvaśī* and *Vikramorvaśīya*. As will

48. M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. III/1, *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 237, fn. 1.

49. *Vikramorvaśī*, transl. by E. B. Cowell, p. vi.

50. A. L. BASHAM, *The Wonder That Was India*, 1954, rpt. New York, 1959, pp.  
435, 441.

51. *The Mudrārākṣasa of Viśākhadatta*, transl. by M. R. Kale, [5<sup>th</sup>] rev. and enl.  
edition, Delhi, 1965, notes, p. 1. [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1900.]

be seen, an explanation of this latter alternation also explains, in grammatical terms, why Kāṭayavema interpreted the title to be a copulative, or *dvandva* compound, with the first member being interpreted as an epithet of Purūravas. For Bhāsa's *Svapnavāsavadattā*, the alternation would be *Svapnavāsavadattā* and \**Svapnavāsavadatta*. This latter form has not been reported in the manuscripts of the play to date, however. The second member in the titles *Pratijñāyaugandharāyaṇa*, *Daridracārudatta*, and *Mudrārākṣasa* are so shaped phonologically, that such an alternation cannot appear on the surface.

In the case of *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, this alternation has been the focus of much apology. V. S. Apte, citing Candrasekhara who had explained the compound by *uttarapadalopa* and who then had justified the form °śākuntala by *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.87, appears not to have recognized the commentator's usage of the Pāṇinian rule. He added, "The reading °śākuntalam is grammatically indefensible"<sup>52</sup>. C. Cappeller, in his edition of the *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, noted agreement with Apte and further took issue with the reading °śakuntala given by M. Monier-Williams, though earlier Cappeller had included this latter reading in his dictionary for the title of the play<sup>53</sup>. A. Sharpé has decided to preserve the reading °śakuntala, but has ridded us entirely of °śākuntala<sup>54</sup>. R. M. Bose has taken great pains to defend the reading °śakuntala, though on incorrect premises<sup>55</sup>.

Actually, the alternation of °śakuntalā and °śākuntala, and of °urvaśī and °urvaśīya, indicates a morphological phenomenon that Sanskritists ought to be able to intuit from usage. It can be seen commonly in the title *Mahābhārata*, or as referred to in the *Mahābhārata* itself, perhaps not referring to the text that we know in the title, *Bhārata* in, for example, *Mahābhārata* 1.1.247, 1.2.308, 1.2.539, 1.62.2329, 1.62.2330, 1.63.2419

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52. P. K. GODE, C. G. KARVE *et al.*, *Principal V. S. Apte's ... Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, vol. I, p. 172b.

53. *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā*, ed. by C. Cappeller, p. 128; M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 62c; C. CAPPELLER, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary Based upon the St. Petersburg Lexicon*, Strassburg, 1891, p. 33b.

54. *Kālidāsa Lexicon*, vol. I, *Basic Text of the Works*, pt. 1, *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, ed. by A. Sharpé, Brugge, Belgie, 1954, p. 11.

55. R. M. BOSE, *Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam, A Synthetic Study*, pp. 11-12.

as in the Calcutta edition<sup>56</sup>. It can be seen in the *Mahāprasthānikaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, the seventeenth book of the *Mahābhārata*, being referred to as *Mahāprasthānika* in 18.6.279 and as *Mahāprasthānika* in the commentaries to 1.2.629 and 1.2.633<sup>57</sup>. It can be seen in the variant readings in colophons for sections of the *Mahābhārata*, such as *Śakuntalopākhyāna* and *Śakuntala* among the variant readings in the colophons for *Mahābhārata* 1.62, 1.63, etc., or *Śyenakapotīya*, *Śyenakāpota*, and *Śyenakapota* among the variant readings in the colophon for 3.130<sup>58</sup>. It can be seen in references to the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* as *Bhāgavata* in *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.1.3 and 2.8.28<sup>59</sup>, and as noticed by T. Aufrecht<sup>60</sup>. Or it can be seen in references to the *Kūrmapurāṇa* as *Kūrma* and *Kaurma* among the variant readings for the title in its colophons<sup>61</sup>. It can be seen in our having *Śrīmatsya* as the regularized title for the *Matsyapurāṇa* in the Ānandāśrama edition of the text<sup>62</sup>. Or it can be seen in the frequent references to the *Līngapurāṇa* as *Śrīlaiṅga* in J. Vidyasagara's edition of this text<sup>63</sup>. Such alternation is common in Sanskrit. An abundance of

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56. *The Mahābhārata, An Epic Poem written by the Celebrated Veda Vyāsa Rishi*, 4 vols., Calcutta, 1834-39. Vol. I, ed. by Pandits attached to the Education Committee. Vol. II, ed. by Nimachand Siromani and Nanda Gopāla Pandits. Vol. III, ed. by Nimachand Siroman, Jaya Gopāla Tirkalanka, Pandits of the College, and Rāma Govinda. Vol. IV, ed. by Namāichandra Siromani, Rāmagovinda, and Rāmahari Nyāya Panchānan.

57. S. SØRENSEN, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, 1904, rpt. Delhi, 1978, p. 456a.

58. *The Mahābhārata*, ed. by V. S. Sukthankar *et al.*, vol. I, Poona, 1927, pp. 283b, 286a, etc.; vol. III, Poona, 1941, p. 426b.

59. *Le Bhāgavata Purāṇa, ou Histoire Poétique de Krīchṇa*, ed. and transl. by E. Burnouf, vol. I, Paris, 1840, pp. 3, 140.

60. T. Aufrecht, *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae, pars octava, Codices Sanscriticos*, Oxonii, 1864, p. 8a, l. 1; p. 59a, l. 37; p. 65a, l. 38; p. 75a, l. 2; p. 101b, l. 41; p. 104a, l. 8; p. 113b, l. 31; p. 163a, l. 6; p. 182b, l. 41; p. 185b, l. 39; p. 279a, l. 2.

61. *The Kūrma Purāṇa*, ed. by Anand Swarup Gupta, Fort Ramnagar, Varanasi, 1971.

