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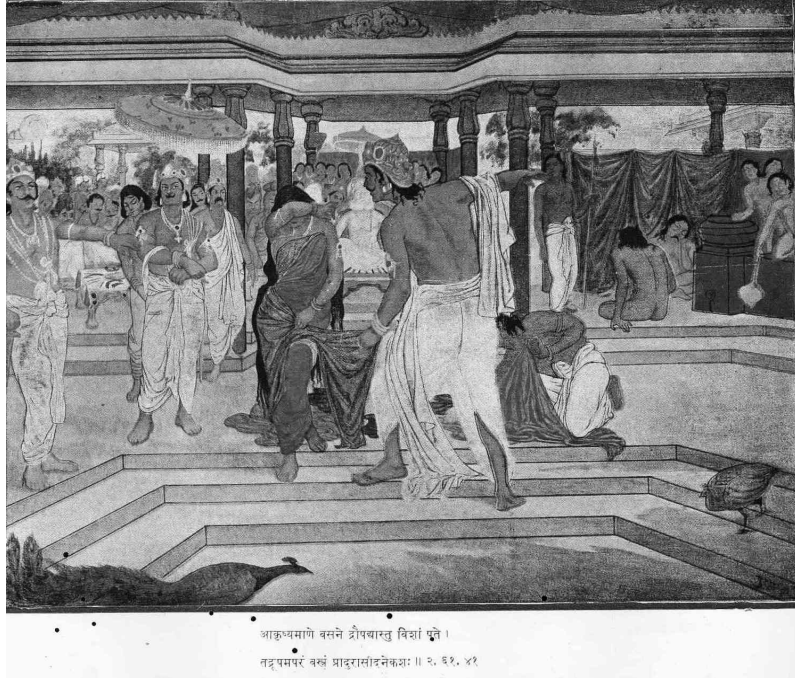
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PRADIP BHATTACHARYA

REVISING THE CRITICAL EDITION OF THE *MAHĀBHĀRATA*:
AN APPROACH THROUGH THE ATTEMPT TO STRIP
DRAUPADĪ

Introduction



Disrobing Draupadi, CE vol. 2

The Critical Edition (CE) of the *Mahābhārata* published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute (BORI), Pune (1933-1966) is generally regarded as the last word in arriving at the textual canon of the epic. Half a century later, however, enough justification exists for taking a hard look at its claim to provide the best manuscript version extant. The fact is, as Mehendale¹ points out, that the oldest manuscript by far— a 12th century, Nepali palm-leaf manuscript— was not available for study. Nor, admitted Sukthankar,² were Kannaḍa, Oḍīya and Nandināgarī manuscripts examined. Edgerton, editor of the *Sabhā Parva* of the CE, refers to a complete manuscript, a continuous roll in Devanagari, in the Bharat Itihasa Sanshodhaka Mandal of Pune, which he could not obtain for study.³ The National Mission for Manuscripts has to find and document it for the revised edition of the *Mahābhārata*.

The CE also did not take into account the earliest version of the epic in a foreign language: Abu Saleh's *Instruction of Princes* (1026), an Arabic translation from the Sanskrit. Preceding the oldest manuscripts depended upon by the CE by centuries, this is an astonishing account of the Kurus and Pāṇḍavas as viewed from Sindh *with no mention of Kṛṣṇa*.⁴ Had Ruben known of it, it would have added grist to his mill in arguing that originally the epic was Kṛṣṇa-less.⁵

Further, the editors did not study the *Razmnama* (1584), the Persian version of the epic (including *Harivamśa*) that Akbar commissioned, although it was contemporaneous with the manuscripts depended upon for the CE. Sukthankar was mistaken in rejecting it as merely a “free rendering of the original.”⁶ Nei-

¹ Mehendale 2009: 5; 21 note 5. Adluri and Hildebeitel (2017) assert, “Sukthankar did examine the Nepali manuscript and found that it confirmed his reconstruction,” but do not cite any evidence to controvert Mehendale's statement.

² Sukthankar 1933: vi.

³ Edgerton, “Introduction,” p. xxii quoted by Mahadevan T.P. “The Southern recension,” p. 105, in Adluri, Vishva ed. 2013. *Ways and Reasons for thinking about the Mahabharata as a Whole*. Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

⁴ Bhattacharya 2009.

⁵ Brockington 1998: 55.

⁶ Sukthankar 1933: xxviii. Quoted in Adluri and Hildebeitel. 2017.

ther is it “an abridgement” as Adluri and Hildebeitel claim.⁷ A comparison with the CE would reveal the departures in the Persian version, which would throw light on the status of the text followed under Akbar’s direction. For instance, its *Aśvamedha Parva* follows Jaimini’s composition, not the Vaiśampāyana recital.⁸ The scholars Akbar gathered for this massive enterprise formed an editorial board that was the precursor of the CE’s and included Debi Misra (author of *Bhārata artha dīpikā?*) and Chaturbhuj Misra (author of *Bhārata upāya prakāsaka bhārata tātparya prakāśikā*) from Bengal, Satavadana, Madhusudana Misra (editor of *Mahānātakam*), Rudra Bhattacharaj and Sheikh Bhawan (a Dakhini Brahmin convert). The selection shows Akbar’s awareness of the existence of the Bengal, Northern and Southern recensions. His orders were to establish exactitude so that nothing of the original would be lost. The work was often read aloud to him, followed by discussions. Badauni records that once Akbar lost his temper on hearing certain passages and accused him of inserting his own bigoted views. Thus, the fidelity of the Persian version to the original was carefully verified.⁹

What the editors of the CE have done now, Kālīprasanna Simha did in Calcutta by the age of 30 for his Bengali translation of the Mahābhārata (excluding *Harivaṁśa*, which he stated was clearly a much later composition) in 17 volumes (1858-1866) omitting and adding nothing. He had a team of 7 pundits. Manuscripts from the Asiatic Society, Shobhābāzār palace, the collections of Asutosh Deb, Jatindramohan Thākur and his own great-grandfather Shāntirāma Simha’s collection in Benares were collated. For resolving contradictions in the texts and making out the meaning of knotty slokas he was helped by Tārānātha Tarkavācaspati of the Calcutta Sanskrit Vidyamandir. Every evening the translation, as it progressed, was read out to prominent leaders of Hindu society.¹⁰

⁷ Adluri and Hildebeitel 2017 *ibid*.

⁸ Sen, S.K. 2008.

⁹ *Jaiminiya Aśvamedhaparva* 2008: 69; Bhattacharya *ibid*.

¹⁰ Bhattacharya 2010.

Thus, like the CE, both the late 16th century Persian version and the mid-19th century Bengali translation were prepared by collating Mahābhārata manuscripts from different regions. However, issues of repetition and inconsistency were not resolved in the Bengali translation. Without studying the *Razmnama* we cannot say what had been done there. One would expect that 20th century scholars would try to make good these lacunae. Instead, the CE contains contradictions that are the result of the rigid¹¹ application of the principle that whatever appeared in the largest number of manuscripts was to be included, irrespective of intra-textual consistency, which was rejected as “the realm of higher criticism.”¹² Yet, Sukthankar himself set aside his own cardinal principle when he chose to begin the CE text with the benedictory invocation, despite its absence from the entire Southern recension. His reason: all Hindu texts invariably began thus.¹³ No one has dared to criticise this departure.

Some unresolved contradictions and repetitions

Bankimchandra Chatterjee argued in his masterly *Krishnacharitra* (1886-1892):

“Those that contradict each other, of them one must necessarily be interpolated... No writer indulges in unnecessary repetition or creates a situation of contradiction through such repetition.”¹⁴

A good example of repetition is the two occasions on which Arjuna prevents Kṛṣṇa from killing Bhīṣma at VI.55 (the third day) and VI.102 (the ninth day). Lexical analysis suggests that the latter is added on, whereas the context suggests that the former is the addition. The CE editor sought to resolve this by

¹¹ Adluri and Hildebeitel, *op.cit.* plead for the word “rigorous” instead.

¹² Edgerton 1944: xxxiii.

¹³ Sukthankar 1930: 268-69 quoted by Adluri and Hildebeitel 2017 in press.

¹⁴ Chatterjee 1991: 61-62.

proposing that originally it was the third day that was the penultimate day of Bhīṣma's command and, therefore, he fought for only 4 not 10 days. His arguments are far from convincing.¹⁵

A few of the unresolved internal contradictions in the CE are enumerated below; these appear to be “passages, which were composed at a very early date and hence found time to creep into all versions,” writes Mehendale, but “the transmitters of the epic tradition...did (not) deliberately omit what they had received by tradition.” He explains that the CE retained these “since such contradictory passages occur uniformly in all the versions of both (North and South) recensions.” He adds that decisions about these “will be the task of later researchers who have to take recourse to *higher criticism* (emphasis mine).”¹⁶

- In the *Ādiparvan* (207.14), Arjuna visits Maṅalūra during his twelve-year long exile, while in the *Āśvamedhikaparvan* (77.46) it is named Maṅipūra. The former indicates southern influence as Southern manuscripts locate Maṅalūra near Madurai and make Citrāṅgadā a Pāṇḍyan princess. One of these has to be emended as a scribal error by comparing with other references to Citrāṅgadā.
- According to the *Ādiparvan* (116.31), Mādrī mounted her husband's funeral pyre in the Himalayas. This is reiterated at 117.28. However, at the beginning of section 117 we find Kuntī and her sons entering Hastināpura with sages who have brought along the bodies of Pāṇḍu and Mādrī. Then, section 118 provides a description of their ornamented, anointed and perfumed bodies and states that Pāṇḍu's body looked as if he were alive. So, the corpses had been preserved for over 17 days (117.27)? Surely, either the corpses had been cremated in the Himalayas or they were brought to the capital for funeral, remaining un-decomposed for over a fortnight. One of these accounts is an interpolation.

¹⁵ Brockington 1998: 146.

¹⁶ Mehendale 2009: 15.

- In the *Sabhāparvan* (61. 35-38), Draupadī is dragged into the gaming hall and Karṇa directs Duḥśāsana, *pāṇḍavānām ca vāsāmsi draupadyāś cāpyupāhara*, “Strip the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī of their garments!” (61.38). Hearing this, the Pāṇḍavas cast off their *uttarīya* (upper garments). Duḥśāsana pulls at Draupadī’s single cloth in the midst of the assembly hall. However, almost nowhere subsequently is there any reference to the attempted stripping. We will examine this contradiction in depth.

The attempt to strip Draupadī

The CE omits Draupadī’s prayer to Kṛṣṇa for succour but not the miracle of unending garments. The *Sabhāparvan* editor, Edgerton, writes, ‘It is apparently implied (though not stated) that cosmic justice automatically, or “magically” if you like, prevented the chaste Draupadī from being stripped in public...later redactors felt it necessary to embroider the story.’¹⁷ The CE text reads thus in van Buitenen’s translation¹⁸ of II.61.40-42:-

“40. Then Duḥśāsana forcibly laid hold of Draupadī’s robe, O king, and in the midst of the assembly began to undress her.

41. But when her skirt was being stripped off, lord of the people, another similar skirt appeared every time.¹⁹

42. A terrible roar went up from all the kings, a shout of approval, as they watched that greatest wonder on earth.”

In the CE (II. 43-47) Bhīma vows to taste the blood of Duḥśāsana after he pulls at Draupadī’s sole cloth and a fresh one appears.

¹⁷ Edgerton 1944: xxix.

¹⁸ van Buitenen 1975: 146.

¹⁹ Why “skirt”? The Sanskrit is *vasana* and *vastram*. Deb Roy’s “garment” (2010, p. 235) is accurate.

As she is dragged from the inner apartments, Draupadī appeals to Duḥśāsana to refrain (II.60.25), as she is menstruating (*rajasvalāsmi*) and is clad in just a single cloth (*ekamca vāso*). Duḥśāsana responds that regardless of whether she is menstruating, wearing a single cloth (*ekāambarā*) or none (*vivastrā*), she is their prize and their slave, “And one lechers with slaves as the fancy befalls!” (van Buitenen, 60.27). As he shakes her about, there is a reference to half of her cloth slipping (*patitārdhavastrā* 60.28).²⁰ She pleads with Duḥśāsana again, “Don’t render me nude, do not debase me!” (*mā mām vivastrām kridhi mā vikārṣṭh*, 60.30). When she is dragged into the assembly hall, Bhīma notices that her upper cloth is slipping (*strastottariya*, 60.47). This refers to the portion of her garment covering her torso and not to a separate cloth for the upper-half of the body since she is *ekāambarā*. The painting commissioned specially for the CE shows, in the background, four Pāṇḍavas bare-bodied and Arjuna seated with his back to the scene, naked; in the foreground Duḥśāsana pulls at a single cloth wrapped around Draupadī.²¹

In the “Vulgate,”²² Draupadī calls out to *Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, Keśava Dvāarakāvāsin, Ramānātha, Janārdana Vrajanātha* and *Gopījanapriya*, the last two epithets indicating a post-*Harivaṁśa* addition by a poet familiar with Kṛṣṇa’s childhood dalliance with the milkmaids of Vraja as Bankimchandra Chatterjee noted back in 1886.²³ Kṛṣṇa springs up from his bed in Dvārakā and rushes on foot, deeply moved by Draupadī’s appeal, which reaches him telepathically.²⁴ This recurs when she, faced with Durvāsā’s untimely demand for food in the forest, invokes Kṛṣṇa. Referring to these two passages Sukthankar comments, “They undoubtedly represent a later phase of Kṛṣṇa worship.”²⁵ Some vernacular versions elaborate

²⁰ van Buitenen mistranslates this as “her half skirt drooping.”

²¹ It is not a skirt-cum-stole ensemble as van Buitenen’s translation has it, but a single cloth whose upper part covers the torso, as the sari does today.

²² Imported from Biblical scholarship referring to the popular Sanskrit text.

²³ Chatterjee 1991: 113, 247.

²⁴ Wilmot 2006: 68.45, 449.

²⁵ Sukthankar 1942: xiii note 1.

this further along the lines of the *gopī-vastraharāṇa* episode in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (X.22): so long as Draupadī clutches on to her sole covering there is no response to her outcries; it is only when she lets go and lifts her hands in total surrender that the miracle occurs.

How Draupadī's modesty was saved is hinted at in verse 544* in the footnotes of the CE, which might be the earliest interpolation:

“Yājñasenī cried out for rescue to Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Hari and Nara. Then Dharma, hidden, the magnanimous, covered her with a multitude of garments.”

This is repeated in 553*:

“Thereupon hundreds of garments of many colours and whites appeared, O lord, due to the protection of Dharma.”

These refer back to II.60.13 where, when summoned to the dicing hall, Draupadī reflects, “In this world Dharma alone is supreme. Observed, he will bring peace.”

The enigmatic statement gives rise to many speculations, one of which possibly led to the interpolated passage bringing in Kṛṣṇa as saviour along the lines of *yato dharmas tataḥ kṛṣṇo yataḥ kṛṣṇas tato jayaḥ* (VI.41.55). Further, the god Dharma incarnated as Vidura who was the first to protest against the dice-game and the summoning of Draupadī before the assembly. Does he, Dharma-incarnate, clothe her? Significantly, later in the *Udyogaparvan* when Kṛṣṇa reminds Saṁjaya of her sufferings, he refers to her casting piteous glances all around the hall to find only *kṣattā* Vidura as her protector, *nānyam kṣatturnāthamadrṣtam kañcit*, who alone spoke in condemnation, *ekaḥ kṣattā dharmyāmartham bruvāṇo* (V.29.33, 34). Or shall we imagine ‘Dharma’ as referring to the outraged sensibilities of the assembly who throw off their upper garments to cover Draupadī, as narrated in Ayyanappilla Asan’s Malayali *Bharatam Pattu* (c.1500 CE, contemporary with the CE’s

manuscripts)?²⁶ Ultimately, as Duḥśāsana tires, evil omens erupt—jackals howl and asses bray—whereupon Gāndhārī and Vidura succeed in persuading Dhṛtarāṣṭra to intervene.

Hiltebeitel (2001)²⁷ argues that Kṛṣṇa’s intervention to protect Draupadī’s modesty is very much envisaged in the CE, citing two verses from the *Udyogaparvan* in which Draupadī, exhorting Keśava (V.80.26), and Kṛṣṇa speaking to Saṁjaya (V.58.21), refer to her appeal, “O Govinda,” for rescue. He admits that neither Draupadī nor Kṛṣṇa mentions the attempted stripping. If, then, Draupadī was not being stripped, why should Kṛṣṇa have intervened miraculously? Moreover, when they meet for the first time after the dice-duel in the forest-exile, Draupadī specifically mentions having been manhandled, *kṛṣyeta* (III.13.60), and “dragged around in their hall with my one piece of clothing” while menstruating (*stridharminī vepamānā śonitena samukṣitā / ekavastrā vikṛiṣṭāsmi duḥkhitā kurusamsadī // III.13.68*), being “molested,” *parikliśyantīm* (III.13.107) and “laid hold of by my hair” *kacagrahamanuprāptā* (III.13.107, 109). However, she makes no mention of any attempt to strip her. Kṛṣṇa responds that, *had he been present*, he would have prevented the fraudulent dice-game, but he was far away battling Śālva who had sacked Dvārakā (III.14.1). He mentions neither any attempt to strip her, nor any appeal from her reaching him—telepathically or otherwise. In his 1976 study on the burning of the forest, Hiltebeitel wrote that the CE is not to be followed blindly.²⁸ Here he is doing precisely that.

Other Evidence

1. At the very beginning of the Mahābhārata in the *Anukramanikā Parvan*, Dhṛtarāṣṭra laments that Draupadī

²⁶ Asan 1988: 222.

²⁷ Hiltebeitel 2001: 246-259.

²⁸ Brockington 1998: 139.

was dragged into the assembly hall but does not mention any attempt to strip her:-

*yadāśrauṣaṁ draupadīm aśrukaṅṭhīm; sabhām nītām
duḥkhitām ekavastrām /
rajasvalām nāthavatīm anāthavat; tadā nāśamse
vijayāya saṁjaya //*

“When I heard that Draupadī, tears in her throat, had been dragged into the assembly hall grieving, in a single garment, and she in her period, while her protectors stood by as though she had no one to protect her– then, Saṁjaya, I lost all hope of victory.” (I.1.106, van Buitenen).

2. Nor does he refer to Bhīma’s vow to drink Duḥśāsana’s blood. Arguing that the vow is a subsequent addition, Bhatt writes that this is “wonderfully supported by the omission of the event from the summary of the Karṇa Parvan given in the well-known Parva-saṅgraha Parvan.”²⁹
3. In the *Virāṭaparvan*, Draupadī, while lamenting her condition before Bhīma, refers only to a *prātikāmin* (servant/messenger) dragging her into the hall by her hair and being called a *dāsī* (IV.17.2).
4. Aśvatthāmā refers to the incident (IV.45.11-12) while reprimanding Karṇa for boasting: “Likewise, where was the battle in which you won Kṛṣṇā? In her single garment she was dragged into the hall, miscreant, when she was in her month, *ekavastrā sabhāyām nītā duṣṭakarmanā rajasvalā*” (van Buitenen).
5. Arjuna upbraids Karṇa: “You watched how evil men molested (*kliśyamānām*) the Princess of Pāñcāla in the assembly hall” (IV.55.4), but he does not mention the ultimate outrage of his command that she be stripped, or even to his abusing her as a prostitute.
6. In the *Udyogaparvan* (V.29.31, 33) when Kṛṣṇa mentions to Saṁjaya the atrocities suffered, he refers only to Duḥśāsana dragging menstruating Draupadī into the hall before elders.

²⁹ Bhatt 1951: 172.

7. Whenever Yudhiṣṭhira recounts the sufferings they have undergone, he always mentions Draupadī having been dragged by her hair, but never to any attempt to strip her. In his message to Duryodhana through Saṁjaya, he refers only to her hair being violated in the hall, *keṣesv adharṣayat* (V.31.16).
8. When Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas consult before the peace-embassy (V.70-79) they do not mention avenging any attempted stripping. Of them, Arjuna alone speaks of Draupadī's trials and this is limited to "how that fiend molested Draupadī in the middle of the hall" *parikliṣṭā sabhāmadhye* (V.76.18).
9. Even when Draupadī herself, furious with everyone favouring peace, lists her sufferings (V.80. 24, 26), "grabbed by the hair and molested in a men's hall" (*sāham keśagraham prāptā parikliṣṭā sabhām gatā*) and states how she invoked Govinda mentally for succour (*trāhi māmiti govinda manasā kamṣito 'si me*), she does not mention any attempt to strip her, although that would have been the sharpest goad to spur them into battle.
10. In his embassy to the Hastināpura court when Kṛṣṇa tells Dhṛtarāṣṭra all the suffering Duryodhana has imposed on the Pāṇḍavas, including dragging Draupadī into the court (V.93.58), he makes no mention of the attempt to strip her, which would have been the greatest crime.
11. When Kṛṣṇa rebukes Duryodhana during the peace embassy, enumerating all his ill deeds, he refers to his abusing and maltreating (*vinikṛtā*) the queen of the Pāṇḍavas (V.126.8-9), but makes no mention of the supreme outrage of attempting to strip her.
12. Kuntī, listing her sorrows to Kṛṣṇa several times over, laments that her greatest sorrow is Draupadī being abused verbally and molested (*parikliṣṭā*), dragged into the assembly hall draped in a single cloth while menstruating, but does not mention any attempt at stripping her daughter-in-law, which would surely have been the greatest torment by far (V.88.50, 56; 85-86; 135.15-18, 21).

13. Ghaṭotkaca, assailing Duryodhana, charges him for dragging and insulting Draupadī in her period in a single garment in the assembly-hall, with no mention of attempted stripping (VI.87.26).
14. The *Karṇaparvan* begins with the Kauravas musing over how they dragged and demeaned Draupadī. Dhṛtarāṣṭra tells Saṁjaya how his son had the wife of the Pāṇḍavas violently brought into the assembly where Karṇa abused her as “Wife of slaves” (*dāsabhāryeti* VIII.5.79). Although at different stages in the battle Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Bhīma, Duḥśāsana and Kṛṣṇa all recall the dragging and insulting of Draupadī, none refers to any attempt to strip her.
15. In the *Karṇaparvan* verses relegated in the CE to footnotes (VIII.61.934* and 935*), when Bhīma rips off the arm with which Duḥśāsana boasts he had dragged Draupadī by her hair, neither refers to the grosser outrage of attempting to strip her.
16. When Kṛṣṇa recounts Karṇa’s misdeeds to goad Arjuna into killing him, he refers to single-cloth-clad, menstruating Draupadī being summoned to the *sabhā* and mocked (VIII.67.2-3), but does not refer to Karṇa instigating any stripping, which would have surely been the sharpest goad to spur him on.
17. Bhīma enumerates Draupadī being dragged by her hair among the sufferings imposed by Shakuni, Duryodhana and Karṇa but not any attempted disrobing (Vulgate, VIII.83.46).
18. At the end of the war, when Yudhiṣṭhira provokes Duryodhana to emerge from Dvaipāyana lake, he mentions Draupadī being verbally abused and dragged, but says nothing about any attempted disrobing (IX.30.187*).
19. Bhīma, while kicking Duryodhana’s head, refers only to single-garment-draped Draupadī being mocked in the hall, not to any attempted stripping (IX.58.4).
20. Even at the very end, in the *Svargārohaṇaparvan*, Yudhiṣṭhira, outraged on seeing Duryodhana in heaven, refers to his having caused Pāñcālī to be afflicted, *parikliṣṭā* (XVIII.1.9) in the *sabhā*, but nothing more.

Adluri and Hildebeitel peremptorily dismiss the evidence of the passages involving Duryodhana as “karmically irrelevant” because of a philosophical proposition “that blame-casting must necessarily be agent-specific in a karmic universe.” This is resorting to the same “higher criticism” which they frown upon instead of tackling the contradictory evidence. They also feel that some of the others are “broadly worded enough to include an allusion to the disrobing,” though they do not explain this.³⁰

Textual disconnect

Satya Chaitanya’s study of the sequence of events brings to light a major hiatus in the text.³¹ A similar disconnect can be found in the *Bhīṣmaparvan* where the text-block VI.95.4-23 repeats the portion at 16.11-20+42.2, indicating an adding-on of verses 16.21 to 42.1.³² In Draupadī’s case, after Duḥśāsana failed in his attempt, ‘The people shouted, “The Kauravyas refuse to answer the question,” and condemned Dhṛtarāṣṭra’ (II.61.50). This refers to Draupadī’s question to the assembly (II.60.44), repeated at II.62.13, which remains unanswered in the epic. Strangely enough, the audience neither censures the king for allowing the attempted stripping, nor criticises Duḥśāsana for making the attempt. Even more puzzling is everyone’s silence about the unending stream of cloth, whether emanating from Dharma or Kṛṣṇa. Instead, Vidura’s speech, which follows, states that Draupadī is awaiting a reply to her question, weeping like an orphan (II.61.52). Surely, Vidura would have been the first to protest against any attempt to disrobe Draupadī publicly and to extol her miraculous escape in response to her appeal to Kṛṣṇa? It is significant that he refers neither to Vikarṇa’s response in support of Draupadī nor to Karṇa rebuking him and directing that she should be stripped. *It is as though these speeches have not happened at all.* We have noted above that even Kṛṣṇa, while

³⁰ Adluri and Hildebeitel *op. cit.*

³¹ Satya Chaitanya 2005.

³² Brockington 1998: 147.

listing Karṇa's misdeeds, does not mention his having ordered the disrobing (VIII.67.2-3). The sequence of events indicates that *originally there was no hiatus* between Draupadī's query and Vidura's exhortation to the assembly to provide an answer. Whatever we find now, in-between, is a subsequent addition.

There are three parallel accounts of Draupadī's coming to the dicing hall in chapter 60, which need to be reconciled.³³

1. Duryodhana sends the *prātikāmin* to fetch her but she sends him back with a question to Yudhiṣṭhira.
2. Duryodhana sends him again to tell her to come and state her case in person. She, thereupon, expresses her faith in Dharma.
3. Now in slokas 14-15 Yudhiṣṭhira sends his trusted attendant to her, whereupon she appears in the hall.
4. But in sloka 16 onwards Duryodhana asks the *prātikāmin* to fetch her and, on his hesitating, orders Duḥśāsana to do so. He, then, drags her by her hair into the hall.

The accounts at 3 and 4 are contradictory and the latter has possibly been added subsequently along with Bhīma's blood-drinking vow for greater dramatic effect.³⁴

What happens thereafter?

1. When Draupadī herself speaks, after Karṇa bids Duḥśāsana take her away to the Kaurava apartments, she voices her bewilderment at being dragged into the assembly but utters not a word about any attempt to strip her, which is most unnatural. Nor does she refer to Kṛṣṇa's response to her prayer and the abject failure of the attempt to disrobe her (II.62.1-14), about which Hildebeitel is insistent.

³³ Bhatt 1951: 176-177.

³⁴ Mehendale 2005 shows the vow is an interpolation.

2. Subsequently, disturbed by the ominous howling of beasts, when Vidura and Gāndhārī press Dhṛtarāṣṭra to intervene, neither refers to any attempted disrobing (II.63.24).
3. Dhṛtarāṣṭra rebukes his son for his wicked speech to *dharmapatni* Draupadī, but not for any heinous attempt to strip her.
4. Even the vow that Bhīma makes refers to her hair having been touched, *parāmr̥ṣya* (II.62.34), while Nakula's vow mentions her being verbally abused, *yairvācaḥ śrāvītā rukṣāḥ* (II.68.43). Neither refers to any attempt to disrobe her, which would surely have been the gravest provocation for swearing vengeance.
5. When Draupadī proceeds on exile, she is described as wearing a bloodstained cloth (II.70.9). If Kṛṣṇa or Dharma had continuously replaced what Duḥśāsana kept pulling away, how could she still be wearing this cloth stained with menstrual blood?
6. In the last chapter of the *Sabhāparvan* Dhṛtarāṣṭra laments that they “dragged the wretched Draupadī to the middle of the hall...clothed in her single garment, stained with blood... Duryodhana and Karṇa threw biting insults at the suffering Kṛṣṇā” (van Buitenen II.72.12-18). There is no mention of what should have been the greatest crime: the attempted disrobing and its miraculous failure.
7. Dhṛtarāṣṭra also tells Saṁjaya (II.72.19-20) that the Bharata women and Gāndhārī cried out in anguish and Brahmins did not perform the *sandhyā* rituals on the day of the dice game, furious with the dragging of Draupadī. Again, there is no reference to disrobing.³⁵
8. In the *Vanaparvan*, Saṁjaya repeats his master's word *parikarṣaṇe* to describe the outrage but makes no mention of disrobing.
9. P. L. Vaidya, editor of the CE's *Karnaparvan*, held that a verse referring to her being stripped (VIII.85.15) was an interpolation and left it out of the CE text.³⁶

³⁵ Satya Chaitanya, *ibid.*

³⁶ Bhatt 1951: 174

Hiltebeitel has overlooked two confirmations of stance in the *Śalyaparvan*. J. D. Smith³⁷ pointed out to me that as “Bhīma is gloating after fulfilling his vow to overthrow Duryodhana and tread on his head,” he says,

“Those who brought the menstruating Draupadī and who made her naked (*avastrām*) in the assembly-see those Dhārtarāṣṭras slain in battle by the Pāṇḍavas because of the torture on Yājñasenī.” (IX.58.10)

Yet, in an earlier verse (IX.58.4), while kicking Duryodhana’s head, Bhīma refers only to Draupadī clad in a single garment being mocked in the hall, not to any attempted stripping. Smith acknowledges that a contradiction exists, but is helpless because of the principle followed by the CE: “...it is strange that Bhīma says this at this point and does not say anything similar after fulfilling the more relevant vow against Duḥśāsana. But again, this is what the text actually says.”³⁸

Secondly, earlier on in the same *parvan* (IX.4.16-17) Duryodhana tells Kṛpācārya that there is no point in seeking peace because,

*duḥśāsanena yat kṛṣṇā ekavastrā rajasvalā
parikliṣṭā sabhāmadhye sarvalokasya paśyataḥ
tathā vivasanām dīnām smaranty adyāpi pāṇḍavāḥ
na nivārayituṃ śakyāḥ saṃgrāmāt te paramtapāḥ*
“Wearing a single cloth and covered in dust, dark Draupadī was wronged by Duḥśāsana in the middle of the assembly hall under the eyes of the entire world. Even today the Pāṇḍavas still remember how she was naked (*vivasanām*) and wretched (*dīnām*); those enemy-destroyers cannot be turned from war.”³⁹

³⁷ Professor of Sanskrit at Cambridge and author of the abridged Penguin translation of the Mahabharata. He maintains the online digital text of the CE.

³⁸ J.D. Smith, personal communication.

³⁹ Meiland 2005: 77.

This is the solitary reference retained in the CE to *Draupadī* *having been stripped naked* (not to an *attempt* to strip her), but it is devoid of any mention of re-clothing. *That implies that she remained naked thereafter and there was no miracle of endless garments.* On the other hand, all recensions of the text agree that she proceeds on exile wearing a bloodstained garment.

This prompts examination of the annotations, which reveals that some manuscripts have *vīmanasā* (dejected, bewildered) instead of *vivasanā*. *Vīmanasā* is textually more consistent with Duryodhana's description of her condition in the earlier line (*parikliṣṭā*), but the editors of the CE did not accept this reading that is more consistent with what has gone before and comes after. Thus, they ended up with a text that renders *Draupadī* naked without any re-clothing.

There has been no attempt to reconcile these contradictions although the overwhelming evidence is weighted against any incident of trying to disrobe *Draupadī*.

Collateral Evidence

1. The earliest post-*Mahābhārata* evidence is in the plays of the first Sanskrit dramatist Bhāsa: *Dūtavākya*, *Dūtaghaṭokacā* and *Ūrubhaṅga* (c. 4th century BC-1st century CE?).
 - In the first, Duryodhana displays to Kṛṣṇa a vivid painting of the dice-game showing *draupadī keśāmbarākarṣaṇam*, “*Draupadī* dragged by the hair and garment” (prose passage following sloka 6) and *duḥśāsano draupadīm keśa haste grihītavān*, “*Duḥśāsana* seizing *Draupadī*'s hair in his hand” (prose passage preceding sloka 7). Kṛṣṇa exclaims, *draupadī keśadharsaṇam* “*Draupadī*'s hair being violated!” In 1916 Winternitz, comparing Bhāsa's *Dūtavākya* with the *Mahābhārata*, demonstrated that Kṛṣṇa's re-clothing of

- Draupadī was an interpolation introduced after the 4th century CE.⁴⁰
- In the second play, Ghaṭotkaca upbraids Duryodhana saying, *śirasi na tathā bhrātuḥ patniṃ sprśanti niśācarāḥ*, “nor do night-wanderers (Rākṣasas) ever touch the brother’s wife on the head” (sloka 47), referring to her having been dragged by her hair. This is an echo of what he says in the *Bhīṣmaparvan* VI.87.26.
 - In the third play, Duryodhana says, *yat kṛṣṭā karanigrahāñcitakacā dyūte tadā draupadī*, “How Draupadī was dragged by the hair in the dicing” (sloka 63).⁴¹
2. Rājaśekhara’s *Bālabhārata* (c. 10th century CE) is unaware of the re-clothing of Draupadī by Kṛṣṇa.⁴²
 3. Neither the Vaishnava Bhakti cult’s *Bhāgavata*, nor the appendix to the epic, *Harivamśa*, mentions any attempted stripping, despite their focus on the miraculous deeds of Kṛṣṇa. The former refers only to the heinous act of the Kuru lady being dragged by her hair (*keśabhimarśam*) in the assembly hall but not to Kṛṣṇa rescuing her miraculously from being stripped (I. 86; I. 15.10; III.1.7; XI.1.2.).
 4. In the *Devi Bhāgavata Purāṇa* Janamejaya refers twice only to Draupadī being dragged by her hair (IV.1.36 and 17.38), using the word *dharsitā* (IV.1.38), which also means “violated”, for what Kīcaka did to her. Yudhiṣṭhira uses the same word while giving Saṃjaya his message, *keśeṣv adharṣayat* (*Mahābhārata*, V.31.16).
 5. It is later, in the *Śiva Purāṇa* (c. 11th century CE) that we find a reference to the incident (III.19.63-66). Here the stream of garments is the result of Durvāsā’s boon to Draupadī for having torn off part of her dress to protect the sage’s modesty when his loincloth was swept away in the Ganga.⁴³ Kṛṣṇa plays no role in this. There is also the popular tale of Draupadī binding up his bleeding finger with a strip of her

⁴⁰ Brockington 1998: 258 note 53; Dhavalikar 1992: 523.

⁴¹ Menon 1996: 266-677, 274, 332, 411.

⁴² Brockington 1998: 490.

⁴³ Dange 2001: 231.

garment because of which he provides her an endless stream of cloth in the dicing hall.⁴⁴

6. Satya Chaitanya⁴⁵ has pointed out that the *Jaiminīya Aśvamedhparvan* again a late work (c. 10th-12th century AD), carries a reference to the disrobing (2.62). Here Kṛṣṇa pays the Pāṇḍavas a surprise visit as they are wondering how to go about the horse-sacrifice. Draupadī says that they ought not to be surprised because earlier Kṛṣṇa had appeared to save them from Durvāsā and, “Before that, Hari appeared in the form of clothes in the assembly (*vastrarūpī sabhāmadhye*) to save me from shame.”⁴⁶ We have noted above Sukthankar’s rejection of both incidents as interpolations.
7. Adluri and Hildebeitel have sought to bolster their argument in favour of the disrobing episode by citing a painting of the incident possibly by Nainsukh (c. 1760/65). On the other hand, the much older sculpture in the Hoysaleswara temple in Halebidu (c. 12th century) reproduced below only depicts Draupadī being held by her hair, one person approaching her while another restrains the male tormentor.⁴⁷



Draupadī being held by her hair. (c. 12th Century)

⁴⁴ Hildebeitel 1988: 226-27.

⁴⁵ Satya Chaitanya *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ *Jaiminīya Aśvamedha Parva* 2008: 90.

⁴⁷ Indrajit Bandyopadhyay 2013.

We do not find any depiction of the dice game in sculpture or painting after this until we come to Akbar's *Razmnama* (1598-99). It is here that, for the first time, the stripping of Draupadi is portrayed. That is why comparing its text with the Sanskrit manuscripts is so important.



Draupadī being stripped in the dice-game by Sangha, son of Surdas, dispersed Razmnama (1598-99)

Conclusion

To sum up, intra-textual evidence supporting the attempt to strip Draupadī is available in only two passages in the *Śalyaparvan* (IX.4.16-17 and IX.58.10), of which the former has a more consistent variant reading available. Even these do not refer to her being re-clothed, whether by Kṛṣṇa or otherwise. The passages upon which Hildebeitel depends refer only to her having invoked Govinda in her distress, but not to any disrobing-and-re-robing. With overwhelming consistency (*at*

least 27 times), the text refers only to her being dragged by her hair into the royal assembly-hall while in her period, wearing a single bloodstained cloth and being insulted. *She leaves on exile wearing the same bloody garment.* Further, there is no mention of the attempted disrobing in early Sanskrit literature. It is only a couple of late texts that mention the attempt and how it was aborted miraculously.

Both the internal and the external evidence, therefore, indicate that the incident of attempted stripping that has ruled the popular imagination so powerfully, featuring on stage, in paintings, films and television as the fuse that detonated the explosion destroying the Kshatriya clans, is a later addition by one or more highly competent redactors.⁴⁸ That would imply that the three verses (II.61.40-42) retained in the CE, quoted at the beginning of this paper, are part of the interpolation that the editors rejected.

Janamejaya, who is listening to the recital, is familiar with only one version in which Draupadī was dragged, not stripped (cf. the *Devi Bhāgavata Purāna* above). That is why he never questions Vaiśampāyana about the contradictory accounts about how Draupadī was outraged.⁴⁹ How is this “the kind of ideologically motivated, idiosyncratic” approach that Adluri and Hildebeitel condemn so vehemently?⁵⁰

Revising the Critical Edition

The first scholar to have expressed serious reservations about the CE was Sylvain Levi, the doyen of French Indologists, who argued in favour of using the Nīlakaṇṭha text showing all other

⁴⁸ Bhatt 1951: p. 178: “The examination of the whole evidence available...leads us to the irresistible conclusion that the Dv. (Draupadīvastraharaṇa) episode did not form part of the original epic...”.

⁴⁹ I am indebted to Simon Brodbeck for this insight.

⁵⁰ They write, referring to me: ‘uses the self-designation “mythographer,”’ “ideology-cally motivated, idiosyncratic... unphilosophical and unthinking approaches,” “vapid arguments,” “most senseless examples” in Adluri & Hildebeitel *op. cit.*

variants alongside.⁵¹ It is interesting that the Clay Sanskrit Library's translation of the MB follows that text and not the CE.

Madeleine Biardeau, questions Sukthankar's basic premise that the Śārada version is the genuine product just because it is the shortest and apparently earliest. She writes, "I do not give much heuristic value to the reconstituted text of the critical edition of Poona."⁵² She felt the editors were blindly devoted to an outdated German philological approach. She is the first to ask bluntly why the text should be dated between 4th c. BC and the end of the 4th c. AD. Another French scholar, Georges Dumezil, preferred the Calcutta edition to the CE.⁵³

Doniger, calling the CE "no text at all,"⁵⁴ urges, "...any structural analysis of the epic would of course demand all available variants of the text."⁵⁵ Mincing no words she writes, "The critical edition...is like Frankenstein's monster, pieced together from various scraps of different bodies; its only community is that of the Pune scholars, the Frankensteins."⁵⁶

Lipner criticizes the imposition of the Western paradigm of a "critical edition" based upon a supposed "original version" since "popular oral tradition...which is the very lifeblood of Hinduism, does not work in this way...the text itself transcends the critical edition both as sacred narrative...and as a seed-bed for the literary imagination."⁵⁷

Arvind Sharma comments, "...it is clear that, at every step, the idea of a critical text seems to go against the grain of the tradition— it is an example of *pratiloma* Indology."⁵⁸

Brodbeck has pointed out the basic flaw in the assumption of the CE, viz. that scribes only add to and do not subtract from texts they copy. There is a case for re-examining the decisions

⁵¹ Levi, Sylvain. 1929. Review of the CE in *Journal Asiatique* 215: 345-48, quoted in Hildebeitel 2011: 17.

⁵² Biardeau 1997: 85-86.

⁵³ Hildebeitel op. cit. p. 17.

⁵⁴ O'Flaherty, W. D. 1978:22 quoted in Hildebeitel 2011: 16.

⁵⁵ O'Flaherty, W.D. 1978 *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Doniger, Wendy. "How to escape from the Curse." *London Review of Books* 32/19:17-18 quoted in Hildebeitel 2011 *ibid.*

⁵⁷ Lipner 2010: 148-149.

⁵⁸ Sharma 2008.

of the CE's editors about both including as well as leaving out passages.⁵⁹

Hiltebeitel has argued strenuously that Belvalkar, editor of the CE's *Śāntiparvan*, made a mistake in following the Malayalam manuscripts to alter the frame narrative as well as splitting a section into two, changing the *Nārāyaṇīya*'s ideal 18 sections (an epitome of the MB's structure, like the *Gītā*) to 19.⁶⁰ This smacks of the "higher criticism" he disapproves of so much.

Purshothaman has shown very recently that the CE of the *Harivaṃśa* contains major errors that call for major revision.⁶¹

Instead of regarding the CE as sacrosanct and arguing that we ought to accept that the epic knows of two versions of the outrage Draupadī suffered, we surely need to weigh the comparative evidence delineated above and then decide which way the scales dip. It is time to re-examine the CE adopting the "higher criticism" route. Even Brockington, who has subjected both epics to minute analysis under the lexical microscope, has come to a conclusion that echoes the "higher criticism" approach.⁶²

Use has not been made of the valuable guidance available in Sri Aurobindo's notes written in 1902. He approached the epic "from the point of view mainly of style and literary personality, partly of substance" deferring "questions of philosophy, allusion and verbal evidence" and ignoring "the question of minute metrical details on which they (Western scholars) base far-reaching conclusions."⁶³ Submitting everything to the ultimate test of style, he identified that the *Sabhāparvan* carries "the hand of the original poet...that great and severe style which is the stamp of the personality of Vyāsa" and stated that, except

⁵⁹ Brodbeck 2013.

⁶⁰ Hiltebeitel 2011: 192-4.