62. *Śrīmaddvaipāyanamunipraṇitam matsyapurāṇam ... ānandāśramapaṇḍitaiḥ saṁśodhitam*, (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series, vol. 54), Poona, 1907.

63. *Līngapurāṇam by Maharshivedavyasa*, ed. by J. Vidyasagara, Calcutta, 1885.

examples is to be found in our colophons of texts. These, of course, are the most frequent places in which we find mentioned the titles of texts<sup>64</sup>.

The alternation is stated in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.87 and 4.3.88, and in the commentaries on these *sūtras* in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, Vāmana and Jayāditya's *Kāśikā*, and Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita's *Siddhāntakaumudī*<sup>65</sup>. See also Varadarāja's *Laghukaumudī* (refers only to 4.3.87)<sup>66</sup>. Despite their general application, the rules appear to have been omitted from Western grammars of Sanskrit until A. Debrunner's volume on nominal suffixes<sup>67</sup>. Even here, however, they are not stated in entirety. The rules have been cited a number of times in explanations of forms of the type °śākuntala and °urvaśīya in the play titles concerned. Very rarely, they have been used to explain forms of the type °śakuntalā and °urvaśī. See, for example, R. M. Bose<sup>68</sup>, O. Böhtlingk<sup>69</sup>, C. Cappeller<sup>70</sup>, and M. R. Kale<sup>71</sup>. In the case of Kale, he appears to display for *Vikramorvaśī* and *Mudrārākṣasa* a total lack of understanding of the rules. For *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, however, he appears to be somewhat correct, though it is not apparent how he arrived at his conclusion in strictly grammatical terms. Such interpretation of these forms

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64. A fuller discussion of such alternations, with special focus on alternate titles in the *Mahābhārata*, is given in STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, "Kālidāsa's Compounds *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*", pp. 23-28. Care must be taken in consulting this discussion, though, on account of occasional significant misprints and editorial changes.

65. *The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*, ed. and transl. by Ś. C. Vasu, vol. I, 1891, rpt. Delhi, 1962, pp. 779-780; *The Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edition, ed. by F. Kielhorn, (Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series, nos. 18-22, 26, 28-30), vol. II, Bombay, 1906, pp. 313-314 [1st edition, 1880-85]; *Kāśikā*, ed. by A. Sharma, K. Deshpande, D. G. Padhye *et al.*, (Sanskrit Academy Series, nos. 17, 20, 23, 32), vol. I, Hyderabad, 1969, p. 418; *The Siddhānta Kaumudī of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita*, ed. and transl. by Ś. C. Vasu, vol. I, Allahabad, 1905, pp. 787-788, §1467 and §1468.

66. *The Laghu Kaumudī, A Sanskrit Grammar, by Varadarāja*, ed. and transl. by J. R. Ballantyne, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Benares, 1881, pp. 338-339. [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1849-51.]

67. J. WACKERNAGEL, AG, Band II/2, *Die Nominalsuffixe*, von ALBRECHT DEBRUNNER, Gottingen, 1954, p. 56, §15f and p. 438, §268b(ε).

68. R. M. BOSE, *Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam, A Synthetic Study*, pp. 11-12.

69. *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā*, ed. by O. Böhtlingk, p. 147.

70. C. CAPPELLER, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 128.

71. *The Mudrārākṣasa*, transl. by M. R. Kale, notes, p. 1; *The Vikramorvaśīyam*, transl. by M. R. Kale, notes, p. 1; *The Abhijñānaśakuntalam*, transl. by M. R. Kale, notes, p. 1.

has never been used for purposes of interpretation of the compounds until my earlier paper on this subject<sup>72</sup>.

The first rule, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.87, states, “*adhikṛtya kṛte granthe*”. As translated by Ś. C. Vasu, this reads:

An affix [one already taught] comes after a word in the 2<sup>nd</sup> case in construction, in the sense of, ‘made in relation to any subject’, when the thing made is a ‘book’.

The *Kāśikā* gives as an example of this rule, “*subhadrām adhikṛtya kṛto granthaḥ saubhadraḥ*”, in English translation, “Saubhadra, or a book relating to the history of Subhadra”. Other examples are *Gaurimitraḥ* (“Gaurimitra, a book relating to the story of Gaurimitra”) and *Yāyātaḥ* (“Yāyāta, a book relating to the story of Yayāti”).

The *Mahābhāṣya* adds to Pāṇini’s rule from Kātyāyana’s *Vārttikas*, as in F. Kielhorn’s edition, “*lubākhyāyikābhyo bahulam*”, and as in Ś. C. Vasu’s text, “*lubākhyāyikārthasya pratyayasya bahulam*”. Ś. C. Vasu translates this into English:

The affix is elided diversely when the book is a story.

The examples given in the *Mahābhāṣya* for this, as in Kielhorn’s text, are *Vāsavadattā* and *Sumanottarā*. Ś. C. Vasu adds *Urvaśī* from his text, and explains the rule, “*vāsavadattām adhikṛtya kṛtā ’khyāyikā vāsavadattā*”, in English translation, “Vāsavadattā, a story relating to Vāsavadattā”. The *Mahābhāṣya* adds that sometimes the elision does not take place, as in the case of *Bhaimarathī*.

The second rule, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.88, states, “*śīśukrandayamasabhadvandvendrajananādibhyaś chaḥ*”. As translated into English by Ś. C. Vasu:

The affix cha comes in the sense of ‘a book made relating to a subject’, after the following words in the second case in construction, viz. ‘śīśukranda’, ‘yamasabha’, the Dvandva-compounds, and the words ‘indra-janana’ etc.

72. S. H. LEVITT, “Kālidāsa’s Compounds *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*”.



*Cha* is the indication used in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* to refer to the suffix *-īya*. To give one example of this formation from the *Kāśikā*, "yamasya sabhā, yamasabham, yamasabhīyaḥ". Examples of *dvandva*, or copulative compounds given are *Agnikāśyapīyaḥ* and *Śyenakapotīyaḥ*. The group of words that begin in list with the words *indra* and *janana* are pointed out to be *ākṛtigaṇa*. In different words, these words are pointed out to be a list of specimens not exhibiting every word to which the rule is applicable. They must be determined by usage. The *Mahābhāṣya*, with regard to this rule, merely adds some prohibitions in the case of *dvandva* compounds.