⁶¹ A. Purshothaman: "Why *Harivaṃśa* calls itself the *Khila* of Mahabharata – A Critique of the BORI Critical Edition of *Harivaṃśa*." Paper presented at the Mahabharata Manthan international conference of the Draupadi Dream Trust, 19-21 July, 2017.

⁶² Bhattacharya 2003 on Brockington 2000.

⁶³ Sri Aurobindo 2007:11-13, 68. Western Indologists have even dated the epic from the single occurrence of words like *suranga* (from the Greek *suringsks?*), *antakhim* (Antioch?) and *roma* (Rome?) cf. CE 02028049a *antākhīm caiva romām ca yavanānām puram tathā*.

for certain passages, the *Virātaparvan* and *Udyogaparvan* were also Vyāsa's work.⁶⁴ As an example he quotes from the former (IV.16.9) Draupadī's outcry to the sleeping Bhīma,

*uttiṣṭhottīṣṭha kim śeṣe bhīmasena yathā mṛtaḥ /
nāmṛtasya hi pāpīyān bhāryām ālabhya jīvati //*

He writes, "The whole personality of Draupadie breaks out in that cry, her chastity, her pride, her passionate and unforgiving temper, but it flashes out not in an expression of pure feeling, but in a fiery and pregnant apophthegm. It is this temperament, this dynamic force of intellectualism blended with heroic fire and a strong personality that gives its peculiar stamp to Vyasa's writing and distinguishes it from that of all other epic poets."⁶⁵ Similar is Kṛṣṇa's exhortation in the *Udyogaparvan* (V.73) for shaking Bhīma out of his pacifist mood.

It is remarkable that this selection of verses on stylistic criteria as pristine Vyāsa is matched by their inclusion in the CE many decades later on the basis of manuscript evidence. Surely, where two approaches agree, there is adequate justification for giving equal weight to each. Brockington has urged the need for "a coordinated approach to a particular text. This is where in particular the future lies...different approaches can be combined in order to provide greater illumination."⁶⁶

Sri Aurobindo pointed out that there is also the hand of an inferior poet clearly visible who delights in the miraculous and whose style is highly coloured.⁶⁷ This stylistic difference is apparent in the *Sabhāparvan* in the portion beginning with Vikarṇa's speech and ending with the miraculous re-clothing of Draupadī. In addition, we have to take into account Kṛṣṇa's assertion – consistently borne out in the epic – that he can do all that a man can, but the miraculous is beyond him:⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Sri Aurobindo 2007: 28. He brings out the features distinguishing Vyāsa's style at length with examples.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 47.

⁶⁶ Brockington 1998: 525.

⁶⁷ Sri Aurobindo 2007: 13.

⁶⁸ Chatterjee 1991: 210.

*aham hi tat kariṣyāmi param puruṣakārataḥ /
daivam tu na mayā śakyam karma kartum katham cana
//V.77.5*

Incidents like those involving Durvāsā in the forest and the re-robing of Draupadī are inconsistent with this. “If we find grave inconsistencies of character...we are justified in supposing two hands at work.”⁶⁹ Therefore, on the grounds of both style, content and textual consistency, the incident is liable to be considered as the work of a different, later, poet. In 1916 Winternitz showed that Kṛṣṇa’s re-clothing of Draupadī was an interpolation.⁷⁰ In 1949, in a different way, G.H. Bhatt argued for the same conclusion at the 15th All-India Oriental Conference, Bombay.⁷¹

L. M. Singhvi,⁷² writing in 2008, recommended “another encyclopedic project of preparing a comprehensive Mahābhārata Bibliography in all the Indian languages as well as other European and Asian languages.” Strongly endorsing the views of Bankimchandra and Sri Aurobindo regarding the stylistic layers in the Mahābhārata, he urged:-

The rigid exclusion and abandonment of the Ugrasrava recension and some of the later additions and accretions would be ruinous. What we need is a continuous discourse of scholarship and a host of scholarly guides to tell us of the architectonics of the Mahābhārata and the historical and literary background of different accretions, additions and interpolations.... (that) represent the history as well as legend and myth of India and the confluence of the so called classical and the folk. The interwoven tapestry of MB made it a veritable people’s Epic reflecting the social and cultural reality of different

⁶⁹ Sri Aurobindo 2007: 12.

⁷⁰ Note 30 above.

⁷¹ Note 23 above.

⁷² Singhvi 2008: “Mahabharata: texts and contexts in a perspective”. *Neo Indika, Bharatayan*, essays in honour of P.D. and S.S. Halvasiya, vol. 1. Ed. Dr Vasudev Poddar. Rai Bahadur Vishweshwarlal Motilal Halvasiya Trust, 15 India Exchange Place, Kolkata-700001.

periods of Indian history and different perceptions of the Indian people at different stages.”

An example of the need for this is seen in Hildebeitel’s comment in *Dharma* (2011) that Aśvaghōṣa’s reference in *Buddhacarita* to Karālanaka is “unknown and uncertain,”⁷³ whereas a discourse with this king exists in the *Mokṣadharmā Parvan* of the MB in the Haridāsa Siddhāntavāgīśa edition⁷⁴ which the CE has not covered. In his recent book on nonviolence in the MB Hildebeitel (2016) uses the story of rishi Parṇāda in deer form and the gleaner Satya which is not in the CE, taking it from “the northern Vulgate of the seventeenth-century compiler Nilakantha.” He even suggests that the tale was inserted by Nilakantha, concluding that with such “improvisations” the MB “both as text and tradition...puts both ahimsa and gleaning into the consciousness and unconscious of Hindus.”⁷⁵ That reminds us of Sukthankar’s insertion of the invocatory benediction into the CE violating his own editorial principles.

Surely, the CE is not beyond all question! Even with the Bible, after the Authorised Version (1604-11) there was the Revised Version (1881-94) followed by further revised editions. It is the German philological approach to the Bible that was adopted in preparing the CE, labelling the others as “Vulgate” as in the case of the Biblical project. The central problem lies in mapping the inter-relationships among manuscripts. Wendy Phillips-Rodriguez has put forward a fascinating schema called “uprooted trees” like the *Gītā*’s cosmic tree whose roots are upwards and branches downwards. Through this paradigm she finds that the southern manuscripts are more widely dispersed than the northern, indicating their independent evolution. This upside-down tree model opens up the study of the epic’s variations as having “an independent cultural value”. Very pertinently she asks, “Why privilege one version over the others?”⁷⁶ The variations are separate interpretations, and the

⁷³ Hildebeitel 2011: 636 n. 34.

⁷⁴ Bhattacharya 2016.

⁷⁵ Hildebeitel 2016: 31.

⁷⁶ Phillips-Rodriguez, Wendy 2012: 228.

study of how each evolved will enable greater understanding of the cultural roots of the epic.

The Revised Edition announced by the BORI, however, raises concerns.⁷⁷ Their website states:-

“Revisions to the edition will be limited to incorporating the addenda and corrigenda for each volume into the text and either correcting or pointing out minor errors in the editor’s apparatus or comments (*e.g.*, misprints, dittographies, confusion of manuscript sigla, etc.). The edition will not undertake to revise the constituted text nor will it emend the form of the edition.”⁷⁸

The editors, V. Adluri and J. Bagchee, declared in an international conference⁷⁹ that they regarded themselves as custodians of “the scribal tradition” and would not look into questions of what manuscripts were not consulted nor editorial errors (as seen particularly in the *Harivaṃśa*).

It is time, however, to take another look at the CE taking into account not only the manuscripts left out, but also the contents of the adaptations in Arabic and Persian that pre-date or are contemporary with the manuscripts, as well as ancient commentaries that have much to reveal regarding the state of the text. The findings of Mehendale, Dhavalikar, Bhatt, Brockington and Purushothaman cannot be ignored.

⁷⁷ The editors are V. Adluri of Hunter College USA and J. Bagchee of Freie Universität Berlin.

⁷⁸ <http://www.bori.ac.in/Mahabharata-Project-Revised-Second-Edition.html> accessed on 19th June 2017.

⁷⁹ Draupadi Dream Trust’s *Mahabharata Manthan*, 19-21 July 2017 on “Mahabharata: A Critical Revisit to the Tangible & Intangible Heritage” at New Delhi.

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RECASTING POETRY: WORDS, MOTIFS AND SCENES
BORROWED FROM THE *RAGHUVAMŚA* AND
RESHAPED IN BUDDHAGHOŚA'S *PADYACŪDĀMAṆI*

Abstract

Buddhaghośa's *Padyacūdāmaṇi* is a medieval Sanskrit *mahākāvya* telling the story of the life of Siddhārtha. Surprisingly enough, the influence exerted on it by its famous predecessor, Aśvaghōśa's *Buddhacarita*, is marginal, if any. As a matter of fact, Buddhaghośa's poetic model is Kālidāsa, and especially his *Raghuvamśa*, on which he draws profusely in terms of language, motifs and scenes. However, despite his indebtedness to Kālidāsa, Buddhaghośa is far from being a mere imitator. This article illustrates the diverse ways in which Buddhaghośa melded the words and ideas he drew from Kālidāsa's work in the mould of his own creativity, and ingeniously remodelled them into new, fresh, enjoyable poetry.

The greatness of Kālidāsa is widely recognized, and over the course of centuries his poetry has won him the highest admiration of a vast audience and exerted a powerful influence on many later poets and dramatists: some tried to emulate his style of composition, which they regarded as a paragon, while others borrowed motifs, themes, and scenes made popular by his genius, reshaping them through their own style and idiom. To

the latter group belongs the author of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, a Sanskrit *sargabandha* which, in spite of its remarkable poetic value, has received but scant attention in contemporary scholarly research. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate how patently the author of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* borrowed from Kālidāsa's poetry – particularly from his *Raghuvamśa* – and, at the same time, how skilfully and creatively he reworked what he had borrowed, giving shape to new, original poetry. However, since the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is (deplorably) almost unknown, a short introduction, restricted to the most relevant facts, is in order here.¹

The *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is a Sanskrit *sargabandha* in 645 stanzas divided into 10 *sargas*, narrating the story of the “historical Buddha”: it opens with the Bodhisattva residing in his penultimate station, the heaven called Tuṣita, goes on with his birth on earth as Prince Siddhārtha, then recounts Siddhārtha's life up to his Enlightenment. Hardly any facts concerning this work are known to us: the poem contains no information about its date, place and author. In addition, it seems to be totally unknown in the Indian literary tradition. All that we know about its author is his name, Buddhaghōṣa. Although some scholars are inclined to identify him with the celebrated Buddhist savant who lived in Ceylon during the 5th century, it seems more likely that they are just namesakes.² No

¹ More detailed overviews of the poem can be found in: A. Fernando, *Buddhaghōṣa's Padyacūḍāmaṇi As a Biography of the Buddha*. (A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in The Faculty of Graduate Studies, Department of Asian Studies, McGill University). Montreal, 1992, *passim*; M. Franceschini (ed., trans.), *Padyacūḍāmaṇi. Il diadema dei versi*. Milano, 2010, pp. 13-31; M. Franceschini, *Buddhaghōṣa's Padyacūḍāmaṇi: A Medieval Mahākāvya on the Life of the Buddha*, in: G. Boccali and E. Mucciarelli (eds), *Stylistic Devices in Indian Literature and Art*. Quaderni di Acme 135. Milano, 2013, pp. 37-45.

² The identification between the author of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* and the celebrated Buddhist teacher and commentator was first assumed by the editors of the first edition of the poem (M. Ranga Acharya and S. Kuppaswami Sastri (eds), *The Padyacūḍāmaṇi of Buddhaghōṣācārya*. Madras, 1921, pp. 3-5 (Preface); the Preface was later reprinted as S. Kuppaswami Sastri, *The Padyacudamani of Buddhaghosa*, in: S.S. Janaki (ed.), *Kuppaswami Sastri Birth-Centenary Commemoration Volume. Part I: Collection of Sastri's Writings and a Kavya on him*. Madras, pp. 154-157). Their claim, which was essentially based only on the homonymy between the two authors and their association with Buddhism,

definite information is available either as to when or where the poem was composed: slight hints – regarding style and vocabulary – suggest that it was possibly composed around the 9th or 10th century, while other similarly slight indications point to South India as its place of origin.³

As previously stated, the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is a *sargabandha* on the life of the Buddha: as such, it might be expected to show the strong influence of Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, the only other extant Sanskrit *sargabandha* on the same subject.⁴ Quite the contrary, Buddhaghōṣa seems to ignore Aśvaghoṣa's work. In fact, with regard to the events of the storyline, he follows the plot of the *Nidānakathā*, a long narrative introduction to the *Jātaka* collection. Moreover, as far as poetic images and scenes are concerned, there is no doubt that Buddhaghōṣa's source of inspiration was Kālidāsa, and especially his *Raghuvamśa*. The influence of the *Raghuvamśa* is clearly perceivable in a great number of passages of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*; but, despite his inspirational debt to Kālidāsa, Buddhaghōṣa is far from being a

was later endorsed without reservation by a few scholars, e.g. Krishnamachariar (M. Krishnamachariar, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*. Madras, 1937, pp. 129-131) and Sharma (M.C. Sharma, *Ācārya Buddhaghōṣa and His Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, in: K.N. Mishra (ed.), *Glimpses of the Sanskrit Buddhist Literature (Vol. I)*. Sarnath-Varanasi, 1997, pp. 104-105), but sharply rejected by most of the scholarly community, e.g. Law (B.C. Law, *The Life and Work of Buddhaghōṣa*. Calcutta and Simla, 1923, pp. 90-91), Winternitz (M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature. Vol. II: Buddhist Literature and Jaina Literature*. Calcutta, 1933, p. 276), Lienhard (S. Lienhard, *A History of Classical Poetry. Sanskrit – Pali – Prakrit. A History of Indian Literature, Volume III, Fasc. 1*. Wiesbaden, 1984, p. 201), Warder (A.K. Warder, *Indian Kāvya Literature. Volume V: The Bold Style (Śaktibhadra to Dhanapāla)*. Delhi, 1988, p. 672). The question is discussed at large in Fernando, *Buddhaghōṣa's Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, op. cit., pp. 99-105.

³ Cf. Warder, *Indian Kāvya Literature*, op. cit., pp. 674-5. In addition to Warder's considerations, a southern origin of the poem is also suggested by the fact that all but one of its known manuscripts are preserved in South Indian libraries, and all of them, without exception, are either written in a southern script or show the idiosyncrasies that are characteristic of manuscripts copied from an exemplar written in a southern script (Franceschini, *Padyacūḍāmaṇi: A Medieval Mahākāvya on the Life of the Buddha*, op. cit., p. 38).

⁴ In (at least some of) the section rubrics of all manuscripts, the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is subsumed under the "siddhārthacarita" literary category, with the formula: *buddhaghōṣācāryaviracite padyacūḍāmaṇināmi (mahākāvye) siddhārthacarite [...] sargah*. Cf. the critical apparatus in Franceschini, *Padyacūḍāmaṇi. Il diadema dei versi*, op. cit.

plagiarist or a mere imitator. In fact, he recasts the material borrowed from the *Raghuvamśa* in the mould of his poetical imagination (*pratibhā*), giving shape to new – and often amazing – fancies.⁵ As a matter of fact, *pratibhā* is the hallmark of Buddhaghōṣa’s poetry: his creative skill impressed A.K. Warder so much so that he described the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* as “a flow of poetry made fresh and enjoyable by surprising fancies” and praised its author as being “very polished in the later *kāvya* manner and spontaneous in a manner possible only to a genius”.⁶

As aforementioned, many stanzas and even whole scenes of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* – scattered throughout the poem – have a counterpart in the *Raghuvamśa*. The present analysis, however, will be restricted to the fourth *sarga* of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, since the cases it provides constitute, as a whole, a substantial and illustrative set of samples of the diverse ways Buddhaghōṣa avails himself of the text and imagery of Kālidāsa. As will be shown, he sometimes borrows words or expressions, other times he picks out the “frame” of an image or scene and fills it with new pictures. In addition, in several cases he borrows elements from stanzas or scenes of the *Raghuvamśa* and skillfully adapts them to a totally different context in his poem.

The whole fourth *sarga* of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is devoted to the description of Siddhārtha’s wedding: it opens with the marriage arrangement between Śuddhodana and the king of the Koliya (the bride’s father),⁷ which is followed by a long lyric

⁵ Granoff shows how the distinction between plagiarism and legitimate borrowing (or poetic influence) was a sensitive issue among medieval Indian authors and theorists: as such, it was dealt with in several medieval Indian treatises on poetics, sometimes in great detail (as in Rājasekhara’s *Kāvyaṁīmāṁsā*). See P. Granoff, *The Alchemy of Poetry: Poetic Borrowing and the Transmission of Texts*, in: G. Colas and G. Gerschheimer (eds), *Écrire et transmettre en Inde classique*. Paris, 2009, pp. 135-146.

⁶ Warder, *Indian Kāvya Literature*, op. cit., p. 681.

⁷ Siddhārtha’s wife is never called by her name in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*: outside the fourth *sarga* – where she is called “(Koliya) princess” (*koliyakanyakā*, *naradevakanyā* and the like) before the marriage and “wife” (*jāyā*) after the wedding – she is mentioned only once, in *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* 5.5, where she is simply Siddhārtha’s “bride” (*vadhū*). She is of very little significance to the plot of the poem, since Buddhaghōṣa omits the two episodes where, in other “biographies” of the Buddha (e.g. Aśvaghōṣa’s *Buddhacarita*), she plays a

section describing the preparation of bride and groom. Then comes the celebration of the marriage rite, the ceremonial procession of the newly-married couple through the capital city of Kapila, and, in the end, their visit to Śuddhodana's palace to pay respect to the groom's father.

The first stanzas in the fourth *sarga* of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* which have a counterpart in the *Raghuvamśa* are those coming right after the description of the marriage agreement between the two kings. The wedding day has come: early in the morning, bride and groom are being made ready for the wedding. Stanzas *Pad.* 4.5-6 are a *yugma* (two stanzas that form a grammatical unit) celebrating the magnificence of the royal apartments where Siddhārtha's bride-to-be is getting prepared for the marriage by her maids:

āropitābhraṃkaṣaketumālam
ābaddhakaśeyavitānaśobham /
abhyucchritendrāyudhatorāṇāṅkam
abhyantarasthāpitapūrṇakumbham // Pad. 4.5 //
āstīrṇamuktāsikatābhīrāmam
ākīrṇānāṅkusumopahāram /
ārabdhaveivaivāhikaśaṃvidhānam antahpuraṃ bhūmipater
*babhūva // Pad. 4.6 //*⁸

main role: the birth of her son Rāhula, and her forlorn lament in the wake of Siddhārtha's departure from the royal palace to undertake the ascetic life.

⁸ The Sanskrit works quoted in this article are taken from the following editions: the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* (abbreviated *Pad.*) from Franceschini, *Padyacūḍāmaṇi. Il diadema dei versi*, op. cit.; the *Raghuvamśa* (abbreviated *Ragh.*) from G.R. Nandargikar (ed.), *The Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa: With the Commentary of Mallinātha*. Third edition: Revised and enlarged. Bombay, 1897; the *Kumārasaṃbhava* (abbreviated *Kum.*) from V.L.Ś. Paṇṣīkar (ed.), *The Kumārasaṃbhava of Kālidāsa: With the Commentary (the Sanjīvinī) of Mallināth (1-7 Sargas) and of Sītārāma (8-17 Sargas)*. Twelfth Edition. Bombay, 1935. Corresponding or analogous words occurring in the verses put in comparison are marked in bold. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are by the author of this article, with the support of Formichi (C. Formichi (trans.), *La stirpe di Raghu*. La Spezia, 1992) and Kale (M.R. Kale (ed., trans.), *The Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa: Cantos I-V*. Delhi, 2008; reprint of Bombay, 1925) for the *Raghuvamśa*; Smith (D. Smith (trans.), *The Birth of Kumāra, By Kālidāsa*. New York, 2005) and Kale (M.R. Kale (ed., trans.), *Kumārasaṃbhava of Kālidāsa: Cantos I-VIII*. Delhi, 2004; reprint of Bombay, 1923) for the *Kumārasaṃbhava*.

In these stanzas, the gynaeceum is “adorned with tall archways [that were like] rainbows” (*abhyucchritendrāyudhatorañāṅka*) and its floor is “scattered with the offerings of various flowers” (*ākīrṇanānākusumopahāra*). Both images are clearly derived from a single stanza of the *Raghuvamśa* (7.4), where Aja and Indumatī are parading the main street of the city, heading to the royal palace where they are going to be married:

tāvat prakīrṇābhīnavopacāram
indrāyudhadyotitatorañāṅkam /
varaḥ sa vadhvā saha rājamārgam prāpa
dhvajacchāyanivāritoṣṇam // Ragh. 7.4 //

The two compounds in the first half of this verse describe the superb decoration of the street, that is “adorned with archways bright [as] rainbows” (*indrāyudhadyotitatorañāṅka*) and “scattered with fresh adorning flowers” (*prakīrṇābhīnavopacāra*). Doubtlessly Buddhaghōṣa had in mind this verse when he composed his own; note also that “flags” are mentioned in both texts, although by different words – *ketu* in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, *dhvaja* in the *Raghuvamśa*.

Further in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, the bride is finally adorned and ready for the marriage, and Buddhaghōṣa extols her beauty in a series of seventeen stanzas (*Pad.* 4.10-26), the first four of which (*Pad.* 4.10-13) are influenced by a passage in the ninth *sarga* of the *Raghuvamśa* (stanzas 40 to 44):

antaḥsamāveśitaphullamallīdhammillabandhas
taralekṣaṇāyāḥ /
tatāna tārāgaṇaśāritasya gāḍhāndhakārastabakasya
kāntim // Pad. 4.10 //
ākuñcitāgrair alakaiḥ praśastais tasyā
mukhāmbhoruham ābabhāse /
tadīyasaurabhyasamṛddhilobhād ālīyamānair iva
cañcarīkaiḥ // Pad. 4.11 //
sindūrakṣiptaḥ kṣītipālaputryā vivāhadīkṣātilako vireje /
prāptādhipatyasya manobhavasya pratāpabālārka
ivojjihānaḥ // Pad. 4.12 //

karṇāvasaktāḥ kamalekṣaṇāyā **yavāṅkurāḥ** sātiśayaṃ
virejuḥ /
trilokajiṣṇoḥ **kusumā**yudhasya kīrtiprarohā iva
jṛmbhamāṇāḥ // *Pad.* 4.13 //

hutahutāśanadīpti vanaśriyaḥ pratinidhiḥ
kanakābharaṇasya yat /
yuvatayaḥ **kusumaṃ** dadhur āhitam tad **alake**
dalakesarapeśalam // *Ragh.* 9.40 //
alibhir añjanabindumanoharaiḥ
kusumapañtinipātibhir añkitaḥ /
na khalu śobhayati sma vanasthalīm na **tilakas tilakaḥ**
pramadām iva // *Ragh.* 9.41 //
amadayan madhugandhasanāthayā
kisalayādharasaṃtatayā manaḥ /
kusumasaṃbhṛtayā navamallikā smitarucā
tarucāruvilāsinī // *Ragh.* 9.42 //
aruṇarāgaṇiṣedhibhir aṃśukaiḥ **śravaṇalabdhapadais**
ca **yavāṅkuraiḥ** /
parabhṛtāviritais ca vilāsināḥ smarabalair
abalaikarasāḥ kṛtāḥ // *Ragh.* 9.43 //
upacitāvayavā śucibhiḥ kaṇair alikadambakayogam
upeyuṣī /
sadrśakāntir alakṣyata mañjarī
tilakajālakajālakamauktikaiḥ // *Ragh.* 9.44 //

The influence of the *Raghuvamśa* on the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* is here suggested by the following three facts. Firstly, the number of words shared by the two texts: *alaka*, *kānti*, *kusuma*, *tilaka*, *mallī* (*mallikā* in the *Raghuvamśa*), *yavāṅkura*. Secondly, in both texts “bees” are mentioned – although by synonymous words: *cañcarīka* in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, *ali* in the *Raghuvamśa* – and the *yavāṅkura* (“shoots of barley”) are worn by women over their ears (*karṇāvasakta* in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, *śravaṇalabdhapada* in the *Raghuvamśa*). Third, the similes in two stanzas translated below – *Pad.* 4.10 and *Ragh.* 9.44 – are based on the same poetic image, namely “darkness speckled with bright dots”. In *Pad.* 4.10 the comparison is between “[black] braided hair interwoven with jasmine blossoms”

(*antaḥsamāveśitaphullamallīdhammillabandha*) and “deep darkness spangled with multitudes of stars” (*tārāgaṇasārita [...] gāḍhāndhakārastabaka*); in *Ragh.* 9.44 “a bunch of *tilaka* flowers covered by bright pollen and reached by a swarm of black bees” (*upacitāvayavā śucibhiḥ kaṇair alikadambakayogam mañjarī tilakajā*) is compared with “a pearl ornament on [a mass of black] curled hair” (*alakajālakamauktika*):

“The [black] braided hair of the quivering-eyed princess, interwoven with jasmine blossoms, spread the beauty of a mass of deep darkness spangled with multitudes of stars.” (*Pad.* 4.10)

“When a bunch of *tilaka* flowers, which was covered by bright pollen, was reached by a swarm of black bees, it took on the beauty of a pearl ornament on [a mass of black] curled hair.” (*Ragh.* 9.44)

In spite of all these correspondences, the two passages deal with different topics: the one in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* praises the beauty of Siddhārtha’s bride-to-be – eventually dressed and adorned, ready for the marriage – while that in the *Raghuvamśa* describes the loveliness of trees blooming in springtime. In this case, Buddhaghoṣa borrowed poetic imagery and words from the *Raghuvamśa* and skillfully adapted them to a totally different context.

Still further, Siddhārtha has reached the wedding pavilion and finds himself – presumably for the first time – in the presence of his bride-to-be. The following stanza describes his delight on finally seeing her, right before their marriage:

sotkaṇṭham ālokayataḥ kumārīm
sudhāṃśuśobhāparibhāvukāṅgīm /
atītya velām adhirājasūnor ānandasindhuḥ prasasāra
dūram // Pad. 4.39 //

“On looking with ardent desire at the princess, whose figure humbled the splendour of the moon, the ocean of

joy of the prince overflowed its shores and flooded in the distance.”

The corresponding stanza in the *Raghuvamśa* instead depicts the joy of King Dilīpa on looking for the first time at his newly born son, Raghu:

*nivātapadmastimitena cakṣuṣā nṛpasya kāntaṃ pibataḥ
sutānanam /
mahodadheḥ pūra ivendudarśanād guruḥ praharṣaḥ
prababhūva nātmani // Ragh. 3.17 //*

“The immense joy of the king, who was drinking the lovely face of his son through his eyes – which were motionless as a lotus sheltered from the wind – rose [and spilled] outside him, as the flow of the ocean at the sight of the moon.”

The two stanzas use the same simile: the joy of a man at the sight of his loved one becomes uncontainable, as an ocean when, on “seeing” the full moon, overflows its shores. Here, again, Buddhaghōṣa borrowed Kālidāsa’s imagery and reshaped it to his needs: he skilfully turned the paternal joy depicted by Kālidāsa into the bliss of a bridegroom on seeing his beautiful bride-to-be – and he did so without borrowing one single word from the original stanza.

Then comes the marriage itself, followed by the description of the emotional reactions of the newly-married couple: the passage in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* (4.41-44) has its parallel in the *Raghuvamśa* (7.20, 22-23). Both texts refer to the same circumstances, although, of course, the characters in play are different: Siddhārtha and his bride in the former poem, Aja and Indumatī in the latter. The stanzas describing the moment of the marriage in the two poems share just a few words and their connection is somewhat loose:⁹

⁹ Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the word *udarcīṣas* (“blazing upward”, referred to the nuptial fire) in the beginning of Buddhaghōṣa’s verse may be the result of an ingenious adaptation to a different context of *arcito* (“honored”, referring to the celebrating priest) in

*udarciṣas tasya hutāśanasya havirbhir uccair jvalataḥ
purastāt /
kriyākalāpe kṛtadhīḥ **purodhāḥ** saṃyojayām āsa
vadhūkumārau // Pad. 4.41 //
tatrārcito bhojapateḥ **purodhā** hutvāgnim ājyādibhir
agnikalpaḥ /
tam eva cādhāya vivāhasākṣye **vadhūvarau**
saṃgamayām cakāra // Ragh. 7.20 //*

Right after these verses, in both poems comes the description of the involuntary physical symptoms revealing the emotion of the spouses. Though there is hardly any verbal agreement in the verses, they are clearly related in their content, and the reactions depicted are the same: the horripilation of the groom and the sweating of the bride. Buddhaghōṣa here expands in two stanzas (*Pad.* 4.42-43) what is described in the first half of *Ragh.* 7.22:

*āsīt kumāraḥ pulakaprarohair udañcitaiḥ
kañcukitāṅgayaṣṭiḥ /
vaikakṣamālyacyutakesarās tadguptyai babhūvur
guṇaratnarāśeḥ // Pad. 4.42 //
āvīrbhavadbhiḥ śramavārileśair ādrāṅgulih
koliyakanyakāsīt /
vivāhadhārājalaśīkarās tadvyājībbabhūvur
vipulekṣaṇāyāḥ // Pad. 4.43 //*
“The prince [*i.e.* Siddhārtha] had his slender body covered by an armour of blossom-like raised hair, [but] the filaments fallen from the flowers of his garland hid this horripilation of him, who was a treasure of virtue-jewels.”
“The Koliya princess had her fingers wet because of the droplets of sweat coming out, [but] the drops of the stream of water [poured on her hands] during the marriage dissimulated the perspiration of the long-eyed [bride].”
*āsīd varah kaṅṭakitaprakoṣṭhaḥ svinnāṅgulih saṃvavrte
kumārī /*

the beginning of Kālidāsa’s verse, or, more likely, it is borrowed from *Ragh.* 7.24, just four stanzas ahead, where *udarciṣas* opens the second *pāda* (see below).

*vṛttis tayoh pāṇisamāgamena samaṃ vibhakteva
manobhavasya // Ragh. 7.22 //*

“The hair on the forearm of the bridegroom raised, the fingers of the princess were sweating: it was as at the joining of their hands, the activity of the god of love was divided equally between them.”

The following stanza in both poems depicts the same circumstance: bride and groom have just been joined in marriage, they stand by the sacred fire and they both long to look at each other, but at the same time they are prevented from doing so by their shyness:

*ālokalobhād abhivartamānā nivartamānās trapayā ca
śaśvat /*

*tayor apāṅgaprasarās tadanīm dolāvihārasriyam
anvabhūvan // Pad. 4.44 //*

“Out of desire they cast them, then out of shyness they withdrew them – again and again: in that moment, the course of their side-glances was as lovely as the swing game.”

*tayor apāṅgapratisāritāni kriyāsamāpattinivartitāni /
hrīyantraṇām ānaśire manojñām anyonyalolāni
vilocanāni // Ragh. 7.23 //*

“Their eyes, longing for each other, were incited to cast side-glances [and then] averted by their encountering [in the same] action: they enjoyed the lovely constraint of bashfulness.”

Although Kālidāsa’s verse is patently the source of this stanza of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*,¹⁰ Buddhaghōṣa masterly forged a new poetry out of it, a delicate picture that stands out as a fine specimen of poetry in its own right.¹¹

¹⁰ Incidentally, it can be surmised that the image of the “swing” (*dolā*) as a term of comparison for the lover’s glances was suggested to Buddhaghōṣa by the term *lola*, which is used by Kālidāsa in his stanza with the meaning of “longing for [each other]”, but whose primary meaning is in fact “swinging”.

¹¹ The passage in *Ragh.* 7.20-23 has its parallel in *Kum.* 7.74-77, where the marriage of Śiva and Umā is celebrated. Tubb (G.A. Tubb, “The Relative Priority of the Wedding Passages in the *Kumārasaṃbhava* and the *Raghuvamśā*”, *Journal of the American Oriental*

Bride and groom having been joined in matrimony, both texts proceed with the description of the auspicious subsidiary ritual acts following the central rite:

*abhyastayā saṃvaranāmburāśer
āvartacakrabhramalīlayeva /*

varah samaṃ vāmadṛśā kṛśānoḥ

pradakṣiṇaprakramam *anvatiṣṭhat // Pad. 4.45 //*

“The bridegroom – together with his lovely-eyed bride – performed the circumambulation of the sacred fire, as if imitating the repeated wheel-like motion of a whirlpool on the ocean of the wedding rite.”

pradakṣiṇaprakramaṇāt kṛśānor *udarciṣas tan*

mithunaṃ cakāse /

meror upānteṣv iva vartamānam anyonyasaṃsaktam

ahastryāmam // Ragh. 7.24 //

“That couple, proceeding to circle the blazing sacred fire, shone like day and night joined one to the other revolving around mount Meru.”

kanyākumārau kamanīyarūpāv ālokya homāgnir

adrṣṭapūrvau /

pradakṣiṇārciḥsphuraṇacchalena ślāghāsiraḥkampam

ivācacāra // Pad. 4.46 //

“Looking at the princess and the prince – who were of beautiful appearance, matchless – the sacred fire seemed to nod its head in praise, under the guise of giving off its flames to the right.”

tasmai samyag ghuto vahnir vājinīrājanāvidhau /

pradakṣiṇārcir vyājena hasteneva jayaṃ dadau // Ragh.

4.25 //

Society 102.2 (1982), pp. 309-321), comparing the corresponding passages in the *Raghuvamśa* and in the *Kumārasambhava*, points out two discrepancies. Firstly, he notes that the order of the events is different: in the *Kumārasambhava* the exchange of glances comes first, followed by the marriage and the “involuntary reactions” of the couple (p. 311); secondly, he underlines that the reactions of bride and groom in the two poems are reversed: “the sweating belongs to the bridegroom, and the horripilation to the bride” (p. 317). The *Padyacūdāmaṇi* follows the *Raghuvamśa* in both respects.

“The fire, which had properly received the oblations during the ceremonial lustration of the army, seemed to give him [*i.e.* Raghū] victory with its hand, under the guise of its flaming to the right.”¹²

guruprayuktā kulapālikā sā lājopahāraṃ visasarja vahnau /

marudvidhūtā latikeva puṣpaṃ cūtadrume syūtanavapravāle // Pad. 4.47 //

“The virtuous noble bride, exhorted by the priest, dropped the oblation of roasted rice grains into the fire, as a creeper shaken by the wind [drops] a flower on a mango tree interwoven with new [red] buds.”

nītabagurvī guruṇā prayuktā vadhūr

vidhātṛpratimena tena /

cakāra sā mattacakoranetrā lajjāvātī lājavisargam

agnau // Ragh. 7.25 //

“The heavy-buttocked bride, exhorted by the priest who was the image of the creator god, dropped the roasted rice grains into the fire, modest in demeanour, with her eyes like those of a *cakora* bird in love.”

In the above sequence, it may be noted that the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* mirrors the narration of the wedding of Aja and Indumatī in the *Raghuvamśa* except for stanza *Pad.* 4.46, which corresponds to a verse of the fourth *sarga* of the *Raghuvamśa* (4.25). The connection between these two stanzas is indicated by the verbal agreements and by the reference in both stanzas to the sacred fire flaming auspiciously to the right. However, the circumstances they relate are different. Kālidāsa’s verse deals not with a wedding ceremony, but with the propitiatory rites performed by Raghū, who had just succeeded his father Dilīpa on the throne of Kosala, on the eve of his formidable military campaign of conquest. Once again, Buddhaghōṣa demonstrates his ability in remoulding the elements he borrows from the *Raghuvamśa* to match a new setting.

¹² See also *Ragh.* 3.14, where the sacred fire accepts the oblations by shooting its flame to the right (*pradakṣiṇārcir*) as an auspicious omen at the birth of Raghū.

In the next five stanzas of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, Buddhaghōṣa depicts the same circumstance – namely, the face of the bride reached by the smoke rising from the sacred fire – using a different fancy in each verse. Sequences of stanzas like this one – appearing very much like *exercices de style* – are a stylistic feature characteristic of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, found in most of its descriptive sections. The first four stanzas in the series under scrutiny (*Pad.* 4.48-51) are free modifications of the image in *Ragh.* 7.26, while the last (*Pad.* 4.52) is directly inspired by *Ragh.* 7.27 – but vocabulary agreements are spread across all the seven verses:

*samudgatā dhūmatatiḥ kṛśānoḥ samīpalagnā
mukhasārasasya /*

amlānanīlāyatanālabhaṅgīm

aṅgīcakārāmbujalocanāyāḥ // Pad. 4.48 //

“The line of smoke rising from the fire in the proximity of the lotus-face of the lotus-eyed [bride] took on the aspect of its unwithered, long, dark stalk.”

tasmād udīrṇā navadhūmarājīs tasyā mukhe

tadgrahaṇaprasanne /

kṣaṇaṃ samālakṣyata saṃcarantī saroruhe

ṣaṭpadamālikeva // Pad. 4.49 //

“The line of fresh smoke rising from it [*i.e.* the fire] towards her face – which was radiant for the marriage with him [*i.e.* the prince] – for a moment looked like a row of bees gathering on a lotus.”

vaktrāravindaṃ paritaḥ prakīrṇā vāmabhruvo

maṅgaladhūmarājīḥ /

anyāmṛtāṃśubhramataḥ prayātām adhatta sāksāt

pariveśalakṣmīm // Pad. 4.50 //

“The auspicious line of smoke that spread all around the lotus-face of the lovely-browed [princess] had indeed the beauty of the halo of the moon, come forth with the illusion that it were another moon.”

vaktrāmbujaṃ vāmadṛśaḥ parītā vaivāhikī

maṅgaladhūmapaṅktiḥ /

babhāra nīlāṃśukanirmitasya
muhūrtavaktrāvaraṇasya¹³ *śobhām // Pad. 4.51 //*
 “The auspicious line of smoke [rising from the] nuptial
 [fire] that girded the lotus-face of the lovely [bride] had
 the beauty of an ephemeral face-veil made of dark
 fabric.”
haviḥśamīpallavalājagandhī puṇyah kṛśānor udiyāya
dhūmaḥ /
kapolaśamsarpiśikhaḥ sa tasyā muhūrtakarṇotpalatām
prapede // Ragh. 7.26 //
 “The auspicious smoke that rose from the fire – fragrant
 of butter, blossoms of the *śamī* tree and roasted rice –
 flaming close to her [*i.e.* Indumatī’s] cheek, assumed the
 form of an ornamental lotus flower fastened to her ear.”

kālāñjanocchvāsavikūṇitākṣaṃ
gharmodakakliṣṭakapolapatram /
vivarṇakarṇotpalam ānanābjam babhūva
dhūmagrahaṇān mṛgākṣyāḥ // Pad. 4.52 //
 “Because of the smoke surrounding it, the lotus-face of
 the fawn-eyed [bride] had eyes contracted due to the
 spreading of the collyrium, the lines drawn on the cheek
 spoiled by the sweat-drops, the lilies [worn as] ear-
 ornament faded.”
tad añjanakledasamākulākṣaṃ
pramlānabījāṅkurakarṇapūram /
vadhūmukhaṃ pāṭalagaṇḍalekham
ācāradhūmagrahaṇād babhūva // Ragh. 7.27 //
 “Due to the performance of the ritual fumigation, the
 bride’s face had eyes brimming with collyrium [mixed
 with] tears, the shoot worn on the ear withered, the
 cheeks faded.”

After the rite is over, Siddhārtha and his wife reach Kapila to pay respect to King Śuddhodana. On their way to the royal palace, they walk in ceremonial procession along the main road

¹³ The compound *muhūrtavaktrāvaraṇa* (“ephemeral face-veil”) is found also in *Ragh.* 13.8, where the veil is formed by the waters still covering the globe of the world, which has just been recovered from the bottom of the ocean by Viṣṇu as Varāha, his *avatāra* in the form of a boar.

of the city: Buddhaghōṣa places here the episode of the women rushing to the windows of the palaces to have a glance of the handsome hero parading in the street (*Pad.* 4.55-62). As far as we know, this scene was first conceived by Aśvaghōṣa in his *Buddhacarita* (3.13-23) and later adopted by other poets, notably also by Kālidāsa, who incorporates it in the *Raghuvamśa* (7.5-15) as well as in the *Kumārasaṃbhava* (7.56-78).¹⁴ The scene is made up of a “gallery” of pictures portraying the women that, hurrying to the windows in their eagerness to see the prince, neglect to put on their ornaments or leave their make-up unfinished. Here Buddhaghōṣa gives free rein to his *pratibhā* and his fancies are particularly fresh and original. Nevertheless, four of his stanzas are reminiscent of as many verses of the corresponding scene in the *Raghuvamśa* (*Pad.* 4.56, 57, 61, 62 couple with *Ragh.* 7.6, 8, 10, 9). Moreover, the images of the first three pairs of stanzas centre on the same object or substance: a garland (*mālā/mālya*), the collyrium (*kālāñjana/añjana*) and a waistband or girdle (*raśanā*) respectively.

*tathā hi kācīt karapallavena kahlāramālām
avalambamānā /*

*svayaṃ varītuṃ kila rājadhānīsopānamārgaṃ tvarayā
jagāma // Pad. 4.56 //*

“Thus one woman rushed up the stairs of the palace holding in her bud-like hand a garland of white lilies, as if to cover herself {or, through pun: as if to choose [him] as her husband}.”

*ālokaṃ sahasā vrajantyā kayācid
udveṣṭanāvāntamālyah /*

*banddhuṃ na saṃbhāvita eva tāvat kareṇa ruddho ‘pi
ca keśapāśah // Ragh. 7.6 //*

¹⁴ It should be noted, though, that in both of Kālidāsa’s poems the scene takes place when the hero and the heroine (respectively Aja and Indumatī, Śiva and Pārvatī) are approaching the wedding pavilion, and thus *before* their marriage.

“As one woman was rushing to the window, her mass of hair lost its garland and its ribbon: and she did not think of tying it up but held it with her hand.”

*netrasya taddarśananiścalasya mā bhūd idaṃ rodha
itīva matvā /
apāsya **kālāñjanam** āyatākṣī **vātāyanam** satvaram āpa
kācit // Pad. 4.57 //*

“As if thinking «Let there not be here this hindrance to my eye, fixed on the sight of him», one long-eyed woman left off the black collyrium and quickly reached the window.”

*vilocanam dakṣiṇam **añjanena** sambhāvya
tadvañcitavāmanetrā /
tathaiva **vātāyanasaṃnikarṣam** yayau śalākām aparā
vahanī // Ragh. 7.8 //*

“Another woman, having made up her right eye with collyrium, her left eye deprived of it, went right to the window just as she was, still holding the collyrium stick.”