The *Siddhāntakaumudī* on 4.3.87 treats the term *Śārīrakam* used in reference to the *Śārīrakasūtraḥ*, and adds to it the suffix *-īya* to indicate a commentary to this. It adds, however, that generally *Śārīrakam* is used to refer to both the *sūtra* and the commentary.

By these rules we have a clear explanation of such forms as *°śākuntala* and *°śakuntalā*, of such forms as *°urvaśīya* and *°urvaśī*, and by extension, of such forms as *°vāsavadattā* and *°rākṣasa*, as meaning "the story of Śakuntalā", "the story of Urvaśī", "the story of Vāsavadattā", "the story of Rākṣasa", and so forth.

The commentary *Carcanā* (?) explains *Śākuntala* as being "the story of Śakuntalā" by *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.87, but then appears to falter and rely on sophistry in explaining the neuter compound *Abhijñānaśākuntala*. The *Anvayabodhinī* does not cite the Pāṇinian rule, but appears to utilize it. It is not clear to me if it tries to explain the compound as such.

Kāṭyavema, in his commentary on the title *Vikramorvaśīya*, utilizes both these rules. His opinion that the title *Vikramorvaśī* is a *dvandva*, or copulative compound with the first member, *vikrama*, being an epithet of Purūravas is no doubt on the basis of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.88 which specifies the addition of the suffix *-īya* to *dvandva* compounds among other forms. The word *urvaśī*, however, is without doubt to be considered as one of the words that are *ākṛtigaṇa*, or, to which the application of the rule is to depend on usage.

By application of a third Pāṇinian rule, *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.2.51, we get *°śakuntala*<sup>73</sup>. This rule reads, "lupi yuktavadravyaktivacane". Ś. C. Vasu translates this as follows:

73. *The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*, ed. and transl. by Ś. C. Vasu, vol. I, pp. 100-101.



When a Taddhita affix is elided by using the word *lup*, then the gender and number (of the derivative word) agree with those of the original word.

It is only Taranatha Tarkavachaspati who refers to this rule to explain the form °śakuntala<sup>74</sup>. All other explanations have focused either on a change of gender by allusion, which is not in Sanskrit grammar, or have simply used incorrect grammar<sup>75</sup>. The explanation by allusion was formulated in full by O. Böhtlingk in 1889<sup>76</sup>. In this article, he listed a large number of examples of this rule, but apparently failed to recognize the rule itself. Of interest is that Böhtlingk found that feminines in -ī do not seem to be subject to this rule. As an example, he gave *Vikramorvaśī*.

Finally, by *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.2.53 we are told that *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.2.51 need not be applied<sup>77</sup>. We therefore obtain an alternation between °śakuntala and °śakuntalā.

We thus have a grammatical explanation of **all** the forms that occur as the second members of the compounds in the play titles concerned.

Consideration of these rules leaves us with a situation in which we no longer have two members without syntactic connection. We now have as the second member of our compounds not the name of the main character, but a word that signifies the story of that character.

We are thus led to two alternate solutions to the interpretation of these compounds. In both instances, we can interpret the compound as being by category a *tatpuruṣa* compound, or a compound in which the first member is in syntactic relationship with the second.

By one interpretation, however, the first member is in a locative case relationship with the second. By this interpretation, we would translate the titles *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* as “The Story of Śakuntalā with regard to a Token of Recognition (or, with regard to Recognition)”, *Vikramorvaśī* as “The Story of Urvaśī with regard to Valor (or,

74. TARANATHA TARKAVACHASPATI, *Vachaspatya, A Comprehensive Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. I, Varanasi, 1962, p. 288ab. [Original edition, 1873-84.]

75. See, for example, *Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā*, ed. by O. Böhtlingk, p. 147 and R. M. BOSE, *Abhijñāna-Śakuntalam, A Synthetic Study*, pp. 11-12.

76. O. BÖHTLINGK, “Ueber eine eigenthümliche Genus-Attraktion im Sanskrit”, in ZDMG 43 (1889), pp. 607-608.

77. *The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*, ed. and transl. by Ś. C. Vasu, vol. I, p. 103.

treating Valor)", *Svapnavāsavadattā* as "The Story of Vāsavadattā with regard to a Dream", and *Mudrarākṣasa* as "The Story of Rākṣasa with regard to a Signet Ring".

With regard to the significance of the first member of these compounds, I am attracted here to the observation made by J. Wackernagel with regard to *uttarapadalopa* compounds that what we seem to have in these compounds is a situation in which the chief characteristic of the second member of the compound is stated in the first<sup>78</sup>. *Uttarapadalopa* compounds, which are a group of anomalous compounds, can be explained rather easily in my opinion as an intrusion into Sanskrit of Tamil compounding<sup>79</sup>. I would therefore separate these compounds from those functioning as the titles of plays on principle, if not for the reasons outlined herein. We can expect the titles of plays, written by expert Sanskrit stylists, to be in perfectly grammatical Sanskrit. The situation pointed out by Wackernagel with regard to *uttarapadalopa* compounds, however, does appear to be the situation with regard to such play titles as *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*. We can hypothesize that the *tatpuruṣa* compound serving as the play's title is pinpointing in its first member the device used by the poet in his unfolding of the story. This would be what is most significant, perhaps even unique, in the poet's version of the story.

This leads us to the second possible interpretation of the play titles concerned. By this interpretation, since the usage of the chief characteristic creates a new story about the same character in the original story, we have in these instances an instrumental *tatpuruṣa* of the type stated in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.30<sup>80</sup>. This rule, as translated by Ś. C. Vasu, reads:

A word ending in the 3<sup>rd</sup> case-affix is optionally compounded with what denotes quality, the quality being that which is instrumentally caused by the thing signified by what ends with the third case-affix and with the word 'artha' wealth, and the compound so formed is called Tat-puruṣa.

78. J. WACKERNAGEL, AG, Band II/1, *Nominalkomposition*, pp. 244-245, §98c.

79. With regard to this, see STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, "Sanskrit *uttarapadalopa* Compounds and Tamil Grammatical Tradition – Echoes of Tamil Grammatical Tradition in Kātyāyana's *Vārttikas*", pp. 57-72.

80. *The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini*, ed. and transl. by Ś. C. Vasu, vol. I, p. 230.

What we have by this rule are instrumental *tatpuruṣa* compounds of the form *dhānyārtha*. The word *dhānya* means “grain”, the word *artha* means “wealth”, and the compound *dhānyārtha* would mean “wealth acquired by grain”. In this fashion, the play title *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* would mean “The Story of Śakuntalā by means of a Ring”, *Vikramorvaśī* would mean “The Story of Urvaśī by means of Valor”, *Svapnavāsavadattā* would mean “The Story of Vāsavadattā by means of a Dream”, *Daridrācārudatta* would mean “The Story of Cārudatta by means of Poverty”.

#### 4. What Our Texts on Dramatic Theory Say About Titling Plays

Of the texts on dramatic theory consulted by me, only four state anything about the titling of plays<sup>81</sup>. These were referred to above in the *Introduction*. They are the *Vakroktijīvita* of Kuntaka (ca. 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* of Bhoja (ca. 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), the *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* of Sāgaranandin (ca. 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), and the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* of Viśvanātha Kavirāja (ca. 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)<sup>82</sup>.

Of these, the latter two are very general in their statements. They are of no use to us for our immediate purpose, and must be understood in the context of the former two.

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81. A full listing of the texts on dramatic theory consulted by me is given in STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, “Kālidāsa’s Compounds *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*”, p. 30, fn. 66.

82. *The Vakroktijīvita, A Treatise on Sanskrit Poetics by Rājanaka Kuntaka with His Own Commentary, Edited with Critical Notes, Introduction and Résumé*, ed. and transl. by Sushil Kumar De, 3<sup>rd</sup> rev. edition, Calcutta, 1961 [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1923]; *The Vakrokti-Jīvita of Kuntaka, Critically Edited with Variants, Introduction and English Translation*, ed. and transl. by K. Krishnamoorthy, Dharwad, 1977; *Maharaja Bhojaraja’s Srīngara Prakāśa, The Great Tenth Century Work on Sanskrit and Prakrit Rhetoric*, 4 vols., ed. by G. R. Josyer, Mysore, 1956-74[?] [vol. I has imprint date, 1955; vol. IV, n.d.]; *The Śṛṅgāraprakāśa of Bhoja*, pt. I, *Adhyāyas 1-14*, ed. by V. Raghavan, (Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 53), Cambridge, 1998; *The Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa of Sāgaranandin*, vol. I, *Text*, ed. by Myles Dillon, London, 1937; *The Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa of Sāgaranandin, A Thirteenth-Century Treatise on Hindu Theatre*, transl. by Myles Dillon, Murray Fowler, and V. Raghavan, (Trans. of the American Philosophical Society, N.S. vol. 50.9), Philadelphia, 1960; *The Mirror of Composition*, transl. by J. R. Ballantyne and P. D. Mitra; *Sāhityadarpaṇa of Viśvanātha Kavirāja*, ed. by D. Dviveda.

In the former two, including the commentary on the *Vakroktijīvita*, also ascribed to Kuntaka, we find support for the interpretation offered above of the play titles concerned in the form of statements of theory regarding the titling of plays. These statements refer specifically to titles of this form.

The less extensive of the statements is in the *Vakroktijīvita*. In both editions consulted, the verses consulted are basically the same. The commentary given by K. Krishnamoorthy is in places a slight bit fuller than that given by Sushil Kumar De, however<sup>83</sup>. The gist, though, is the same nevertheless.

The primary passage under consideration, *Vakroktijīvita* 4.24, states that what is clever (*vaidagdhya*; comm., = *vicchitti*) should be placed in the plot (*vastu*) of the work of art (*kāvya*) with a certain amount of cunning (*vakratā*). It then adds that the poet (*kavi*) ought to entitle his work after the main character (*pradhāna*) and the significant feature (*aṅka*) in his contrivance (*saṁvidhāna*).

K. Krishnamoorthy translates this verse<sup>84</sup>:

Even if we let alone the artistic skill of the poet in devising original incidents or episodes, we find that he can display his unique art even in designating his main plot with a very significant title. (24)

The commentary to this verse, as translated by Krishnamoorthy<sup>85</sup>, states that, “As we have seen, the poet’s art is seen in the construction of varied incidents in his work. Even apart from it, there is another way in which he displays his wonderful artistic genius even in the course of naming significantly his play or epic. The proper name itself reveals the abounding inventive power of the poet, since it significantly highlights the most important and interesting aspect of the whole plot itself, serving as the vital essence as it were of the work as a whole. That such skill is indeed amazing is indicated by the word ‘even.’” By my understanding of

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83. *The Vakrokti-Jivita of Kuntaka*, ed. and transl. by K. Krishnamoorthy, pp. 270-273; *The Vakrokti-Jivita, A Treatise on Sanskrit Poetics*, ed. and transl. by Sushil Kumar De, pp. 241-245.

84. *The Vakrokti-Jivita of Kuntaka*, ed. and transl. by K. Krishnamoorthy, p. 575.

85. *The Vakrokti-Jivita of Kuntaka*, ed. and transl. by K. Krishnamoorthy, pp. 575-576.

this passage, Kuntaka is stating that by referring in the title to the significant feature (*anika*) of the contrivance (*saṃvidhāna*), defined as that which is the chief characteristic (*cihna*) of it, one creates a name of which even the sound stimulates the emotion (*rasa*) *vismaya*, or “amazement”.