*pativratāyāḥ paradarśanāya yātrā na yukteti
nirundhatīva /
nitambabimbād **raśanā galanī** kasyāścid aṅghriṃ
kalayāṃ cakāra // Pad. 4.61 //*

“«It is not seemly for a woman devoted to her husband to go looking at other [men]!»: as if restraining [her], the waistband of one woman, slipping down her round waist, tangled to her feet.”

*ardhācitā satvaram utthitāyāḥ pade pade durnimite
galanī /
kasyāścid āsīd **raśanā** (v.l. **raśanā**) tadānīm
aṅguṣṭhamūlārpitasūtraśeṣā // Ragh. 7.10 //*

“When one woman got up in a rush, her girdle was only half strung, and impeded every step she made, flowing away as it dropped its gems – all that remained of it was the string she had tied to her toe.”

*ekāvalīm kācid anarpayitvā kaṅthopakāṅthe
karapaṅkajena /
samudvahanī tvaramāṅacetās tasyopahārārtham iva
pratasthe // Pad. 4.62 //*

“One woman, who had not fastened the string of pearls around her neck with her lotus-like hand, moved forward holding it up, with her mind in a flurry, as if to make a gift to him.”¹⁵

*jālāntarapreṣitadr̥ṣṭir anyā prasthānabhinnāṃ na
babandha nīvīm /
nābhīpraviṣṭābharaṇaprabheṇa hastena tasthāv
avalambya vāsaḥ // Ragh. 7.9 //*

“Sending her gaze through the window grill, another woman, the knot of her waistband undone by her dash to the window, did not refasten it. There she stood, her hand holding up her garment and lighting up her navel with the radiance of its rings.”¹⁶

The scene of the women at the windows is followed in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* by an “appendix” where the women, enchanted by the sight of Siddhārtha, fall in a sort of love-trance: in a sequence of nine graceful stanzas (*Pad.* 4.69-77), Buddhaghōṣa portrays them lost in their reveries, acting in a daze while fantasizing about the prince. There is no such scene in the *Raghuvamśa*, but some of Buddhaghōṣa’s stanzas have a parallel in a scene in the sixth *sarga* of the *Raghuvamśa* (6.13-19), which takes place just before the beginning of Indumatī’s *svayamvara*: the ceremony is about to begin and Kālidāsa depicts the candidates to Indumatī’s hand acting nervously and in anxiety, while they gaze full of desire at the beautiful princess, who is going to choose her husband from among them.

¹⁵ Or perhaps: “One woman, who had not fastened her string of pearls, moved forward holding it up by her neck with her lotus-like hand – her mind in a flurry –, as if to make a gift to him.”

¹⁶ The four stanzas of the *Raghuvamśa* given above (7.6, 7.8, 7.10, 7.9) are identical to *Kum.* 7.57, 7.59, 7.61, 7.60 respectively; their translation is taken, with a few changes, from Smith, *The Birth of Kumāra*, op. cit., pp. 277, 279.

The similarity between the following pair of stanzas is conspicuous:¹⁷

*śukāvacañcūpuṭapāṭalena nakhena kācid vililekha
navyam /
pāṇisthitam ketakagarbhapatram anaṅgasamdeśam
ivāsya kartum // Pad. 4.71 //*
“One woman, with her nail rosy like a parrot’s beak,
scratched the tender leaf of *ketaka* she held in her hand,
as if writing a love message to him.”
*vilāsinīvibhramadantapatram āpāṇḍuram
ketakabarham anyah /
priyānitambocitasamniveśair vipāṭayām āsa yuvā
nakhāgraiḥ // Ragh. 6.17 //*
“Another young [prince], with his nails [that were]
accustomed to sink into his lover’s buttocks, tore a pale
ketaka leaf, that women used to wear as an earring.”

This last pair exemplifies one of Buddhaghōṣa’s *modus operandi*: he borrows just the framework of Kālidāsa’s picture (someone scratches a *ketaka* leaf absentmindedly with his nail), adds a new element (the simile between the nail and the parrot’s beak) and an original poetic idea (the love message), then reworks the whole giving shape to new poetry. In the process he adapts the stanza to a new context: in this case, he had to invert the roles of the male and female characters, as well as change the predominant feeling of the main character, from one of anxiety and sexual desire to one of dreamlike, romantic love rapture.

After the scene of the “entranced women”, there come five stanzas where those very women extol, in direct speech, the beauty and glory of Siddhārtha (*Pad.* 4.78-82). In the *Raghuvamśa* the corresponding passage is placed after the scene of the women rushing to the windows (*Ragh.* 7.13-15): the two passages share the same general frame (women sing the hero’s

¹⁷ Other verses of the two passages can be paired, although on the basis of weaker correspondences: *Pad.* 4.69 and *Ragh.* 6.13, *Pad.* 4.71 and *Ragh.* 6.17, *Pad.* 4.72 and *Ragh.* 6.15.

praises) and stylistic device (direct speech), but their agreement in content is negligible.

Then comes the final comparison. In *Pad.* 4.83 Siddhārtha and his wife finally reach Śuddhodana's palace to pay respect to the king, the groom's father: this verse has its counterpart in *Ragh.* 7.16, which portrays Aja and Indumatī arriving at the palace of King Bhoja, where they are going to be married:

*ityādīm āsāṃ giram atyudārām ākarṇayan
karṇasukhāyamānām /*

*pradakṣiṇīkṛtya purīm kumārah prāvikṣad
antarbhavanam nṛpasya // Pad. 4.83 //*

“The prince, hearing these and other noble words of the women – pleasant to his ears –, completed the circling of the city and entered the king's palace.”

*ity udgatāḥ pauravadhūmukhebhyaḥ śṛṇvan kathāḥ
śrotasukhāḥ kumārah /*

*udbhāsitaṃ maṅgalasaṃvidhābhiḥ saṃbandhinaḥ
sadma samāsasāda // Ragh. 7.16 //*

“The prince, hearing the conversation issuing from the mouths of the city's women – pleasant to his ears –, came to his brother-in-law's mansion, which was decorated with auspicious arrangements.”

Here ends the presentation of the indebtedness of the fourth *sarga* of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* to the *Raghuvamśa*. As has been shown, a good number of verses of the former poem (25 out of 87) have a counterpart in the latter, mostly in its seventh *sarga* (the marriage of Aja and Indumatī), but also in the third (the birth of Raghu), in the fourth (Raghu's conquest of the world), in the sixth (Indumatī's *svayaṃvara*) and in the ninth (the description of springtime). Like any other poet, Buddhaghōṣa was indebted to several of his great forerunners: surely Bāṇa, probably Bhāravi and Māgha as well. But none of them exerted such a definite influence on his poetry as Kālidāsa's works: by far chiefly the *Raghuvamśa*, but – to a lesser extent – also the *Kumārasaṃbhava*. Although the analysis of the correspondences between the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* and the

Kumārasaṃbhava is out of the scope of this article, one revealing case will be illustrated here.

As aforementioned, many stanzas of the fourth *sarga* of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* have their counterpart in the passage of the seventh canto of the *Raghuvamśa* dealing with the marriage of Aja and Indumatī; the latter, in turn, is strikingly similar to the passage in the *Kumārasaṃbhava* describing the wedding of Śiva and Pārvatī.¹⁸ As a rule, Buddhaghōṣa follows – and borrows from – the *Raghuvamśa*, but at times he gleans from both poems, as in the following case.

In all three poems the scene of the women hurrying to the windows to look at the handsome hero parading in the street is preceded by an introductory verse. In the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, this verse (*Pad.* 4.55) combines elements taken from its counterparts in both Kālidāsa's poems (*Ragh.* 7.5 and *Kum.* 7.56) and also from the stanza of the *Raghuvamśa* that opens the gallery of pictures describing the anxious behaviour and attitudes of the princes waiting for Indumatī to begin her *svayaṃvara* (*Ragh.* 6.12):

tasmin muhūrte kapilāṅganānām
kumāranidhyānaparāyaṇānām /
saudheṣu saudheṣu samudbabhūvuh śṛṅgāraceṣṭā
madanopadiṣṭāḥ // Pad. 4.55 //
tatas tadālokanatatparāṇām saudheṣu
cāmīkarajālavatsu /
babhūvur itthaṃ purasundarīṇām tyaktānyakāryāṇi
viceṣṭitāni // Ragh. 7.5 //
tasmin muhūrte purasundarīṇām
īśānasamdarśanalālasānām /
prāsādamālāsu babhūvur itthaṃ tyaktānyakāryāṇi
viceṣṭitāni // Kum. 7.56 //
tām praty abhīvyaktamanorathānām mahīpatīnām
praṇayāgradūtyaḥ /

¹⁸ For the relationships between the wedding passages in the two poems, see Tubb (*The Relative Priority of the Wedding Passages in the Kumārasaṃbhava and the Raghuvamśa*, op. cit.). Tubb comes to the conclusion that the verses of the *Kumārasaṃbhava* were composed first and served as the model for those in the *Raghuvamśa*.

*pravālaśobhā iva pādapānām śṛṅgāraceṣṭā vīvidhā
babhūvuḥ // Ragh. 6.12 //*

The similarity between the first half of the stanza of the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* and that of the *Kumārasaṃbhava* stands out conspicuously. The incipit is identical (*tasmin muhūrte*) and the following two compounds in the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* are the result of the necessary adaptation to a different context of the ones in the *Kumārasaṃbhava*. Thus “the beautiful women of the city, eager to get a good view of Lord Śiva” (*purasundarīṇām īśānaśaṃdarśanalālasānām*) was replaced with “the beautiful women of Kapila, totally engaged in looking at the prince” (*kapilāṅganānām kumāranidhyānaparāyaṇānām*). On the other hand, in the second half of the stanza, Buddhaghōṣa borrows the word *saudheṣu* from the *Raghuvamśa* (7.5), preferring it to *prāsādamālāsu* of the *Kumārasaṃbhava*.¹⁹ The connection between *Pad.* 4.55 and *Ragh.* 6.12 is looser but significant: they share the somewhat infrequent compound *śṛṅgāraceṣṭā(h)*, and they are analogous in that they both introduce a gallery of poetic portrayals, some of which can moreover be paired on the basis of their similarity.²⁰

In conclusion, it is clear that Kālidāsa’s poems – especially the *Raghuvamśa* – served as a source of inspiration for Buddhaghōṣa. Nonetheless, in spite of the considerable influence the *Raghuvamśa* exerted on the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, the latter is far from being a pastiche of the former, by virtue of Buddhaghōṣa’s creative skill and of his ability in recasting what he took from Kālidāsa. However, it is precisely this ability in melding and transmuting poetic material that makes it difficult to discern the borrowed elements in Buddhaghōṣa’s poetry, and makes the study of the correspondences between the *Padyacūḍāmaṇi* and other poems a particularly complex job.

¹⁹ However, *prāsādamālāsu* occurs in *Pad.* 1.19, a verse extolling the beauty of the city of Kapila, where “women are engaged in playing on lines of golden palaces” (*prāsādamālāsu hiraṇmayīṣu prārabdhalīlāḥ pramadāḥ*).

²⁰ E.g., see above for the comparison between *Pad.* 4.71 and *Ragh.* 6.17, and the relevant note.

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MASSIMILIANO A. POLICHETTI

UNDERSTANDING THE INDO-TIBETAN
SACRED MUSIC. AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE¹

*Nada Brahman
ko karrh bakhan.
Yogi yeti muni
karrete dhyan.*

«Sound is God:
explain by singing.
Yogis, renunciates of the world,
renunciates of speech,
meditate on this.»
(*Rāga yaman kalian - vilampat*)²

For the devotee music is the preferred mode for paying homage to his/her deity. From the drums played by the shaman to call upon the spirits, to king David who composed the psalter to glorify and thank his God, from the Gregorian to the Tibetan chants, from the Byzantine chant to the Sufi singsongs, humanity has constantly made use of this aptitude in the course of time, and is unrelenting in using it even today.

For the penurious, music becomes a means of subsistence: for example the wandering singers that were to be found in

¹ Translated from Italian by Baljit Singh.

² Cit. in Pandit Pran Nath 1971: sleeve.

every society,³ along the pilgrim routes, in markets, just like today in the underpasses of our cities. For those driven by passion, music is the best source of pleasure for the senses, sometimes taking the shape of absolute obsession. Someone who can make good music always stands out for this praiseworthy talent, even if he/she is physically unattractive or poor.

In the Indian tradition music naturally plays an important role in the life of each individual at a social and community level and during religious functions. And it could not be otherwise, not just in view of the common notions referred to above, but more importantly because India gifted a very sophisticated musical theory which even today forms the foundation of the Indian classical music. At the heart of this theory lies the concept of *rāga*.⁴

The word *rāga* derives from the Sanskrit root *ranj*, which can be translated as “to color with emotions”. In the Indian tradition, there are six main *rāga*-s: *bhairava* (‘furious’), *mālava* (from the name of a central Indian region), *hindola* (‘swing’), *dīpaka* (‘luminous’), *śrī* (‘glorious’), *megha* (‘evanescent’). Not all the phases of the day are suitable for each *rāga*. There are those which are sung at dawn, like *rāga bhairava*; leading amongst the morning *rāga*-s is *rāga megha*; sung in the afternoon are *rāga dīpaka* and *rāga śrī*; amongst those sung at night are *rāga mālava* and *rāga hindola*. Fear is associated with *rāga bhairava*; passion of love with *rāga śrī*, *rāga hindola* and *rāga dīpaka*; joy of living with *rāga mālava*.

A *rāga* is not simply a combination of notes (*svara*) but also the melody associated with them. There are a total of twelve *svara*-s (divided in ‘delicate’, *komal*, and ‘intensive’, *tivra*) and, as per the basic rules, a *rāga* must have at least five *svara*-s in the ascending (*āroha*) or descending (*avroha*) sequence. There are various groups of *svara*-s which, through various *āroha* and *avroha* sequences, give rise to a large number of *rāga*-s. But

³ E.g. the *Baul*, mystic minstrels in Bengal.

⁴ For further readings: A. Daniélou 1949, *Volume 1*.

since the *rāga-* are not simply a mixture of notes, though high the number of *rāga-s* is limited.

There are about 500 *ragas* currently in use in Indian music. Some are defined *anvaṭ* ('not common'), some *apracalit* ('not publicized') and around 150 *rāga-s* are more commonly sung.⁵

Indian aesthetics also uses the concept of *rasa*. *Rasa*'s main aim is to arouse a particular emotion, including serenity through contemplation. In fact, to the distinct Indian quality of deep inner peace, the sacred musician adds his/her personal experience of union with the infinite. Therefore the *rāga-s* act as powerful intellectual stimulators, unique "creator of images". Therefore, music and dance are so closely interconnected that it is difficult to make a clear distinction between the two. But whereas vocal and instrumental music connects with the mind through the organs of sound reception, dance uses the visual perception to entice and lure. Music gratifies the hearing, frees the mind from worries and refreshes the soul with its sweet chords. Similarly the dance, through skillful use of rhythms and poses, inspires the heart and encourages it to face life with renewed vigor. The rhythm and the melody thus find the right path, via perception, to reach the secret recesses of the soul, and sometime even the inner self. Music, in particular, is the most useful device to cultivate our sensitivity. Conscious listening of music incorporates our personality with willpower and harmony and enables us to eliminate unrefined behavioral tendencies, thus helping us to attain happiness in a more effective manner. By allowing us to get carried away by the *rāga-s*, by their amazing combination of musical notes, the mind's ability to perceive beauty increases. Therefore, a man who cannot appreciate music will find it difficult to win the admiration of others.⁶

Important spiritual traditions have accorded human being the highest status within nature, at least on account of his abilities. This is mainly due the exclusively human ability to express

⁵ A. Daniélou 1949, *Volume 2*.

⁶ «The man that hath no music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoil.» W. Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, V-1.

himself or, in other words, communicate with others and music is the best means to that end. It ennobles the mind and stimulates its aesthetic competence, nourishing it with apposite mathematical models of reference, like psychic crystals suspended in a primarily harmonic reality of the cosmos. Through its capacity to make contact with a wide range of human emotions, music confers gracefulness to his every righteous deed. Music is so necessary for the society that one can conclude that anyone who is able to appreciate its importance must dedicate himself/herself to this art, even if simply as a listener.

This can be better understood by going back to the concept of deity - which manifests itself through sonorous vibrations - mentioned in the citation in the beginning of this brief introductory note. A concept that brings to mind *mantra*, the 'sacred word of power' which if on one hand evokes the deity, on the other hand, in a way, constitutes an ontological process (something of fundamental importance for understanding the Indian school of thought, this concept deserves separate discussion). Like other paths of wisdom, both Brahmanism-Hinduism and Buddhism describe universe as a series or a accumulation of vibrations - from the most subtle to the coarse - which get disseminated within a 'tremulous and constantly moving space' (*ākāśa*). Music, when applied to impassioned attempt to move from less rarified to more spiritual realities, acquires attributes of a synthesis of harmonies that becomes the best instrument to obtain bliss. Expressing the deepest human emotions through music, chanting of the sacred names of deities, the psalmody of the sacred scriptures, are all valid examples of the evocative power of music. While the inaudible reality of the mind still is of the utmost importance, music acts as a preferred vehicle to fill the world of forms with the formidable presence of the invisible. For all the above reasons, and others which we will analyze in the section dedicated to the doctrine, music can undoubtedly be considered an effective support along the path towards realization of the human potential.

Music can stimulate the dormant state of spirituality, hidden in the ordinary conscience. It can also be used to soothe the maladies that afflict the mind, which in this process of self-healing is delicately guided towards more subtle awareness. Today even western science accepts that sound might have therapeutic qualities. In fact, some researchers are inclined to believe that listening to “relaxing” music can actually reduce the impact of diseases like tachycardia and anxiety, besides lowering the frequency of some brain waves that had become too sharp, when seen during the EEG test, owing to stress. Besides, vocal or instrumental sacred music helps in bringing about altered states of consciousness which can allow both the players and the listeners to experience higher states of awareness. The sacred music, reaching the skies like soft clouds of incense, becomes a very effective instrument for identifying the inner sacred space. To explain this concept in less romantic terms, it’s as if in some specific compositions (handed down by traditions such as Tibetan sacred music, Gregorian chant, shamanic rituals of Australian aborigines, etc...) sound transforms into a powerful psychic tool capable of redesigning the very molecular structure and transform the biochemical characteristics of the organism. Such modifications help every person to convey a social context in which more peaceful relations can be maintained. The usual barriers of aggressiveness and rivalry can thus finally vanish against the background of conscious harmony, because if humans beings wish to sincerely vibrate in unison they have to be “in tune” with each other.

In Buddhism *dharmakāya*, the ‘*dharma* body’, is the basis of existence and is placed above any other form or logical framework. This reality manifests itself as unconditional and omniscient beatitude. This state of beatitude is an immutable background of all that which “becomes”, or in other words the changeable mundane world. This background is filled with an all-pervading vibration made up also of, within its ontology

spectrum, sounds. This is the reason why music, starting also at the sensory level, is universally experienced as the most natural and spontaneous expression of the divine joy concealed under the dry surface of phenomenal reality. But in order to understand this “prelude to paradise”, so to speak, it is necessary to possess proper inclination, capacity to concentrate and at least an opening toward a spiritual approach to reality.

Every occurrence in the universe has a vibration frequency and it “resonates” when it reaches that frequency. When something is wrong, for example when an organism is unhealthy, a sort of counter vibration interferes with the normal, or healthy, vibration. If one can restore the correct vibration frequency of that organism, it is possible to restore health. It is as if the human body is an orchestra playing a symphony. Its each organ, its each bone and tissue is emitting a harmonic frequency, balanced with respect to all the other instruments without exception. When we are experiencing illness it is as if, in this metaphor, an oboe is playing out of tune in the large orchestra of the body. But what indeed happens during the illness is that an incompatible trait begins to superimpose itself on the normal state of physiological components, thus causing imbalance in the organism.⁷

In the ancient Egyptian, Jewish, Greek, Persian, Chinese and Indian mystery schools, the use of sound for healing and spiritual purposes was considered a highly developed sacred science. It viewed vibrations as a fundamental creative force. Use of certain tones, frequencies and whole tones was considered a refined and exact art. Relationship between the individual and the universe, and between two individuals, were compared to various sounds and analyzed as music.

Nothing or little remains of those mystery schools but the Buddhist tradition, and most importantly the *vajrayāna* Buddhism practiced in Tibet and in other Asian areas as well,

⁷ The idea of healing of diseases through music must be as old as music itself. In the beginning, music must have been conceived as a socializing activity, and then used more often for magical and therapeutic purposes. Even today man uses music not just for entertainment but also for invoke the deity, to heal and induce changes in ordinary awareness.

has preserved its contents and practice, especially with regard to sacred.

Buddhism as practiced in Tibet has since centuries developed a powerful “ritual of sound” that presents original characteristics compared to other traditions, probably including, at least in part, also the Indian tradition. To analyze the issue of Indian influence on Tibetan music we must for the moment set aside preconceptions about what is, or what is not, “Indian”.

In fact, Tibetan music does not use the *sitar* or other string instruments used in the Indian tradition. Instead it uses trumpets, oboe, cymbals and drums, instruments widely used in Indian royal courts and in other temple music traditions. But Tibetan culture would have preserved some elements of the Buddhist theory, in this case the musical theory, elements which by now have disappeared from the Indian subcontinent, especially following the Muslim invasions which brought a culture that would surely have influenced also the music.

Sacred Tibetan Buddhist music employs both instrumental and vocal sounds and it should be separated, both in terms of function and style, from the Tibetan folk music. The predominant characteristic of this sacred music undoubtedly is multiple voices, sung in unison and set to a typical bass timbre that sounds awesome even to the unacquainted.

In this tradition solo performance finds very little space: in fact the *umdze*⁸ limits himself to introducing for a brief instant the beginning of each part of the performance, which remains choral for the whole duration of the chant. Sacred Tibetan music is an extremely complex phenomenon that simultaneously involves various levels of realities which are so different from the formal European music models that our western musical language is not adequate to describe it. Music helps the monks to memorize the texts, and while they sing, often very slowly, they have time to contemplate their solemn meaning.

Even in the case of music the dual role of rituals in *vajrayāna* is re-proposed in this manner. In a way it's about

⁸ The ‘chant leader of *hum*’, the choirmaster who sets the tone and the timbre for the congregation of monks.

making an offering of sounds to the deities, but since these deities are believed to be present not just outside but also inside the mind, this irremovable component complementary to every tantric worship involves, even here, improving the prospects of attaining beatitude and omniscience that are waiting to be revealed in our heart. Being sacred music, the Tibetan chant takes place within a ritualistic context. This context suggests both the suitable dates and the rituals that will provide the content for the musical rendering.

Tibetan ritualistic music is not considered to be efficacious on its own, but is rather used as support to the larger process of introspection which the participants try to induce by using every kind of support believed to be important to augment the power of suggestion intrinsic to the ritual itself. In preparation for the meditation process music therefore becomes useful in inducing the mind to analyze with greater vigor the fields of awareness. Articulated and put in order as per sacred rules, sounds can influence the human soul and turn it into a fertile land ready to receive and enhance spiritual truths. In the Tibetan tradition, every monk is asked to meditate upon one's own personal archetypal deity of meditation,⁹ set his voice correctly, and appease the *buddhas* and the *bodhisattvas*. In this manner the sacred sound brings man closer to the gods and the gods to men. In the *mahāyāna* tradition, which is based on the principal of sympathetic compassion (*karuṇā*), playing sacred music is meant to be beneficial both for human and supernatural perception.

The monk who flawlessly, or rather with truly altruistic motivation, conducts the chant also gathers positive *karma* for the subtle support, in therapeutical-spiritual sense, rendered to laypersons. When during the assembly the monks sing or play their instruments, their aim is to add beauty and power to the sacred space where they have gathered mainly by virtue of what they are capable of invoking, through music, in their streams of consciousness.

⁹ *Iṣṭadevatā*, tib. *Yi.Dam* or, with some differences, 'Dod lHa.

Therefore music, like any other traditional art form, is an instrument of contemplation, a sensitive tool that allows a patient pursuit of the transcendent with regard to the matter which then, while spiritualizing steadily, acquires benevolent compassion. Let me repeat again this concept which is so vital for understanding this theme: more than the music, understood as a mere combination of sounds, it is the effect produced in the minds of the performers and the listeners that causes the immersion of the intangible into the tangible. In other words, music leads to sacralization of the context in which the event takes place, also when the music is not actually played. In fact, Tibetan lore says that deities, who are responsible for augmenting the potential of the human mind, can appreciate music even if played only in the mind, thus highlighting the supremacy of mind over body.

Therefore, from the likelihood that the ritual may include music not produced physically but only psychically, we can conclude that the global number of performers is always higher than those who simply listen physiologically.

In the sacred Tibetan music there are various types of vocal training as per the point of origin in the body. So there is the “sound of body cavity”, “sound of throat”, “sound of nose”. The multitude of sounds vibrating around the drone notes, delivered by the deep bass voices produced by the more expert monks, create an ambience where harmonic ensembles vary from the solemn to the rhythmic, inducing the listener to perceive internal spaces they had never visualized before. It is mainly due to this effect, which surprises anyone who comes closer, that we preferred to talk in detail about Tibetan sacred music. Naturally, there are more musical traditions within cultures that were inspired by Buddhism. In Japanese *Zen* Buddhism, for example, the use of percussions, of hand clapping, of bells and wooden instruments plays an important role, which confirms the value of the elements of nature in Buddhist spiritual practice. We feel that it is by listening to Buddhist music practiced in Tibet, compared to any other music, that one could have the opportunity to at least have an indication towards the primordial sound of the Indian *vajrayāna*. By listening to this music, Western listeners have the

precious opportunity to review their ideas about musical sensitivity by doing a comparison with something so alien to the European taste, but maybe in reality much nearer to the throbbing of the heart, to the moaning of the soul, to the terrible and heart rending symphony produced by the human mind that remains restless and does not stop inquiring.

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NIELS SCHOUBBEN

‘À LA GRECQUE COMME À LA GRECQUE’ –
THE GREEK KANDAHAR INSCRIPTIONS AS A CASE
STUDY IN INDO-GREEK LANGUAGE CONTACT
DURING THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD¹

Abstract

This paper deals with the cultural and linguistic contacts that once existed between Greece and India, after the conquests of Alexander the Great in the regions of Bactria and the Indus Valley. I focus on the Kandahar Inscriptions, which are the Greek translations of some of the Aśoka-inscriptions, thus being a case study of the contacts between these two fundamental linguistic and cultural traditions. I will reconsider several features of these (bilingual) inscriptions, using, in particular, the recent achievements and rich apparatus of the academic fields of contact linguistics and sociolinguistics. Doing so, this paper will also contribute to the study of Indo-Greek cultural contact in general. I will argue that Indo-Greek contact during the Hellenistic Period, for the most time, needs to be interpreted as

¹ Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude towards the many people who assisted in creating this paper: Mark Janse and Leonid Kulikov, who were my supervisors while writing my BA paper at Ghent University, which formed the basis for this article. Their everlasting interest in my research proposal and valuable comments were indispensable for the successful outcome of the paper. Gunnar De Boel for providing me with the PhD of Eddy Seldeslachts. Irma Piovano for her interest in the topic and considering publishing my article in *Indologica Taurinensia*. Sophie Verhaeghe and Marina Schoubben for correcting the original Dutch version. Anouk Jacobs, Inge Bleyweert and again Leonid Kulikov for helping me with the English translation.

an *adstratum* relationship. Based on my analysis of the Middle Indo-Aryan borrowings in the Greek texts and some grammatical phenomena I will investigate, I will argue that the inscriptions are a good example of the sociolinguistic *adstratum* relationship between Greek and Middle Indo-Aryan.

1. Introduction: *Fashionable but not practicable?*

Cosmopolitanism is often considered a phenomenon typical, first of all, of the modern world. This is not true. The Ancient World offers a very broad range of examples proving the cosmopolitan character of non-modern societies, for example one can think of the conquests of important empires, like those of the Persians or the Romans. In peacetime, major trading routes connected the outer parts of the known world. These networks were a place of mutual encounter for different cultures, a confrontation between different religions and – especially – between languages. These inter-linguistic encounters are the framework of this article. Over the last decades, scientific research has put forward the importance of the sociolinguistic context for the evolution of languages. The study of ancient languages has undergone a so called sociolinguistic shift. This paper intends to contribute to this growing field of research and wants to demonstrate the use of the Kandahar Inscriptions, the Greek translations of a few Aśoka-inscriptions, for the study of the linguistic contacts between Ancient Greek and Old and Middle Indo-Aryan during the Hellenistic Period.²

The Kandahar Inscriptions consist of a corpus of two Greek texts based on the Middle Indian inscriptions, produced by Aśoka to promote his doctrine of *dhamma* among the inhabitants of his vast empire. The first one was discovered in

² Middle Indian is used as a covering term for the different spoken Indo-Aryan dialects of the Indian subcontinent, thus being used as synonym with Prakrit. Old Indian (Sanskrit) had already developed into a codified language by that time, but was as such also important in the contact situation.

1958 and almost immediately published by Scerrato (1958). The text can be considered as a summary of the most important elements of Aśoka's ideology. An Aramaic translation of the text was found on the same stone. The second inscription was discovered in november 1963 and edited by Schlumberger (1964), this time without an Aramaic version and consists of a (non-literal) translation of Rock Edict XII and XIII. Previous scholarship focussed on text criticism, the translation process from Prakrit to Greek and some philological problems inherent in the text. The many papers by Christol, written between 1980-1998, offered fundamental new linguistic insights and were an inspiration for my own research.

The choice for a sociolinguistic study of these engravements was made because of a double observation. Firstly, these inscriptions are one of the most noteworthy epigraphical findings of 20th century and definitely some of the most important documents concerning Indo-Greek contact in Antiquity. Secondly, although much has already been written on the subject, the last extensive research on the whole corpus of Kandahar Inscriptions dates back as far as 1998 (Christol 1998). Therefore, it seems appropriate to restudy these notable inscriptions, using a modern linguistic paradigm, namely contact linguistics, which has never been done before for this inscriptions.

This paper is organized as follows. Firstly, I offer a brief survey of the most pressing methodological problems inherent in the sociolinguistic research, based on written corpora. They are typically more formal than the spoken conversation corpora that are available for modern languages and therefore, require a sophisticated methodology. As a short introduction to the historical context of the inscriptions, I will present a sociolinguistic description of Indo-Greek contact in the Hellenistic Period. Based on the kind of borrowings from Indian to Greek and from Greek to Indian, I will argue that, chronologically, this contact situation has to be divided in several periods, which differ slightly sociolinguistically. Generally regarded, Greek and Middle Indian were in an *adstratum* relation with each other. At the end of the Hellenistic

Period, due to invasions from China and Central Asia, Greek became a *substratum* language and later on disappeared from the sociolinguistic scene in India.

In Section three, which deals extensively with the Kandahar Inscriptions, this sociolinguistic perspective is applied to the material of these (bilingual) engravements. After an overview of the historical context of the inscriptions, I present the Greek texts of the inscription with a translation and my philological and linguistic analysis, paying special attention to the linguistic phenomena that can be accounted for in terms of language contact. I offer some remarks on the explanation of specific phrases, evaluating earlier conjectures and interpretations and, where appropriate, provide my own analysis. The aim of this section is to answer the following two questions: (i) where can Middle Indo-Aryan influence be found in the Greek text? and (ii) how can we interpret these influences on a sociolinguistic level? Firstly, I will discuss the Indian loanwords in the Greek texts and argue that, due to their political nature, they reflect an *adstratum* relationship. Addressing grammatical and, especially, syntactic issues, I will demonstrate that the abundant use of parataxis in the inscriptions, the limited use of definite articles and some other concrete translation interferences can be explained as a result of Middle Indo-Aryan influence and the linguistic background of the translators. Analysing the differences between the first and second Kandahar Inscriptions and discrepancies within the second inscription, I will demonstrate, following Christol (1998), that three translators with different knowledge of the languages were involved in the process.

As a conclusion, I want to evaluate the Kandahar Inscriptions as a case study in Indo-Greek language context. Such research does not only look fashionable, but is in my opinion also practicable (cfr. Mullen & James 2012: 11).

2. Preliminary paragraphs

2.1 Some methodological remarks

Before going into the actual analysis of Indo-Greek contact and the Kandahar Inscriptions, I will first shortly review the methodological problems of sociolinguistic research based on written corpora and briefly present the main concepts I am going to use in my analysis. Because we are dealing with documents that are written, not spoken, we always have to realize that, as a rule, they tend to be more formal, because a written utterance of language is generally more conscious than a spoken one (Adams *et al.* 2002: 2). Moreover, we are dealing with an inscription, in which different people were involved in the process: the person who orders the text, Aśoka in our case, the maker of the text and the stonecutter. Therefore, we always have to keep in mind who is responsible for a grammatical phenomenon in the text. To me, it seems reasonable that orthographic faults are the result of limited literacy on the stonecutter's part and that the Middle Indo-Aryan influences in the Greek text are to be considered as a manifestation of the linguistic (in)abilities of the translators. Although Adams (2003: 5) denies the importance of translations in the study of language contact, because this is not what he calls 'positive linguistic performance', I do believe this kind of text to be of considerable importance for contact linguistic research. When you translate a text, both languages are working together in your head, to such a degree mutual influence can be argued for. From this perspective, the Kandahar Inscriptions are an ideal object of study for contact linguistics, even more so because the inscriptions are not-literally translated as we will see further on.

In the course of the paper, two important concepts of contact linguistics will mainly be used. The first concept pertains to the three possibilities within linguistic contacts: *adstratum*, *superstratum* and *substratum*. The first refers to a contact situation where both languages are equal in prestige. Mostly, such a situation implies good neighbours. Long term *adstratum* relationships can cause the growth of a *Sprachbund*, a linguistic area. The two other concepts mostly exist in the contexts of war

and (societal) minorities (Thomason 2005: 34). When invaders occupy a certain country, the language of the invaders is most likely to become the *superstratum* language, especially during a long reign. *Substratum* refers to the language of the indigenous population. This language has the potential to survive as a minority language, but can nevertheless obtain the status of dominant language. In the worst case scenario the *substratum* language will eventually die.

The second concept concerns linguistic hierarchization: in fact all linguistic elements are prone to be borrowed in a contact situation, but lexical elements, borrowings, are most likely to do so (Matras 2009: 146-148). You do not necessarily need to learn a new language complete, to be able to use a loanword. Morphological and syntactic borrowings require a higher level of multilingualism. However, as Thomason (2005: 63) argues correctly, if a speaker is not fluently bilingual, he is more apt to use structures of his own language in the target language. Therefore, we have to be careful not to confuse these two manifestations of language contact.³ I assume that concerning the Kandahar Inscriptions, the semantic and cultural character of the borrowings can be put to use to illuminate the societal level of multilingualism and that grammatical interferences can give information about the contact linguistic situation of individuals, the translators.

2.2 A sociolinguistic discussion of Indo-Greek language contact

The Kandahar Inscriptions are one of the most tangible manifestations of the contacts that existed between Greece and India after the conquests of Alexander the Great. The purpose of this paragraph is to ask how we have to conceptualize the

³ Borrowings and syntactic interferences are not seen as two independent outcomes of language contact, rather one has to envisage a continuum with both kinds at the opposite end.

contacts on a sociolinguistic level:⁴ an *adstratum*, a *substratum* or a *superstratum*?

An important factor in contact situations is the multilingualism of the speakers. Seldeslachts (1998) underlined on the basis of certain loan translations, the existence of (partial) bilingualism in Greek and Middle Indo-Aryan languages throughout Antiquity. How is this individual bilingualism related to the societal context? In my opinion, we have to distinguish between the contact occurring in trading context on one hand and in the Hellenistic kingdoms on the other. The Indo-Greek contact originated in a commercial context, as is proven through the existence of borrowings concerning exotic products.⁵ Seldeslachts (2002: 88) points to the bilingualism that must have existed between the traders. The same is to be conjectured for the contacts between Greeks and Indians in the army of the Achaemenids. Some warriors will have learnt at least some words in the other language. To focus again on the trading contacts, we can postulate an *adstratum* relation, but over a large geographical area. This situation originated in the Classical Period, but continued throughout Hellenistic and Roman times.

During the Hellenistic Period, the contact situation underwent some developments and became more immediate. This also had its consequences on a sociolinguistic level. The campaigns of Alexander could have resulted in a Greek *superstratum* in India. However, because of the Indian resistance Greek was not able to become so. As the official language in the Seleucid Empire, Greek became an *adstratum*

⁴ I am not going to give a historical sketch about Indo-Greek contact in Antiquity. Interested readers are referred to the standard historical works, like Tarn (1951), Narain (1957) and Karttunen (1997).

⁵ The Indo-European background and the probable language contact in protohistoric times between Greek and Indo-Iranian are neglected in this survey. A good survey of Indian loanwords in Greek is given by Christol (2007) and Benedetti (2014). These borrowings were also the subject of two PhD's in the last decade: by Seldeslachts (2002) and Brust (2007). Exotic borrowings include for instance the Greek words *πέπερι* ('pepper') from MIA *pīpparī*, *ῥυζα* ('rice') from OIA *vṛīhi* or *σάκχαρις/σάκχαρον/σάκχαρ* ('sugar') from Pāli *sakkharā* (OIA *śarkharā*).

language next to the Indian dialects, which can also be observed in the diplomatic contact reflected in the figure of Megasthenes.

The separation of Bactria triggered new developments. On one side, we perceive the existence of a Greek population alongside the Iranian and Indian ones, resulting in bilingualism (Christol 1999: 108). The *adstratum* is preserved, but Greek gained a political function as well. This does not imply that Greek evolved into a *superstratum*, because Iranians remained important inside the ruling class. The different populations lived next to each other,⁶ so a limited form of bilingualism was sufficient (Tarn 1951: 376).

In Bactria, Iranian dialects were the dominant modes of communication. After Demetrius' and/or Menander's conquests in India, the Greeks came into direct contact with Indian languages.⁷ One would expect Greek to be a *superstratum* due to the conquests, but this is not the case. The Greeks became the political upper class of a federal empire, but the Indian culture remained dominant (Tarn 1951: 255-260). Therefore, we perceive a preservation of the situation in Bactria, but with a higher intensity.⁸ The few sources we have at our disposal, underline this interpretation: Indian and Greek were both used on coins, political and military encounters are reflected in the loan words, there was mutual interest on the levels of philosophy, science etc.

The Iranian and Chinese raids during the first century BC alter the situation. The Greeks lose their power and were assimilated into Indian culture (Tarn 1951: 352-353). At the end of the century, the remaining Greeks must have been bilingual (Tarn 1951: 389). Greek became a *substratum* language and would eventually disappear. Every new generation assimilated

⁶ Inscriptions show the existence of a restricted amount of Greek inhabitants in Bactria (Karttunen 1997: 47). The Greek population constituted an important minority within the cities (Karttunen 1997: 292).

⁷ Tarn (1951) and Narain (1957) differ in their opinions about the invasion of India by Bactrian Greeks. Narain does not believe Tarn that Demetrius reached India, according to him only Menander played a major role in conquering parts of Northern India.

⁸ Unfortunately, due to the lack of many sources, the sociolinguistic situation sketched above, remains somewhat hypothetical.

further into Indian culture and caused the language death of Greek. The *communis opinio* stresses the velocity of the process (Tarn 1951: 354-355). Greek names remained for a long time and, even though it no longer was a living language, Greek remained on coins.

3. The Kandahar Inscriptions: A case study

Queste brevi considerazioni sulle iscrizioni di Aśoka, analizzate dal punto di vista del bilinguismo e del biculturalismo miravano a far vedere come esse mettano in luce un incontro di tre culture, l'indiana, la greca e l'iranica che nel III sec. a.C. convivevano e si integravano vicendevolmente in quella zona dell'Afghanistan, là ai confini tra l'India e l'Iran. E questa convivenza e integrazione era favorita e incoraggiata dal re Aśoka che vedeva in ciò realizzarsi la sua predicazione del dharma. (Sani 1988: 163).

3.1 Historical Sketch

When Tarn (1951) and Narain (1957) were writing their histories of Indo-Greek contact, they did not have the opportunity to use epigraphical material. It was not until 1958 that the first Greek inscription was discovered in the Far East, in the old city of Kandahar.⁹ It turned out to be a bilingual inscription with a Greek and an Aramaic text. This was a big surprise in the academic world, especially when it became apparent that the text is part of the wondrous Aśoka-inscriptions.

The Greek and Aramaic texts can be considered as a summary of Aśoka's guidelines for life, *e.g.* respect for other people or

⁹ Probably, the city has to be identified with *Alexandria in Arachosia* (Karttunen 1997: 47).

vegetarianism.¹⁰ Scerrato (1958) was appointed to clarify the discovery of the engravement as soon as possible. For this reason, his research contains many factual details. He recounts, among others, that the text was originally placed at the entrance of the old city (Scerrato 1958: 4). The inscription was engraved on a limestone bloc covered by a layer of basalt. The Greek text was engraved at the top and consists of 13.5 lines. 2 cm below the Greek text, we find the Aramaic text, which consists of 7.5 longer lines.¹¹ The Greek letters are clearly carved and their size varies between 0.7 and 1.5 cm. After the paleographic analysis, we can conclude that the text dates back to the third century BC (Scerrato 1958: 4-6).¹² Robert extended the paleographic analysis on its own, where he emphasizes the different forms of certain letters. In contrast with Scerrato, he stresses the fact that some letters reach a height of 2,2 cm, while on the other hand, some other letters, mostly round forms as omicron or omega, are especially small. The form of the theta is an exception to this rule. He explains these differences with reference to the kind of stone used for the engravement: limestone is more difficult to handle than marble (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 7-12).

In 1963 another Greek inscription was discovered in Kandahar. One year later, the text was published by D. Schlumberger (1964). There are many differences between the two discoveries. Again, the text needs to be included in the corpus of Aśoka, but instead of a summary, it happened to be a translation of Rock Edict XII and XIII. Unfortunately, only the end of the first and the beginning of the last inscription was

¹⁰ Scerrato denotes it, in his introduction to Pugliese Carratelli's study, an *editio brevis* of the salvation text of Rock Edict XIV (Pugliese Carratelli 1964: 24).

¹¹ The Aramaic text will not be discussed in my paper, only when it offers some interesting point on the Indo-Greek contact. I only want to highlight the importance of Aramaic as a chancery language, during the Achaemenid period and slightly after. Therefore the existence of Aramaic in Kandahar is not to be considered as evidence this language was actually spoken in the region. The real spoken languages were Greek and Indo-Iranian dialects. Readers with an interest in the Aramaic inscription can benefit from Schlumberger *et al.* (1958), Altheim & Stiehl (1959) and Pugliese Carratelli & Garbini (1964).