Krishnamoorthy continues his translation, “The sum and substance of it is: – There is nothing very amazing in a poet’s imparting beauty to his work by his carefully planned construction of appropriate incidents. That even in giving a delightful and richly significant title to it, he displays his great constructive skill is what really leaves us amazed. For example, we might cite such titles of plays as *Abhijñāna-śākuntala* [*abhijñāna*, “token of recognition”, or “recognition”; *śākuntala*, “the story of Śakuntalā”], *Mudrā-rākṣasa* [*mudrā*, “signet ring”; *rākṣasa*, “the story of Rākṣasa”], *Pratimā-niruddha* [*pratimā*, “statue”; *niruddha*, “the story of Niruddha”], *Māyā-puṣpaka* [*māyā*, “illusion”; *puṣpaka*, “the story of Puṣpaka”], *Kṛtyā-rāvaṇa* [*kṛtyā*, “deed”, or “act”; *rāvaṇa*, “the story of Rāvaṇa”], *Chalita-rāma* [*chalita*, “tricked”, or “outwitted”; *rāma* “the story of Rāma, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*], *Puṣpa-dūṣitaka* [*puṣpa*, “flower”, or perhaps, “politeness”, or “declaration of love”; *dūṣitaka*, “the story of one falsely accused, or compromised (?)”], etc. [Most of these plays have not come down to us. For most, we have at best only other references elsewhere in Sanskrit literature.] Such significantly delightful titles given to literary works also appear matchless in so far as they reveal the underlying important threads that go to form a unified connected plot by their interrelation. They do indeed contribute to the work’s beauty. But simple and straightforward titles such as *Hayagrīvavadha* [“The Slaying (*vadha*) of Hayagrīva”, by Bhartṛmeṅṭha], *Śiśupālavadha* [“The Slaying (*vadha*) of Śiśupāla”], *Pāṇḍavābhyudaya* [“The Happiness (*abhyudaya*) of the Pāṇḍavas”, by Vyāsa Śrīrāmadeva], *Rāmānanda* [“The bliss (*ānanda*) of Rāma”], and *Rāmacarita* [“The exploits (*carita*) of Rāma”] do not sound interesting.”

Elucidating with regard to the titling of plays as well is what Kuntaka believes to be significant in the construction of a good play, as mentioned in *Vakroktijivita* 4.25 and its commentary. As translated by Krishnamoorthy<sup>86</sup>:

86. *The Vakrokti-Jivita of Kuntaka*, ed. and transl. by K. Krishnamoorthy, pp. 576-577.

Even when great poets compose different literary works based on an identical theme, they are each seen to possess infinite individual beauty, each possessing distinctiveness from the others. (25)

“... The drift is: – Numerous literary works might be composed by several master-poets on one and the same delightful original story; and yet each will have an individuality of its own and will prove equally appealing to connoisseurs, without any trace of mutual correspondence.

“We might take for instance the original story of Rāma. On that single theme are based such different literary works as *Rāmābhyudaya*, *Udāttarāghava*, *Vīracarita*, *Bālarāmāyaṇa*, *Kṛtyārāvaṇa*, *Māyāpuṣpaka*, etc. They are indeed first rate works. [The list given includes titles of the form just admonished against in the commentary to *Vakroktijīvita* 4.24, along with titles of the structure applauded. Apparently, though Kuntaka did not approve the titles, he did approve the plays’ contents.] Though they are all based on an identical theme, they embody a rich flow of varied and individual sentiments, so much so that each word, each sentence and each incident radiates a new glow of originality and fills them with brilliance. Each time, we are attracted by a newly illumined aspect of the hero’s super-human character, and they yield a uniform delight to connoisseurs though read again and again. Other instances of this also can be imagined by readers on similar lines.

Though the main story may remain common to several literary works, each of them can shine with striking individuality distinctively even like individual animals of the same species. (56)

This is a mnemonic verse.”

In short, from the vantage of play titling, the title according to Kuntaka pinpoints the distinctive individuality of a play, that which distinguishes it from all other versions of the same story. It is in this context that we should understand such a title as *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, “The Little Clay Cart”. It is pinpointing the significant feature of the contrivance that distinguishes this story from that of the *Daridrācārudatta* in which poverty (*daridra*) functions as the significant feature of the

contrivance introduced into a presumably well-known story, though the source of that drama is not certain.

The *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* discusses titles at the end of Chapter 6 and in the middle of Chapter 11<sup>87</sup>. For the passages consulted V. Raghavan's edition, in comparison with G. R. Josyer's edition, sometimes breaks the words up differently, and sometimes punctuates the text differently; or it lays the text out slightly differently. There are as well a few differences in readings. But on the whole, the text as in the two editions expresses the same thing.

In the middle of Chapter 11, the statement is basically an allusion to titles as demonstrating the same principle as being discussed, the origins and limitations of the connotations of meaning (*artha*). Bhoja, obviously accepting as proper titles the form admonished against in the commentary to *Vakroktiḥvita* 4.24, here states that the titles *Jānakīharaṇa* and *Kumārasambhava* are not to be understood as *bahuvrīhi* compounds (*jānakyā haraṇam asmin*, "in which there is the carrying off of Jānakī [*i.e.*, Sītā]"; *kumārasya sambhavo 'smin*, "in which there is the birth of Kumāra [*i.e.*, Skanda]"), but rather as *tatpuruṣa* compounds (*jānakyā haraṇam*, "the carrying off of Jānakī"; *kumārasya sambhavaḥ*, "the birth of Kumāra"). One does not obtain these words on the basis of a different word connected by a *bahuvrīhi*. Just as in ornate poetry (*kāvya*), one ought not appeal to the meaning of a different word. The expression of the common property as the cause of the similarity in the comparison is restricted to the object in question alone. Poets (*kavi*) designate a name by a substantive (*abhidheya*; perhaps, "that which is referred to"). Bhoja then provides two additional examples, the play *Abhijñānaśākuntala* and the narrative *Harṣacarita* ("The Deeds (*carita*) of Harṣa"). He then notes that there is a connection between plays and prose compositions.