¹² These general remarks are also to be found in more recent papers, namely Schlumberger *et al.* (1958: 1-3; 6-10), Galavotti (1959: 185), Pugliese Carratelli & Garbini (1964: 1-5), Harmatta (1966: 77), Pepermans (1976: 127), Tola & Dragonetti de Tola (1977-1979: 258-259), Sani (1988: 155) and Christol (1980: 63; 1983: 25; 1998: 67).

preserved and the hope of many scientists to discover translations of other Rock Edicts was never fulfilled.

Also notable is the fact that this inscription is entirely written in Greek without an Aramaic counterpart. Perhaps, an Aramaic version existed, but has vanished through time. The text is carved on a block of spongy limestone, measuring 45 cm x 69.5 cm x 12 cm. Only the angles contain some deviations (Schlumberger 1964: 129-130). It was fixed to a building. Unfortunately, we can only guess which kind of building it was fixed to, perhaps a *stūpa*, a palace, a temple or a defence wall (Schlumberger & Benveniste 1968: 196). This form of inscription is unique for the Maurya Empire. Therefore, a Greek and/or Iranian influence seems probable. On the other hand, the tradition of carving in rocks is considered to be an Indian influence on Greek practice. The paleography and style of the letters are very much the same as in the first inscription (Schlumberger 1964: 135).¹³

In what follows, I refer to the engravements as Kandahar 1 (Kd1) and Kandahar 2 (Kd2), following the example of A. Christol. For both inscriptions, I present the Greek text with translation, an overview of the most important philological problems and an analysis of Indian influences on the Greek. In Section 3.4, I evaluate the value of the inscriptions as a case study for the Indo-Greek language contact, during the Hellenistic Period.

¹³ General information also to be found in Harmatta (1966: 77), Norman (1972: 111), Tola & Dragonetti de Tola (1977-1979: 258-259), Sani (1988: 155-156), Christol (1980: 63; 1983: 25; 1998: 67) and Cassio (2016: 39-44).

3.2 KANDAHAR I (1958)

3.2.1 Greek text and translation

Summary edict¹⁴

δέκα ἐτῶν πληρη[.(.)]ων βασιλεὺς
 Πιοδασσης εὐσέβεια[ν] ἔδειξεν τοῖς ἀν-
 θρώποις, καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου εὐσεβεστέρους
 τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐποίησεν καὶ πάντα
 εὐθηνεῖ κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν, καὶ ἀπέχεται
 βασιλεὺς τῶν ἐμψύχων καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ δὲ
 ἄνθρωποι καὶ ὅσοι θηρευταὶ ἢ ἀλιεῖς
 βασιλέως πέπαινανται θηρεύοντες, καὶ
 εἴ τινες ἀκρατεῖς, πέπαινανται τῆς ἀκρα-
 σίας κατὰ δύναμιν, καὶ ἐνήκοοι πατρὶ
 καὶ μητρὶ καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων παρὰ
 τὰ πρότερον, καὶ τοῦ λοιποῦ λώϊον
 καὶ ἄμεινον κατὰ πάντα ταῦτα
 ποιῶντες διάξουσιν.

Summary edict

After a period of ten years, king Piodasses (Aśoka) introduced dhamma alongside his people and he succeeded in urging them to live according to the rules of dhamma. Everything prospers on the whole earth. The king has adopted vegetarianism and the other people - hunters and fishermen of the king - stopped hunting. When some people were not able to control themselves, they distanced with great commitment from this lack of self-control. In opposition with previous times, they are obedient to their father, mother and people with a respectable age. Always doing these things, they will obtain a better and more prospering life in the future.

¹⁴ The Greek text is borrowed from the paper of Schlumberger *et al.* (1958), but without the conjecture concerning πληρη[.(.)]ων. I mainly agree with the reading πληρη[θέντ]ων (... which were fulfilled), I will not further explore the philological debate about this peculiar form (cfr. Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 13-14; 46; Galavotti 1959: 186; Pepermans 1976: 128). On other points, the text editions differ only on some details, pertaining punctuation. The translation is my own and is not intended to be a very literate rendering of the Greek, but to transmit the overall thought and purpose of the text to English readers. The choice for some translations and the name of Aśoka will be discussed later on.

3.2.2 Discussion of a philological problem

To draw a correct picture of (possible) Indian influences on the Greek text, there has to be dealt with a philological problem concerning this inscription first.¹⁵ In past research, much debate arose about the concrete meaning of the verb ἔδειξεν, which literally means 'he showed'. The standard article of Schlumberger and his contributors explains it as a religious proclamation (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 14). I wonder how such a connotation could be detected in a common word as δείκνυμι ('to show'). Galavotti considers it as a causative meaning, using the Aramaic version as an argument (Galavotti 1959: 187). Such a causative meaning for δείκνυμι is confirmed by the *LSJ* and the *Montanari*. The Aramaic version does not constitute a persuasive argument, because the different studies emphasized the fact that it was written independently from the Greek version. Nonetheless, this remark formed the basis for an interesting hypothesis by Christol (1998). He interprets the verb as denoting literally the power of *dhamma*, namely by organising spectacular parties. *Dhamma* is used by Aśoka as a broad philosophical concept, which incorporates aspects of justice, a good life etc. I agree with most researchers that Aśoka's interpretation of the concept is not specifically Buddhist, but rather pan-Indian in its approach.¹⁶ Aśoka thus wanted to teach them his doctrine of *dhamma* (Christol 1998: 86). This hypothesis could even be broadened in my opinion, namely as a reference to the *dharmamahāmātrās*, the functionaries who were appointed by Aśoka to promote *dhamma*. The fact that these functionaries were known by the Greeks, is shown by a gloss from Hesychius (a sixth-century lexicographer). Aśoka wants to tell he taught his subjects the doctrine of *dhamma* through his functionaries and his parties.¹⁷

¹⁵ There are different problems inherent in the text, e.g. the interpretation of the Greek *genitivus absolutus*, or the meaning of the last sentence. I will limit myself to the problem that requires reassessment in my opinion.

¹⁶ Linguistically, *dhamma* is the Prakrit version of Sanskrit *dharma*, with the typical assimilation of /-rm-/ to /-mm-/.

¹⁷ Discussing Kd2, I will give further arguments for this explanation and a discussion of the Hesychian gloss.

The compactness of the phrase can further be explained with reference to the aim of producing an *editio brevis*.

3.2.3 Discussion of Indian influences

Before pointing to (possible) Indian influences on the Greek text, we first have to be aware of the high level of Greek used in the inscription. The kind of Greek used points towards the living language of a population with a relatively high level of education.¹⁸ This is reflected in the use of a philosophical vocabulary. For example, a big surprise for the early researchers was that the Indian term *dhamma* was transferred by the Greek εὐσέβεια. We can consider this as a target-oriented translation.

The use of an extensive philosophical vocabulary shows the fact the Greek text is not a literal translation of the Indian *Vorlage*. This does not mean that no Indian influence is to be found in the text. When we search for Indian borrowings, the lowest level of language contact, only one personal name catches our attention: Πιοδασσης ('Piodasses'). In the previous sections of my paper, I always referred to king Aśoka, but in the Greek version he is actually named Πιοδασσης. This can be explained by means of the Indian versions, because they also do not use the name Aśoka. Instead, they depict their king as *devānāmpriya* ('friend of the gods')¹⁹ and use different dialect forms of Sanskrit *priyadarśi* ('with a gentile glance'). From the paper of Schlumberger *et al.* onwards, the dialectal form *Piyadassi* is considered as the source for the Greek word.²⁰

¹⁸ In general, the text is to be interpreted as a well-written form of hellenistic koinè. Apart from the possible Indian influences, no morphological or syntactic deviations, except the Ionism εὐθηνεῖ ('he prospers'), are to be remarked. Nonetheless, I do not want to denote it as Attic, because Kd2 will offer more clues towards koinè and I treat both inscriptions within one and the same framework. Readers interested in the philosophical vocabulary used in the Greek text, are referred to the discussions by Schlumberger *et al.* (1958) and other secondary literature.

¹⁹ A literal translation from Greek φίλος τῶν θεῶν ('friend of the gods') (Seldeslachts 2002: 77). The name Aśoka finds its origins in the *avadāna*'s.

²⁰ The form in Aśoka's own dialect, Magadhī. The original sound /r/ assimilated with the /s/, it is a general tendency from the region to have problems with the sound /r/ (Cfr. the labdacism of whole East Asia). This does not occur in North-Western dialects, so Greek

Benveniste remarks in the 1958 article that the omicron of the Greek is due to a velar pronunciation of /a/, or more probable, because Greek prefers compounds with /o/ (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 4; 37).²¹ Other Indian loans in Greek like Ταπροβάνη ('Sri Lanka', modelled on *Tāmraparṇī*) or Σανδρόκοττος ('Candragupta') display the same tendency. This remark built the basis for further interpretations of the name. Pugliese Carratelli (1964) interprets it as an official name for the king (Pugliese Carratelli 1964: 35). Benveniste (1964) strengthens his arguments in a second article. According to his view, we have to interpret *Piyadassi* as a personal name and the more well-known 'Aśoka' as a nickname. He argues for this interpretation as follows: first, this title is only attested during Aśoka's reign. In the Indian inscriptions it is combined with *devānāmpriya* or with *rājā/lājā* ('king'), but these two terms are never combined together. Therefore, they are to be seen as denoting 'majesty' and not as personal names. When we accept this hypothesis, it constitutes a calque of the Achaemenid titulary, an extra argument. Finally, it seems probable that a king presents his own name in an inscription addressed to his subjects. Therefore, this name was borrowed in Greek and in Aramaic (Benveniste 1964: 143-145). Harmatta (1966) uses this hypothesis as a foundation for conclusions about the origin of the Greek and Aramaic text. Because the Greek adopts the assimilation of /r/ and /s/, as already discussed, the model was probably written in an eastern Prakrit. The good relations between the Greeks and Pāṭaliputra point even more to this direction. Sanskrit is linguistically impossible, in spite of the thoughts of L. Renou. Aśoka clearly wanted to use vernaculars to promote his ideas. The Aramaic version on the other hand, can be traced back to a northwestern Prakrit, where the

cannot have borrowed it there. The Aramaic version *pydrš* was on the other hand borrowed from Sanskrit or NW-Prakrit.

²¹ The borrowings *σραμεναι* ('śramaṇa's') and *βραμεναι* ('brahmins') in the second Greek inscription are an important argument against this hypothesis. They rather points towards a more palatal pronunciation. Apart from that, the word forming rules of Chantraine (1933) and Schwyzer (1959-1968) argue for the second hypothesis. Seldeslachts (2000: 126) equally highlights the importance of Greek morphology in the borrowing process.

assimilation does not occur.²² Therefore, we have to separate the Greek and Aramaic version from one another (Harmatta 1966: 82-83).

Apart from the one Indian borrowing in the inscription, certain constructions point to structural interference from Indian on Greek. We saw that a higher level of bilingualism is required for this process. But because the text is to be considered as a translation, it is more likely on a cognitive level that interference from one language on the other occurs in the text. My analysis aims to prove that the Greek text is influenced in two general features and in one particular phrase.

Firstly, the Greek text very frequently uses the conjunction καί ('and').²³ Greek texts, like Vedic, are characterized by extensive use of particles. For a continuative enumeration, Greek language normally uses the particle δέ, possibly in combination with μέν, but in this inscription it occurs only once. Some scholars explained it as a religious feature (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 12; Galavotti 1959: 189). To build their arguments, they make references to the Biblical Greek of the *Septuagint* or the *New Testament*. A Hebrew and/or Aramaic influence seems unlikely in their opinion. L. Robert interprets the use of paratactic καί's as a general feature of religious and popular texts (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 12). The text discussed here is more likely to be interpreted as a philosophical, rather than a religious text, comparable, for instance, to Plato's philosophical dialogues, which are characterized by abundance of particles. L. Robert's (1958) reference to the *New Testament* is also untenable. For, a few decades later (1984: 510-511), when he criticizes the hypothesis of A. Christol on the expression ἵνα διαμεινώσιν in Kd2,²⁴ he declares the *New Testament* as an untrustworthy argument for the Kandahar Inscriptions, which makes me wonder why he used it himself in his previous arguments. With reference to Biblical Greek, one has argued

²² Sanskrit could also be a possible source of the form, but this explanation appears less likely, due to the positive attitude of Aśoka towards vernaculars.

²³ 11 times on a total amount of 71 words, being 15,5%.

²⁴ I will further discuss it in the section about Kd2. Christol (1998) only mentions that the καί's render a monotone character to the text.

that the use of parataxis can be explained as a feature of a lower diastatic level.²⁵ This interpretation does not fit for the Kandahar Inscriptions. The use of a rich, philosophical vocabulary points towards a high register. Apart from that, when one reads the Middle Indian inscriptions or Old Indian texts in general, it is remarkable that conjunctions like *ca* ('and') or *vā* ('if') are frequently used.²⁶ Furthermore, non-native speakers are more apt to construct unnecessary conjunctions between their sentences. Therefore, Indian influence seems probable, interpreting the *καί*'s as a kind of sampler, in contrast to the high lexical level of the text.

A second feature of structural Middle Indian influence to be discussed in this paper, is the limited use of definite articles in the text. Not only are these kind of grammatical words not used in Indian, but the lack of articles is even a shared feature of the contemporary linguistic area of South Asia (Matras 2009: 270). Articles as such are normally not borrowed, but language contact can explain some common patterns of their use. In Central Europe we see for instance a common lack of articles (Matras 2009: 251). Dealing with Latin influence on Ancient Greek and Turkish influence on the Cappadocian language (a mixed Greek-Turkish language formerly spoken in Asia Minor), researchers arrived at the same conclusions. Thus, the lack of articles in Latin and Turkish influenced the Greek (Adams 2003: 515 ff.; Dawkins 1916: 87). Therefore, it will be useful to analyse the most important occurrences. A first example is offered by βασιλεύς ('king'), three times attested in the text, constantly without a definite article. But we can leave it out of consideration, because eastern monarchs generally do not receive an article in Ancient Greek (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 45). Other examples include εὐσέβειαν ('piety'), κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν ('across the whole world) and πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ ('for father and mother'). Galavotti elucidates the lack of articles referring to the compactness of the text and he thinks that the phrase

²⁵ Cfr. Moulton (1906-1976) in his grammar of New Testament Greek.

²⁶ *Ca* and *vā* both are translated with *καί* in the Greek text. See for example the Magadhī reconstruction by Schneider (1978).

πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ is a more refined manner of expression (Galavotti 1959: 189). Alongside with Christol (1998: 81), I interpret it as an Indian influence. Some limited corpus research with the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG) learns the term εὐσέβεια occurs both with and without the article, but there seems to be a preference for the one with the article.²⁷ The same is true for πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ ('for father and mother'). The most remarkable expression is built by κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν, which literally means 'across the whole world'. The rules of Greek grammar require an article after quantifiers like πᾶς ('every, all'). The only possible exception would be when it denotes 'every country'. But the content does not support this vision. Aśoka does not rule over the whole world and therefore, is not able to promote his *dhamma* in every country. Consequently, we have to read 'in his whole country', where Greek would require an article.²⁸ As a conclusion, I explain the low frequency of definite articles in the text as an Indian influence. Unfortunately, the corpus of text available is too small to offer statistical surety.

Yet another example of Indian influence can be found in the expression ἐνήκοοι πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ('obedient to their father, mother and people with a respectable age'). Of course a copula like ἐγένοντο ('they became') is to be added for a correct translation. The word ἐνήκοοι ('obedient') is a hapax,²⁹ formed analogically on the basis of ἐπήκοος, εὐήκοος, ὑπήκοος or κατήκοος, all meaning more or less 'obedient' (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 17). According to Benveniste, it can be considered as a local form (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 42). Syntactically, it is noteworthy that both a dative and a genitive are used as complements. Both patterns are possible, but the

²⁷ With article for example in E., *Ion*, v. 1045, Plu., *Num.*, 12,3, Isoc., *Hel. Enc.*, 31, ... Without e.g. in Isoc., *Panath.*, 204, line 6, S., *El.*, v. 464. A full statistical research was not the aim of this study, but I clearly marked a preference for forms with the article.

²⁸ Kd2 uses the article: κατὰ πάσας τὰς διατριβὰς ('among all the philosophical schools').

²⁹ Pugliese Carratelli (1964: 31) denotes that it is known from manuscripts of the *Onomasticon* by Pollux, where it is regarded as an incorrect reading. The *DGE* speaks about an adverb ἐνηκόως by Iust. Phil., *Dial.*, 137, 4.

combination of the two is remarkable, as L. Robert declares (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 17). Pepermans (1976: 129) searches for another explanation and tries to interpret the genitive πρεσβυτέρων as a partitive genitive ('who belong to the old people'). This renders the construction too severe and offers the impression that only aged people will receive a better life in the future, opposite to the aim of Aśoka to promote morality alongside all his subjects.³⁰ Galavotti (1959: 189) and Pugliese Carratelli (1964: 31) offer a more probable explanation, namely by pointing towards Indian influence. The expression is in fact very similar to a passage of the fourth Rock Edict. Because of the geographical nearness, I quote from the version of Shābāzgarhī: *matapituṣu vuḍhanam suśruṣa* 'who has to obey to their mother, their father and the elder people' (Schneider 1978: 116 ff.). It is remarkable that a locative (*matapituṣu*) is used firstly, agreeing with the datives πατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ. The following word (*vuḍhanam*) is a genitive like τῶν πρεσβυτέρων. *Suśruṣa* is a desiderative form of the root *śru* ('to listen, to obey'), and corresponds to the adjective ἐνῆκοοι. Therefore, the switch in cases in the Greek version is to be explained through influence of the Indian original. Christol (1998: 83) agrees with this hypothesis and explains it as follows. Firstly, a linear translation was made from Indian to Greek, which later on was converted into better Greek. The most important argument for it, lies in the change of the order of mentioning the father and the mother. In the Greek version, the father is mentioned first, and then the mother. L. Robert explains it as due to the normal hierarchy in Greek (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 13), as opposed to the Indian and Aramaic version, which place the mother on the first position (Schlumberger *et al.* 1958: 42). In fact, Robert's claim is exclusively based on his intuition. I statistically verified his hypothesis with a limited statistical research with the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG)*, proving that in ca. 80% of the instances the father is mentioned first. This research offered objective evidence that his statement was correct and therefore,

³⁰ This preference for searching the solution on the Greek side, is probably caused by his limited knowledge of the Indian context.

I can also agree with Christols hypothesis about a linear intermediate stage.

3.2.4 Preliminary conclusions

The analysis of the Kd1 demonstrated that, on a general level, the Greek version does not contain gross errors. It is written by and for people who knew the Greek language sufficiently. At the same time, we notice that the Indian concepts are well-understood. Therefore, it seems probable that the translator was at least partially bilingual and had a sufficient knowledge of both languages. The fact we are dealing with a translation, is responsible for the limited Indian influence we can perceive in the Greek text. Firstly, we find the transcription of Aśoka's name comparable to the many Indo-Aryan personal or geographical names that were rendered in Greek (and also Latin). The question remains whether the structural interferences we found in Kd1, were also part of the daily speech in the Indo-Greek contact regions. This is very difficult to answer. But perhaps, it was also a feature of the daily speech in these regions that less definite articles were used than in standard Greek. As already said, the modern linguistic area of South Asia points towards this hypothesis. The inscription is a good example of the *adstratum* relation of Greek and Indian language and culture. The philosophical terms are replaced by good equivalents etc. As such, the sociolinguistic model, presented in Section 2, is supported by the analysis of Kd1. Therefore, we have to explore these contact phenomena in the analysis of Kd2, paying special attention to further examples of and arguments for Indian influence on Greek.

3.3 KANDAHAR 2 (1964)

3.3.1 Greek text and translation

Rock Edict XII³¹

(...) [Εύ]σέβεια καὶ ἐγκράτεια κατὰ πάσας τὰς διατριβάς· ἐγκρατῆς δὲ μάλιστα ἐστὶν ὅς ἂν γλώσσης ἐγκρατῆς ᾗ. Καὶ μῆτε ἑαυτοὺς ἐπα[ι]νῶσιν, μῆτε τῶν πέλας ψέγωσιν περὶ μηδενός· κενὸν γάρ ἐστιν· καὶ πειρᾶσθαι μᾶλλον τοὺς πέλας ἐπαινεῖν καὶ μὴ ψέγειν κατὰ πάντα τρόπον. Ταῦτα δὲ ποιοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς αὔξουσι καὶ τοὺς πέλας ἀνακτῶνται· παραβαίνοντες δὲ ταῦτα, ἀκ(λ)εέστεροι τε γίνονται καὶ τοῖς πέλας ἀπέχθονται. Οἱ δ' ἂν ἑαυτοὺς ἐπαινῶσιν, τοὺς δὲ πέλας ψέγωσιν φιλοτιμότερον διαπράττονται, βουλόμενοι παρὰ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἐγλάμψαι, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον βλάπτου[σι] ἑαυτοὺς. Πρέπει δὲ ἀλλήλους θαυμάζειν καὶ τὰ ἀλλήλων διδάγματα παραδέχεσθαι[ι]. Ταῦτα δὲ ποιοῦντες πολυμαθέστεροι ἔσονται, παραδιδόντες ἀλλήλοις ὅσα ἕκαστος αὐτῶν ἐπίσταται. Καὶ τοῖς ταῦτα ἐπ(α)σκοῦσι ταῦτα μὴ ὀκνεῖν λέγειν ἵνα δειαμεινῶσιν διὰ παντὸς εὐσεβοῦντες.

Text Criticism:

ἀκ(λ)εέστεροι *corr.* L. Robert, ΑΚΑΕΕΣΤΕΡΟΙ *ac.*,
δειαμεινῶσιν A. Christol, δειαμείνωσιν *cett.*

Rock Edict XII

... *Dhamma and self-control among all philosophical schools. Who is able to control himself with his tongue, especially this person controls himself. They are not able to glorify themselves and to criticize their neighbours. Because that is in vain. Rather, they have to try to glorify their neighbours and in all manners not to criticize them. Doing that, they will place themselves on a higher rank*

³¹ The Greek text is based on the article of E. Benveniste (1964), in fact being a transcription of L. Robert. Orthographical deviations in the Greek text, like iotacism are not corrected. I do not always agree with Benveniste, e.g. the hypothesis of Christol (1983) (ἵνα δειαμεινῶσιν) is incorporated in my text. Indian loans are not accentuated. More text criticism is discussed in the *apparatus criticus* and in my survey of philological problems. As with the first inscription my translation is not intended to be a very literal translation. Rock Edict will be abbreviated as RE in the rest of the paper.

and as such be able to have them on their side. When they break those rules, they will lose honour and become hated by their neighbours. But those who praise themselves and criticize their neighbours, they act out of ambition. It is their aim to excel above the rest, but in fact they injure themselves. It is strongly recommended to admire each other and to learn from each others opinions. Doing that, they will become much wiser, because everyone transmits his knowledge to everyone. Do not hesitate to speak to such people, in order that they improve themselves choosing dhamma as an example for everything.

Rock Edict XIII

ὀγδόωι ἔτει βασιλεύοντος Πιοδασσου κατέστρεπται τὴν Καλιγγην. ἦν ἐζωγρημένα καὶ ἐξηγμένα ἐκεῖθεν σωματῶν μυριάδες δεκαπέντε καὶ ἀναιρέθησαν ἄλλοι μυριάδες δέκα καὶ σχεδὸν ἄλλοι τοσοῦτοι ἐτελεύτησαν. ἀπ' ἐκείνου τοῦ χρόνου ἔλεος καὶ οἶκτος αὐτῶν ἔλαβεν καὶ βαρέως ἤνεγκεν. δι' οὗ τρόπου ἐκέλευεν ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν ἐμψύχων σπουδῆν τε καὶ σύνταξιν πεποίηται περὶ εὐσεβείας. καὶ τοῦτο ἔτι δυσχερέστερον ὑπέιληφε ὁ βασιλεύς· καὶ ὅσοι ἐκεῖ οἴκουν βραμεναὶ ἢ σραμεναὶ ἢ καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς οἱ περὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν διατρίβοντες, τοὺς ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦντας ἔδει τὰ τοῦ βασιλέως συμφέροντα νοεῖν, καὶ διδάσκαλον καὶ πατέρα καὶ μητέρα ἐπαισχύνεσθαι καὶ θαυμάζειν, φίλους καὶ ἐταίρους ἀγαπᾶν καὶ μὴ διαψεύδεσθαι, δούλοις καὶ μισθωτοῖς ὡς κουφότατα χρᾶσθαι, τούτων ἐκεῖ τῶν τοιαῦτα διαπρασσομένων εἴ τις τέθνηκεν ἢ ἐξῆκται, καὶ τοῦτο ἐμ παραδρομῆι οἱ λοιποὶ ἡγεῖνται, ὁ δὲ [β]ασιλεύς σφόδρα ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐδυσχέρανεν. καὶ ὅτι ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰσιν...

(lacuna in textu)

Text Criticism:
κατέστρεπται *inscr.*, κατέστραπται *corr.* L. Robert
σύνταξιν *inscr.*, σύντα(σ)ιν *corr.* L. Robert
ἡγεῖνται *corr.* L. Robert, ἡγήνται *inscr.*

Rock Edict XIII

During the eighth year of his rule king Piodasses (Aśoka) subjected the region Kalinga. 150 000 people were

captured and taken away from there, 100 000 people were executed and an almost equal amount fell in battle. From that time onwards, Piodasses was captured by condolence and reflection. He suffered greatly and therefore, he promoted a vegetarian way of life and organised a propaganda program for dhamma. The king understood this to be even more offensive. The brahmins, living there (in Kalinga), the śramans, other people dealing with dhamma and the layman had to realize that the king brought them advantages, they had to respect their teacher, their father and their mother and they had to admire them. They had to love their friends and comrades and not to deceive them, to give their slaves and servants duties as light as possible. If someone from them, who did such things, died or was taken away, and the other people sympathized with that, the king became even more furious. And because among the other people are... (Rest of the text is missing)

3.3.2 Linguistic and philological analysis of the text³²

I found numerous orthographical deviations from standard Attic Greek. I note certain orthographies occurring from the koinè onwards: iotacistic faults in δειαμεινῶσιν (= διαμεινῶσιν) ('they remain') and ἡγιῆνται (= ἡγεῖνται) ('they think'), the loss of the double consonant in γλώσης (= γλώσσης) ('of the tongue') and διαπράτονται (= διαπράττονται) ('they accomplish'), and phonological orthographies due to assimilation in κενὸν γὰρ (assimilation of ν (nu) to the following γ (gamma)) ('because it is in vain'), ἐγλάμψαι (κ (kappa) becomes γ (gamma) due to following λ (lambda)) ('to shine') and ἐμ παραδρομῆ (the dental nasal ν (nu) becomes the bilabial nasal μ (mu) because a π (pi) follows) ('in running by') (Cfr. Harmatta 1966: 79-80). A noteworthy phonetic feature is the confusion of double sigma (σσ) and double tau (ττ). Remark for instance, the contrast between διαπράτονται and

³² As for Kd1, I do not present a total overview of the Indian text. See e.g. Benveniste (1964: 147-149) or Norman (1972).

διαπρασσομένων. With regard to the personal name Πιοδάσσου no choice was available, because the voiceless alveolar fricatives, that is /ss/, were borrowed from Indian, as Christol remarks (Christol 1998: 82).

On the morphosyntactic level, the form ἀναιρέθησαν ('they were murdered') is remarkable because of the absence of the augment, while the verb γίνεται ('he becomes') is the normal *koinë* form of γίγνεται. The participle construction ἦν ἐξωγρημένα καὶ ἐξηγμένα ('they were captured and taken away') is noteworthy because the gender does not agree with the feminine μυριάδες ('thousands of'), but with the neutral σωμάτων ('of the corpses'), a partitive genitive justly before it. A final morphological peculiarity concerns the verb κατέστρεπται ('he subjected (for himself)'). L. Robert corrected it into Attic κατέστραπται. Yet I rather ascribe Harmatta (1966: 80) in following the original form. Harmatta remarks that a similar form is found on a papyrus and explains it as due to confusion with the passive aorist: ἐστράφην in Doric and ἐστρέφην in Attic. I, on the other hand, think that the present forms with e-grade (ie. στρέφω) are a more likely explanation than the aorist forms.

The passage σπουδὴν τε καὶ σύνταξιν (literally 'the diligence and the composition') is particularly debated in the scholarship. Robert advocates the reading σύντασιν ('vehement effort'), explaining it as a tautology with σπουδὴν (Schlumberger 1964: 131).³³ Harmatta wants to preserve the original reading. The possibility of a simple fault, while cutting down the engraving, does not fit in his opinion, because of the specific form of the letter ξ (ksi). Therefore, he relies upon a phonological evolution in Greek: /-ks-/ > /-ss-/ > /-s-/. This shift was not fixed in orthography, but can be an explanation for the confusion between σύνταξις and σύντασις, the first one giving the orthography and the second one the meaning. As an extra argument, he refers to the Bactrian language, which used the Greek alphabet but lacked the letter ksi, using the digraph <χβ> to denote Iranian /χš/. Christol (1998: 89) rightly criticizes this

³³ Based on Pl., *Smp.* 206β.

hypothesis. Such mistakes normally occur the other way around: a phonological orthography instead of an etymological one. Therefore, he links it to his interpretation of ἔδειξεν in the first edict and reads the construction as depicting the parties, which were organised for the propaganda of *dhamma*. As such, he preserves the original reading of the inscription σύνταξις, a substantive derived from the verb συντάττω ('to put in order together' (mostly in military sense)) (Christol 1998: 89).

Drawing upon Christol's remark, I propose the following explanation. I stick to the original reading, σύνταξις, which is mostly used in military contexts. Therefore, I think that we also have to understand σπουδή ('diligence') with a warlike connotation. This is supported by the Greek lexicon of Montanari (2015: 1950), who offers 'dispute, context, rivalry, intrigue' as possible translations. In my opinion, the collocation σπουδὴν τε καὶ σύνταξις, refers to the past Kalinga wars. Aśoka realised that his bloody war with the Kalinga's was a wrong decision and therefore, wants to alter the situation now by promoting his new doctrine of *dhamma*. Saying it otherwise, this is his new war, but a war which is intended to stop all previous wars. One question comes to mind in this interpretation: who are his warriors? In my opinion, these are the *dharmamahāmātrās*, mentioned in my analysis of Kd1. I refer again to the gloss of Hesychius: μαμάτραι· οἱ στρατηγοί, παρ' Ἰνδοῖς ('the *dharmamahāmātrās*: the warriors, by the Indians'). Gray and Schuyler (1901: 199) explained it by the Sanskrit word *marmatra* ('breastplate'). However, it seems much more plausible to consider the *dharmamahāmātrās* as the source for our gloss.³⁴ The translation of Hesychius refers to people, not to objects. Another argument to link these civil servants with this passage is formed by the end of RE XII. In the Indian version, the *dharmamahāmātrās* are explicitly spoken of in their function to promote *dhamma* (cfr. Cassio 2016: 40). Benveniste (1964: 150) highlights the remarkable fact of their disappearance in the Greek version. Did the

³⁴ With syncopation of the *-hā-* from Indian to Greek. For the interpretation, see for example Christol (1999: 112), Seldeslachts (2002: 88) or Brust (2007: 414-416).

translator not understand it well or are other explanations equally possible? We saw already the tendency of the Greek text to deviate from the Indian *Vorlage*. This can also be observed in this peculiar passage. The Indian text highlights the study and the love for *dhamma*.³⁵ The Greek text preserves only partially the aspect of study, using the term σπουδήν, but the love element is not to be found in the Greek version. Therefore, it does not seem improbable that the Greek translator wanted to put emphasis on the military aspect. Another advantage gained by this analysis, is that it presents a more natural interpretation of the passage that otherwise might appear a mere tautology. Finally, it allows to preserve the original reading of the inscription without abandoning the core meanings of the forms.

The interpretation of ἵνα δειαμεινῶσιν ('in order that they remain...') poses yet another important problem. Earlier studies interpreted it as a purpose clause introduced by ἵνα and analysed the form δειαμεινῶσιν as a conjunctive of διαμένω, thus in fact διαμείνωσιν. Christol (1983) offers an alternative explanation. He analyses the verb as a conjunctive of *διαμεινώ ('to ameliorate'), a non-attested verbal derivative of the comparative ἀμείνων ('better'). To account for such a non-attested verb, he refers to similar derivatives like βελτιώ ('to ameliorate' from βελτίων 'better') and ἐλαττώ ('to reduce' from ἐλάττων 'smaller'). Apart from that, a verb ἐξαμεινώ ('to amend') is attested in a fragment of Cratinus (*Ploutoi*, v. 16). With respect to the content, he cites the Indian passage *sālavadhī* (the increase of *sāla*), an amelioration in fact (Christol 1983: 32-33).³⁶ Secondly, he remarks the fact that in Post Classical Greek ἵνα can also introduce a noun clause. He considers it more fitting in the context and translates 'that they...' (Christol 1983: 35). Robert (1984: 510-511) criticized these hypotheses with a double argument. The first one was already cited in my paper: the limited value of Biblical Greek for our understanding of

³⁵ Schneider (1978: 116) reconstructs the original from Pāṭaliputra and reads: *dhammāvāye, dhammakāmatā dhammānusathi*. The Indian tricolon is rendered by two forms in Greek.

³⁶ The word *sāla* is unknown and the different hypotheses lack persuasiveness. In all cases, it denotes a moral quality. For a possible hypothesis, see Norman (1972: 112).

Hellenistic Greek (*cfr. supra* for criticism). On the other hand, he made enquiries about the value of the Indian original, because the Greek handles it creatively. The text is indeed to be considered as a free translation, but remaining a translation, the original *Vorlage* forms the point of departure. Furthermore, we noted for Kd1 that Indian syntax can even influence the Greek text in an *editio brevis*. Therefore, I agree with Christol in reading the verb as a form of διαμεινῶ. Further argumentation is given by the end of Kd1, which ends with a very similar formula: λῶιον καὶ ἄμεινον ... διάξουσιν ('they will become better and more prosperous'). The fact that the verb is not attested, does not constitute a big problem. Kd1 also offers Greek words, like ἐνήκοος, which were never attested before. Christol's syntactic analysis seems equally possible, but the same is true regarding the interpretation with a purpose clause. The difference is only a matter of detail.

3.3.3 Discussion of Indian influences

Again, I first have to emphasize that the Greek text is not to be considered a literal translation, but a text which does its utmost to exploit its philosophical vocabulary.³⁷ On the one hand, we rediscover some terms from Kd1: εὐσέβεια ('piety') as a translation of *dhamma*, the ἀποχή τῶν ἐμψύχων (literally 'the abstention from animals', referring to a vegetarian way of life) and ἐγκρατής ('self-controlled') as an antonym of ἀκρατής ('without self-control') in Kd1. But on the other hand, the researchers were again surprised when they discovered that the Indian term *pāśaṃdā* (religious sect) was rendered by Greek διατριβή, a philosophical school (Schlumberger 1964: 133).³⁸ The Greek translator sought for a word in his own philosophical tradition. However, I have to remark that in the rest of the text Indian *pāśaṃdā* is not always translated with the same word.

³⁷ I do not present an exhaustive list. See L. Roberts contribution to Schlumberger (1964: 134-138).

³⁸ Cassio (2016: 45-46) argues against this equation. In general, his paper wants to prove that the Greek version highlights the individual aspect of philosophy, whereas the Indian originals refer to philosophical encounters between different schools.

We also find ὁ πέλας ('the neighbour') and the more religious διὰ παντὸς εὐσεβοῦντες ('observing piety in every circumstance') (Christol 1983: 33-34; 1998: 82). L. Robert admires the beautiful *iuncturae verborum*, for instance ἔλεος καὶ οἶκτος ('pity and compassion') and σπουδὴν ποιῆσθαι ('to make efforts') (Schlumberger 1964: 137). However, this high linguistic level does not exclude Indian influence.

Firstly, we remark four Indian borrowings in the inscription. We meet again the personal name Πιοδασσης, this time in the genitive clause. This inflection shows that the word was morphologically integrated in Greek language among the masculine inflection of the first declension. A second personal name is to be found in the borrowing Καλιγγην. Benveniste (1964: 150) justly highlights the fact that a switch happened from Indian to Greek. The original *Kaliṅgā* refers to the inhabitants of the country. But the translator interpreted Indian /ā/ as a feminine form like in Doric Greek. Furthermore, it is common practice in Greek to denote countries with feminine substantives. On a formal level we want to stress the rendering of the velar nasal with common Greek <γγ>.

The two remaining borrowings will be discussed together. Βραμεναι ('brahmins') and σραμεναι ('śramaṇa's') denote two groups in Indian society.³⁹ The brahmins are of course the Indian priests and the term śramans can refer both to ascetics or more specifically to buddhists or jains. The Greek language retains the ambiguity. Benveniste (1964: 152-153) was the first researcher to analyse βραμεναι, linking it with Sanskrit *brāhmaṇa*. He explains the difference between <α> and <ε> in Greek through the Indian difference in quantity. /ā/ is rendered by <α> and /a/ evolved into <ε>. In his opinion, the form σραμεναι is to be seen as an analogical formation. Harmatta (1966: 83) justly criticizes Benveniste, because his account fails to explain the disappearance of Sanskrit /h/ in Greek, even

³⁹ Other borrowings, attested in Greek literature, prove that the Greeks were acquainted with these concepts. For a detailed survey of the forms in Greek, Old Indian, Middle Indian, Middle Iranian and Tocharian, cfr. A. Christol (1984; 1990). This specific form in Greek is only attested here. Quite strikingly, Burst (2007) found it unnecessary to discuss these forms in his lexicon of Indian and Iranian borrowings in Greek.

though the Greek borrowing βραχμῶνες retains it with <χ>. This last borrowing also offers a second objection against Benveniste's hypothesis. The /ā/ of Βραχμῶνες clearly shows that the Indian difference in quantity does not matter in Greek. Therefore, I follow Harmatta (1966: 83), who declares that the form was borrowed from a northwestern Prakrit. He identifies the version of Shābāzgarhī as the source, with the forms *bramaṇa* and *śramaṇa*.⁴⁰ The switches between <α> and <ε> are not discussed in his work. Christol (1984: 39) agrees with him and highlights the fact that the preservation of /sr/ points towards a northwestern Prakrit. His enlarged article (1990: 61) tries to explain the <ε> with regard to the more closed pronunciation of the /a/ in Middle Indo-Aryan. This closed pronunciation is a possible explanation, but I want to present another hypothesis. When we look closer at the Greek side, a folk etymological explanation can be expected. For example, a word like εὐμενής ('well-disposed, kindly'), perfectly fitting with the positive Greek conception of Indian ascetics, could have triggered Greek <ε>. Seldeslachts's PhD (2000: 89-92; 98) offers an extensive list of borrowings from Indian into Greek, where Indian /a/ is rendered by <α>. Transcription with <ε> also occur, but in much lesser quantities, not more than 24 words.⁴¹ Concerning this limited amount of words, one can wonder if some examples are not influenced through folk etymology, for example Μέθορα (a place name) under influence of Greek μεθόριος ('lying between as a boundary') or Πέτροι (a place name) by Greek πέτρος ('stone'). The form of the word πέπερι ('pepper') can be caused by vocal harmony.

Finishing my discussion about the borrowings in Greek I want to focus on the participle τοὺς οἰκοῦντας (literally 'all those who inhabit...'), which is in fact to be understood as a wrong calque from Indian. This vision was gradually developed in scholarly literature. Benveniste (1964: 153) interprets it as a readmission of ὅσοι ἐκεῖ ὄκουν, but he is not able to explain

⁴⁰ As such without Sanskrit /h/ and without a difference in vowel length.

⁴¹ See Seldeslachts (2000: 98). The forms discussed here are incorporated in the given amount.

how this participle can translate Indian *grahatha* (masters of the house).⁴² However, this Indian word offers the real explanation. Norman on the other hand (1972: 115-116), equally fails to recognize the right solution and combines it with Indian *ye tatra vasati* ('they who dwell there'). Christol (1980: 63) gives a better interpretation. In his opinion, we have to detect the real meaning in the etymology of Indian *grahatha* ('masters of the house'). The basic meaning with 'house' caused the Greek word on the basis of the equivalence *gr̥ha* = οἶκος. Though, in the Indian version *grahatha* is here used to denote 'layman' as opposite with the brahmins and the śramans, previously mentioned.⁴³ The Indian context escaped the translator's mind, alongside with the syntax. Therefore, we find a *nominativus pendens* within the relative clause in opposition with the accusative οἰκοῦντας, both dependent from ἔδει ('it was necessary').

Two other constructions equally deserve our attention. First, the translator adapted the Indian construction of RE XIII. The Indian version uses a passive construction, namely *kaligā vijitā* ('the inhabitants of Kalinga were conquered').⁴⁴ Greek translates it with a medial form κατέστρεπται, with the non-expressed subject Πιοδασσης. As such, the subjects of the *genitivus absolutus* and the main clause become the same in Greek. The Indian object *piyadasine lājine* ('by king Piyadassi') is replaced by a non-expressed Πιοδασσης.⁴⁵ Therefore, we can conclude that the translator sought for a construction, which better suits the Greek language. The same is to be said about διδάσκαλον καὶ πατέρα καὶ μητέρα ἐπαισχύνεσθαι ('to revere his teacher,

⁴² The version of Shābāzgarhī is consequently used in my citations of the Indian text, otherwise it will be mentioned.

⁴³ Pāli *gahat̥ṭha* underwent the same evolution in meaning.

⁴⁴ Here we use the reconstructed version in Magadhī by Schneider (1978), probably the chancery model used as the source of translations.

⁴⁵ A *genitivus absolutus* is characterized in prescriptive grammars as an error, but it occurs already during the Classical Period, e.g. Thuc. 3.13. But the choice to use here the form with a same subject, can be influenced by the translation from Indian into Greek.

his father and his mother').⁴⁶ As we saw about Kd1, the order is reversed from Indian to Greek.

To finish my discussion about Indian influences, I want to analyse the conjunctions and the articles, in comparison with Kd1. Therefore, I first want to stress the difference in style between the two Rock Edicts (Harmatta 1966: 80). Harmatta characterized the Greek of RE XII as Attic, but RE XIII as koinè. I do not agree with his description, because RE XII can also be characterized as koinè. This becomes obvious from the fact that it is also influenced by iotacism, because it has an ionism γίνονται etc. As such, I rather want to denote it as a difference in register, or more specifically about a difference in susceptibility to the contact situation. Reconsidering the use of paratactic constructions, we observe a remarkable reduction of καί's in RE XII. Having an entire amount of 113 words, only eight times a καί is used, or 7% in opposition with the 15,5% in Kd1. Corresponding with this fact, the use of particles is much richer in RE XII. Eight times, we encounter the continuative particle δέ and one time the explanatory particle γάρ ('for'). Kd1 used only one time the particle δέ. The translator of RE XII attempts high level Greek in his text. Using the same statistics on RE XIII, we perceive a remarkable difference. The amount of καί's has again raised until 18 times on a total amount of 136 words, or 13,2%. Particles disappeared from the text, only one δέ is found. A similar difference is to be noted with reference to the articles, again a possible Indian influence of the text. RE XII uses a sufficient amount of Greek articles. Only in the beginning of the text, it is noteworthy that εὐσέβεια ('piety, dhamma') and ἐγκράτεια ('self-control') lack an article.⁴⁷ Although, the lack of an article can here be regarded as an attempt to give them a universal meaning. The Greek of RE XIII again lacks articles, we can think of βραμεναι, σραμεναι, διδάσκαλον, πατέρα, μητέρα etc. The cases where an article is used, are very specific occasions. Firstly, a considerable amount of the attestations of the

⁴⁶ The reconstructed version reads: *mātāpītuśu śusūsā gulususūsā* ('obeying the mother, the father and the teacher'). Remark that the Greek version also alters the place of the teacher.

⁴⁷ With regard to εὐσέβεια we are not sure because the preceding text is lost.

article occur with substantivized participles, where an article cannot be omitted.⁴⁸ Apart from that, the article λουπός ('remaining') receives two times an article as does βασιλεύς ('king'). Remarkably, this title was in Kd1 used without an article, the typical Greek manner to denote an eastern monarch. This refined expression is omitted here.

These observations support the hypothesis of Christol (1998: 82) that two different editors were responsible for Kd2. RE XII was translated by a bilingual, with a profound knowledge of both Indian and Greek language and culture, RE XIII on the other hand was transferred by a technical translator, who lacked knowledge about the context and was not acquainted with the nuances of the language. Also remarkable is the fact that the borrowings all occur in RE XIII, while the other (parts of the) inscriptions (RE XII and Kd1) search for Greek equivalents. Furthermore, the structure of the first sentence provides problems, the wrong calque occurs here as the *nominativus pendens*. They also can be an argument for my hypothesis. The switch in the order of father and mother is an exception, where the translator search for a target oriented translation, possibly influenced by Kd1?⁴⁹

3.3.4 Preliminary conclusions

Generally spoken, this second inscription confirms my conclusions concerning Kd1. The Indian version is not literally followed and we encounter Greek language of a high level. This fact does not exclude Indian influence in the text. Firstly, we can think of the four borrowings in RE XIII, where we re-encounter the personal name Πιοδασσης. These borrowings are especially borrowed from the political context, whereas the religious and philosophical terms are transferred with a Greek alternative. Apart from that, we remarked important differences

⁴⁸ Notice for instance 'οἱ περὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν διατρίβοντες' ('those who are dealing with *dhamma*'), 'τοὺς ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦντας' ('those who dwell there') and 'τὰ τοῦ βασιλέως συμφέροντα' ('the advantages of the king').

⁴⁹ We do not know the relative chronology of both inscriptions, thus this remains a mere possibility.

between RE XII and RE XIII. I explained this with reference to a different level of bilingualism. Christol (1998: 84) proposes the hypothesis that the editor of RE XIII was a merchant, who knew Greek technically, but was not able to grasp all the finesses of the language. Nor was he experienced with the Indian context. The analysis of this second inscription fortified my hypotheses about paratactic construction and articles. However, we always have to remember that we are dealing with a very limited corpus to postulate absolute conclusions. It can be uttered as a possibility that paratactic conjunctions and a reduction of articles were features of daily Greek speech in Bactria and India, during the Hellenistic Period.

3.4 Evaluation of the Kandahar Inscriptions

Concluding my case study, I present an overview about the most important observations concerning Indo-Greek language contact we can make on the basis of an analysis of the Kandahar Inscriptions. Methodologically, we became aware that inscriptions give rise to some difficulties for contact linguistic research. Indeed, it is very difficult to know who is responsible for certain interferences in the text: the translator or the stone cutter? The inscriptions point towards the translator as the responsible. However, the stone cutter could be responsible for the orthographic faults we encountered in Kd2. Aśoka is to be considered as the orderer of the translations into Greek, but this is only of minor importance for the language contact or the bilingualism of certain people, we cannot deduce whether Aśoka actually knew Greek or not.

The inscriptions offer us two interesting insights. Firstly, my research proved the fact that Adams (2003: 5) is not correct in his negative judgement about translations as a source for contact linguistic research. The Kandahar Inscriptions have the advantage that they are to be considered as a not-literal translation, therefore, also a form of *positive performance*. The translation remains however responsible for the cognitive processes in the head of the translator which caused some

interferences. Secondly, the Kandahar Inscriptions are to be denoted as *cripto-bilingui*.⁵⁰ We are dealing with bilingual texts, knowing (parts of) the original texts, but which are not cut on the same stone.⁵¹

Apart from that, the inscriptions confirm certain observations about language contact in general. Firstly, we remarked the importance of individual multilingualism (Matras 2009: 3). Kd2 is a good example. I maintained that two editors, with a different level of bilingualism, were responsible for its production. Such instances are the clues for our understanding of the societal level of language contact. Secondly, I fortified a comment by Thomason (2005: 3) that language contact can occur at a distance. The Greek language of Arachosia came in contact with the Magadhī dialect of Pāṭaliputra, thousands of miles away.⁵² At the same time, contacts existed between neighbours. To demonstrate this, we can remember the borrowings, which entered into Greek from NW-Prakrit. Thirdly, the inscriptions present clues that both languages have prestige in the contact situation. The Greek language uses its own philosophical vocabulary, but the political terms are borrowed from the Indian language. The political power of the Maurya's reached also Arachosia. Therefore, regarding this specific period we can postulate a stable language contact. The Greeks are well-established in the East and India is powerfully ruled by Aśoka. Later on, during the Indo-Greek kingdoms there will be a peak in the Indo-Greek contact, especially during Menander's reign. When these Indo-Greek kingdoms collapse, the Greek language disappears, the contact loses its stability and Greek is absorbed by the Indian languages, which re-establish themselves as the dominant languages.

Specifically about the Indo-Greek contact, a couple of conclusions can be formulated. First, we discover both borrowings and structural interference. The borrowings include mainly political terms: a king, a country and two groups of

⁵⁰ Term borrowed from Sani (1988: 155).

⁵¹ Fortunately, we know that the Indian version was the first to be made.

⁵² In the probable case that the original was written in the dialect of Aśoka's court.

people in Indian society. These borrowings aimed to fill a lexical gap in Greek, the recipient language. The words were adapted to agree with the morphology and phonology of the Greek language, therefore, they are not to be conceptualized as code-switching. However, it remains impossible to find out the extent to which these borrowings were incorporated in Greek language. As a matter of fact, they are only attested in the Kandahar Inscriptions. Nonetheless, it is perfectly possible these borrowings were used frequently, but in other inscriptions nor in the literature are these specific forms to be found. This fact can be caused due to the loss of much material dealing with Indo-Greek language contact.

Concluding, we can be rather positive in our evaluation of the Kandahar Inscriptions as a case study in Indo-Greek language contact. They offer hapax legomena, they contain information about the bilingualism of the translator and they are a unique source for Indian inferences in Ancient Greek syntax. It remains problematic that the material is limited, statistic certainty is therefore excluded. It demands for a sophisticated analysis to detract interesting conclusions from this limited corpus. But on the whole, the Kandahar Inscriptions offer the possibility for doing so.

4. Conclusion: A battle for enlightenment

dharmah tasmād dharmāt param nāsti |
atho abalīyān balīyām samāśamśate dharmeṇa |
yathā rājñāivam | yo vai sa
dharmah satyaṃ vai tat |
tasmāt satyaṃ vadantam āhur dharmam vadatīti |
dharmam vā vadantam satyaṃ vadatīti |
etad dhyevaitad ubhayaṃ bhavati ||

(Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 1.4. xiv)⁵³

⁵³ 'Nothing is higher than Dharma. The weak overcomes the stronger by Dharma, as over a king. Truly that Dharma is the Truth (*Satya*); Therefore, when a man speaks the

I reached the place to conclude my paper. My aim was to discuss the value of the Greek Kandahar Inscriptions as a case study in Indo-Greek language contact, during the Hellenistic Period. Therefore, I began my paper with a brief discussion of the methodological problems for sociolinguistic research based on written corpora. Keeping this in mind, I offered an overview of the sociolinguistic situation of Indo-Greek contact in Antiquity. I argued that for most of the time Greek and Middle Indo-Aryan were in an *adstratum* relationship. This hypothesis needed to be proven by an in-depth contact linguistic analysis of the Kandahar Inscriptions, the most important primary sources concerning Indo-Greek contact.

It became obvious that the Greek text does not constitute a literal translation of the Indian original, but the translators sought for a text which could exploit the Greek philosophical vocabulary at its best. Nevertheless, I was able to point towards certain Indian interferences. First, the inscriptions are a unique source concerning four Indian (political) borrowings into Greek: the name of a king, a geographical region and two societal groups in Indian society. On the syntactic level, I focused on the use of paratactic constructions and the limited use of definite articles, both features where Indian influence is plausible. Certain phrases in the Greek version also could be explained as an interference from Indian or as a target oriented translation from Indian into Greek. Based on these observations I deduced several conclusions concerning the bilingualism of the translators. I argued that two editors were involved in the translation of Kd2. RE XII is written by a person with a high degree of bilingualism, RE XIII by a technical translator, maybe a merchant who was not fully bilingual and who only knew the basics about Indian culture. The inscriptions are an example of the *adstratum* between Greek and Indian, both languages stand alongside each other. The texts avoid a blending of both

Truth, they say, "He speaks the Dharma"; and if he speaks Dharma, they say, "He speaks the Truth!" For both are one.' (Sanskrit text based on the edition by Olivelle (1998); own translation).

languages, because the translators search for Greek philosophical equivalents.

Further research can confirm or nuance these conclusions, always keeping in mind the limitedness of the material. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to study the other epigraphical rests from the Far East, like the inscriptions of Aī Khanoum on a sociolinguistic level. The Greek loan words in Indian and the rather extended corpus of Greek and Indian names on coins are other research possibilities. As such, they can provide further clues for the sociolinguistic discussion of the contact during the Hellenistic Period. This sociolinguistic framework can more generally be applied on other Indian texts. To name only a few examples, social variation in Sanskrit drama (*e.g.* female speech) can be further discussed on a sociolinguistic level. Contact linguistics can be used in the encounters between different Middle Indian languages. On the other hand, the Aśoka Inscriptions can further be discussed as a source for Indo-Greek language contact, by comparing the description of the Maurya administration by Megasthenes and the Indian inscriptions, both historically and linguistically (*cfr.* Seldeslachts 1998: 285).

My paper was intended to be an impulse for such sociolinguistic research. I discussed briefly the framework for doing so and made a comprehensive sociolinguistic analysis of the Greek Kandahar Inscriptions. I wanted to deliver my own contribution to Aśoka's objective to deal with *dharma*. Aśoka wanted to extend his *guerre sainte* towards the Greeks. However, how could it be different? The Greeks found their own, philosophical way for dealing with it, their interpretation was *à la grecque*.

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VERONICA ARIEL VALENTI*

HOMO LOQUENS E DESIDERIO NEL MONDO VEDICO

Abstract

In this paper, the tripartition *manas-*, *mantra-*, *jihvā-*, which describes the *iter* of verbalisation from the purely eidetic dimension right up to the phonic dimension, is compared to a possible bipartition of the human being into *manuṣa-* and *puruṣa-*. While the former is etymologically and phenomenologically related to *manas-* and *mantra-* and refers to desire in the ‘ascetic’ sense (*tapas-*), the latter is related to the sphere of earthly facticity, to the *jihvā-* sphere of the pronounced word and to desire as related to *kāma-*, which can also descend to the dimension of body. Only by means of the complementarity of *manuṣa-* and *puruṣa-* may the *homo loquens* be born, and it is this *homo loquens* who is to all effects the bearer of language from the *dynamis of poetics*, but which does not exclude, however, connotations to the element of play. Finally this paper attempts to determine a collusion between the *homo loquens* and the *homo ludens*.

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1. Homo loquens

Nel presente contributo si intende delineare la possibilità di comparare nel mondo vedico una possibile tripartizione della dinamica verbale scandita in *manas-*, *mantra-* e *jihvā-*, con una bipartizione nella designazione dell'essere umano in *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-*.

In merito alla tripartizione si può interpretare *manas-* quale dimensione eidetica, sfera del pensiero e 'spazio' al quale il poeta attinge onde cogliere i motivi del suo stesso poetare.¹ Il pensiero sarebbe, tuttavia, destinato a confinarsi nella pura dimensione dell'essere in potenza, qualora non ci fosse la sfera del *mantra-*,² che consente l'attualizzarsi di quanto afferisce alla sfera del *manas-*. A partire dall'interrelarsi anche etimologico di *manas-* e *mantra-*, che alla medesima base *MAN*^l afferiscono,³ si perviene, così, al momento in cui si assiste all'acquisizione della veste fonica da parte del pensiero: si approda alla fase della *jihvā-*, della parola pronunciata. Che *manas-* e *jihvā-* siano complementari emerge, ad esempio, dall'accostamento dei due lessemi in *RV X, 53, 11*, passo in cui pensiero e lingua arcani agiscono sincronicamente.⁴

Si cerca, ora, in particolare, di valutare se effettivamente i termini implicati nella designazione dell'essere umano possano essere *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-*.

Guardando alla bipartizione dell'essere umano, si considera innanzitutto *manuṣa-*.

In *KEWA s.v. mānuḥ*, contrariamente all'*EWAia*, in cui non presenta tale ipotesi, Mayrhofer prospetta la possibilità che il termine sia da ricondursi alla base **men-*.⁵

¹ È, infatti, attingendo alla sfera del *manas-* che i poeti-sacerdoti crearono la parola stessa (*mānasā vācam ākrata*, *RV X, 71, 2*), cfr. anche *RV I, 171, 2*; *X, 20, 1*; *X, 177, 1*. Guarda alla correlazione fra *manas-* e sfera della parola LAZZERONI (1997: 129-134) e LAZZERONI (1998: 96-99)

² Donde il *māntrakṛt-*, cfr. *RV IX, 114, 2*.

³ La base *MAN*^l è descritta in MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 14*, 305-306.

⁴ Cfr. JAMISON (2014: III, 1464): «cryptic mind and tongue».

⁵ MAYRHOFER, *KEWA, II. Band, 575-576*, dove **men-* è il corrispettivo di *MAN*^l di MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 14*, 305-306. D'ora innanzi per coerenza si farà riferimento a quest'ultimo.

Se si ammette la connessione con la base **men-/MAN^l*, si viene ad avere che *manuṣa-* nasce in origine quale termine onde designare l'essere umano, in quanto partecipe della dimensione dell'essere in potenza declinantesi primariamente nel *manas-*, secondariamente nel *mantra-* che, seppur in diversa gradazione, partecipano entrambi della dimensione dell'essere in potenza, l'uno descrivendo la pura dimensione eidetica, l'altro facendosi tramite fra pensiero e parola.

In tale prospettiva si potrebbe ipotizzare l'esistenza di un termine preposto a designare l'essere umano nel suo manifestarsi nella dimensione dell'essere in atto, della *jihvā-*, nel suo farsi, quindi, portatore di parola pronunciata.

A noi sembra possibile individuare tale termine in *puruṣa-*.

Si guarderà, pertanto, a *puruṣa-* innanzitutto da un punto di vista etimologico, quindi alla sua celebrazione in *RV X, 90*, infine alla selezione di *puruṣa-* quale termine designante la persona verbale (Kātyāyana Vt. VIII on P. 1.4.1).⁶

Per quanto concerne la prospettiva etimologica si delinea la possibilità di cogliere in *puruṣa* un termine scaturito, per quanto concerne *u-ṣa*, dal confronto con *manuṣa-*,⁷ quasi si trattasse di un termine originariamente nato onde attualizzare una componente, una possibilità dell'essere umano, quella di esprimersi nella sfera dell'essere in atto, dominio della *jihvā-*, che il termine *manuṣa-* con la base *MAN^l*, con la sua connessione, quindi, con la sfera dell'essere in potenza di *manas-* e *mantra-*, non sembrava in grado di esprimere adeguatamente.⁸

Tale avvio della vicenda etimologica di *puruṣa-* sembra suggerire una complementarità di *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-* nella designazione dell'essere umano, complementarità comparabile con quella della triade *manas-*, *mantra-* e *jihvā-*.

⁶ Cfr. PĀṆINI (1995: 237): «Pāṇini does not use the word *puruṣa* 'person' as a technical term, but it is known to Kātyāyana (Vt. VIII on P. 1.4.1)».

⁷ MAYRHOFER, *EWAia*, II. Band, *Lieferung 12*, 149-150.

⁸ Per quanto si assista, poi, a una tendenziale generalizzazione di *manuṣa-*.

Se *u-ṣa* si spiega per influsso di *manuṣa-*, si verrebbe ad avere una forma di partenza **pūrṣa* < **pṛHso-* rapportabile all'idg. **per-h₃*, *PAR²* di Mayrhofer,⁹ da cui *πορεῖν*¹⁰ e *pariō*.¹¹

Per *PAR²* in *puruṣa-* viene a delinearci una duplice possibilità semantica, questione che in seguito tenteremo di dirimere. Una prima possibilità è che il termine afferisca alla semantica del dare, semantica originaria di *PAR²* “geben, schenken, spenden”,¹² che ben si adatterebbe alla dinamica che vuole il *puruṣa-* quale portatore, datore di parola nella dimensione dell'essere in atto, della faticità terrestre, nella sfera della *jihvā-*. La seconda possibilità è che il termine sia riconducibile alla semantica della generazione, attualizzarsi di *PAR²* che si verifica nel caso di *pariō* e che appare non incompatibile con il manifestarsi di *puruṣa-*, in quanto in grado di sottolineare la *dynamis* germinativa della parola.

In merito alla differenza fra *PAR¹* e *PAR²* sembrerebbe esclusivamente quantitativa e non qualitativa. Grassmann ammette, infatti, quali valenze del verbo *par*, attualizzazione di *PAR¹*, anche i significati di «reichlich spenden, schenken», mentre Mayrhofer, come si è visto, propone quali significati di *PAR²* «geben, schenken, spenden». Si sembrerebbe legittimati a pensare che, originariamente, vi fosse un unico *PAR* e che solo successivamente, per la tendenza a dicotomizzare, si sarebbe sdoppiato in *PAR¹* e *PAR²*.

A conferma vi sono alcuni passi che coinvolgono *puruṣa-* e verbi derivanti da *PAR¹*. Sembrerebbe insito in tale accostamento l'intento di generare una figura etimologica nonché un gioco di natura fonica, che nel mondo vedico non è pressoché mai limitato ai foni, coinvolgendo in un unico gioco anche i sèmi.

⁹ MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 12*, 90-91.

¹⁰ Cfr. FRISK, *GEW, Band II*, 579-580.

¹¹ Non persuade la connessione fra **pūrṣa* < **pṛHso-* e il lat. *pāricīda*, *parricīda* (da un prelat. **parso-*) ‘*Verwandtenmörder*’, che sarebbe da ricondursi a un originario *Menschenmörder* rintracciabile in *RV I*, 114, 10 *pūruṣa-ghnā-* (MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 12*, 150; cfr. MAYRHOFER, *KEWA, Band II*, 312-313).

¹² Cfr. *prñāti*, *pūrtā n.*, *pūrtī f.*, MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 12*, 90.

Tra i significati di *PAR*¹ funzionale alla presente ricostruzione è, in particolare, quello che contiene l'indicazione di riempimento, ma anche quello che si accompagna alla nozione di attraversamento: *puruṣa-* è, infatti, il fautore dell'attraversamento, del transitare dalla dimensione del *manas-* a quella della *jihvā-* e si può dire che si diffonda per lo spazio intermedio (*antarikṣa-*) riempiendolo con la sua parola, similmente all'Aurora di *RV VII, 75, 3*, strofe nella quale significativamente si ha la forma verbale *āprṇānto*:

*eté tyé bhānāvo darśatāyāś citrā uṣāso amṛtāsa āguḥ /
janāyānto daīvyāni vratāny āprṇānto antārikṣā vy
àsthuh //*

«Ecco, gli splendidi raggi immortali di Uṣas, bella a vedersi, sono giunti! Mettendo in atto le ordinanze divine, si sono diffusi nello spazio intermedio riempiendolo!».¹³

A favore della connessione fra *puruṣa-* e *PAR*¹ si guarda alla contiguità che il poeta stesso ha voluto creare in *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad III, 9* fra *puruṣa-* e *pūrṇam*:

*yasmāt paraṃ nāparam asti kiṃcit yasmān nānīyo na
jiyāyo 'sti kaścit /
vrkṣeva stabdho divi tiṣṭhaty ekas tenedaṃ pūrṇam
puruṣeṇa sarvam //*

«Di lui, più alto, non vi è nulla: nulla è più piccolo, nulla più grande. È un albero che ha radici in cielo, l'Uno, il Puruṣa, che interamente riempie questo mondo».

Si verrebbe, dunque, ad avere un fecondo intersecarsi di *PAR*² di *puruṣa-* e *PAR*¹ di *pūrṇam* fino a suggerire un confondersi di *PAR*¹ e *PAR*² che verrebbero a colludere in una più semplice base *PAR*.

Onde definire il *puruṣa-* e coglierne l'attualizzarsi delle potenzialità che il nome pare recare in sé, si guarda, ora, a *RV X, 90*, inno al Puruṣa dedicato. Si considera l'inno una sorta di

¹³ SANI (2000b: 131).

‘celebrazione dell’uomo’, in particolare dell’*homo loquens*, piuttosto che una descrizione della sorte del Puruṣa quale «gigante cosmico di effigie umana dal quale sarebbe nato il mondo».¹⁴

Si percorrono cursoriamente alcuni momenti dell’*inno*.

La prima strofe descrive l’originario carattere oloedrico, la milleplanarità della dimensione alla quale afferisce il Puruṣa e nella quale solamente può vivere con le sue “mille teste”, con i suoi “mille occhi, mille piedi” e la sua olotropia, che lo induce ad abbracciare “la terra da ogni lato”:

*sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣāḥ sahasrapāt /
sā bhūmiṃ viśvāto vṛtvāty atīṣṭhad daśāṅgulām //*
«Puruṣa aveva mille teste, mille occhi, mille piedi.
Ricopriva tutta la terra da ogni parte e la superava ancora
di dieci dita».¹⁵

Imprescindibile la seconda strofe con la sua espressione di una temporalità che, onde realizzare la nozione di passato e di futuro, ricorre alla perifrasi «ciò che è divenuto e ciò che sta per divenire», testimoniando come lo statuto ontologico sia affidato al nomadismo del divenire, piuttosto che alla stanzialità dell’essere, al mondo *jagat-* e non al mondo *sthā-*.¹⁶

*puruṣa evédam sārvaṃ yād bhūtām yac ca bhāvyaṃ /
utāmṛtatvāsyésāno yād ānnenātiróhati //*
«L’uomo è davvero questo universo, ciò che è divenuto e
ciò che sta per divenire; anche dell’immortalità è
diventato signore, perché col nutrimento cresce sempre
di più».¹⁷

Tale rappresentazione della temporalità risulta coerente con il riferimento alla crescita indefinita e con la natura stessa del sacrificio. Si può cogliere, infatti, il sacrificio del Puruṣa quale

¹⁴ AMBROSINI (1981: 90).

¹⁵ SANI (2000b: 67-68).

¹⁶ Cfr. SANI (2000a: 103-113). Per l’affermarsi, nella dimensione vedica, del mondo *jagat-* piuttosto che del mondo *sthā-*, cfr. anche LAZZERONI (1998: 13-24).

¹⁷ AMBROSINI (1981: 90-94).

celebrazione di esistenza nella negazione dell'essere stanziale a favore di un alchemico mutarsi, un letterale tras-formarsi da *Urmensch* in mondo, senza annientare la primitiva forma, bensì potenziandola in un miriadico frangersi. Si tratta di un politropico darsi nella dimensione dell'essere in atto a partire dall'originaria olotropia propria, nella sua indefinitezza, della dimensione dell'essere in potenza.

A questo punto, prima di procedere con la considerazione di altri momenti dell'inno, si propone un'*ekphrasis* nel mondo greco.

L'espressione della temporalità della seconda strofe può, infatti, risultare comparabile con espressioni volte a esprimere la temporalità, che si incontrano nel mondo greco, per quanto queste ultime si realizzino nel dominio dell'essere piuttosto che in quello del divenire.

In *Il. I*, 70 si ha Calcante che conosce *τά τ'έόντα τά τ'έσσόμενα πρό τ'έόντα*, in *Theog.* 29-32 si ha il poeta ispirato dalle Muse, perché canti *τά τ'έσσόμενα πρό τ'έόντα*.

Nell'ultimo frammento pervenuto del poema di Parmenide (28 B 19 D.-K.) all'espressione del tempo si associa il riferimento alla nominazione, donde si può pensare che si tratti di una prima embrionale espressione della verbalizzazione del tempo. Si tratterebbe di un delinarsi dell'atto germinativo del tempo verbale, un definirsi di natura linguistica, seppure immerso in un'opera dominata da interessi epistemologici, nella quale, infatti, il tempo verbale, in quanto legato al mondo fenomenico, afferisce alla sfera della *δόξα* e non a quella dell'*ἀλήθεια*.¹⁸

οὔτω τοι κατὰ δόξαν ἔφν τάδε καί νυν ἔασι
καὶ μετέπειτ' ἀπὸ τοῦδε τελευτήσουσι τραφέντα·
τοῖς δ' ὄνομ' ἄνθρωποι κατέθεντ' ἐπίσημον ἑκάστωι.
«Fu così che si produsse questa natura delle cose
secondo quel che pare,

¹⁸ Evidenzia UNTERSTEINER (1958: CCX): «la *Δόξα* di Parmenide è concepita dal filosofo come la temporalità del reale di fronte all'atemporalità dell'*έόν* nell'*Αλήθεια*».

e così son esse ora qui e da qui in poi una volta cresciute
finiranno;
e ad esse gli uomini han posto un nome designativo per
ciascuna».¹⁹

Se in questo frammento di Parmenide si può cogliere una prima espressione del tempo verbale nel mondo greco, non ci si può esimere dal segnalare un'analoga possibilità di ravvisare il delinarsi di una verbalizzazione del tempo in *RV X*, 90. Questo si ha coniugando, in particolare, la seconda e l'undicesima strofe: se nella seconda strofe si ha l'identificarsi della manifestazione del Puruṣa con la temporalità, nella strofe 11 si assiste alla sottolineatura della capacità demiurgica della parola con l'atto di nominazione delle parti del Puruṣa che sfocia nel farsi del mondo.

Nell'evidenziare la centralità della parola nel dispiegarsi dell'inno l'undicesima strofe non è, peraltro, isolata. Diversi sono i momenti dell'inno che cooperano in tal senso. Si tratta delle strofe 9 e 12. Nella nona strofe si ha lo scaturire di canti, melodie rituali, metri, da cui il canto sacrificale.²⁰

*tásmād yajñāt sarvahíta ṛcaḥ sāmāni jajñire /
chándāmsi jajñire tásmād yájus tásmād ajāyata //*
«Da quel sacrificio completamente offerto nacquero il
Ṛgveda e il *Sāmaveda*; da quello nacquero i metri; da
quello nacque lo *Yajurveda*».

Nella dodicesima strofe si ha, invece, l'attualizzarsi della bocca del Puruṣa nel conoscitore della formula.

La dinamica verbale del Puruṣa non si limita, però, a richiamare la possibilità dell'emissione del materiale verbale nel momento della creazione, ne viene, altresì, richiamato l'atto della ricezione. Nella quattordicesima strofe si ha, infatti, che dagli orecchi del Puruṣa scaturiscono le parti del mondo a significare, a un tempo, sia il fatto che «solo di ciò che si ode si sa

¹⁹ La traduzione è di LAMI (1995²: 295).

²⁰ La traduzione delle tre strofe di *RV X*, 90 è di SANI (2000b: 67-68).

l'esistenza»,²¹ sia che con il manifestarsi del Puruṣa (mediante il suo stesso sacrificio) si ha non solo l'attivarsi del polo comunicativo rappresentato dall'emittente del messaggio, ma anche il coinvolgimento del destinatario. Questo prevede l'attivazione del canale dell'ascolto, a completare, così, il circuito della dinamica dialettica.

Riscontrata la complementarità di tali momenti con la strofe 11 a definire la centralità della dimensione verbale nell'inno *RV X, 90*, si può guardare nuovamente alla seconda strofe, nella quale si ha il delinearsi della temporalità.

Coniugando il manifestarsi della *dynamis* verbale e il dispiegarsi della temporalità che, entrambe, confluiscono nel Puruṣa, si viene ad avere la possibilità di cogliere nell'inno la consapevolezza del tempo verbale, il profilarsi di una sua eziologia e celebrazione: in seguito alla διαίρεσις del Puruṣa si delinea la possibilità che una base lessicale atemporale, che si colloca nell'indistinta dimensione precosmogonica dell'essere in potenza, venga a declinarsi nello spazio e nel tempo, proprio perché il Puruṣa è «ciò che è divenuto e ciò che sta per divenire». Questo pone le premesse stesse per il proporsi del *puruṣa*- quale persona verbale.²²

In definitiva l'inno *X, 90*, incentrato sul sacrificio del Puruṣa, diviene potenziale luogo in cui si assiste sia all'attualizzarsi della *dynamis* onomatopoeica sia all'atto di verbalizzazione del tempo.

Si cercherà, ora, di valutare se il manifestarsi del Puruṣa in tale inno possa indurre a propendere per un'opzione etimologica piuttosto che per un'altra, e si cercherà di cogliere se la vicenda stessa di *RV X, 90* possa essere stata, in certa qual misura suggerita e indotta proprio dall'etimologia di *puruṣa*-. Tale eventuale influenza dell'etimologia non sarebbe, peraltro, incompatibile con il carattere dell'inno fortemente incentrato proprio sulla potenzialità della parola nel suo attualizzarsi nel dominio della *jihvā*-.

²¹ AMBROSINI (1981: 90).

²² Kātyāyana Vt. VIII on P. 1.4.1.

Pur ritenendo, come già espresso, tutt'altro che incoerente la semantica di generare, si crede, tuttavia, di poter cogliere in X, 90 indicazioni in direzione di una connessione fra *puruṣa-* e semantica del dare.

Dalla centralità della parola in *RV X, 90* e dalla presenza del motivo del sacrificio, di cui il Puruṣa è oggetto e che è decodificabile quale forma estrema del darsi, scaturisce facilmente la possibilità di un'interferenza con la semantica del dare e del darsi della parola nella dimensione dell'essere in atto, nella sfera della *jihvā-*.

Il *puruṣa-*, che nel suo stesso nome lascerebbe trasparire la semantica del dare, si dà secondo l'estrema modalità del sacrificio, celebrazione del divenire in quanto negazione dell'essere nella sua stanzialità, e genera il cosmo, che scaturisce da atti di nominazione, e il tempo, che, analogamente, si definisce concretizzandosi in atti verbali: il *puruṣa-* consegna spazio e tempo al divenire mediante l'attualizzarsi delle potenzialità della parola.

Si può, quindi, cogliere in X, 90 il manifestarsi di un darsi verbale del *puruṣa-* e l'attualizzarsi della parola nello spazio e nel tempo che vengono, così, ad essere o, meglio, a divenire. Si ha quindi che il *puruṣa-*, configurandosi quale "datore" d'atto verbale, viene a offrirsi naturalmente quale termine onde esprimere la persona verbale: in *RV X, 90* il Puruṣa, fautore d'estremo *PAR*, si prepara a diffrangersi in *prathamapuruṣa*, *madhyamapuruṣa* e *uttamapuruṣa*, persone che si danno nell'atto verbale consegnandosi alla sfera della *jihvā-*.

In definitiva se *puruṣa-* è espressione delle basi *PAR¹* e *PAR²* prese in considerazione da Mayrhofer, si delinea la concreta possibilità, inizialmente ipotizzata, di un corrisondersi di tripartizione di *manas-*, *mantra-* e *jihvā-* e di bipartizione antropologica in *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-*: l'uno afferisce alla dimensione dell'essere in potenza di *manas-* e *mantra-*, l'altro afferisce alla dimensione dell'essere in atto della *jihvā-*, che, in ultima istanza, risulta cromata dal darsi sia della parola pronunciata sia del *puruṣa-*.

Dalla complementarità di *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-* si ha, dunque, l'*homo loquens*.²³

2. *Desiderare nel mondo vedico: complementarità di kāma- e tapas-*

2.1. *Puruṣa-, soggetto del kāma-, e manuṣa-, soggetto del tapas-*

Se l'*homo loquens* si scandisce in *manuṣa-*, che si declina nella dimensione dell'essere in potenza, e in *puruṣa-*, che si declina nella dimensione dell'essere in atto, entrambi che diversamente seppure armonicamente si rapportano alla parola e al mondo, è postulabile che si debba far ricorso a due differenti termini anche onde esprimere lo *Streben* desiderante che si attualizza in modo diverso se si guarda alla fenomenologia del *puruṣa-* piuttosto che del *manuṣa-*.

Nel caso del *puruṣa-* la *Weltanschauung* e l'enciclopedia di questi sono descrivibili nei termini della dimensione dell'essere in atto, in particolare nella sfera della *jihvā-*, della parola pronunciata che positivamente connota la *Geworfenheit* dell'essere umano nella fatticità terrestre. Il *puruṣa-*, quale soggetto desiderante, potrebbe trovare, quindi, adeguato significante del proprio desiderio nel *kāma-*²⁴ che, infatti, nella dimensione dell'essere in atto fisiologicamente si declina e, in particolare, nella corporeità ha luogo specifico di espressione.²⁵

²³ Si ritiene che queste nostre pagine possano, forse, costituirsi quali indizi a corroborare l'ipotesi che PISANI (1981: 515-517) avanza a proposito dell'etimologia di ἄνθρωπος volendolo, appunto, *homo loquens*, etimologia che ci persuade in misura maggiore rispetto alla proposta di SILVESTRI (1997: 929-986) che, pur volendo legittimamente sfuggire alla prospettiva androcentrica, rischia tuttavia, mediante il ricorso alla prospettiva cronomimica, di sottoporre ἄνθρωπος ad una componente nuovamente gerarchizzante.

²⁴ Cfr. MAYRHOFER, *EWAia*, I. Band, *Lieferung* 5, 338-339; MAYRHOFER, *KEWA*, I. Band, 200.

²⁵ Cfr., ad esempio, nel *Rg-Veda*: RV I, 179, 4a; II, 38, 6b; III, 30, 19c; III, 54, 2b; IV, 43, 7d; IV, 44, 7d; V, 42, 15c; V, 61, 18c; VII, 20, 9c; VII, 97, 4c; VIII, 78, 9b; IX, 97, 46d; X, 10, 7a. Per la centralità della dimensione corporea nel caso del Puruṣa si è visto RV X, 90.

Diversa è la situazione del *manuṣa-* la cui sfera pertiene, anche per *philia* etimologica, a *manas-* e *mantra-*. Per il *manuṣa-* il desiderio non è, dunque, da ricercarsi nella dimensione dell'essere in atto e nella corporeità: la fenomenologia del desiderio del *manuṣa-* verte sulla dimensione dell'essere in potenza, si articola nella sfera del *manas-*.

Pare si possa proporre il *tapas-*²⁶ quale termine che realizzi la semantica del desiderio del *manuṣa-*. Se già *manuṣa-* è direttamente legato alla base *MAN^l*, che lo vuole in grado di afferire alla dimensione di *manas-* e *mantra-*, termini ugualmente da ricondursi a *MAN^l*, è la medesima base a ripresentarsi anche nel caso di *manyu-*, interessante lessema che si connette al *tapas-*. Il *tapas-* è, infatti, passibile di essere letto strettamente congiunto a *manyu-*,²⁷ come emerge in particolare da *RV X, 83, 3b* e dal sintagma *manyō tāpasā sajōṣāḥ* presente sia in *RV X, 83, 2d* sia in *AV IV, 32, 2d*. Si tratta di passi nei quali si delinea il legame fra *tapas-* e *manyu-*, che attiva, quindi, un intersecarsi del *tapas-* e della base *MAN^l* qui testimoniata da *manyu-* e condivisa da *manuṣa-*. *Manyu-*, dunque, etimologicamente connesso a *manuṣa-*, è dal punto di vista fenomenologico connesso al *tapas-*. Connessione anche genealogica è colta da Geldner²⁸ che vuole il Tapas personificato²⁹ quale padre di Manyu, interpretazione che tuttavia non trova riscontro nel testo per quanto sia possibile che il legame di paternità di Tapas e Manyu sia da intendersi in senso metaforico: il Tapas, essendo in grado di generare Manyu, può dirsi padre di questi.

Si possono evidenziare ulteriori passi volti a mostrare la reciproca dipendenza fra la sfera del *manuṣa-* e quella del *tapas-*.

²⁶ Cfr. MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, I. Band, Lieferung 8*, 624-625; MAYRHOFER, *KEWA, I. Band*, 477.

²⁷ Cfr. MAYRHOFER, *EWAia, II. Band, Lieferung 14*, 313-314, MAYRHOFER, *KEWA, II. Band*, 585. Cfr. anche SANI (2009: 1194): 1. spirito, mente, umore, tempra (RV; TS; Br); 2. ardore, zelo, passione (R); 3. rabbia, furia, collera, indignazione (anche personificate, spec. come Agni, Kāma o come Rudra); 4. afflizione, rimpianto, turbamento (MBh, Kāv); 5. sacrificio (Nalac); 6. N. di un re (figlio di Vithata), (BhP); 7. (con Tāpasa) N. dell'autore di RV X, 83; 84; 8. (con Vāsiṣṭha) N. dell'autore di RV IX, 97, 10-12.

²⁸ Cfr. GELDNER (1951: III, 265).

²⁹ Il Tapas personificato è, ad esempio, presente in *RV X, 109, 1c*.

La sfera del *manuṣa-* è testimoniata ora dalla presenza del lessema stesso, ora dalla presenza di *mānuṣa-*, ora dall'accenno alla dimensione del *manas-*.

Si possono, pertanto, ritenere significativi alcuni passi rigvedici quale è il caso di *RV IV, 2*, inno nel quale si ha *manuṣa-* (2a), il riferimento alla dimensione del *manas-* (3b), nonché la presenza, seppure umbratile, del *tapas-* evocato nella forma verbale *tatapate* (6a). *Mānuṣa-* è presente anche in *RV III, 2, 10a* in concomitanza con *tejas-*, che, rappresentando il calore indotto dall'ascesi, quindi il *tapas-*, determina l'occasione per celebrare nuovamente la contiguità della dimensione del *manuṣa-* e del *tapas-*.

Funzionale a cogliere l'intersecarsi della sfera del *manuṣa-* e di quella del *tapas-*, può essere anche constatare come la sfera del *tapas-*, quand'anche non personificato, sia sfera strettamente contigua alla presenza di Agni anche nel suo declinarsi quale elemento 'fuoco', fuoco che all'ardore e all'ardere insiti nel *tapas-* fisiologicamente si connette. In merito al legame fra *manuṣa-* e Agni, che al *tapas-* rinvia, indicativi sono alcuni passi: *RV II, 2*, inno dedicato ad Agni, nel quale iterata è la presenza di *Manuṣa*, e similmente *RV VI, 10, 2b*, che accoglie *manuṣa-* e *agni-* in un inno nuovamente dedicato ad Agni. Anche *RV X, 80, 6a* associa *agni-*, *manuṣa-* e *mānuṣa-*, mentre si ha il ricorrere di *agni-* e *mānuṣa-* in *RV V, 8, 3a*. *RV IV, 1*, consente, poi, di rilevare, in un inno dedicato ad Agni, la presenza di *manuṣa-* (9a), essere umano che si declina in particolare quale *homo loquens*, come mostrano la sezione finale della strofe 15 e quella iniziale della strofe 16, che coniugano *göttliches Wort (vācasā daívyena)* e *nāman-*, il cui attualizzarsi prevalentemente pertiene alla sfera umana, suggerendo così un intersecarsi di dimensione verbale divina e dimensione verbale umana, del *manuṣa-*, intersecarsi che richiama la dimensione poetica, luogo di incontro di uomini e dèi.

Fisiologico termine volto a significare il desiderio del *manuṣa-* parrebbe, dunque, essere il *tapas-*, lessema che ha in sé una capacità demiurgica in grado di manifestarsi sia in prospettiva umana, in particolare, nel legame che intercorre fra

il *tapas-* e la creazione poetica, sia in prospettiva cosmogonica, come si vedrà emergere da *RV X*, 129, 3.

2.2. Potenzialità demiurgica del *tapas-*

Nel caso del legame che intercorre fra *tapas-* e parola poetica si possono considerare alcuni esempi rigvedici, quali *RV VIII*, 89, 7cd che celebra il «*tapas des Dichters*» o *RV X*, 68, 6b, che coniuga dimensione verbale e valenza cosmogonica: i “canti aventi il *tapas* di Agni” aprono, infatti, la caverna di Vala. La *dynamis* del *tapas-* e la sua connessione con la sfera verbale emergono, d'altronde, anche per sottrazione: è detto essere *ataptatanūh* e *āmáh*, “dal corpo non riscaldato e crudo” colui il cui corpo non è ovunque percorso da Brahmanaspati, divinità strettamente legata alla parola (*RV IX*, 83, 1).³⁰

Nel caso del declinarsi prevalentemente filogenetico del *tapas-* eloquenti sono passi sia del *Ṛg-Veda* sia dell'*Atharva-Veda*.