In Chapter 6, there is a lengthy and technical discussion on the form of the expression (*śabda*) and on the meaning (*artha*) of the title of a play. The main points of the beginning of this discussion that are relevant in the present context are as follows:

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87. *Maharaja Bhojaraja's Sringara Prakasha*, ed. by G. R. Josyer, vol. I, pp. 217-222 and vol. II, 1963, p. 461; *The Śṛṅgāraprakāśa of Bhoja*, pt. I, ed. by V. Raghavan, pp. 345-352, 712-713.



A declared title is an express declaration on a subject (*vākya*). Perceptions consider just so that the compound as a compact whole (*padasaṅghāta*) is speech. And those things that begin with action are implied in this way in the meaning of the word. For instance – Action is the meaning of the constituent parts. Time (perhaps, circumstance) makes it (the action) distinct. Person (probably here, “the animating principle”) containing the meaning (*artha*) of the basis for action (*pratyaya*) specifies that which is instrumental in bringing about the action. [By G. R. Josyer’s construction of the text, “A *tatpuruṣa* compound containing the meaning of the basis for action specifies what is instrumental in bringing about the action.” We may perhaps have punning here, especially in the context of the statement in the middle of Chapter 11.] Both members of the compound, one stating the original source (*prakṛti*) and one stating the basis of action (*pratyaya*) have particularizing attributes. This compound expresses on the one hand the fame of the meaning (*artha*) of what is explicit, and on the other hand what is pre-eminent (*viśiṣṭa*), and uses the word that refers to this concern in the sense of something possessing the same meaning (*samārthya*) as the well-known matter. The compound ends with a *kṛt* or a *taddhita* suffix (*i.e.*, a primary suffix added to a verbal root, or a secondary suffix added to a derivative word). It is regarded as a relationship between independent words (*vākya*) designated “concern-title” (*padasaṅjñā*). ...

It is nevertheless a relationship of independent words (*vākya*) expressing something by way of the signification (*artha*) of the entire statement. The justification for its construction is significance (*vācakatā*), which may be primary (*mukhya*), secondary (*gauṇī*; perhaps, “qualitative”), and attributive (*lakṣaṇā*; perhaps, “based on a characteristic attribute”). ... The form of the statement (*śabda*) makes clear the meaning (*artha*). It titillates by stating something that is recognized and something that is not recognized yet possesses the same subject. ...

The nature of the word that particularizes (*viśeṣaṇatva*) is to impart knowledge of what is pre-eminent (*viśiṣṭa*; perhaps, “most distinct”). This word is of three types: distinguishing (*bhedaka*), attaching (*anurañjaka*), and designating by implication (*upalakṣaṇa*). Thus, “he ought conquer by conquering all”; “he desires a white goat”; “priests wearing red turbans discharge (sacred functions)”. ...



What is particular (*viśeṣaṇa*) exists because of the chief feature (*pradhāna*).

In these passages from the *Vakroktijīvita*, its commentary, and the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, we find explicit support for the argument that the second member of such compounds as *Abhijñānaśakuntalā*, *Vikramorvaśī*, and *Svapnavāsavadattā* are formed by secondary suffixation and signify, “The Story of Śakuntalā”, “The Story of Urvaśī”, and “The Story of Vāsavadattā”. We also find explicit evidence that the compounds are *tatpuruṣa* compounds, and that what is signified by the first member of these compounds is what is distinctive in the poet’s treatment of the story. Our two possible methods of constructing the compounds in question appear to remain, however. On the one hand, the instrumentality of what is pinpointed by the first member in bringing about the action in the story is emphasized in both texts. On the other hand, Bhoja emphasizes that the distinctive feature may appear in second position in the compound as well. When discussing the case relationship between the two members of the compound, he refers not only to compounds of the type in which we are interested in here primarily. Perhaps because of the general nature of his statement, he specifies no more that the existence of a case relationship in general between the two members of the compound. As no example of a compound of the type in which we are interested is given with a case relationship specified, we cannot decide whether compounds of this form generate a locative or an instrumental relationship between the first member and the second.

We also may view the *Anvayabodhinī* in its indication of *abhijñāna* “a token of recognition, or recognition” as the *pradhāna* “the chief thing”, as preserving contact with this tradition. Similarly, this commentary’s understanding of *śakuntalā* as *śākuntala*, “the story of Śakuntalā” also shows contact with this tradition. Its statement has not been understood to date, however. It is not clear whether the *Anvayabodhinī*, though, is just identifying the two elements of the title, or is offering a full-blown *uttarapadalopa* argument for the compound.

Clearly, the other commentaries consulted by me that did mention the formation of the titles *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*, and all the commentaries consulted before for these titles, are all out of contact with the tradition.

According to *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* 11.383-388 all types of plays, *nāṭakas* and so on, are to be named according to either a designation of the chief character (*pradhāna*) or a designation of the plot (*vastu*)<sup>88</sup>. Examples are given of *nāṭakas* and *prakaraṇas* named in both fashions. For the *nāṭaka*, *Jānakīrāghava* (“Jānakī [*i.e.*, Sītā] and Rāghava [*i.e.*, Rāma]”) and *Rāmānanda* (“The Bliss [*ānanda*] of Rāma”) are given as examples of titles coming from the designation of the chief characters, and *Kundamālā* (“The Garland [*mālā*] of Fragrant Oleander [*kunda*]”) from the designation of the theme. For the *prakaraṇa*, *Mālatīmādhava* (“Mālatī and Mādhava”) is given as an example of a title coming from the designation of the chief character, and *Mṛcchakaṭikā* (“The Little Clay Cart”) from the designation of the theme.

This perhaps shows some contact with the tradition. But clearly the tradition has been lost here.

*Sāhityadarpaṇa* 6.142-143 divides the names of plays into three groups depending on the type of play<sup>89</sup>. The *nāṭaka*, it states, is to be named so as to indicate the matter contained in it (*garbhitārtha*). The example given is *Rāmābhyudaya* (“The Happiness [*abhyudaya*] of Rāma”). The class of plays beginning with *prakaraṇa* is to be named after the hero (*nāyaka*) and heroine (*nāyikā*) together. The example given is *Mālatīmādhava* (“Mālatī and Mādhava”). And the class of plays beginning with the *nāṭikā* and the *saṭṭaka* are to be designated by the heroine. Examples of this are *Ratnāvalī* (“Ratnāvalī”) and *Karpūramañjarī* (“Karpūramañjarī”).