Particolarmente articolato è il caso di *RV X*, 129, 3-4, il cui svolgersi crea, peraltro, una tassonomia che prevede la priorità del *tapas-* sul *kāma-*:³¹

tāma āsīt tāmasā gūḷhām āgre 'praketām salilām sārvaṃ
ā idām /
tuchyénābhv āpīhitam yād āsīt tāpasas tām
mahinājāyataikam //
kāmas tād āgre sām avartatādhi mānaso rétaḥ
prathamām yād āsīt /
sató bāndhum āsati nír avindan hr̥dī pratīṣyā kaváyo
manīṣā //
 «In principio vi era solo tenebra nascosta dalla tenebra.
 Acqua indistinta era tutto questo universo. Il germe

³⁰ Per tali esempi siamo debitori a MAGGI (2006: 1020, n. 50). Per la presenza di un ulteriore elemento, l'elemento acquoreo, in relazione al *tapas-* e al *kāma-* cfr. FALK (2004²: 28-34).

³¹ Cfr. VALENTI (2015-2016: 163-191, in particolare 167).

dell'esistenza, che era avvolto dal nulla, grazie al potere del suo ardore interiore (*tapas-*), nacque come l'Uno. In principio fu il desiderio (*kāma-*) che si mosse sopra Ciò, il desiderio che fu il primo atto fecondante della mente. Il legame di Ciò-che-è con Ciò-che-non-è lo trovarono nel loro cuore i poeti, vòlti ad apporre significanti ai significati».

La centralità del *tapas-* a livello cosmogonico emerge, d'altronde, quand'anche a essere *focus* dell'inno non sia il *tapas-* in sé. Esempi si hanno in AV XIX, 54, 1b, e in AV XIX, 53, 10d: nel primo passo, pur essendo il tempo, celebrato quale padre del tutto, oggetto principale dell'inno, termine primo della *Sorge* creatrice del tempo stesso è proprio il *tapas-*. Difficilmente questo può considerarsi evento casuale se, nel secondo passo indicato, si crea una sorta di curioso *hysteron-proteron* in un circolo virtuoso fra saggio, *tapas-* di questi e tempo: il saggio è detto nato da se stesso e tuttavia è generato dal tempo «perché dal tempo è nato il desiderio ardente di sapere», ossia il *tapas-*, che è il movente stesso del saggio.³²

La *dynamis* del *tapas-* nel mondo vedico è, quindi, ovunque e sempre endogena all'uomo, se questi è passibile di essere definito tale, se, cioè, è effettivamente implicato e impegnato in un percorso evolutivo. Il carattere originario e creatore del *tapas-* è, pertanto, da intendersi quale origine e termine del sussistere sia del cosmo sia dell'interiorità umana.

A conferma del fisiologico intersecarsi di *tapas-* ed essere umano in quanto soggetto desiderante, viene, peraltro, in aiuto anche l'inno XIX, 72 dell'*Atharva-Veda* sia per il suo contenuto, in quanto è già in sé celebrazione del *tapas-*, in particolare del *tapas-* dello *ṛṣi-* autore dell'inno, sia per il fatto che proprio di tale inno, secondo i commentatori indiani, si richiedeva la recitazione sia al termine dei riti dedicatori nello studio dei *Veda* sia al termine degli altri rituali.³³ Si tratterebbe, quindi, nel caso del *tapas-* di una celebrazione 'inesausta'.

³² Cfr. AMBROSINI (1984: 174).

³³ Cfr. AMBROSINI (1984: 179-180).

Il *tapas-* pare, dunque, da considerarsi in sé *condicio sine qua non*, a livello filogenetico, del cosmo così come, a livello ontogenetico, del singolo essere umano.³⁴

2.3. Evoluzione del *manuṣa-* e *tapas-* dell'asceta

Se, in particolare, si segue l'*iter* del *tapas-* dell'asceta, si nota come il desiderio sia sottoposto a una spiroidale evoluzione similmente a quanto avviene nell'ambito della parola dell'essere umano per la quale si assiste a un comparabile processo evolutivo che, in quanto processo *in fieri*, coinvolge il mondo *jagat-* e non *sthā-*. Il sussistere stesso di tali processi consente di trovare conferma di come *tapas-* e parola condividano l'afferire al mondo *jagat-* cui segue l'assegnazione dello statuto ontologico al divenire. Ne è, ad esempio, testimonianza *RV X*, 154, che non si limita a evidenziare l'intersecarsi di *tapas-* e

³⁴ Nel mondo greco forte è, invece, l'ambiguità che caratterizza la semantica del desiderare, attualizzata nel termine ἐπιθυμία. Il termine è ammesso, infatti, quale *vox media* solo fino a Platone che, onde esprimere il desiderio in senso deteriore, ricorre all'aggettivo κακός, -ή, -όν (cfr. *Leg.* 9, 854a, *Resp.* I, 328d, e, similmente, Senofonte in *Mem.* I, 2, 64), per poi assumere ineludibilmente una valenza negativa nella filosofia greca, dove si tratta di giudizio etico, non religioso come, invece, accade nel mondo israelitico-giudaico sin dalle origini e non diversamente emerge nel Nuovo Testamento, cfr. BÜCHSEL (1968: coll. 593-603). Scostando l'attenzione dall'antichità il tema del desiderio potentemente appare in ambito psicoanalitico: se, in una sorta di afflato riduzionistico della complessità del discorso freudiano, si può dire che in tale delinarsi della psicoanalisi il desiderio venga fatto afferire all'*Es* e, conseguentemente, sia da modularsi ad opera dell'*Io*, Lacan scioglie il desiderio da tale vincolo, non prospettando un desiderio religiosamente e ossequiosamente ligio al *Nomos* dominante bensì un desiderio che si pone oltre il *common sense*. Lacan non si esime, tuttavia, dal richiamare la necessità del coniugarsi di desiderio e mondo. Se, infatti, il desiderio si cristallizza in un indefinito circolare su se stesso, con sé recando un ritiro autistico che radicalmente escluda il mondo, rischia di approdare a una condizione patologica fino a cronicizzarsi nel momento in cui diviene il 'tempo delle glaciazioni' (cfr. RESNIK [2001]). Il *désir* non è, dunque, desiderio dell'Uno senza l'Altro, Lacan prospetta, piuttosto, la possibilità di raggiungere attraverso la via del desiderio un altro godimento che permetta al soggetto di aggirarsi nel mondo quale *Leib* e non quale *Körper*. Il soggetto desiderante, 'gettato nel linguaggio', è ineludibilmente convocato all'esercizio della parola che reca con sé il *désir* dalla dimensione dell'essere in potenza a quella dell'essere in atto. Il porsi lacaniano di fronte al 'desiderio' pare così evocare la viva connessione che nel mondo vedico significativamente coniuga *tapas-* e sfera verbale, nonché la complementarità di *tapas-*, afferente all'indefinita dimensione dell'essere in potenza, e *kāma-*, afferente alla dimensione dell'essere in atto, al mondo.

dimensione ascetica, ma li vuole entrambi coinvolti nel mondo *jagat*- come testimonia l'iterata presenza all'interno dell'inno di verbi di moto quali *dhāv*, *gam*, *yā*. Per quanto concerne la parola si ha che dalla dimensione puramente eidetica (sfera del *manas*-), il pensiero del *manuṣa*- scorre progressivamente verso la dimensione dell'essere in atto, verbalizzandosi in parola nella sfera del *mantra*-, fino a cromarsi di foni. Si fa, quindi, parola pronunciata afferente alla dimensione della *jihvā*-. Il percorso della parola non è tuttavia ancora concluso: le associazioni che la sostanza fonica suggerisce nella fitta trama di figure contenute nei versi del *Rg-Veda* stesso sono in grado di tornare alla dimensione dell'essere in potenza come testimonia la possibilità di accrescere gli dèi proprio mediante la parola poetica. La capacità della parola di accrescere la divinità è, ad esempio, testimoniata da *RV* V, 31, 4cd e VI, 24, 7cd, passi nei quali la divinità coinvolta è Indra:

*brahmāṇa indram maháyanto arkair ávardhayann áhaye
hántavā u //*

«I poeti ispirati accrebbero Indra con i canti, lo rafforzarono per l'uccisione del serpente»

*vṛddhásya cid vardhatām asya tanú stómebhir ukthais ca
śasyámānā //*

«sebbene sia cresciuto, il suo corpo cresca ancora, onorato con canti e con inni».³⁵

Analogamente, per quanto concerne il *tapas*-, si ha che tale desiderare si manifesta sia in fase iniziale sia in fase egressiva. Come si può cogliere in *RV* X, 129, 3, il *tapas*- è l'incipitario desiderio che circola indefinitamente e indistintamente nella dimensione dell'essere in potenza rischiando di cristallizzarsi in un'autistica auto-referenzialità. Tale rischio è scongiurato dall'appresentarsi del *kāma*- che consente l'attualizzarsi del desiderio nella dimensione dell'essere in atto (*RV* X, 129, 4). In

³⁵ Cfr. anche *RV*, III, 31, 4; VI, 24, 7. Dell'accrescimento della divinità in forza della parola si occupa LAZZERONI (1997: 147-162) e LAZZERONI (1998: 43-48). Cfr. anche LÜDERS (1959: 555-568).

fase egressiva il *tapas-* si manifesta poi quale ascetico *Streben* che permette all'essere umano di tornare alla dimensione dell'essere in potenza arricchito delle forme e dei colori del mondo vissuti anche nell'attualizzarsi del *kāma-*, donde, nuovamente, la complementarità di *tapas-* e *kāma-*.

Il desiderio volto al mondo *jāgat-* conduce l'essere umano a una ricognizione fra gli elementi dell'universo per realizzare un Ritorno che si giova dell'esperienza vissuta derivantegli sia dall'interazione con il mondo, sia dalla rinuncia allo stesso. Il ritornare del *manuṣa-* non è il ritorno di un *Körper* anonimo, asettico, ma è il ritornare di un *Leib* che ha saputo pulsare al ritmo degli elementi. Il *tapas-* è *dynamis* desiderante in sé ambigua in quanto implica ora l'accesso al mondo ora la rinuncia allo stesso. Eppure non è fredda, scarna, abulica privazione, bensì caldo, acceso, pieno desiderio.

Prova ne è, ad esempio, il fatto stesso che la morte dell'asceta non necessita di cremazione perché questi già è arso in vita attraverso il *tapas-* e può, conseguentemente, essere inumato.³⁶ L'asceta ha, di fatto, raggiunto l'*akme* dell'evoluzione dell'essere umano: anche per la condizione di austerità nella quale viene a trovarsi, il 'rinunciante' riduce progressivamente la necessità di ricorrere al compimento di sacrifici destinati agli dèi. Viene, dunque, conseguita una condizione che consente, infine, di poter prescindere sia dalla necessità di chiedere l'aiuto degli dèi sia dal premunirsi dal rischio dei demoni.³⁷ La condizione di liberazione alla quale l'asceta perviene gli permette, quindi, di prescindere dalla dipendenza dagli dèi e dal ciclo stesso di rinascite al quale l'uomo è altrimenti ineluttabilmente destinato.

³⁶ Cfr. MALAMOUD (1978: 448-449); FILIPPI (2010: 65-66, 119, 149). Analogamente al mondo vedico anche nel mondo greco si può notare una certa peculiarità nelle modalità di sepoltura che coinvolgono figure dalla particolare vita interiore, figure di precursori e mistici con connotazione sciamanica. Sia sufficiente, qui, citare il caso di Epimenide: alla sua morte, infatti, il suo corpo si scopre essere tatuato di segni e viene conseguentemente conservato intatto onde essere letto dai seguaci (Diogene Laerzio I, 115; Suida, s.v.), cfr. COSTA (2007: 85-95). Sulla connotazione sciamanica di figure arcaiche del pensiero greco cfr. VEGETTI (2007: 165-177), nonché SASSI (2009: in particolare 165-201). Sull'eccentricità della persona di Socrate rispetto ai filosofi successivi cfr. SASSI (2015).

³⁷ Cfr. MALAMOUD (2008: 167-169).

Tale condizione evoca quella che si può definire ‘concordia’, che è oggetto di celebrazione dell’*inno X*, 191 del *R̥g-Veda*, *inno* caratterizzato dall’esplicita e insistente presenza dell’elemento *sam-* in una totalizzante celebrazione della ‘concordia’ quale attività sincretica nonché *inno* volto al dio del fuoco, Agni, fisiologicamente connesso al *tapas-*. Tale *inno* è, peraltro, significativamente preceduto dall’*inno X*, 190, celebrazione del *tapas-*, donde la creazione del cosmo come avviene nell’*inno* 129 del decimo libro del *R̥g-Veda*, nel quale si ha la celebrazione della *dynamis* poetica quale *dynamis* sincretica nonché soterica. Proprio coniugando *RV X*, 190 e *RV X*, 129 si ha testimonianza di come il percorso sia cosmogonico sia antropologico vengano, dunque, a potersi definire nei termini di un atto di divisione seguito da un atto sincretico che si fondano sulla calda, ardente *dynamis* del *tapas-*.

2.4. Nesso fra *tapas-* del poeta e Agni

Si ha, dunque la positività del *tapas-*, desiderio conoscitivo correlato sia all’intelligenza del soggetto desiderante sia alla sua parola, in particolare se poetica. Si tratta di una positività non lungi da quella del fuoco³⁸ che non si esime dal manifestarsi nel

³⁸ Come testimonia *RV X*, 124, che pare celebrare la positività del fuoco nel suo trascolorare nel fulmine e nel cielo ed evidenzia, in particolare, la funzione del fulmine di Indra. Similmente *RV X*, 179, marca il carattere poliedrico di fuoco, fulmine, sole e focolare domestico, ma significativa è, soprattutto, la celebrazione incipitaria del X libro, della quale si propone qualche accenno: in *RV X*, 1 il fuoco figura, infatti, in grado di afferire al cielo come alla terra, passibile di unirli mediante il suo stesso manifestarsi, è portatore di una *dynamis* nutritiva nonché accrescitiva di uomini e dèi in quanto sacrificante e, proprio in quanto tale, è in grado di evocare e recare gli dèi sulla terra. Nell’*inno RV X*, 51, si ha una solo apparente disconferma del ruolo di sacrificante del fuoco, semplicemente se ne sottolinea il suo non volersi subordinare a questo esclusivo ruolo, in quanto le origini stesse del fuoco, celato nel fluire delle acque, nella placenta del cosmo, ne fanno un principio cosmico non riducibile, quindi, al solo ambito del sacrificio. L’attività sacrificale è solo un possibile declinarsi delle potenzialità del fuoco, qualora questi accetti di fungere da intermediario fra uomini e dèi, che non potendo prescindere dal fuoco non possono che assecondare le sue ‘richieste’. Il motivo del sacrificio torna anche in *RV X*, 52, costituendone il motivo centrale, per quanto il fuoco non manchi di evidenziare la propria superiorità rispetto agli uomini e una possibilità di sciolto contrattare direttamente con gli dèi.

mondo vedico, in particolare nel momento in cui, nella sua luminosità, il fuoco si palesa quale intelligenza connessa alla parola. Tale connotazione di positività numerosi esempi trova nel *Rg-Veda*.

Significativo l'inno rigvedico X, 53 nel quale la celebrazione verte sul carattere intrinseco del coniugarsi di fuoco e parola: la lingua misteriosa del sacrificio (3b) permette all'essere umano sia di rifunzionalizzare le parole arcane, quelle stesse parole che hanno consentito agli dèi di conseguire l'immortalità (10), sia di approssimarsi alla luce mediante il tendersi della corda verbale, fino al configurarsi del poeta quale uomo in grado di far nascere la stirpe stessa degli dèi (6d). Proprio la "corda" offre l'opportunità di accostare nuovamente fuoco e parola se si guarda a *RV X, 172, 3a*: la "corda", che abbia per significante *tantu-* o *raśmi-*, è, infatti, prerogativa non solo dei poeti nel suo declinarsi verbale (*RV X, 53, 6; X, 129, 5*), ma anche del fuoco.³⁹ Se poi alla decima strofe di *RV X, 53*, al poeta si attribuisce la possibilità di conseguire l'immortalità in forza della conoscenza delle parole arcane, similmente in *RV X, 124*,

Nel mondo greco, invece, non univocamente positiva e catartica è la funzione del fuoco, nonostante non trascurabile sia il mito di Prometeo. Significativa, tuttavia, anche per una sorta di analogia se non specularità con l'*iter* dell'asceta, è la sorte di Meleagro: la vita di Meleagro era in modo endogeno legata a un tizzone che la madre conservava e proteggeva spento, perché, se fosse arso, rapidamente si sarebbe consumata anche la vita del figlio. Tale delinarsi della vicenda mitica evidenzia un radicale contrapporsi di *Weltanschauung* greca e vedica, nella quale l'ardere dell'asceta è eminentemente positivo, configurandosi quale manifestarsi del suo stesso evolversi. La connotazione evolutiva è tutt'altro che insita nella vicenda che coinvolge Meleagro: quando, infatti, la madre, adirata con il figlio, riaccende il tizzone rapidamente si consuma anche la vita di Meleagro che conseguentemente ne muore, evento che si declina univocamente in termini di ineluttabile e funesta esizialità. Per la vicenda di Meleagro cfr. Omero, *Il. IX*, 529-599, Ps-Apoll., *Bibliotheca*, I, VIII, 1-3, Ovidio, *Metamorphoses*, VIII, 298-546. L'etimologia del nome si è voluta, ora, da ricondursi all'interpretazione ὃ μέλει ἄγρα «colui a cui piace la caccia» (KUHNER [1884: II, col. 2608]; VON KAMPTZ [1982: 209]), ora, da ritenersi quale composto di μέλεος "qui ne réussit pas" e ἄγρα "caccia", donde "sfortunato nella caccia" (CARNOY, *DEMGR*); in particolare MÜHLESTEIN (1987: 45 n. 15, 77), non discostandosi da tale proposta etimologica, vuole Meleagro "l'uomo dalla caccia inutile" (cfr. anche Euripide, fr. 515, in *Etym. Magn.*, s.v.) e precisa che, qualora si fosse trattato di un composto di μέλωμαι, avremmo avuto una forma *Μελ-αγρος, ma si sarebbe trattato di un nome scaturito a posteriori onde adattarsi alla sorte dell'eroe.

³⁹ Cfr. anche *RV X, 52, 4* e *124, 1*. Per la connessione fra tessitura e sfera verbale cfr. MAGGI (1981: 49-86).

2ab del fuoco si sottolinea l'acquisizione di uno stato divino da non-dio che era e la sua capacità di procedere per vie segrete verso l'immortalità.

D'altronde in *RV X*, 177, pur nella celebrazione della parola, non manca un duplice accenno al valore del fuoco-luce-intelligenza: alla strofe 1d si ha, infatti, l'accostamento di *marīcin-* e *pada-* a definire la traccia delle faville che chi venera la parola cerca, mentre nella seconda strofe si fa riferimento al carattere luminoso dell'intelligenza.

La terza e la quarta strofe dell'inno *X*, 164, oltre a sottintendere l'interdipendenza, già precedentemente affermata, fra Agni e *tapas-*, evidenziano come il desiderio, proprio qualora non sia guidato dalla luce del fuoco e del fulmine, possa tradursi in desiderio in senso deteriore, in un errare che si esprime in un gioco di parole fra *āśasā*, *niḥśas*, *abhiśas*:⁴⁰ desiderio (troppo) intenso, incapacità di volere, desiderio di sopraffare,⁴¹ tratti, tutti, lungi dal *tapas-* dell'asceta.

Onde cogliere la contiguità fra fuoco-luce-parola indicativo è anche *RV X*, 181, 2:

*āvindan té átihitam yád āsīd yajñāsya dhāma paramāṃ
gúhā yát /
dhātúr dyútānāt savitús ca viṣṇor bharádvājo brhád ā
cakre agnéḥ //*

Quello che essi riuscirono a trovare, sebbene fosse in disparte e, nel segreto, fosse la forma più remota del sacrificio, egli, l'Ispirato, dal luminoso creatore, dal dio incitatore, da Viṣṇu e dal fuoco, l'ha fatto essere qui, il canto detto *brhát*.

Il legame che qui emerge risulta enfatizzato anche nelle tre strofe di *RV X*, 188, dove i tre soggetti dell'inno sono il fuoco, la *dynamis* poetica e le fiamme, accomunati dal tratto del movimento, come testimoniano i tre verbi di movimento (*hi*, *r*, *i*), che compaiono nelle strofe in relazione ai soggetti dell'inno, da cui, nuovamente, il loro significativo afferire al mondo *jagat-*:

⁴⁰ Di *abhiśas* è attestato il solo strumentale *-ā*.

⁴¹ Seguiamo, qui, l'interpretazione di AMBROSINI (1981: 137).

*prá nūnám jā́távedasam áśvaṃ hinota vāj́nam /
idám no barhír ā́sáde //*

*asyá prá jā́távedaso vípravīrasya mī́húṣaḥ /
mahīm iyarmi suṣ́utím //*

*yá́ rúco jā́távedaso devatrá́ havyavā́hanīḥ /
tā́bhir no yajńám invatu //*

Fate avanzare, ora, il cavallo vittorioso che conosce tutte
le forme delle cose,

perché si distenda sul nostro letto sacrificale!

Di lui, che conosce tutte le forme del reale, che ispira gli
uomini e riversa i suoi doni,

io metto in moto un grande inno di lode.

Con quelle che sono le luci di colui che conosce tutte le
forme delle cose, e che conducono il sacrificio verso gli
dèi,

con queste egli sospinge il nostro sacrificio.⁴²

In definitiva il dinamismo pare essere il denominatore comune di tali inni a connotare fuoco, *tapas-* e parola, dinamismo dal quale si deduce anche il loro afferire al mondo *jagat-* piuttosto che *sthā-*. D'altronde nel mondo vedico viene a iscriversi nel mondo *jagat-* anche la conoscenza, che è l'attualizzarsi nella dimensione dell'essere in atto del *tapas-*, desiderio conoscitivo in sé indefinito e ateleologico. Nel mondo indiano seriore e così nella dimensione indoeuropea più tarda la conoscenza è, invece, condensata in un'immagine spaziale di stanzialità, viene, infatti, còlta come uno "star sopra", un "sovrastare" l'oggetto del conoscere,⁴³ delineando così una posizione statica e gerarchica del soggetto rispetto all'oggetto, nonché la reificazione di quest'ultimo. Nel mondo vedico, pur non mancando la connotazione spaziale della conoscenza, non vi è un lessema nel quale sia condensata tale immagine, ma essa è potentemente presente nella rappresentazione del conoscere mediante il ricorso prevalente a verbi non di stato, bensì di moto (*abhi-gam-* "andare intorno"⁴⁴). In tale momento del declinarsi della storia del pen-

⁴² AMBROSINI (1981: 165).

⁴³ Cfr. BELARDI (1976), MAGGI (1978: 149-156), BELARDI (1979: 251-274).

⁴⁴ Cfr. RV VIII, 20, 22; IX, 72, 9; X, 78, 8. Cfr. SANI (2009: 103), voce di cui evidenziamo, qui, cursoriamente i significati di «incontrarsi con, trovare... coabitare...

siero umano si ha, dunque, la centralità dell'attribuzione dello statuto ontologico non allo stanziale essere bensì al nomadico divenire non solo in ambito ontologico ma anche gnoseologico.

Il fatto stesso, al quale già si è accennato, che l'inno emblematicamente dedicato al *tapas-*, non solo sia posto a conclusione dell'*Atharva-Veda*, ma ne fosse richiesta la recitazione al termine dei riti dedicati nello studio dei *Veda*, nonché al termine di altri rituali, starebbe a significare, a parer nostro, il non-concludersi stesso ora dello studio, ora del rito, se non nella dimensione di uno *Streben* tensionalmente volto alla conoscenza in un costante divenire, in un mondo che sia *jagat-*.

3. Dimensione ludica, *tapas-* e mondo *jagat-*. Un accenno

Ci si può, ora, volgere a un'altra modalità di conoscenza e 'creazione' del mondo anch'essa macroscopicamente coinvolta nella fenomenologia del mondo *jagat-* e non *sthā-*. Si tratta della dimensione ludica, che nel mondo indoeuropeo, ad eccezione, forse, del mondo greco,⁴⁵ non rinvia alla sfera infantile ma afferisce al mondo degli adulti ed è attività estremamente proteiforme e prometeica pressoché al pari del mutante e multiforme ardente *tapas-*. Lungi dalla stanzialità è, infatti, prossima, piuttosto, al nomadismo di luoghi, al mutarsi di forme e alla sfera verbale, e in essa si incontrano le aree semantiche del movimento e della *mimesis*, fino a consentire di evocare la

capire», e GRASSMANN (1999: 379): «1) herbeikommen; 2) hinkommen zu (A.); 3) begreifen». Si tratta di termini che descrivono la conoscenza quale paritetico 'incontro' fra partecipanti all'atto conoscitivo. Che poi sia qui attiva la dimensione *jagat-* e non *sthā-* è confermato dal fatto che quand'anche si abbia il perfetto di un verbo di movimento, si deve tener presente che il perfetto vedico, non essendo ancora compiutamente integrato nel sistema dei tempi, è agilmente ammissibile quale «significante di uno stato metacronico acquisito dal soggetto in seguito al compimento di un processo», che non è dato concluso in sé bensì *in fieri*, e, dunque, nuovamente il mondo *jagat-*, cfr. LAZZERONI (2001: 93-97, in particolare 95).

⁴⁵ Per *παίζω* cfr. NUTI (2013: 53-70). Per uno sguardo specificamente volto alla dimensione ludica nel mondo greco cfr. NOBILI (2013: 155-160).

figura del *Trickster*,⁴⁶ *homo ludens* che nel mondo vedico si associa, come ora si vedrà, al mondo della parola in un coniugarsi di *homo ludens* e *homo loquens*.⁴⁷ Sia sufficiente, infatti, richiamare alcuni dei valori dei due principali significanti vedici per “gioco”: *krīḍā* e *līlā*. *Krīḍā* è anche aggettivo attribuito dei venti, dei Marut noti quali portatori di parola, assimilati ai cantori in diversi passi del *Ṛg-veda*,⁴⁸ nonché fisiologicamente nomadici e la cui dimensione ludica emerge in *RV V*, 60, 3, passo nel quale dei Marut si dice *krīlanti krīlayas*.⁴⁹ *Līlā* può, invece, essere sì gioco infantile, ma si connette soprattutto alla sfera della *mimesis* intesa quale “simulazione, travestimento, mistificazione”, non esente da “grazia, fascino, bellezza, eleganza, amabilità”.⁵⁰ Entrambi i termini sono, poi, connessi alla sfera musicale e verbale indicando l’uno un tipo di misura in ambito musicale, l’altro un tipo di metro proprio della poesia. Donde si ha sia l’aereo nomadismo dei giocosi venti irrinunciabilmente anche cantori, quindi, il colludere di movimento, gioco e parola, sia la proteiforme mutevolezza in una dinamica *mimesis* passibile di connotarsi di tratti positivi quali, ad esempio, la fascinazione.

Eloquente è anche il fatto che l’inno *RV X*, 53, nel quale alla sesta strofe si ha la celebrazione della parola quale tramite per generare gli dèi stessi, voglia il dio creatore quale divinità non

⁴⁶ Non si intende, qui, affrontare la sterminata bibliografia relativa alla figura del *Trickster*, ci si limita, pertanto, ad alcuni suggerimenti: ampio in prospettiva diacronica e interessante per uno sguardo ‘junghiano’ è WILLEFORD (1998), intorno al mito del ‘briccone’ è, d’altronde, imprescindibile l’intersecarsi dell’analisi di JUNG, KERÉNYI, RADIN (2006); mantiene uno sguardo equilibrato di fronte all’ambivalenza del *Trickster* MICELI (2000), evidenziandone l’irriducibile liminarità. Se HYDE (2001) sceglie quale marca del briccone il tratto della creatività, LANZA (1997) sottolinea come uno sguardo biecamente dettato dal senso comune, cerchi di depauperare i trasgressori del *limen* delle loro potenzialità creative stigmatizzandoli con la marca della stoltezza onde scarnificarne la carica eversiva.

⁴⁷ Cfr. HUIZINGA (2002), e, soprattutto, CAILLOIS (1995). Interessante, per la figura di Caillois, OLIVIERI (2004).

⁴⁸ Cfr. *RV I*, 37, 10; *I*, 82, 2; *I*, 85, 2; *I*, 166, 7; *III*, 22, 4; *V*, 29, 3; *V*, 52, 1, 12; *V*, 57, 5; *VI*, 69, 9-10; *VII*, 35, 9; in *RV X*, 125, 8, è, d’altronde, la parola stessa a identificarsi con il vento.

⁴⁹ LAZZERONI (1997: 135-145) segnala la presenza del motivo del gioco in relazione ai Marut anche in *RV I*, 166, 2.

⁵⁰ Cfr. SANI (2009), s.v. *krīḍā* (440) e *līlā* (13686).

solo esplicitamente connessa alla parola, Brahmanaspati, ma anche esperta di astuzie a richiamare la figura del *Trickster*, in un coniugarsi di *dynamis* demiurgica della parola e dimensione ludica.

Interessante, qui, accennare alla ‘teoria’ del gioco di Caillois, in particolare nel momento in cui, nella sua poesia-catalogo dei giochi, l’autore propone impulsi che anche nella realtà si manifestano, seppure il gioco li ponga in una sorta di alveo protetto, “marginale e astratto”. In particolare si possono sottolineare alcuni elementi prospettati da Caillois nella sua ‘poesia’, ossia «la nostalgia dell’estasi, il desiderio di un panico voluttuoso», che consentono, ad un tempo, di coniugare fecondamente la dimensione ludica sia con il desiderio in sé, quale è ben rappresentato dal *tapas*- ascetico, sia, secondo la tassonomia nella quale Caillois ordina e raggruppa gli impulsi primari, con l’*ilinx* in cui dominante è il tratto della ricerca della vertigine. Di fatto, proprio attraverso il gioco, l’uomo si mostra in grado di ‘immaginare’, e tale *dynamis* è quella stessa capace di generare il cambiamento nonché la storia in un consegnarsi sempre all’inedito e al nomadico divenire ‘panico’ e ‘voluttuoso’, ben lungi dall’assegnazione dello statuto ontologico allo stanziale essere, quadro che si delinea significativamente comparabile con la fenomenologia del *tapas*- che al mondo *jagat*- si consegna.

Funzionale può essere, ora, un’*ekphrasis* nel mondo latino dove eloquente è la vicenda semantica di *iocus* sia in prospettiva sincronica sia in prospettiva diacronica nel suo egressivo venire a coincidere con *ludus*.⁵¹ Originariamente il termine *iocus* designa lo “scherzo verbale”, marcando nuovamente la connessione fra dimensione ludica e parola già vista nel caso dei giocosi cantori Marut, per poi confluire nella semantica di *ludus* che rinvia al tratto della *mimesis*, al quale afferiscono anche i valori di “esercizio, attività preparatoria in varie forme, apprendimento”.

Tali valenze consentono che l’*ekphrasis* si concluda con il ritorno al tema della conoscenza ingenerata dal *tapas*-: come la conoscenza nel mondo vedico, intrinsecamente legata alla sfera

⁵¹ Cfr. NUTI (2003: 5-28), e NUTI (2013: 53-70).

verbale, afferisce al mondo *jagat-*, al mondo del movimento, così la dimensione ludica non può che afferire al mondo *jagat-*, come attesta la forte connotazione verbale testimoniata sia da *krīḍá*, connesso ai Marut, cantori amanti del gioco, sia da *līlā* nel suo essere anche metro proprio della poesia sia da *iocus* (**jek-*), in sé, appunto, “scherzo verbale”. Se si guarda, poi, ai tratti dei quali si è vista portatrice la base **loid* di *ludus*, ossia esercizio e apprendimento, si può constatare come tali tratti non si esimano dal delinearli quali modalità onde pervenire alla conoscenza.

Si coniugano così il motivo della *mimesis* proprio, ad esempio, di *līlā* e di *ludus*, con quello del movimento proprio del gioco nella sua totalità, della parola, del *tapas-* nonché della conoscenza stessa.

4. Conclusioni

In definitiva nel corso del presente contributo si è confrontata la tripartizione, ricostruibile per il mondo vedico, della dinamica verbale scandita in *manas-*, dimensione eidetica, *mantra-*, fase di verbalizzazione del pensiero, e *jihvā-*, sfera della parola pronunciata, con una potenziale bipartizione nella designazione dell’essere umano in *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-*. Si è guardato in particolare a *puruṣa-*, cercando di evincerne la ‘fisionomia’ ora dall’etimologia, ora dall’inno rigvedico X, 90, ora dalla sua designazione quale persona verbale. Si è ipotizzato che proprio dalla complementarità di *manuṣa-* e *puruṣa-* scaturisca quello che si può definire *homo loquens*. Tale bipartizione si ripercuoterebbe anche sulla selezione dei lessemi denotanti il desiderio, *tapas-* e *kāma-*, l’uno sarebbe proprio della sfera dell’essere in potenza del *manuṣa-*, l’altro di quella dell’essere in atto del *puruṣa-*. Appurato, poi, che lo *Streben* desiderante espresso dai due lessemi presi in esame si connette alla sfera verbale e afferisce al mondo *jagat-*, nel quale lo statuto ontologico è affidato al divenire e non all’essere, si è confrontato ‘desiderio’ e conoscenza, che pure verte sul mondo *jagat-*, per poi concludere con un accenno a una peculiare forma

di conoscenza ossia alla dimensione ludica, per la quale si sono presi in considerazione i termini *krīḍá* e *līlā*, determinando così un fecondo intreccio di *homo loquens* e *homo ludens*.

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VERONICA ARIEL VALENTI

RV X, 95, 1 E LO SCAMBIO AMEBEO PRIMO

Abstract

This paper sets out to suggest a reading of hymn X, 95 of the *R̥g-Veda*, and in particular the first verse beginning with the exchange between Urvaśī and Purūravas, which is the focal point of the hymn. We retain that the first verse alludes to a phase which is very close to the cosmogonical dimension; namely the first action carried out by heaven and earth following their separation. We intend, moreover, to demonstrate how the phonic features in the hymn imitate the *hiatus* by the use of *enjambement* and this first act is intended above all to heal the cosmogonical wound by the coming together of assonance, alliteration and paronomasia, which by themselves as phonic features are able to create links which would be unthinkable in a purely eidetic dimension.

**1. RV X, 95, 1 e la dinamica della creazione poetica
vedica**

Nel corso del presente contributo si guarda all'inno rigvedico X, 95, nello specifico all'arte allusiva che lo permea e alle figure foniche che lo caratterizzano, e si considera in particolare il connotarsi poetico della prima strofe, luogo incipitario e focale dell'inno. Coniugando tali elementi, si intende, di fatto, proporre come sia possibile leggere la prima strofe quale

allusione all'avvio dello scambio amebeo vòlto a ricongiungere cielo e terra in seguito allo iato cosmogonico e come lo scambio fra Urvaśī e Purūravas sia passibile di costituirsi quale indizio testuale della *dynamis* sincretica della parola in ambito sia ontogenetico sia filogenetico.

In *RV X*, 95, 1 si ha un invito a Urvaśī da parte di Purūravas a quello che si può genericamente definire scambio di parole:

hayé jāye mānasā tiṣṭha ghore vácāmsi miśrā
kr̥ṇavāvahai nú /
ná nau māntrā anuditāsa eté máyas karan páratate
canāhan //

«Orsù, o donna - ma fermati, crudele! – scambiamoci parole con il cuore (*manasā*)! Se questi nostri pensieri restano inespresi (*mantrā anuditāsa*) non ci porteranno una grande gioia (*mayas-*) che possa durare fino a un giorno lontano!».¹

Onde comprendere se sia possibile specificare ulteriormente il carattere di tale scambio verbale, cogliendone un connotarsi poetico, si guarda ad alcuni dei termini che concorrono al costituirsi della prima stanza.

Lo strumentale *mānasā*² evoca un passo dell'inno X, 71, nel quale si descrive lo scaturire primo della parola tramite il *manas-*, che viene a delinarsi quale demiurgica capacità, prerequisito della parola poetica stessa (*RV X*, 71, 2), a opera

¹ La traduzione dell'intero inno rigvedico X, 95 è tratta da SANI (2000: 243-246).

² Si accoglie la lettura del testo che considera lo strumentale come indipendente da *tiṣṭha ghore* da leggersi quale appello parentetico a fermarsi conchiuso in sé, per quanto collocato in un momento tipico, quello incipitario dello svolgersi del dialogo, e ripreso, in una significativa *Ringkomposition* che ne enfatizza il valore, al momento della conclusione. MAGGI (2014: 25-54, in particolare 37-38) sottolinea, invece, la compresenza, nella medesima strofe, di *jāye* e *mānasā*: il passo alluderebbe a *RV VII*, 33, 11ab, versi nei quali si delinea la figura di un figlio nato dal *manas-* di Urvaśī e da *Vásiṣṭhaḥ*, forse *Vásiṣṭhaḥ* antenato mitico della famiglia di poeti-sacerdoti, donde il VII libro stesso, ma, soprattutto, nel *RV X*, 95, proprio Purūravas che nella diciassettesima strofe dice di sé *vásiṣṭhaḥ*. In *RV X*, 95, 1 vi sarebbe, pertanto allusione a Urvaśī quale madre del figlio di cui il padre è Purūravas. Pur non negando l'esistenza di un figlio della coppia Urvaśī e Purūravas tuttavia, per quanto concerne *manas-* di *RV X*, 95, 1, crediamo che primariamente rinvii alla fase incipitaria della dinamica della creazione poetica vedica come cercheremo di esporre in queste pagine.

della figura del *dhīras-*, termine significativamente passibile di essere sia denominazione del poeta sia epiteto della divinità.³

Lo strumentale di *RV X, 95, 1* richiama anche la seconda strofe di *RV I, 145*,⁴ nella quale il poeta è nella condizione di essere interrogato piuttosto che di interrogare, poiché con il *manas-* ha colto i motivi della poesia dimostrandosi, pertanto, *dhīras-*, ossia dotato di quella capacità visiva che consente il confondersi del confine fra umano e divino.

Mantra- costituisce, invece, il *medium* che consente di dar forma al fluire noetico, di verbalizzare il pensiero, è lo strumento mediante il quale si attualizza quanto afferisce alla sfera del *manas-*. È, quindi, il tramite onde realizzare, nella dimensione dell'essere in atto, il sèma di cui è portatrice la base **men-*. Si tratta di un sèma altrimenti destinato a rimanere nella sola dimensione eidetica dell'essere in potenza, nella sfera del *manas-*, e che si attualizza, invece, grazie all'azione del *māntrakṛt-* (*RV IX, 114, 2*), che codifica il pensiero in poesia. La fase del *mantra-* è, pertanto, fase di conversione del pensiero in pensiero verbalizzato, momento di transizione dalla dimensione dell'essere in potenza alla dimensione dell'essere in atto.⁵

L'approdo a quest'ultima si ha con l'acquisizione della dimensione fonica: il pensiero verbalizzato si fa parola pronunciata, si accede, quindi, al luogo del *vācas-(vāc-) kṛ*, della fatticità terrestre, dimensione della *jihvā-*, nella quale si ha la spazializzazione del pensiero. La parola pronunciata, onde propagarsi, richiede, infatti, atmosfera: l'approdo alla dimensione fonica esige che la distinzione dell'indistinto, efficacemente descritta in *RV X, 129*, sia conclusa e si abbia, quindi, il profilarsi dello spazio intermedio (*antarikṣa-*).

Proprio mediante l'acquisizione della veste fonica da parte della parola, solo, dunque, mediante l'attualizzazione nella dimensione della *jihvā-* si può conseguire, d'altronde, un effetto positivo dalla parola poetica. Tale effetto, espresso nella prima

³ È, ad esempio, epiteto di Agni in *RV I, 94, 6*.

⁴ Per la trattazione del passo cfr. LAZZERONI (1998b: 96-103).

⁵ LAZZERONI (1997a: 129-134, in particolare 129) mostra come conforme rispetto alla tradizione sia l'accezione di *mantra-* in *RV X, 95, 1*.

strofe di RV X, 95 mediante il termine *mayas-*, si può sortire, infatti, esclusivamente, qualora non si lascino “inespressi i pensieri” (*māntrā ānuditāsa*⁶).

Il riferimento, poi, ai “giorni lontani” è allusione a una delle caratteristiche dell’effetto positivo che si consegue mediante la poesia, ossia l’acquisizione di «un bene imperituro (*ākṣiti-*) non soggetto a vecchiaia (*ajuryá-*; RV, V, 53, 15; I, 126, 2) durevole per tutta la vita (*viśvāyu-*; RV, I, 9, 7)». ⁷ È in forza di tale ‘bene’ che si profila, quindi, la possibilità di riapprodare, mediante la parola poetica stessa, a una condizione di atemporalità, immergendosi in una sorta di eterno presente che riporta alla dimensione dell’essere in potenza, del *manas-*. Per quanto alla medesima dimensione del *manas-* afferiscano sia la fase pre-verbale sia la fase che vede la poesia apportare un *surplus*, ossia apportare *mayas-*, non sussiste identità fra i due momenti. La *Geworfenheit* nella dimensione della *jihvā-* non avrebbe, altrimenti, senso: l’andamento non è ciclico, bensì spiroidale proprio in forza dei legami che la materia fonica (tramite, ad esempio, assonanze e allitterazioni) suggerisce e che sarebbero insospettati nella sola dimensione dell’essere in potenza, nella sfera del *manas-*, qualora la si preservasse autisticamente.

Ulteriore indizio della centralità della parola poetica in RV X, 95 si desume dalla lettura del verbo *prṇāti* della quinta strofe confrontabile con RV VII, 32, 8:

*sunótā somapāvne sómam índrāya vajrīne /
pácatā paktīr āvase kṛṇudhvám ít prṇánn ít prṇaté
máyah //*

«Pressa il Soma per Indra, bevitore di Soma, portatore di
vajra! Prepara cibi cotti: induci in lui accrescimento,
perché solo chi offre è motivo di gioia per chi offre».

In tale strofe si ha il duplice ricorso al verbo *prṇāti* e la constatazione che «solo chi offre è gioia per chi offre» nonché la presenza del termine *mayas-* in relazione all’effetto

⁶ Cfr. RV X, 151, 2-3, passo in cui, del discorso poetico, si dice che è *uditám*.

⁷ LAZZERONI (1997a: 129-134, in particolare 134).

dell'offerta. Similmente nella prima strofe di *RV X, 95* si ha il ricorso al termine *mayas-* in relazione all'offerta, che è offerta di natura verbale. Si prepara così l'*humus* per l'interpretazione di *prṇāti* che nella quinta strofe farebbe riferimento non tanto alla ripresa del rapporto amoroso bensì allo scambio amebeo. In definitiva *prṇāti* sarebbe da ricondursi all'ideologia dello scambio attivata dall'offerta di parola poetica,⁸ che si delinea motivo centrale della prima strofe se non dell'intero inno.