This does not seem to show contact with the tradition outlined above at all.

With regard to such titles as *Mālatīmādhava* and *Mālavikāgnimitra*, it must be noted that it is difficult to say whether we have here the names of the chief characters pure and simple, or compounds with secondary suffixation indicating “The Story of Mālatī and Mādhava”, or “The Story of Mālavikā and Agnimitra”. The forms

88. *The Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa of Sāgaranandin*, vol. I, ed. by Myles Dillon, p. 17; *The Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa of Sāgaranandin, A Thirteenth-Century Treatise*, transl. by Myles Dillon, Murray Fowler, and V. Raghavan, p. 15a.

89. *The Mirror of Composition*, transl. by J. R. Ballantyne and P. D. Mitra, p. 225, nos. 427-429; *Sāhityadarpaṇa of Viśvanātha Kavirāja*, ed. by D. Dviveda, p. 330.

would be the same both with and without secondary suffixation. If they are *dvandva*, or copulative compounds with secondary suffixation, we might perhaps expect an occasional form \**Mālatīmādhavīya*, for example, in the manuscripts in accord with *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.88.

Of interest here, and a point to be determined by someone at some time by analysis of these plays by traditional means, is whether the female character in these plays is considered to be the significant feature of the contrivance in the new addition to the story that turns the plot; whether she represents, in the words of Kuntaka's commentary, the vital essence, or vitality (*prāṇa*) of the play. Of importance here, and a possible indication that this may be so, is that the female, which in the Indian tradition would be the *śakti*, or vital energy of a male god, let us say, has her name placed first in these titles in the position held elsewhere to represent this vitality of the play.

### 5. The Tradition of Titling Plays and the Kāmasūtra

The tradition outlined above for titling Sanskrit plays, though there are clearly exceptions to the tradition, does not allow the same latitude as is allowed in our Western titling of plays. Very specific things are supposed to be placed in the title – the name of, or perhaps a reference to, the well-known story upon which the play is based, and an indication of the new matter added by the poet through a statement of the chief feature of this new matter that turns the plot.

Why are the plays titled in this strange form? The answer is given by Bhoja in Chapter 6 of the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*. It involves the theory of what a play is supposed to present – an old well-known story with a new twist. And it involves the theory of the purpose of drama as stated in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. According to *Nāṭyaśāstra* 1.2-23, drama is the fifth Veda, or sacred book of knowledge, which was created so as to be accessible to all<sup>90</sup>. Bhoja's statements imply that a play title was released to the public in advance of the production of a play, or per-

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90. *The Nāṭyaśāstra, A Treatise on Hindu Dramaturgy and Histrionics Ascribed to Bharata Muni*, transl. by Manomohan Ghosh, vol. I, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edition, Calcutta, 1967, pp. 1-5; A. B. Keith, *The Sanskrit Drama*, p. 12.

haps a production of a play, and was supposed to stimulate interest in the play. It served, so-to-speak, as a Madison Avenue gimmick. Figuring out the relationship between the two members of the compound that served as the title of the play, or figuring out what the significant feature of the contrivance used to turn the plot of the play had to do with the well-known story, might be likened perhaps to a game. It became a common point of speculation.

Such games are referred to in the *Kāmasūtra*, Chapter 3, in its listing of the sixty-four arts at which a courtesan, as well as other women and also men, were supposed to be adept<sup>91</sup>. These included the solution of riddles and verbal enigmas, the art of telling stories, and mental exercises such as completing an unfinished verse.

In this instance, a person who figured out the relationship between the two members of the compound would have what modern psychologists have referred to as an “ah hah” reaction. Such a reaction was supposed to be the general reaction stimulated by a skillful combination of words in titling a play, according to Bhoja. Through such reactions, a person would be advanced on the road to spiritual progress.

The play title was thus intended to be a puzzle the significance of which, when realized, served spiritual ends. It was a game of a sort admonished against earlier than our classical Sanskrit plays by such early Buddhist texts as the *Dīghanikāya's Brahmajālasutta* 1.14, which casts aspersion on Brahmans playing games and engaging in idle pursuits<sup>92</sup>.

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91. *The Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana*, transl. by R. Burton and F. F. Arbuthnot, rpt., ed. with a preface by W. G. Archer, New York, 1963, pp. 71-73 [original of rpt. = 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1883; 1<sup>st</sup> edition, also 1883] [Cosmopoli, the place of publication given in the first two printings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, both of which appeared during Burton's life, was a common spurious imprint]; *Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana, Complete Translation from the Original Sanskrit*, transl. by S. C. Upadhyaya, Bombay, 1963, pp. 76-78; *The Complete Kāma Sūtra, ...*, transl. by A. Daniélou, prepared with the help of K. Hurry, Rochester, Vermont, 1994, pp. 51-55; *Kamasutra, A New Complete English Translation of the Sanskrit Text ...*, transl. by W. Doniger and S. Kakar, Oxford, 2002, pp. 14-15.

92. *Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, transl. by Maurice Walshe, 1987, rpt. under the title *The Long Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, Boston, © 1995, p. 70; M. WINTERNITZ, HOIL, vol. II, *Buddhist Literature and Jaina Literature*, transl. from the original German by Mrs. S. Ketkar and Miss H. Kohn, and rev. by the author, 1933, rpt. New York, 1971, p. 36 [original, 1913-20].

That it was a game perhaps suggests why higher Indian tradition, which as it developed is generally averse to games because they are seen as not leading to spiritual progress, lost sight of the significance of play titles.

It is perhaps worthwhile, in this context, to quote some of Bhoja's verses<sup>93</sup>:

It (*i.e.*, the *artha* [meaning]) is recognized from that which possesses the same subject (*sāmānādhikaraṇya*) as the celebrated matter (*prasiddha-pada*).

The *artha* (meaning) of the matter that is not well known (*aprasiddha-pada*) streams forth as does a cuckoo's [cry] "rai".

Without a doubt [there occurs to one], "Indeed, the [cry] 'rai' that is on the mango tree is that cuckoo".

From being indicated, the *artha* (meaning) here declared to be praise-worthy becomes evident in this same way.

By common practice, the connection between *śabda* (the form of the statement) and *artha* (meaning) has three means of ascertainment (*pramāṇaka*).

Hereby one sees with immediate perception (*pratyakṣa*), by means of the *śabda* (the form of the statement) that has been augmented (*vṛddha*), those things that are to be spoken of.

The understanding (*pratipannatva*) of the hearer, by the action of inference (*anumāna*),

And in a different manner when there is no obtained conclusion (*anupapatti*), knows the relationship (*āśrayā*) between the meaning of the word (*śakti*) and the thing (*dvaya*).

Further,

There is not in the world any new notion (*pratyaya*) other than by adaptation (*anugama*) of the *śabda* (the form of the statement) of something. All knowledge is received by means of *śabda* (the form of the statement) as something discovered.

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93. *Maharaja Bhojaraja's Srīngara Prakāśa*, ed. by G. R. Josyer, vol. I, pp. 217-218; *The Śrīngāraprakāśa of Bhoja*, p. I, ed. by V. Raghavan, p. 346.

Also,

One who possesses knowledge from reflecting, “so it is (*asti*)”, is the first one to possess no false understanding (*nivikalpaka*).

An equal in knowledge to Bāla, Mūka, and so forth<sup>94</sup> is the one who possesses brightness as his most excellent thunderbolt.

## 6. Conclusion

In this context, our greatest Sanskrit plays are marked by peculiar titles because they perform more skillfully what Indian tradition appreciates most: a new adumbration to an old story, and one that is performed skillfully so that there is a constant unfolding of new realizations.

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94. S. SØRENSEN, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, p. 106c notes Bāla to be a name of Śiva, but I have not been able to confirm this in either *Śivasahasranāmāṣṭakam, Eight Collections of Hymns Containing One Thousand and Eight Names of Śiva*, ed. by R. K. Sharma, Delhi, 1996 or *Śiva Sahasranama Stotram, with Namavali*, ed. and transl. by S. Chidbhavananda, Tirupparaiturai, 1979. Mūka is generally given as the name of a Daitya, son of Upasunda, who when he had taken the form of a wild boar to kill Arjuna was himself killed by Śiva, who had taken the form of a Kirāta, or mountaineer. See, for example, J. DOWSON, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History, and Literature*, 1879, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, London, 1961, p. 211 and S. SØRENSEN, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, p. 491a. For the story, see *The Mahābhārata*, vol. 2, *Book 2, The Book of the Assembly Hall; Book 3, The Book of the Forest*, transl. by J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1975, rpt. Chicago, 1981, pp. 299-300. Both Śiva and Mūka assumed different forms, just as well-known stories in the hands of master poets take on new form. The sense here seems to be that one who can ascertain a well-known story’s adaptation, or disguise, is himself equal in knowledge to a divine being who can just so transform himself into something else. Also consulted for these names were M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, pp. 728c-729a, 825b, which points out with regard to Mūka that this is also the name of a poet, and to no avail *Viṣṇusahasranāma, with the Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*, ed. and transl. by R. A. Sastry, (Adyar Library General Series, vol. 8), Adyar, Madras, 1980 and *A Word to Word Meaning to Sri Vishnu Sahasranāma Stōtram ... written according to Shankara Bhashyam*, ed. and transl. by A. Vijaya Rama Rao, New Delhi, 1997. For the imagery in this verse that the one who can ascertain a well-known story’s adaptation possesses brightness as his most excellent thunderbolt, see the imagery used to describe the arrows of Śiva in his form as a Kirāta. The mountaineer’s arrow is likened to “a flash of lightning or a flame crest”, and as having the “impact of lightning and thunderbolt on a mountain”. Further on, when the Kirāta is responding to Arjuna’s insult regarding his having shot at the boar that Arjuna considered his to take, the Kirāta says he will shoot Arjuna with “arrows like thunderbolts”.

Through the utilization of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 4.3.87 and 4.3.88, and *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.2.51 and 1.2.53, we can arrive at simple explanations for the variations that occur in the second member of the titles of two of these plays, Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśakuntalā* and *Vikramorvaśī*, as well as explanations for the second member in the titles of a large number of other plays for which the phonological shapes are such that they would not display the variations on the surface. These rules are of general occurrence in Sanskrit literature, and suggest a solution as to the interpretation of our compounds that is supported by Kuntaka's *Vakroktijīvita*, by its commentary, and by Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*. On the basis of Kuntaka's *Vakroktijīvita*, its commentary, and Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, we can see that there is a general rule governing the titling of plays that is in accord with the utilization of these Pāṇinian rules, that this general rule functions within the standard rules of Sanskrit grammar, and that the titles covered by this rule are not anomalous Sanskrit. Further, Bhoja's argument suggests that plays were so titled so as to create interest in them, and that figuring out the meaning of the relationship between the two members of the compound constituted a sort of intellectual game of the type outlined in the *Kāmasūtra* in its listing of the sixty-four arts. As such, it led to one's spiritual advancement, in Bhoja's opinion.

In Brahmanical civilization as it developed, however, seemingly frivolous intellectual pursuits that did not lead to *mokṣa*, or release from rebirth, were looked down upon. No doubt on this account, the type of intellectual games outlined in the *Kāmasūtra* were marginalized. And with this, it would seem, the tradition of naming our plays from the great classical age of Indian civilization was forgotten.

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#### Abbreviations

AG	=	<i>Altindische Grammatik</i> , by J. Wackernagel
HOIL	=	<i>A History of Indian Literature</i> , by M. Winternitz
JOIB	=	<i>Journal of the Oriental Institute</i> , Baroda
JTS	=	<i>Journal of Tamil Studies</i> , Chennai
NCC	=	<i>New Catalogus Catalogorum</i> , by V. Raghavan <i>et al.</i>
ZDMG	=	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlänischen Gesellschaft</i> , Leipzig