In definitiva, guardando ad alcuni dei termini che concorrono al costituirsi della prima stanza, è possibile cogliere un connotarsi poetico di tale scambio verbale: i termini implicati sono lo strumentale *mānasā*, che rinvia a una fase di pura produzione eidetica, *māntrā ānuditāsa*, che allude alla fase nella quale si assiste alla verbalizzazione del pensiero, e *vācas-* (*vāc-*) *kr-*, fase della *jihvā-*, dell'attualizzarsi fonico del pensiero verbalizzato, che apporta un vantaggio (*mayas-*) alla sfera del *manas-*.

Nell'invito di Purūravas a Urvaśī sono, quindi, efficacemente tratteggiati i momenti fondamentali della dinamica della creazione poetica vedica e la poesia si configura essere, a un tempo, sia forma sia oggetto di se stessa tanto che il passo può legittimamente considerarsi quale antico «esempio di espressione metateatrale».⁹

Parrebbe, però, contraddire l'attribuzione di un ruolo centrale allo scambio di parole il profilarsi di un rifiuto all'invito di Purūravas da parte della ninfa sia nella seconda sia nella quinta strofe di *RV X, 95*, proprio in concomitanza con il verbo *prṇāti*.

La portata della negazione di Urvaśī è, tuttavia, di necessità, da ridimensionarsi: alla seconda strofe, luogo del rifiuto, seguono, infatti, quindici stanze di inno dialogato, mentre a *RV X, 95, 5* segue la sesta stanza che collega intrinsecamente alla parola poetica la figura di Urvaśī in forza della sua appartenenza alla schiera delle Ninfe, i nomi delle quali alludono alla

⁸ Cfr. SANI (1978: 179-197, in particolare 193-197), che confuta il valore erotico del termine.

⁹ LAZZERONI (1997a: 129-134), dimostra come l'invito di Purūravas sia invito al canto amebeo; si interessa all'inno pure AMBROSINI (1970: 47-85).

dinamica della creazione poetica richiamandone, come si vedrà, momenti o tratti:¹⁰

*yā sujūrñih śrēñih sumnāāpir hradécakṣur ná granthīnī
carāṇyúh /
tā añjāyo 'ruñāyo ná sasruḥ śriyē gāvo ná dhenāvo
'navanta //*

«La schiera delle ninfe dal bello splendore che, amiche tra loro, recitano inni, che conoscono i legami dei versi, come il poeta che ha l'occhio rivolto verso il lago dei suoi mondi interiori, e che si muovono veloci, sono corse via tutte a gara come i rosei belletti dell'Aurora e, come vacche da latte, hanno fatto risuonare la loro voce».

1.1. Verbalità stanziale e verbalità nomadica

Per quanto non sia da trascurarsi il rifiuto di Urvaśī, pare non sia altresì da leggersi quale negazione vòlta allo scambio di parole in sé, tant'è che lo scambio avviene. Il rifiuto della ninfa è da considerarsi, piuttosto, orientato a un determinato tipo di verbalità rappresentata da Purūravas, che può cogliersi quale portatore di verbalità stanziale.

Fin da *RV X, 95, 1*, con l'appello rivolto a Urvaśī a interrompere la fuga, emerge come la posizione di Purūravas si identifichi con un opporsi al nomadismo. Significativo è da considerarsi che l'appello a fermarsi sia contenuto proprio nell'*incipit* dell'invito di Purūravas allo scambio di parole che si connota, quindi, di staticità. Non trascurabile è, poi, che l'appello, in una sorta di *Ringkomposition*, ricorra pure in *RV X, 95, 17*, ossia al termine dello scambio amebeo a decretare l'immutato carattere di Purūravas, quindi, nuovamente nonché definitivamente, la sua stanzialità e la collaterale assegnazione dello statuto ontologico proprio allo stanziale essere *versus* il nomadico divenire.

¹⁰ Si occupa del passo anche MAGGI (1989: 67-108).

L'unico tratto di nomadismo apparentemente ravvisabile in Purūravas è il suo essere detto “figlio dell'Offerta liquida”,¹¹ *aiḷa-* (*RV X, 95, 18a*), appellativo che, in particolare, attiva la sfera dell'acquoreo, quindi del nomadismo, facilmente richiamato dall'immagine dello scorrere delle acque. Non arduo è, tuttavia, confutare la possibilità del connotarsi di acquoreità e nomadismo della verbalità di Purūravas.

Innanzitutto sulla base di *RV V, 41, 19ab*, dove *īlā-* coesiste con *Urvaśī*, si potrebbe identificare l'appellativo *aiḷa-* di *RV X, 95, 18a* con il figlio di *Urvaśī* e non con Purūravas. Questi acquisirebbe tale nome solo secondariamente, in forza della dinamica dello scambio fra padre (qui Purūravas) e figlio (qui *aiḷa-*, figlio di Purūravas e *Urvaśī*). I tratti dell'acquoreo e del nomadico non sarebbero, pertanto, volti a connotare la verbalità di Purūravas, mentre si vedranno essere endogeni alla verbalità di *Urvaśī*.

In definitiva, nella prospettiva di Purūravas, l'essere detto “figlio dell'Offerta liquida” non fa che avviare all'ossessiva ricerca di immortalità che Purūravas persegue e avrebbe conseguito se fosse riuscito a farsi compagno di *Urvaśī*, suo esclusivo fine nel corso dell'intero inno, donde, nuovamente, la sua stanzialità. L'immortalità alla fine ottenuta da Purūravas non è, d'altronde, acquisizione autonoma, è bensì subordinata all'appellativo concessogli (*aiḷa-*) e alla connessa dinamica dello scambio fra padre e figlio, che tramite sacrifici dovrebbe assicurare l'immortalità al padre.

A connotare la figura di *Urvaśī* è, invece, sia l'acquoreità, evidente nel suo afferire alla schiera delle Ninfe, sia l'endogeno nomadismo, ravvisabile non solo nella sorte che la vede in una costante fuga, ma anche in *RV X, 95, 2*: *Urvaśī* stessa dice di sé *durāpanāvāta ivāhām*, difficile a raggiungersi come il vento, cromando la propria verbalità di un tratto ulteriore.

¹¹ Cfr. MAGGI (2014: 25-54, in particolare 40, 46-47). Concordiamo, peraltro, con MAGGI (2014: 41-42) in merito alla lettura in chiave di letteralità ossimorica del successivo “figlio della morte” presente nella medesima diciottesima strofe, non esente dal porsi quale *brahmodya*, forma-enigma cara al gusto vedico, cfr. THOMPSON (1997: 13-37).

Significativamente non di rado i venti stessi si configurano quali *Sānger* come testimonia, ad esempio, *RV I, 85, 2*:¹²

*ārcanto arkāṃ janáyanta indriyám ádhi śríyo dadhire
pṛ̥ṣṇimātarah //*

Cantando il loro canto e generando a Indra il suo potere,
i figli di Pṛ̥ṣṇi si sono acquistati gloria.¹³

La seconda strofe di *RV X, 95*, in forza della connessione vedica fra vento e parola, può, dunque, leggersi quale proposta di una parola aerea, una verbalità in costante movimento come il vento, una verbalità, appunto, nomadica.

Nella sesta stanza, poi, delle Ninfe si dice «che si muovono veloci», specificando come intrinsecamente dinamica, mobile e costantemente *in fieri* sia la parola della quale è portatrice *Urvaśī*. Nel momento in cui in *RV X, 95, 6* si legge che le Ninfe, «come vacche da latte, hanno fatto risuonare la loro voce», si ha, inoltre, la sottolineatura della pertinenza della dimensione fonica alla schiera di *Urvaśī*. Se si compara la similitudine fra le Ninfe e le "vacche da latte" con il configurarsi dei Marut quale schiera di vacche in *RV II, 34, 13* e *V, 65, 5*, si può cogliere nell'immagine della sesta strofe di *RV X, 95*, un'evidente allusione ai Marut.¹⁴ Il passo permette, quindi, di riconfermare la contiguità di *Urvaśī* con il vento, in particolare con i Marut, ai quali la poesia è strettamente legata.

Considerando come frequentemente i Marut siano rappresentati quali poeti-cantori eloquente è, peraltro, il fatto che nella sesta strofe le *Apsaras* stesse figurino quali donne poetesse.

Che le Ninfe siano assimilabili ai Marut emerge anche nella nona strofe sulla base della condivisione della componente

¹² Per il configurarsi dei Marut quali *Sānger* cfr. *RV I, 37, 10*; *I, 82, 2*; *I, 166, 7*; *III, 22, 4*; *V, 29, 3*; *V, 52, 1, 12*; *V, 57, 5*; *VI, 69, 9-10*; *VII, 35, 9*; da notarsi anche l'identificarsi della parola stessa con il vento in *RV X, 125, 8*.

¹³ La traduzione è di Sani (2000: 163).

¹⁴ Si possono, a tal proposito, considerare *RV II, 34, 13*, cfr. MAGGI (1989: 108, nota 89), e *RV V, 56, 5*, passo in cui i Marut figurano quale "schiera di vacche".

ludica: esse, infatti, sono rappresentate come cavalli giocosi, *krīlayas*, e in *RV V*, 60, 3 dei Marut si dice *krīlanti krīlayas*.¹⁵

In definitiva, se nella seconda strofe è decretata l'accostabilità di Urvaśī al vento e nella sesta vi è più che un'allusione ai Marut, nella nona si ha un ulteriore richiamo a questi ultimi e la parola di Urvaśī viene sempre più a cromarsi di aereo oltreché di acquoreo per la natura stessa delle Ninfe. Trattati, l'aereo e l'acquoreo, che, entrambi, contribuiscono a connotare di nomadismo la verbalità di Urvaśī e conseguentemente a segnalare, da parte della Ninfa, l'assegnazione dello statuto ontologico proprio al nomadico, fluido divenire.

1.2. *Indra, l'Aurora e i Marut*

Una volta che si è colto come la verbalità di Urvaśī e quella di Purūravas si connotino rispettivamente di nomadismo e di stanzialità, si cerca di individuare ulteriori tratti della loro fisionomia, considerando come l'intero inno *RV X*, 95 sia intessuto di arte allusiva. Vi si incontrano, infatti, diverse espressioni iperboliche tali da indurre a postulare che si è in contesti nei quali si attualizza la capacità allusiva.¹⁶ È possibile riportare le peculiarità fraseologiche che caratterizzano Purūravas alle rappresentazioni di Indra, mentre è possibile riportare la fraseologia che interessa Urvaśī alle descrizioni dell'Aurora e, come si è visto, dei Marut.

Alla settima strofe si ha l'immagine che vuole Purūravas rinvigorito da parte degli dèi per l'uccisione dei demoni. La strofe è permeata di evidente terminologia indraica: l'immagine dell'accrescimento tramite la preghiera assimilata a cibo sacrificale viene, infatti, riferita, in genere, agli dèi, ma in particolare a Indra, come emerge, ad esempio, da *RV III*, 34, 1cd e da *RV VII*, 19, 11ab:

¹⁵ LAZZERONI (1997b: 135-145) segnala la presenza del motivo del gioco in relazione ai Marut anche in *RV I*, 166, 2.

¹⁶ Cfr. LAZZERONI (1997b: 135-145).

*bráhmajūtas tanvā vāvṛdhāno bhūridātra āprnad ródasī
ubhé //*

«Stimolato dal *brahman-*, accresciuto nel corpo, il munifico (Indra) riempì i due mondi».

*nū indra śūra stāvamāna ūtī bráhmajūtas tanvā
vāvṛdhasva /*

«Ora, o signore Indra, invocato per l'aiuto, stimolato dal *brahman-*, rafforzati nel corpo».¹⁷

Anche il termine *raṇa-*¹⁸ rientra nella terminologia indraica, potendosi considerare quale riferimento al *furor* bellico del dio.

Non diversamente *dasyuhátya-* in relazione a Purūravas può essere considerato isotopo di *ahihatya-* in relazione a Indra in *RV* III, 47, 4, Indra che figura, d'altronde, esplicitamente quale *dasyuhan-*, “uccisore dei demoni” in *RV* I, 100, 12.¹⁹

Ambiguo è il termine *amānuṣa-*, che ricorre nell'ottava strofe, nella quale in coppia polare con *mānuṣa-* vale “sovrumano” in riferimento alle Ninfe nemiche di Purūravas e, in contesto indraico, indica i nemici del dio ossia i demoni “nemici dell'uomo”. Tale opposizione trova conferma in *RV* II, 11, 10ab:

*āroravīd vīṣṇo asya vājro 'mānuṣam yān mānuṣo
nijūrvāt /*

¹⁷ Cfr. LAZZERONI (1998a: 43-48), del quale si è accolta la traduzione di *RV* III, 34, 1 e VII, 19, 11. Cfr. anche LÜDERS (1951-59: 555-568).

¹⁸ Cfr. RENOU (1958: 58-59).

¹⁹ SANI (1995: 457-470) segnala oltre a *RV* I, 51, 5-6 (*dasyuhátya jājñīṣe* «sei nato per uccidere i *dasyu*»); I, 103, 4; X, 99, 7; X, 105, 11, anche i passi nei quali Indra è rappresentato come uccisore dei *dasyu*: *RV* I, 175, 3; II, 12, 10; III, 34, 6; IV, 28, 3; V, 31, 7. Non trascurabile è anche l'epiteto *vṛtrahán-*: da esso nasce la possibilità di formare epiteti con *han* che rimandano alla *dynamis* indraica di coloro ai quali tali epiteti vengono attribuiti. SANI (1991: 61-77), che offre una completa disamina del verbo *hanti*, sottolinea come il semplice impiego di tale verbo consenta di riportare la vicenda descritta alla vittoria dell'elemento positivo sul negativo (Indra *versus* *Vṛtra*), suggerendone implicitamente la conclusione: soggetti di *hanti* sono, nella quasi totalità dei casi, esseri positivi e, qualora si tratti di esseri negativi, si è in situazioni nelle quali è loro preclusa la possibilità di nuocere a suggerire «l'ipotesi che tali esseri siano visti come illegittimi utilizzatori dell'azione espressa da tale verbo». Interessante a conferma della capacità allusiva di *han* è anche l'articolo di BENEDETTI (1990: 23-51).

«Il suo potente *vajra* disse che egli, amico dell'uomo, avrebbe dovuto distruggere i demoni».

Anche il termine *vasiṣṭha-*, presente nella diciassettesima strofe, inequivocabilmente iperbolico, è, quindi, da intendersi come potenzialmente indraico come emerge in *RV X*, 181, 1.²⁰

Il rapportarsi stesso di Purūravas a Urvaśī è testimonianza dell'arte allusiva presente nell'inno, nel momento in cui alla quinta strofe si ha il riferimento all'accondiscendere, da parte di Urvaśī, al cenno di Purūravas. Tale modalità di accondiscendere è motivo indraico come testimonia *RV IV*, 26, 2:

*ahám bhūmim adadām āryāyāham vṛṣṭim dāsūṣe
mārtyāya /*

*ahám apó anayaṃ vāvaśānā máma devāso ánu kētam
āyan //*

«Ho dato la terra all'uomo rispettabile, ho dato la pioggia all'uomo che porta oblazione.

Ho guidato le acque dall'alta voce-ruggente e gli dèi hanno ubbidito al mio cenno».

Anche la precisazione che vuole Purūravas signore del corpo di Urvaśī è non diversamente indraica e richiama *RV IV*, 16, 17, dove *gopa-* è isotopo di *rājan-* (*X*, 95, 5); il termine *gopa-* ricorre, peraltro, nell'undicesima strofe di *RV X*, 95.

Considerando, invece, la figura di Urvaśī l'esplicito accostamento alla figura dell'Aurora presente nella seconda strofe viene indirettamente consolidato nella diciassettesima, che vede Urvaśī misurare lo spazio e riempire l'atmosfera come si verifica nel caso dell'Aurora in *RV VII*, 75, 3 dove, mettendo in atto le ordinanze divine, i raggi di Uṣas colmano lo spazio intermedio.²¹

Eloquente, in merito all'accostamento di Urvaśī e dell'Aurora, è *RV I*, 92, 9, strofe nella quale si connette la figura dell'Aurora con il moto di tutto ciò che è vivo e si sottolinea

²⁰ Il termine ricorre anche in *RV II*, 2, 1; *VII*, 18, 4, 21; *VII*, 33, 12, 14; *VII*, 59, 3; *VII*, 73, 3.

²¹ SANI (2000: 131).

come ella apprezzi e gradisca la parola degli ispirati (*viśvaṃ jīvaṃ carāse bodhāyantī viśvasya vācam avidan manāyóḥ*). Tale profondità del legame fra l'Aurora, presente in *RV X, 95* in quanto a essa allude la figura di *Urvaśī*, e la poesia non fa che rafforzare il nesso fra la Ninfa e la *dynamis* verbale che, come si è visto, è fortemente connotata del tratto del movimento.²²

Significativa è anche l'identità lessicale dei verbi con i quali è espresso il fuggire di *Urvaśī* come dell'Aurora: *prākramiṣam* di *RV X, 95, 2*, richiama, infatti, *prākṛāmat* di *RV X, 138, 5cd*:

*īndrasya vājṛād abibhed abhiśnáthaḥ prākṛāmac
chundhyūr ājahād uṣā ānaḥ //*

«L'Aurora ebbe paura che l'arma di Indra la trapassasse: la Splendida fuggì abbandonando il carro».

Sulla base della presenza del motivo della fuga in risposta al timore dell'Aurora nei confronti di Indra si ha, peraltro, conferma dell'accostamento di *Urvaśī* all'immagine dell'Aurora e dell'attribuzione a *Purūravas* di tratti indraici come testimoniato anche dalla presenza di *śnath* in *RV X, 95, 4-5*, verbo tipicamente indraico come emerge dal passo ora

²² Interessante l'epiteto *brhatī*, "alta", riferito all'Aurora o alle Aurore (cfr. *RV I, 113, 19; 123, 2; V, 80, 1, 2*), tanto più se si considera un dato culturale irlandese che si comprende proprio guardando alla figura dell'Aurora vedica e di quella greca: la dea celtica Brigitta, etimologicamente connessa all'ora visto epiteto dell'Aurora vedica, sarebbe la continuazione nell'area celtica della dea indoeuropea dell'Aurora. Corrispondenze difficilmente imputabili a casualità sono rilevabili dall'osservazione dei tratti di queste figure. Notevole la *philia* dell'Aurora greca come di Brigitta per la parola poetica. Per la prima si può prendere in considerazione la sua stessa genealogia: non trascurabile è, infatti, che in Hes. *Theog.* 984 suo figlio figurò essere Μέμνων, nome riconducibile (seguendo De Saussure) al ved. *mánman-*, ossia "pensiero, preghiera, poesia". Quanto, invece, a Brigitta e alla sua connessione con la poesia, si può considerare il Glossario di Cormac, che esplicitamente la vuole poetessa nonché adorata dai poeti, e *Il dialogo dei due Saggi* risalente al X secolo e nel quale la poetessa *Brigit* figura quale madre dei tre dèi della poesia. Significativi sono, dunque, tali dati onde constatare il permanere del tratto della parola poetica in relazione all'Aurora. Cfr. CAMPANILE (1988: 197-204, in particolare 199, 200); MOTTA (1995: 103-112, in particolare 105); MOTTA (1998: 275-280, in particolare 276-277).

considerato, dove il verbo presenta il prefisso *abhi-*, nonché da *RV VI, 60, 1* e *VII, 25, 2*.²³

Il rapportarsi di Indra all'Aurora, analogamente al rapportarsi di Purūravas a Urvaśī, è caratterizzato da ambivalenza: l'Aurora è detta *indratama-* (*RV VII, 79, 3*), nonché generata da Indra (*RV II, 21, 4*; *I, 138, 1*), ma è contrastata e fugata da Indra in quanto questi è nemico delle tenebre e dei demoni che vi hanno dimora. A tal proposito eloquenti sono le formazioni di duale *naktośasā*, *uśasanaktā* (*RV IX, 5, 6*; *X, 36, 1*), che accostano la Notte e l'Aurora e che giustificano il proporsi dell'Aurora sia quale demone, in quanto prossima alla dimensione notturna, sia quale dea che con sé reca la luce (*RV I, 113, 7*; *I, 124, 3*), donde la considerevole dose di ambivalenza testimoniata dall'atteggiamento di Indra nei confronti dell'Aurora.²⁴

Alla luce della connessione di Urvaśī con il vento e, in particolare, delle ninfe con i Marut, interessante è, poi, il fatto che le Apsaras siano accostate all'Aurora là dove sono dette fuggire via quali "rossi unguenti", richiamando colori aurorali, così come i Marut sono accostati alle Aurore in *RV II, 34, 13ab*:

*té kṣoṇībhir aruṇēbhir nāñjībhī rudrā ṛtāsya sādaneṣu
vāvṛdhuh /*

«Con le loro schiere, come rossi unguenti i figli di
Rudra si sono rafforzati nelle sedi dell'ordine».

Per una più stretta correlazione fra Urvaśī e i Marut si può guardare anche a *RV X, 86, 9*, che associa l'aver per sposo Indra e per compagni i Marut:

²³ SANI (1995: 457-470, in particolare 467-468) accosta Purūravas e Urvaśī oltre che a Indra e ad Aurora, anche a Sūrya e ad Aurora; la comparabilità di Purūravas e Sūrya scaturisce dalla formula "tre volte al giorno" che caratterizza sia l'attività di Purūravas (*RV X, 95, 5*), sia quella di Sūrya (*RV III, 56, 6, 7*; *IV, 54, 6*) e che allude ai tre *savana*, cioè ai tre momenti della giornata in cui si spremeva il soma.

²⁴ In merito alla prossimità dell'Aurora alle tenebre si può guardare alla corrispondenza fra l'Aurora vedica e la figura della dea celtica Brigitta: il definirsi della loro fisionomia vuole, infatti, sia una connessione con la poesia e la luce sia una contiguità con le tenebre e l'oscurità. Non diversamente dall'Aurora vedica si connette, infatti, all'oscurità anche la figura dell'irlandese *Brigit* attraverso la sua stessa genealogia che la vuole figlia di *Dubtach*, "Nero", e nipote di *Dallbrónach*, "Nero e Cupo". Cfr. CAMPANILE (1988: 197-204, in particolare 199-200); MOTTA (1998: 275-280, in particolare 275).

*avīrām iva mām ayāṃ śarārur abhi manyate /
utāhām asmi vīrīñīndrapatnī marútsakhā víśvasmād
índra úttaraḥ //*

«“Questo scocciatore mi insidia come se non avessi marito! Io, invece, il marito l’ho: ho per sposo Indra e per compagni i Marut!” Più in alto di tutti è Indra».

Se si considera che, qui, la sposa di Indra è detta essere “coi Maruti quali amici”, *marutsakhā-*, e che compagne di Urvaśī sono le Ninfe variamente accostabili ai Marut, si ha la predicabilità di Urvaśī quale *marutsakhā-* e, quindi, nuovamente il connotarsi di aereo della verbalità di Urvaśī.

In definitiva, essendo il testo tramato di allusioni fino a potersi considerare come allusiva la chiave interpretativa di RV X, 95, si ritiene possibile postulare che anche nella prima strofe si sia in presenza di un’allusione, tanto più che si è in posizione incipitaria, uno dei luoghi focali dell’inno.

Si ritiene, tuttavia, che in tal caso, non essendoci tratti che direttamente richiamino Indra, l’Aurora o i Marut, non ci si possa limitare a ricondurre Urvaśī all’Aurora e Purūravas a Indra, ma, proprio per la centralità dello spazio privilegiato in cui si colloca l’allusione, si debba risalire a una fase il più possibile prossima alla situazione originaria di scaturigine del cosmo stesso.

1.3. Dynamis allusiva: lo scambio amebeo primo

Ci si volge, quindi, a considerare quali potrebbero essere i poli dialettici implicati nello scambio verbale, cui alluderebbe lo scambio amebeo fra Purūravas e Urvaśī avviato nella prima strofe.

Si considera, innanzitutto, come nei testi spesso si assista alla con-fusione di cosmogonico e contingente. In tal modo la *dynamis* allusiva consente di evocare simultaneamente il piano individuale dell’ontogenesi e quello universale della filogenesi.

Basti pensare al richiamarsi dell'aurora quotidiana e dell'aurora primigenia come avviene, ad esempio, nell'inno I, 123 alla seconda e alla nona strofe:²⁵

*pūrvā viśvasmād bhúvanād abodhi jáyantī vājam br̥hatī
sánuṭrī /
uccā vy ákhyad yuvatīḥ punarbhūr óṣā agan prathamā
pūrváhūtau //*

«Si è risvegliata la vittoriosa che precede ogni creazione, la maestosa dea che ottiene il premio della vittoria. Lassù in alto la giovane, nata di nuovo, volge intorno il suo sguardo: Uṣas è giunta per prima alla preghiera mattutina».

*jānaty áhnaḥ prathamásya náma śukrá kṛṣṇād ajaniṣṭa
śvitīcī /
ṛtásya yóṣā ná mināti dhāmāhar-ahar niṣkṛtām ācárantī
//*

«Lei, che conosce il nome del primo giorno, è nata bianca dallo spazio nero. La giovane donna non viola l'ordine stabilito, lei che viene all'appuntamento giorno dopo giorno».²⁶

Indicativo anche RV I, 124, 4cd:

*admasán ná sasató bodháyantī śaśvattamāgāt púnar
eyúṣīṇām //*

«Prima tra le molte Aurore che son tornate ogni volta, essa è arrivata svegliando tutti come fa una mosca».²⁷

Alla luce della frequente con-fusione di cosmogonico e contingente anche lo scambio di parole fra Purūravas e Urvaśī potrebbe iscriversi nella dinamica del rinnovarsi della filogenesi nell'ontogenesi e, in tal caso, la coppia rappresentata da Purūravas e Urvaśī potrebbe risultare allusiva di una coppia il più possibile prossima al momento incipitario del cosmo tanto

²⁵ Ulteriori passi significativi sono RV X, 72, 10; IV, 51, 6; III, 61, 1; IV, 51, 4; III, 55, 1; I, 113, 8; VII, 76, 3.

²⁶ SANI (2000: 126-127).

²⁷ SANI (2000: 128-129).

più che nel mondo vedico la scaturigine del cosmo viene rappresentata quale iato e proprio un netto iato segna il rapporto fra Purūravas e Urvaśī. Che la cosmogenesi scaturisca da una divisione emerge, ad esempio, in *RV III, 38, 3*:²⁸

*nī śīm íd átra gúhyā dádhānā utá kṣatrāya ródasī sám
añjan /
sám mātrābhir mamiré yemúr urvī antár mahī sámṛṭe
dhāyase dhuh //*

«Ed entrambi sono uniti, Cielo e Terra, a governare, lasciando le loro tracce. Si sono realizzati insieme nella loro grandezza e hanno disposto in ordine i mondi. Si sono divisi loro, che erano originariamente uniti, onde mettere in atto la creazione».

Stabilito che coinvolti nello iato sono cielo e terra, si cerca, ora, di determinare se proprio i due emisferi possano costituirsi quali coppia primigenia che attualizza lo scambio di parole al quale alluderebbe, in una dimensione cosmogonica e non più quotidiana, lo scambio verbale avviato da *RV X, 95, 1*.

Si guarda, pertanto, a passi che dimostrino come cielo e terra siano rappresentati quale coppia, nello specifico la coppia prima nella cosmogonia vedica.

Sono, ad esempio, genitori degli dèi in *RV VI, 17, 7cd*:²⁹

ádhārayo ródasī deváputre pratné mātārā yahvī ṛtāsya //
«Tu hai sostenuto Cielo e Terra, i cui figli sono gli dèi, (e che sono) gli antichi genitori e i giovani figli dell'ordine».

Si hanno, inoltre, passi nei quali i due emisferi figurano esplicitamente quale coppia come in *RV III, 54, 7* o in *RV I, 164, 33ab*:

²⁸ Quanto allo iato cosmogonico è non solo da *RV III, 38, 3* ma anche da *RV VII, 86, 1* che si desume come sia momento cosmogonico fondante il separarsi di cielo e terra (*ródasi*); immagine eloquente si ha anche in *RV V, 85, 1*.

²⁹ Cfr. anche *RV I, 159, 1*; *I, 185, 4 e 6*.

*dyaúr me pitā janitā nābhir átra bāndhur me mātā
pr̥thivī mahīyām /*

«Il Cielo è mio padre, il mio creatore, perciò il mio ombelico. Questa grande Terra è la mia famiglia, mia madre».

Da *RV X, 10, 9cd* emerge ulteriormente rafforzata la valenza primigenia della rappresentazione di cielo e terra. Yamī, infatti, onde persuadere Yama, sottolinea la possibilità di legittimare la loro coppia sulla base dell'antico esempio della coppia di cielo e terra:

*divā pr̥thivyā mithunā sábandhū yamīr yamāsya
bibhryād ajāmi //*

«Grazie al Cielo e alla Terra due parenti possono essere una coppia di sposi. E Yamī sopporterebbe da Yama ciò che un fratello non dovrebbe fare».³⁰

Accordando la constatazione che la coppia prima è rappresentata da cielo e terra con il dato di fatto che *RV X, 95, 1* è momento incipitario, quindi focale, di un inno fortemente tramato di arte allusiva, si può ritenere che la prima strofe di *RV X, 95* si configuri quale allusione all'avvio dell'atto primo compiuto dai due emisferi onde ovviare alla loro stessa divisione. Considerando, poi, che la prima strofe dell'inno rigvedico *X, 95* descrive momenti della dinamica della creazione poetica vedica, si avrebbe che a consentire di curare la frattura determinata dallo iato può essere solo uno scambio di parole fra cielo e terra, uno scambio amebeo, un reciproco nominarsi che crei un filo comunicativo fra i due poli, un *continuum* verbale poeticamente connotato.

In definitiva, qualora si accolga tale lettura della *dynamis* allusiva di *RV X, 95, 1*, si ha che nella realtà vedica l'atto primo è un atto poetico in un reciproco darsi.

Se l'«Inizio» è decretato proprio dallo iato e dal collaterale scambio verbale, la parola poetica viene a configurarsi quale matrice di qualsivoglia discorso non solo cosmologico ma anche

³⁰ SANI (2000: 240-242).

ontologico, risulta essere, ad un tempo, fondamento di ogni *Weltanschauung* e *medium* necessario per qualsivoglia approccio gnoseologico al 'reale'.

Coniugando *RV X*, 95, 1 in particolare con la quarta strofe di *RV X*, 129, nella quale si sottolinea la capacità dei poeti di creare un nuovo *bandhu-*, "legame", là dove vi è divisione, si viene, dunque, ad avere che, in seguito alla fase diacritica, la nuova fase sincretica si raggiunge proprio in forza delle potenzialità coesive della parola poetica.

2. Le figure foniche di *RV X*, 95

Onde cogliere ulteriormente la capacità sincretica della parola nel suo manifestarsi in atto, si presta particolare attenzione al declinarsi delle figure foniche in *RV X*, 95.

Si è ipotizzato che la prima strofe dell'inno alluda allo iato cosmogonico e al suo risolversi grazie alla capacità della parola poetica, che consente il reciproco nominarsi di cielo e terra e l'avvio, quindi, dello scambio dialogico. Guardando al tramarsi delle figure foniche nel dipanarsi dell'inno, si cercherà di valutare come il loro manifestarsi non solo sia compatibile con la lettura proposta, ma contribuisca pure a corroborare tale linea interpretativa.

Nella versificazione vedica si assiste generalmente al coincidere di unità metrica e unità sintattica, pertanto, non trascurabile è il fatto che per quattro volte in *RV X*, 95 si abbia violazione della coincidenza fra segmentazione ritmica e sintattica mediante il ricorrere di quattro *enjambement*, due dei quali si hanno nella quarta strofe, uno nell'ottava e uno nella diciassettesima.³¹

³¹ Per una trattazione della questione metrico-sintattica e per la bibliografia relativa cfr. MEDDA (1978: 199-210), nei confronti del quale si è debitori per quanto concerne l'individuazione dei quattro *enjambement*, ma non per la loro interpretazione che noi crediamo sia da ricondursi all'analisi che abbiamo offerto dell'inno rigvedico X, 95, ossia alla *dynamis* sincretica della parola in particolare vividamente in atto nello scambio amebeo fra cielo e terra, che sarebbe *Sorge* dello iato cosmogonico.

Quale motivazione della peculiare dinamica ritmico-sintattica di *RV X, 95* si propone l'estrinsecarsi di un intento allusivo: attraverso la rottura dell'unità metrico-grammaticale l'*enjambement* mimerebbe la rottura dell'unità di cielo e terra. Nell'inno non ci si limiterebbe, comunque, ad alludere allo iato, ne verrebbe, altresì, offerta una possibile *Sorge*: dove ricorrono tre dei quattro *enjambement*, nella quarta e nell'ottava strofe, infatti, al frazionamento grammaticale corrisponde una fitta tessitura fonica.³² La rottura sintattica è, quindi, risolta mediante soluzione fonetica e allo iato di cielo e terra si ovvia grazie alla sopravvenuta possibilità del propagarsi di foni nell'atmosfera, donde il reciproco nominarsi della coppia prima, che in tal modo cura la ferita cosmogonica.

Solo nel caso di *RV X, 95, 17*³³ tentare di ricomporre l'unità originaria non darebbe senso: lo scambio dialogico contingente si conclude, infatti, senza la ricomposizione auspicata da Purūravas, tant'è che l'inno non offre, qui, soluzione fonetica della rottura ritmico-sintattica che, pertanto, permane. L'*enjambement*, non risolto dalla soluzione fonetica, si presta a rappresentare l'ἔποχή alla quale si vede condannato Purūravas stesso che focalizzando l'attenzione sullo struggersi del suo

³² Per la *dynamis* delle figure foniche cfr. SANI (1972: 193-226). Guarda alla facoltà associativa delle figure foniche SANI (1992: 23-47, in particolare 23-24 e 44) sottolineando: «La rima... grazie alla sua capacità di legare una parola con un'altra, è in grado anche di comportare associazioni di idee e per questo motivo largamente e deliberatamente impiegata nei testi magici». Eloquenti anche le parole di CAMPANILE, ORLANDI *et al.* (1974: 228-251): «... il mondo divino è accessibile all'uomo primariamente attraverso la parola e il sacrificio» e «il sacrificio stesso comporta un *ineliminabile elemento verbale*» (245, il corsivo è nostro), parole che sottolineano la dipendenza del sacrificio da un'insopprimibile componente verbale, *condicio sine qua non* del sacrificio stesso, che le risulta ineluttabilmente subordinato. Significativo anche il modulo stilistico della ripetizione (per il quale cfr. SANI 1992: 23-47), gli inni "a ritornello" (29), il procedimento dell'enumerazione (33 ss.) e le figure foniche stesse che, fondandosi sulla moltiplicazione di determinati suoni, sono, in un certo senso, riconducibili alla tecnica della ripetizione (37).

³³ Non persuade il tentativo di dimostrare l'opportunità di espunzione delle ultime due strofe, da ultimo sostenuta da SCHNAUS (2008: 392, 394), siamo, infatti, altresì convinti della coesione dell'intero inno, come argomentato da MAGGI (2014: 25-54, in particolare 38-39), nello specifico la diciottesima strofe si presenterebbe nella forma-enigma del *brahmodya*, donde «il carattere non erratico di quest'ultima stanza, che piuttosto si collega profondamente a quanto la precede nell'ambito di una precisa strategia testuale che attraversa tutto il dialogo», cfr. MAGGI (2014: 43, nota 67).

cuore, conferma il proprio stanziale egocentrismo e un'indubbia autoreferenzialità.

Nel caso della quarta strofe è, invece, mediante il ricorso a un infittirsi della trama fonica del testo che si cerca di ovviare al frammentarsi metrico-grammaticale ingenerato da due *enjambement*. Il primo coinvolge *vásu-vayah*, il secondo *ántigrhāt-nanakṣe*:

*sā vásu dádhatī śvāsūrāya váya úṣo yádi váṣty ántigrhāt /
ástam nanakṣe yásmiñ cākán dívā náktam śnathitā
vaitaséna //*

Nel primo caso,³⁴ alla rottura dell'unità ritmico-sintattica, corrisponde sia l'evidente allitterazione tra i due termini dell'*enjambement* stesso, sia un peculiare riproporsi di alcuni segmenti fonemici: a determinare un *continuum* fonico, oltreché sintattico, interviene la possibilità di cogliere come la sequenza fonemica costituita dal soggetto offerente (*sā*, pronomi che si riferisce a *Urvaśī*) e dall'offerta (*vásu-vayah*) quasi coincida con i foni del lessema scelto onde esprimere il ricevente stesso (*śvāsūrāya*).

Nel secondo caso la violazione dell'unità ritmico-sintattica è compensata da un analogo incrementarsi della trama fonica a coinvolgere l'intera quarta strofe: *ántigrhāt*, ἄπαξ che chiude 4b, allittera con l'*incipit* (*ástam*) di 4c, e *vaitaséna*, ἄπαξ che conclude la strofe, non solo contiene i fonemi dei termini coinvolti nel primo *enjambement*, bensì, pure, le consonanti prevalenti nei lessemi del secondo: l'occlusiva dentale sorda *t* di *ántigrhāt* nonché la nasale dentale *n* di *nanakṣe*. La centralità che si è attribuita a *vaitaséna* è, peraltro, confermata anche a livello della dinamica dialogica: il lessema contiene in sé i segmenti fonemici caratterizzanti i termini centrali della quarta strofe, che pertanto in *vaitaséna* risulta quasi condensata, ed è, infatti, ripreso a 5a costituendosi quale legame fra la quarta e la quinta strofe. Quest'ultima, in parte replica della precedente, ne

³⁴ Per l'individuazione delle figure foniche in questo primo caso si seguono le indicazioni di MEDDA (1978: 199-210, in particolare 202, nota 6), che, peraltro, sottolinea come la strofe sia sede di due ἄπαξ, ossia *ántigrhāt* e *vaitaséna* (203-204).

amplifica tuttavia il contenuto informativo, secondo uno schema peculiare dello scambio amebeo,³⁵ e, al riferimento all'offerta erotica, si aggiunge il riferimento all'offerta di parola poetica.

Per quanto concerne l'*enjambement* dell'ottava strofe, dove la violazione dell'unità ritmico-sintattica coinvolge il complemento *jāhatīṣu* in 8a separato dalla forma verbale *niṣéve* che si articola in 8b, al frammentarsi del *continuum* sintattico corrisponde nuovamente l'incrementarsi della frequenza di figure foniche: si tratta sia dell'allitterazione che interessa *átkam*, momento ultimo di 8a nonché oggetto di *jāhatīṣu*, e l'*incipit* di 8b, *ámānuṣīṣu*, sia dell'iterarsi della sibilante cerebrale in combinazione con diverse vocali.³⁶

*sácā yád āsu jāhatīṣv átkam ámānuṣīṣu mānuṣo niṣéve /
 āpa sma mát tarásantī ná bhujyús tã atrasan rathaspr̥ṣo
 nãśvāḥ //*

L'*enjambement* dell'ottava isola, dunque, in 8b l'atto del mescolarsi dell'umano con il non-umano, marcando il carattere non trascurabile di tale con-fondersi. Tale paronomasia, volendo la contiguità di umano e non-umano, anticipa il contenuto semantico ripreso dalla paronomasia di 9a a collegare l'ottava e la nona strofe³⁷ e a inserire l'ottava nell'economia dell'inno costituendola, appunto, quale momento del manifestarsi del polarismo morte-immortalità. Si legge, infatti, nella nona strofe:

*yád āsu mártō amṛtāsu nispr̥k sám kṣoṇībhiḥ krátubhir
 ná pr̥kté /
 tã átáyo ná tanvāḥ śumbhata svã áśvāso ná krīlāyo
 dándaśānāḥ //*

«Quando il mortale, accostandosi a queste donne immortali, cerca di unirsi alla loro compagnia, come seguendo il proprio desiderio, esse rendono belli i loro corpi come dei cigni, come dei cavalli che si mordono per gioco».

³⁵ Tale schema è individuato da AMBROSINI (1970: 47-85).

³⁶ Cfr. *jāhatīṣu*, *ámānuṣīṣu*, *mānuṣo*, *niṣéve*.

³⁷ Similmente a *vaitasēna* nel caso della quarta e della quinta strofe.

La parola, creando un *continuum* fonico fra mortali e immortali, pare suggerirsi quale tramite onde generare la confusione, facendo sconfinare il mortale nell'immortale, l'umano nel divino e viceversa, decretando quindi la violazione di uno dei principi che reggono il rapportarsi dei mortali agli immortali, ossia, appunto, il non mescolarsi degli uni con gli altri. Tale labilità del confine fra i due poli e la dipendenza degli immortali dal mortale portatore di parola poetica emerge, d'altronde, ripetutamente nel *Ṛg-Veda*, nel momento in cui si insiste sulla capacità della parola di accrescere gli dèi (*RV III, 34, 1cd; VII, 19, 11ab*).³⁸

Se si guarda, in particolare, al manifestarsi dell'accrescersi testimoniato da *vṛdh* si può cogliere l'innescarsi della dinamica del reciproco scambio fra umano e divino conseguente all'attualizzarsi della parola poetica che determina il manifestarsi della proprietà transitiva dell'accrescimento: la parola accresce la divinità in forza del cibo-preghiera, il dio accresciuto accresce l'uomo. Questo è quanto emerge, ad esempio, dall'undicesima e quattordicesima strofe di *RV I, 36*:

*yám agnīm médhyātithiḥ kaṇva īdhá ṛtād ādhi /
tāsya préṣo dīdiyus tám imā ṛcas / tám agnīm
vardhayāmasi //*

«Medhyātithi Kaṇva illuminò dall'ordine sacro Agni, i cui ristori hanno lampeggiato, e noi lo rinvigoriamo con questi canti».

*ūrdhvó naḥ pāhy āmhaso ní ketúnā / víśvaṃ sám atrīṇaṃ
daha /
kr̥dhí na ūrdhvāñ caráthāya jīvāse / vidā devēsu no
dúvaḥ //*

«Col tuo segnale, o accresciuto (dai canti), proteggici dall'angoscia, brucia ogni demone. Accrescici per il movimento, per la vita. Procuraci il favore degli dèi».³⁹

³⁸ Cfr. *supra*.

³⁹ Lo scambio fra umano e divino viene a delinarsi anche nel momento in cui si dice di portare «ad Agni sacrificatore la parola primordiale, alta, a lui che porta le luci dei canti ispirati» (*RV III, 10, 5*): la luce di Agni offre, dunque, svelandoli, i motivi dei canti, perciò, ad Agni si offre la parola primordiale.

Data la contiguità riscontrata fra immortale e mortale, non alla centralità del polarismo morte-immortalità è, dunque, imputabile il fallimento dello scambio dialogico fra Purūravas e Urvaśī, tanto più che, alla fine, Purūravas otterrà l'immortalità. Questa circostanza, tuttavia, non è causa sufficiente per una riunione di Purūravas e Urvaśī. In definitiva dalla centralità del polarismo morte-immortalità non risulta né assecondato né impedito il fallimento, che, come si è visto, si deve piuttosto al contrapporsi di due diversi modelli di verbalità: l'una stanziale di Purūravas legata all'assegnazione dello statuto ontologico al monolitico essere, l'altra nomadica di Urvaśī legata all'assegnazione dello statuto ontologico al fluido divenire.

3. Capacità sincretica e arte allusiva

La dinamica della creazione poetica vedica è, quindi, in grado di attivare lo scambio con la sfera del *manas*- secondo un andamento che prevede un accrescimento sia della dimensione dell'essere in atto, umana e terrestre, sia della dimensione dell'essere in potenza, divina e celeste.

Si conferma così come la circolarità fra segno, significante e significato non sia destinata a declinarsi in una ciclicità piatta bensì in un andamento spiroidale.

L'immagine mentale, manifestandosi quale parola vestita di *habitus* fonico, continuamente rinnova il reale, ricreando il mondo, arricchendolo di rimandi ulteriori.

Come emerge dal manifestarsi delle figure foniche in *RV X, 95*, si viene, infatti, ad avere piena attualizzazione della *dynamis* verbale qualora si intrecci la capacità associativa, che è il portato della dimensione del *manas*-, nella quale ancora sussiste l'unità originaria e dove pertanto fisiologiche sono le legature, con la sostanza fonica della parola sul piano della *jihvā*-. Si svelano così legature ulteriori, rese possibili dal reciproco richiamarsi di foni.

Certo la dimensione della *jihvā*- implica un rallentamento del pensiero e un frenarsi dell'attività noetica rispetto alla dimensione eidetica del *manas*-, dove cielo e terra sono uniti e

nella quale il pensiero, non dovendosi confrontare con la realtà della scissione e con i conseguenti coartanti confini, può circolare senza attrito alcuno.⁴⁰ Infatti, nel momento in cui, tendendo diagonalmente la corda fra cielo e terra (*RV X*, 129, 5), il funambolico *r̥ṣi-* tocca la scabrosa superficie terrestre, l' indefinito scorrere (*r̥ṣ*) del pensiero incontra l'atmosfera, creatasi in seguito alla divisione degli emisferi, e, nell'attrito, si definisce in fonemi: il pensiero, prima olosemico che circola indefinitamente senza doversi 'ridurre' a lessemi specifici, deve venire a patti con forme e suoni del mondo, finendo con il contaminare l'altrimenti pura sfera del *manas-* e convertendone l'olosemia originaria in una polisemia imperfetta, eppur viva di verbi.⁴¹

Come si è visto in *RV X*, 95, le figure foniche, nutrite di suoni e di nostalgia dell'originario *continuum* di cielo e terra, nel loro farsi contribuiscono all'infittirsi della rete di relazioni in un accrescersi del disegno primo.⁴²

La parola si delinea quale ragione stessa dell'heideggeriano essere-gettati nella dimensione dell'essere in atto. Una volta verificatasi la *Geworfenheit*, onde evitare il collassare nell'adimensionalità del silenzio primigenio, l'uomo è invitato a verbalizzare quanto afferisce alla sfera del *manas-*. Il farsi dei semi in fonemi apporta un *surplus*, che consente alla dimensione eidetica di non depauperarsi nell'attualizzarsi: in virtù delle cromature, che il pensiero acquisisce nel farsi parola parlata, l'immersione nella dimensione della *jihvā-* è tutt'altro che sterile e, permettendo un potenziamento stesso del 'mondo delle

⁴⁰ Non vigendo la divisione di cielo e terra, non vi è nemmeno lo "spazio intermedio" (*antarikṣa-*), l'atmosfera nella quale, proprio per una sorta di attrito, si propagano i fonemi, sicché il pensiero scorre indefinitamente.

⁴¹ Interessante può essere un confronto fra il lacaniano desiderio infinito, che indefinitamente circola su se stesso, e la teoria del desiderio di Deleuze e Guattari come delineata da BERRETTONI (2002-2003: 45-61), che, peraltro, evidenzia la comparabilità fra imparare a desiderare e l'esercizio del linguaggio in quanto entrambi implicano una scelta ineluttabilmente dolorosa nel momento in cui si passa dalla dimensione dell'essere in potenza alla dimensione dell'essere in atto. Per la nozione di desiderio nel mondo vedico si possono considerare: *RV X*, 129, *AV XIX*, 52, cfr. AMBROSINI (1984: 170).

⁴² Come è rilevabile dall'analisi che si è proposta di *RV X*, 95, 4 e 8.

idee', consente alla dimensione dell'essere in atto di non risultare difettiva in un confronto con la sfera del *manas-*.

In tale ricostruzione delle vicende che coinvolgono la parola si ha che le figure foniche che caratterizzano il manifestarsi del vedico, come si è colto in RV X, 95, non sono mero artificio retorico, bensì fisiologico esito della *Geworfenheit* dell'uomo nonché ragione stessa del suo esser-ci quale detentore di una parola la cui *dynamis* sincretica consente di creare un costante scambio fra dimensione di *manas-*, *mantra-* e *jihvā-*, di fare un *continuum* delle antonimie, di ricongiungere, quindi, il diviso.

Nel corso del contributo si è, dunque, guardato all'inno X, 95 del *Rg-Veda*, in particolare alla prima strofe, avvio dello scambio fra *Urvaśī* e *Purūravas*, che si è proposta quale allusione allo scambio amebeo primo volto a ricongiungere cielo e terra scissi in seguito allo iato cosmogonico. A tale conclusione si è pervenuti considerando come il testo sia fortemente tramato di *dynamis* allusiva, come frequentemente il contingente alluda alla dimensione cosmogonica nonché come il testo si offra intriso di figure foniche che, a un tempo, avrebbero lo scopo sia di alludere allo iato cosmogonico sia, contestualmente, di offrirne una possibile *Sorge*. Si è giunti a ipotizzare che fine stesso dell'uomo in seguito alla *Geworfenheit* sia quello di produrre parole in grado di mitigare lo scarto fra dimensione dell'essere in potenza, luogo di *manas-* e *mantra-*, e dimensione dell'essere in atto della *jihvā-*, della parola pronunciata. Questo indurrebbe un accrescimento della dimensione dell'essere in potenza in forza della materia fonica stessa in grado di suggerire nuove legature, sulla base di assonanze e allitterazioni, che sarebbero altrimenti impensabili nella sola dimensione eidetica.

In definitiva, dopo aver considerato il ruolo focale dell'avvio dello scambio fra *Urvaśī* e *Purūravas* della prima strofe, la *dynamis* allusiva che permea di sé l'intero inno e le figure foniche volte a farsi *Sorge* degli iati semantici o sintattici, pare legittimo pensare che la prima strofe alluda allo iato primo e al primo scambio di parole fra cielo e terra, scambio volto a curare, appunto, lo iato cosmogonico. Si tratta di quella cura che

è momento filogenetico fondante ed è momento che lo *ṛṣi*
rinnova in ogni suo poetico-poietico atto di parola.

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REVIEWS

PRADIP BHATTACHARYA, trans. from Sanskrit, *The Mahābhārata of Vyasa: The Complete Shantiparva Part 2: Mokshadharmā*, Writers Workshop, Kolkata, 2016, 1107 pages.

The book reviewed here is Pradip Bhattacharya's translation of *Mokṣadharmaparvan* in the *Śānti-Parvan* of the Mahābhārata, which starts from Section 174 of the *Śānti-Parvan* in Kisari Mohan Ganguli's (KMG) prose translation, and corresponds to Section 168 of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI) or Pune Critical Edition (C.E).

Padma Shri Professor Purushottam Lal, D. Litt. began the first ever attempt to a verse "transcreation" of the Mahābhārata in 1968; unfortunately, his timeless ongoing work lost to time in 2010 with his untimely demise, so that "transcreation" of only sixteen and a half of the epic's eighteen books could be published. Bhattacharya takes up the unfinished job of his *Guru*, and offers this verse-prose *Guru-Dakṣiṇā* to his "much-admired guru and beloved acharya", Prof. Lal. He, however, is on his own in that he does "translate rather than transcreate".

Bhattacharya proposes "keeping to the original syntax as far as possible without making the reading too awkward" and sets out on his translation venture "in free verse (alternate lines of ten and four-to-six feet) and in prose (as in original) faithful to Prof. Lal's objective of providing the full 'ragbag' version."

Mokṣadharmaparvan being the philosophic and soteriological culmination of Mahābhārata and *Ancient India's* message and wisdom, Bhattacharya's work is culturally important in bringing to the English speaking world this very important *parvan*.

The idea of *Mokṣa* that Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna in the *Gītā* (*Udyoga Parvan*) and found elsewhere (though mostly in the sense of liberty from any *Tyrannous Power*) is elaborated in *Mokṣadharmaparvan* through *Itihāsa-Purāṇa*, narratives, recollections and fables. *Mokṣa* is the final of the Four *Puruṣārthas* – following *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*; yet it would not arrive automatically or inevitably by law of chronology

unless *Puruṣakāra* blends with *Daiva*, and *Daiva* may favour only when Balance of *Puruṣārthas* – *Dharma-Artha-Kāma* – is attained through *Buddhi*, *Upāya* (Strategy/Policy), Will and *Karma*.

The *parvan* stands out as unique in its advocacy of a *Liberal Varṇa System* (portraying non-*Brāhmiṇ* characters like Sulabhā, the prostitute Piṅgalā and *Śūdras* as qualified for higher merit and social status through wisdom), and carries the important and interesting message that understanding *Gender Relation* or *Evolutionary Nature* of Gender is essential for *Prajñā* leading to *Mokṣa*. Yudhiṣṭhira learns all these theoretically from grandfather Bhīṣma, who is then on his Bed of Arrows. This is not without significance. Bhīṣma's physical life-in-death or death-in-life is apt parallel and metaphor for Yudhiṣṭhira's mental state. Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers and Draupadī qualify to gain knowledge on *Mokṣa-Dharma* only after their growing realization through dialogues, debates, experiences and feelings that victory in war has been futile, and Kurukṣetra War is as much external as internal. Yet, at the end of *Śānti-Parvan*, theoretical knowledge does not suffice, and the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī emerge Dynamic in their quest for more quests – that sets the stage for further of Bhīṣma's advice in *Anuśāsana Parvan*. The message that emerges from *Mokṣadharmaparvan* is that, one has to actually attain *Mokṣa*; mere theorizing is only furthering *Bandhana*.

Bhattacharya has long been a critic of the C.E considered almost sacrosanct by perhaps most of the *Videśi* and *Svadeśi* scholars alike, while, ironically, even V.S. Sukhtankhar (1887-1943), the first general editor of the project, was tentative in calling it an approximation of the earliest recoverable form of the *Mahākāvya*. Bhattacharya's taking up the massive project of translation is, in a way, his critical commentary on C.E through action; he boldly declares about his project "whatever the C.E. has left out has been sought to be included" – ringing like Mahābhārata's famous self-proclamation - *yad ihāsti tad anyatra yan nehāsti na tat kva cit* (1.56.33).

Bhattacharya's project is thus, what James Hegarty calls "(recovery of) embarrassment of riches" and perhaps more, because it is "a conflation of the editions published by the Gita Press (Gorakhpur, 9th edition, 1980), *Āryaśāstra* (Calcutta, 1937) and that translated and edited by Haridās Siddhāntavāgīś Bhattacharya in Bengali with the *Bhāratakaumudī* and Nīlakanṭha's *Bhāratabhāvadīpa* annotations (Bishwabani Prakashani, Calcutta, 1939)."

Bhattacharya has done an invaluable job to English readership by providing four episodes found in Haridās Siddhāntavāgīś (Nibandhana-Bhogavatī, Nārada, Garuḍa and Kapilā Āsurī narratives) and many verses not found in the Gorakhpur edition. Of these, the Kapilā Āsurī *Samvāda* at Section 321-A (p. 815) is only found in the Siddhāntavāgīś edition (vol. 37, pp. 3345-3359). Just as, in archaeology, every piece of human-treated rock delved from earth is beyond value, I would say that every unique variation or every narrative in Mahābhārata recensions is of similar value particularly in marking a curious interaction point between *Classical* and *Folk Mahābhārata* – something that no serious Mahābhārata scholar can ignore.

Bhattacharya deserves kudos for bringing into light the stupendous work and name of Siddhāntavāgīś, an almost forgotten name even to most Bengalis, and an unknown scholar to most Mahābhārata scholars or readers, almost eclipsed by the other popular Bengali translator Kālī Prasanna Siṃha.

Translation is a difficult and complex ball-game, particularly when it comes to Sanskrit. India and the Mahābhārata-World have witnessed much *Translation Game* all in the name of scholarship. The *Translation Game* as a part of *Colonizer's Agenda* as well as the *Game-calling* is already cliché – having been pointed out and criticized by stalwarts from Rsi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay to Edward W. Saïd. Sometimes *Agenda* sometimes peculiar whims have done injustice to Sanskrit. While Alf Hiltebeitel's constant rendering of *Itihāsa* as "History", or *Mahākāvya* as "Epic", or translation of *Dharma* as

“religion” or “law” or “foundation” (the latter also in Patrick Olivelle) is the most common example of the former, Van Buitenen’s rendering of *Kṣatriya* as “Baron” is a signal case of the latter.

The whole *Vedic* (later, *Hindu*) tradition is contained in culturally sensitive lexicons that should not be subjected to *Free Play* in the name of translation. Needless to say, *Dharma* holds the Key to *Bhāratiya Itihāsa* as also understanding Mahābhārata. Given the inclusion of *Dharma* in Oxford dictionary, and given definition of *Itihāsa* in Kauṭilya’s *Arthaśāstra* (anywhere between c.a 300 BCE – 300 CE) and Kalhana’s (c. 12th century) *Rājatarāṅgini*, I wonder why *Dharma* has to be translated at all, or why *Itihāsa* has to be translated as “History”, a signifier that falls shorter to the signified of *Itihāsa*. Bhattacharya arrives at a compromise by rendering “*Itihāsa*-history” (e.g. Section 343, p. 998).

Bhattacharya’s translation venture has to be understood at the backdrop of above-mentioned translation-scenario. He declares he has been cautious on the matter of translation in having cross-checked with Kaliprasanna Sinha’s Bengali translation (1886), KMG’s first English translation (1883-96) and the shorter BORI edition. Such crosschecking with available translations in different languages of a time-tested Sanskrit work is no doubt the safest and most appropriate translation-methodology that every aspiring translator of already rendered works should follow. Mahābhārata can neither be reduced into simplistic narratives, nor it can be thought in terms of *Grand Narrative*; more so because Sanskrit denies singular and straightjacket interpretation of signifiers. Varied translations are actually explorations of various narrative possibilities in the Sanskrit lexicon and *Ślokas*. The wise way therefore, is to keep open to different narrative possibilities.

As one reads Bhattacharya’s translation, one finds that his work is as much experimentation with translating Sanskrit into English, as much with English language itself. If Sanskrit is not a translatable language, then English must transform into a

worthy receptacle language – this, it seems, is Bhattacharya’s underlying purpose and belief. He retains Sanskrit words that are in the Oxford English Dictionary, and following Prof. Lal’s style of rendering some Sanskrit words and giving their common or contextual English synonym with a hyphen, also coins Sanskrit-English compounds or retain Sanskrit word as it is. In latter cases, initially, the unused eye and ear may miss the rhythm; however, the Sanskrit-English compound has a rhythm of its own, adds to poetic flavor, enables Bhattacharya to maintain syllable counts in feet, and also enables him to be the simultaneous translator and reader.

Bhattacharya’s Sanskrit-English compounding is utilitarian and perhaps *Political* too, and surely comes under the purview of *Skopostheorie*. The reader has the option either to make sense of the Sanskrit on his/her own, or take the English suggested by Bhattacharya. In ‘pure’ translation, this option is unavailable and the reader has to be at the receiving end.

At times, however, over-use of Sanskrit-English compounds makes the reading strenuous and breaks the rhythm. For example, “Likewise by force do I *Pr̥thivī*-earth verily for the welfare of all creatures” (Section 339, verse 71, p. 936) is not a sonorous rendering. Similarly, in “*Niṣāda*-tribals” (Section 328, verse 14, p. 863), compounding ‘tribal’ is neither politically correct, nor historically or *Mahābhāratically* correct, because *Niṣāda* is *Varṇasaṃkara* (12.285.8-9), and sometimes considered *Kṣatriya* – though “fallen”, and overall a very complex entity.

In some cases, where the *Śloka* itself offers the explanation to an epithet or name, Bhattacharya’s retaining the Sanskrit word for what is already explained in the *Śloka* is a laudable strategy to introduce the Sanskrit word into English vocabulary. For example, “*śitikaṇṭha*” (verse 98) and “*Khaṇḍaparaśu*” (verse 100) at Section 342 (p. 990). However, the “ś” in former is lower-case, but “K” in the latter is upper-case; consistency should have been maintained, as also in the case of “maha”. For example, *mahāprājña* (12.200.1a) rendered as “Maha wise” is

with capital “M” (verse 1, 12, p. 157, 159), whereas it is not in other cases like “maha rishis” (p. 1026, 1027). ‘P’ in *Puruṣottama* is not capitalized at Section 235 verse 39 (p. 908), but capitalized at page- 910 (verse 53). *Guṇa* is not transcribed (Sec- 205, verse 10-12, p. 142); it is in lower-case “g” in most cases, even at page-143, verse 17 where once it is lower-case and once with a capital “G”. *Kāla* is transcribed but in same verse-line *saṃsāra* is not (Sec- 213, verse 13, p. 217). Similarly, “atman” (*Ātmā*) is sometimes with small “a” sometimes capital “A” (e.g. pp. 386-7).

Bhattacharya may address these minor issues in his next edition; minor, because his laudable retention of culturally exclusive words like “*arghya*” (e.g. Section 343, p. 1000) and “*āñjali*” [“palms joined in āñjali” (e.g. Section 325, verse 30 & 32, p. 846)], as also *Praṇāma* in “pranam-ed” (verse 19, p. 176) and “pranam-ing” (Sec- 209A, verse 25, 28, 29, 33; p. 177), outweighs occasional capitalization-italicization inconsistency or misses.

Even if it is not “inconsistency” but deliberate, Bhattacharya’s dual strategy of transcribing Sanskrit words in IAST, and non-transcribing Oxford accepted Sanskrit words, may appear confusing to readers. For example, he does not transcribe the prefix ‘maha’ or italicize it. Similar is “rishis”. In my opinion, the recurrence of the prefix ‘maha’ could have been avoided in some cases. For example, “maha-humans” (Section 343, p. 999) and ‘*mahāyaśāḥ*’ (12.200.33a) translated as “maha-renowned” (Sec- 207, vn. 33, p. 161) sounds odd and breaks the rhythm.

The translation experimentation is Bhattacharya’s commentary too – which Sanskrit words English should accept in its vocabulary instead of futile indulging in *Translation Game*. Take for example the word *Puruṣa*, which is a Key word in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan* and in the doctrine of *Puruṣārthas*. *Puruṣa* has been translated in various ways. Renowned scholars like Julius Eggeling, Max Muller, Arthur Berriedale Keith and Hanns Oertel have mostly translated *Puruṣa* as “man” or

“person” in their renderings of ancient *Vedic* texts. Needless to say, these renderings are misleading because, originally, *Puruṣa* is a non-gendered concept. Bhattacharya has it both ways; he retains *Puruṣa* and offers different compounding in different contexts – *Puruṣa*-Spirit (e.g. Sec- 348, p. 1026), “*Puruṣa*-being” (e.g. Sec- 321, verse 37, p. 817; Sec- 343, p. 1000), and “*Puruṣa* the Supreme Person” (Sec- 334, verse 29, p. 900).

While the contextual compounding offers the reader the choice to make his own sense of *Puruṣa*, in my opinion, Bhattacharya could have retained *Puruṣa* as it is, because the compounded English translation is at times etymologically problematic. For example, Bhattacharya translates *ekāntinas tu puruṣā gacchanti paramaṃ padam* (12.336.3c) as “those exclusive devotees, reaching *Puruṣa*-spirit the supreme station” (Sec- 348, p. 1026). But, ‘Spirit’ from PIE *(s)peis- “to blow” does not go well with *Puruṣa* (though “*ru*” connotes “sound”), and though the Latin *spiritus* connotes “soul” (other than “courage, vigor, breath”), the modern English connotation (since c.1250) “animating or vital principle in man and animals,” and *Puruṣa* is indeed identified with *Prāṇa* in *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āraṇyakas*, yet *Puruṣa* is much more than all those combined connotations and significances. Perhaps, Bhattacharya could have left *Puruṣa* as *Puruṣa*, and *Pada* as *Pada* given the immense significations of *Pada*. “Supreme station” does not seem to be an adequate translation of *paramaṃ padam*. ‘Station’ from PIE base *steh₂- “to stand” is rather *Static*, whereas, *Puruṣa* is a *Dynamic* principle in the *Vedas*, with “thousand feet” (RV- 10.90). Bhattacharya seems to have followed Griffith’s translation of *Paramaṃ Padaṃ* as “supreme station” (e.g. Griffith’s trans. in RV- 1.22.21 – “Vishnu’s station most sublime” for *viṣṇoḥ yat paramam padam*). Further, the punctuation ‘comma’ is missing after *Puruṣa*-spirit.

Bhattacharya has sometimes quoted the whole Sanskrit *Śloka* and then given its translation. Mostly these are well-known and oft-quoted famous *Ślokas*; at times, it seems these are his

personal favourites. This strategy is a severe jolt to conventional translation. Bhattacharya makes the point that despite reading translation, the reader must have the reminder of the original. In some renderings, he has used popular English idioms in addition to the translation, which carry the sense of the *Śloka* though not literally implied. Such experimentation makes the communication forceful. For example, he translates *karoti yādṛśam karma tādṛśam pratipadyate* (12.279.21c) as “as is the karma done, similar is the result obtained”; and then further adds, “as you sow, so shall you reap” (verse 22, p. 639). This being a popular idiom, succeeds in better communication with the reader, which is no doubt the translator’s achievement.

Bhattacharya’s translation is crisp, compact and lucid. For example, KMG renders - *manoratharatham prāpya indriyārthahayam narah / raśmibhir jñānasambhūtaiḥ yo gacchati sa buddhimān* (12.280.1) as “That man who, having obtained this car, viz., his body endued with mind, goes on, curbing with the reins of-knowledge the steeds represented by the objects of the senses, should certainly be regarded as possessed of intelligence.” The result is loosening and dispersing of the original sense; besides, “curbing” adds a negative dimension. Bhattacharya translates this as “obtaining this chariot of the mind drawn by the horses of the sense-objects, the man who guides it by the reins of knowledge...” – which is a more practical and easy-flowing rendering, retaining the poetic flavour; besides, “guiding” instead of KMG’s “curbing” is positive and does justice to the optimistic philosophy implied here.

Bhattacharya’s task is indeed a “Himalayan task” (preface, p.6) as he is aware of the “challenge”. With all humbleness that befits an Indian scholar’s *Śraddhā* to Indian tradition, Bhattacharya is open-minded to revise towards perfection and admits “all errors are mine and I shall be grateful if these are pointed out” (Preface, p. 6).

As an experimentation in translation, Bhattacharya’s methodology is here to last; future translators of Sanskrit may

improve the system, but surely cannot indulge in whimsical translations without mentioning the original Sanskrit words that hold the key to the overall meaning of a *Śloka* or a section or even the whole Text.

The annexures provided at the end of the translation work is useful and enlightening. Annexure-1 gives the internationally accepted system of Roman transliteration of the Devanāgarī. Annexure-2 is Prof. P. Lal's sketch of the Mahābhāratan North India (based on the Historical Atlas of South Asia) showing important places and rivers; however, one feels, the sketch could have been magnified a bit for better legibility. This document and Annexure-3, another sketch of the whole of India, is historically valuable as reminiscence of Prof. P. Lal. Annexure-4 provides a comprehensive list of all the episodes of *Mokṣa-Dharma parvan* courtesy Madhusraba Dasgupta. This document is an instant information provider of what is contained in *Mokṣa-Dharma parvan*. One wishes, Bhattacharya could have provided the corresponding page numbers to the episodes of his translation.

In final analysis, Bhattacharya's rendering is a must in library for serious scholars and readers alike.

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V. ADLURI and J. BAGCHEE, *Argument and Design – the unity of the Mahābhārata*. Brill, Leiden, 2016, 478 pages.

What the Ancillary Stories do in the Mahābhārata

Traditional Indological scholarship has believed in early Kshatriya ballads being edited into the Mahābhārata (MB). Alf Hiltebeitel, once of the most prolific and provocative of MB scholars, has persistently been advocating that it is the written work of a committee of Brahmins of the Panchala area between 150 BCE and 100 CE. A few years ago Adluri, his devoted *shishya*, and Bagchee, Adluri's nephew-cum-*chela* in the *parampara*, collected the guru's papers in two volumes running to over 1200 pages. Now they have edited a superb collection of papers by twelve MB scholars from Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA with two articles by Hiltebeitel preceding and rounding off the set. As usual with conferences held abroad, India is not represented although the epic is grounded there. In India, on the other hand, no seminar on her ancient traditions is considered worthwhile unless some foreign scholars feature, irrespective of the standard of their contribution.

What provoked this book's riveting outpouring is Hiltebeitel's proposition that the "sub-tales" are not fringe episodes or "digressions" as Sukthankar, the editor of the Critical Edition, called them, but are central to the architectonics of the MB. The papers, all focusing on this argument, featured in the 41st annual conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin, in October 2012. From the excellent Foreword by R.P. Goldman, editor of the translation of the Ramayana's Critical Edition (R), it is clear that the book is very much of a *Festschrift* from loving friends, admiring colleagues and students. Adluri provides a fine Introduction happily titled, "From supplementary narratives to narrative supplements," presenting a succinct survey of the highlights. As Goldman points out, thematic proximity is what characterizes these stories which are by no means lesser or subordinate tales. Adluri proposes that they are the best way to rethink the nature of the MB as the repository of all knowledge.

Hiltebeitel notes that among the various terms the MB applies to itself one is *upakhyana*, a non-Vedic word which might be used for the first time here and not occurring in the R. He lists 67 stories (almost 15% of the epic's total slokas) that are so termed, taking "the reverberations between them as a kind of sonar with which to plumb the epic's depths." Whereas *akhyana* is a long narrative often interrupted, the *upakhyana* is a major tale that is not broken up. These are almost all addressed to the Pandavas (primarily Yudhishtira) and a few to Duryodhana and Karna. In saying that only one is narrated by a woman (Kunti to Pandu) Hiltebeitel overlooks the fiery tale of Vidula she tells Krishna for retelling to her sons for screwing their courage to the sticking place so as not to fail. Where tales are repeated, they are always from a different angle. Because of this, Hiltebeitel argues for reading the *Shanti* and the *Anushasana Parvas* as part of the total design, not as the consequence of "an anthology-by-anthology approach." It is relevant that the MB's oldest *parva* list occurring in the Spitzer manuscript (c. 250 CE) does not have the *Anushasana*. It might have formed part of the *Shanti* at that time as it does in the Indonesian MB. These stories build up a nexus of values such as *anrishansya* (non-cruelty), friendship, hospitality, gratitude. This is not so clear in the R. In discussing the Parashurama-Rama encounter, Hiltebeitel erroneously states that the former demands that the latter break Vishnu's bow and he does so (p. 50). Actually, Parashurama challenges him to shoot an arrow with the bow, which Rama does, blocking his path to Swarga. There is a pattern in the encounters Rama has with sages: Hiltebeitel claims that he meets all the eight founders of Brahmin lineages, arguing not very convincingly that Rishyashringa is a substitute for his grandfather Kashyapa and Parashurama for Jamadagni. Childless Parashurama cannot be considered a *gotra*-founder. Seven of these rishis make up the *Saptarshi* constellation, pointing Rama southwards. Hiltebeitel argues that the two epics have similar designs and therefore the MB's story of Rama, beginning with material from canto 7 of the R, cannot be an epitome of Valmiki's epic. Valmiki went beyond it to posit new values about dharma based upon a bhakti

relationship between subjects and monarch, bolstered by rishis of Vedic antiquity. In the course of this discussion, Hiltebeitel very uncharacteristically calls for correcting the Critical Edition of the MB (held sacrosanct by him and his ilk), for having turned the 18 chapter “Narayaniya” section of the *Mokshadharma Parva* into 19, thereby spoiling his ideal “18” paradigm. This smacks of that very “higher criticism” which he is wont to condemn. He contends that these *upakhyanas* aim at churning out the secret of achieving liberation through dharma and truth, something that Shuka attains and finally Yudhishtira too. But does he? After all, in Swarga he is prevented from putting a question to Draupadi-Shri.

Robert Goldman argues that *upakhyana* does not connote subordinate tales but rather complementary or supplementary narratives that are instructive in nature, repeating motifs in the main story. He examines the R’s *Uttarakanda* as such a narrative encapsulating core components of the MB’s central story. Here the poet appears to be attempting to project Rama as the *chakravartin* who achieves universal imperium through conquest as idealised in the MB. It is only in this last canto that we find mention of armies of 300 rajas massing, too late, to help Rama in besieging Lanka. After the *rajasuya* yagya Yudhishtira’s sway extends from Antioch in the West to China in the East. But why should this imperial concept be seen as emulating the Persian Empire? Further, Yudhishtira certainly does not “lay waste to all rival kingdoms” and commit “wholesale slaughter” for the *rajasuya*. Unlike the Dharmaraja, Rama does not annex kingdoms (not even Lanka). He establishes Shatrughna to rule in Mathura. Bharata conquers Gandhara by releasing a WMD annihilating thirty million *gandharvas*- veritable ethnic cleansing- and establishes his sons at Pushkaravati (Peshawar) and Takshashila. Then Rama commands Lakshmana to take over Karupatha without bloodshed. He refrains from the *rajasuya* because Bharata convinces him that the world is already under his sway. The horse-sacrifice which he performs instead at Lakshmana’s suggestion emulates Dasharatha’s in being devoid of conquests or battles. It is not only Bhavabhuti (8th century CE) who sought

to remedy this omission by introducing the battle with Lava and Kusha in *Uttararamacharita*, as Goldman notes, but also Jaimini who did the same in his MB's *Ashvamedha Parva*. Rama is the ideal pacific and righteous emperor, very different from Dharmaraja Yudhishtira who does not shrink from imperial conquests. The *Uttarakanda* fails to remodel Rama "in the model of the idealized *cakravartin*, Yudhishtira, held up as an ideal template for Kshatriya rule in the Mahābhārata." Goldman believes that its authors were familiar with the MB. He goes further to suggest a probable chronology as Pushkaravati and Takshashila were major towns of the Persian satrapy of Gandaris and then under Alexander (4th c. BCE) and Menander (2nd c. BCE). Their importance would have inspired the authors to claim them as part of the Kosalan Empire. Would that not hold equally true for the MB which is recited to Janamejaya in Taxila?

Bagchee focuses on the variations in the Shakuntala story in the northern and southern recensions. Like Yagyavalkya defying his maternal uncle-and-guru Vaishampayana, he challenges grand guru Hiltebeitel's views and proposes a novel concept, viz. that southern scribes composed extra slokas restoring a better sequential order of chapters in terms of Paurava genealogy. He asserts, they "*heal the breaches in the text*" as they had "*an architecture in their heads*" (emphasis in the original). This is very much like the "higher criticism" which he condemns strongly otherwise. The order in the southern recension is superior to the northern in which "the transitions...are quite awkward." He also alleges that the scribes deleted entire segments, as in the beginning of chapter 90. To him the southern version is "a more complete retelling of the Mahābhārata." Hence he suggests rethinking the relation between the two recensions. As he and Adluri are revising the Critical Edition, we will be seeing the results of their editing work seeking to preserve the tradition of the Indian scribes, as they claim. Bagchee asserts that the southern is not descended from the northern, as argued by T.P. Mahadevan and strongly backed by Hiltebeitel. In proposing a common source for both he is reverting to the German theory of an "Ur-Mahābhārata".

According to him, Mahadevan is mistaken in saying that Sukthankar chose the shortest text as the archetype because of his training in the German school of Philology. Bagchee himself reveals his own Germanic affiliations by speaking of this being “a case of *Vorlage* that makes a certain *Vorgabe*”.

Greg Bailey shows how the section in the *Vana Parva* dealing with Markandeya’s narratives mirrors the use of multiple and mixed genres in the MB text, besides aiming at providing a “totalistic view of things.” There is theogony, cosmogony, tyrannical rajas, raging rishis and differing views of dharma. There is no overarching plot holding this part together, except that all of it educates Yudhishtira. This is particularly interesting because nothing happens to the Pandavas who are the interlocutors all through. The only actors are the sage and Krishna. The focus appears to be on presenting Brahmins with a unified interpretation of dharma through tales of widely varied content.

Sally Goldman examines the MB’s *Ramopakhyana* and the R’s account of the Rakshasas in the *Uttarakanda* to show that sexual transgression by females and misogyny inhere in the demonic in Valmiki’s imagination, not in Vyasa’s. Vyasa is not bothered about Rakshasa women and even omits Ravana’s mother Kaikasi. She holds that the *Ramopakhyana* is refashioning the *Uttarakanda* to fit in with its views. Why can it not be the other way round, particularly when it is quite certain that the *Uttarakanda* is later (cf. Hildebeitel)?

Bruce Sullivan seeks to find out what Bhima’s encounter with Hanuman can tell us about the MB. Firstly, the MB mostly uses the name “Hanoomaan” instead of “Hanumaan”. Sullivan makes the excellent point that there is no reason to assign several centuries for the size of the MB, or a committee as Hildebeitel proposes, when Isaac Asimov could write 500 books on subjects covering all ten major categories of the Dewey Decimal System while working as a professor of biochemistry. This episode is the only instance in which Bhima cites knowledge of the quality-less supreme soul (*nirgunah paramatmeti*) as the reason for not jumping over the monkey, and refuses the amrita-like food offered. Further, he mentions

this meeting to no one, not even Hanuman's presence on Arjuna's pennant. Even later, when the Pandavas hear the *Ramopakhyana*, Bhima does not mention that he has met Hanuman. Yet, when he meets Hanuman, he says he is aware of his exploits in the R. Hanuman refers to Rama as Vishnu and uses the word *avatara*. Besides this, it is a parallel to first Arjuna and then Yudhishtira meeting their fathers, with Bhima's encounter with Hanuman appropriately in the middle. It also links up with the burning of Khandava when Arjuna received the celestial chariot with a divine ape on the flagstaff, which we are now told is Hanuman. This episode, therefore, seeks to explain Hanuman's presence on Arjuna's flagstaff. In this episode Hanuman is linked four times to Indra. In the *Rigveda* Indra is "Vrishakapi," the bull-ape. Nowhere else in the MB is the ape on the banner known as Hanuman, which suggests that this episode was added at the very end of its composition. Hanuman's assuming his incomparable form to teach Bhima about dharma and the yugas, advocating puja with bhakti, is modelled on Krishna's *Gita*, as is the forgiveness both brothers beg of the deities. Just as Arjuna alone can see this form of Krishna and hear him, so it is with Bhima and Hanuman, Yudhishtira and Dharma. Sullivan sees a parallel between Bhima's double quest for wondrous flowers on Gandhamadana and Indra's mountain-climbing to seek the source of golden lotuses floating in the Ganga. Since here Hanuman is depicted as more divine than in the R, does that indicate composition at a time when he was worshipped as a deity (c. 1st century BCE - 400 CE)? Possibly not, as evidence of such worship comes much later.

Fernando Alonso's thesis is that the committee writing the MB was presenting an answer to competing ideologies like Buddhism and bhakti following Alexander's invasion. He focuses on "the architectures of power and the role of Indra". In doing so he surveys the epic of Gilgamesh where the heroic king is punished by gods for misrule. Both the MB and this epic deal with kings who are intermediaries between men and gods and need to be righteous. Though Alonso asserts that both epics have a divine plan of massacre, in the MB this affects not all

humanity, as in Gilgamesh, but only Kshatriyas. Further, how is the good side “degraded...paving the way for their slaughter” when the Pandavas are left unscathed with a resurrected heir? Nor do bad kings or the absence of kings imply attacks by demons or perversion of the social order and a lack of yagyas. None of these occur during Duryodhana’s reign which is extolled by the subjects when they bid tearful farewell to Dhritarashtra. An excellent insight is how sages contribute to the daivic plan through rape (of Matsyagandha), boons (to Kunti, Gandhari, Drona), curses (on Dyaus-Bhishma, Dharmavidura, Karna), engendering (by Bharadvaja, Vyasa). Besides incarnating, the gods empower both parties (Arjuna, Shikhandi, Dhrishtadyumna, Draupadi, Jayadratha and Ashvatthama) while the demons possess Duryodhana and Karna. In this list, Alonso misses out Duryodhana whose torso is adamantine being Shiva’s creation but waist-downwards is delicate having been made by Uma. As for Indra, he is much more of a figurehead than Homer’s Zeus who actively intervenes in the Trojan War. In the *upakhyanas* he is shown as lecherous and scared, never as the demon-smiting Rigvedic hero, but a god who bows to Brahmin-dom. The tirtha stories show that the gods are not all that superior and can be overcome by rishis, asuras and even humans. Their inferiority to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, to kings like Kuru and even to asuras like Bali and Namuchi is made amply clear. The bhakti trinity has overtaken the Rigvedic deities and Indra has no place in the new bhakti ideology. His Swarga is rejected as inferior to moksha. The critical role is played by Kshatriyas who act like Brahmins (Bhishma’s celibacy, Yudhishtira’s ahimsa) and vice-versa (Drona, Kripa, Ashvatthama) the latter being all on the Kaurava side: “there is no MB without out-of-role Brahmins.” The very onset of the Dvapara epoch is because of Brahmin Parashurama’s massacres, while Yudhishtira’s obsession with nonviolence ushers in Kali Yuga. Alonso proposes that the makers of the MB made it a war story so that it was closed off to competing groups like the *Shramanas* and their cycles of tales. Thus, the *Samyutta Nikaya* shows Indra as a devotee of Buddha and the

gods as inferior to *arhants*. It would have been similar in Jain texts.

Adheesh Sathaye tries to make sense of the Madhavi episode by using a unique approach. He conceptualizes the architectonics of the MB as resembling a modern museum whose text panels guide the audience's reaction to the exhibit. He argues that the story of Galava and Madhavi provides "a unique fusion of morality and political discourse" advocating gathering power through friendship, not conquest. He notes Dumézil's linking of Madhavi with the Celtic epic heroine Medb, both names deriving from the Indo-European root "medhua" meaning "intoxicating", which we hear still in the Santhal "mahua," the Sanskrit "madhu". It is not cognate to the English "mead" as Sathaye says, that word being Germanic. Sathaye argues that Garuda is shown to be "a morally problematic friend and guide" as he disrespects women in the encounter with the female sanyasi Shandili, foreshadowing Galava's "pimping" of Madhavi. As he is a pupil of the arch-rebel Vishvamitra, we are predisposed to accept his operating at the fringes of social propriety and his being as stubborn as his guru. Here a story about a different kind of Brahmin is glued on to the Vishvamitra meta-myth. Vishvamitra's very birth is linked to the black-eared horses he demands from Galava which is also the name of Vishvamitra's son in the *Harivansha*. Ashtaka, his son from Madhavi, is a Rigvedic seer. The yagya the grandsons of Yayati perform for him is the epic's version of the Rigvedic verse 10.179 attributed to three of the same kings (Shibi, Pratardana and Vasumanas) ruling over Kashi, Ayodhya and Bhojapura plus Ashtaka at Kanyakubja, all important sites in early Buddhist and Jain literature. Shibi, in particular, is an epitome of moral kingship in both Brahminical and Buddhist traditions. Sathaye suggests that linking these kingdoms through matrilineal genealogy constructs a new way of looking at consolidating power through regional alliances instead of conquest following the collapse of the Mauryas. To these Sathaye adds Pratishthana, Yayati's capital, identifying it with the Satavahana capital of Paithan in the post-Mauryan period, known as important commercially in Buddhist texts. He

overlooks that Khandavaprastha is given to the Pandavas as having been the capital of their ancestor Yayati. Simultaneously, the Galava-Garuda tale highlights the supremacy of Vishnu which is stressed in the story of Dambodhbhava that follows. This arrogant king is trounced by Nara with a fistful of grass. This is very interesting because in the *Mairavana* and the *Sahasramukharavana* tales from the *Jaiminiya Mahābhārata*, both Hanuman and Sita use similar mantra-infused grass to destroy the demons. Vaishnava theology is thus being brought to the fore. As these stories focus on obstinate pride leading to destruction, the audience is guided to realise the anxieties of post-Mauryan rulers in whose despotic times the MB is trying to push a new vision of moral rule, *dharmartha*, for governing effectively, ruthless conquest no longer being a feasible option.

The longest paper, running to 45 pages, is by the editor Adluri: a provocative contribution claiming that Amba-Shikhandi represents *Ardhanarishvara*. The name, of course, is that of the Goddess-as-Mother, but how does her turning male recall Shiva's "gender ambiguity"? Nor does *ardhanarishvara* mean "half woman" but rather "the-half-woman-God." The MB does not know the *Ardhanarishvara* concept. Adluri argues that Arjuna, empowered by Shiva, and Shikhandi resemble the Purusha-Prakriti dyad. However, the Purusha is always a witness, never acting, whereas it is Arjuna's arrows, not Amba-Shikhandi's, that bring down Bhishma. It could be argued that by using Shikhandi as a stalking horse, Arjuna is, in effect, pretending to be witness, but Adluri does not resort to that. For him, the "ultimate androgyne" Shikhandi challenges the "ultimate masculine figure" Bhishma (but does not celibacy undercut this maleness?), and the ultimate mortal (Nara-Arjuna) opposes the ultimate immortal (Bhishma). There is no evidence that Amba/Shikhandi remembers "to become the divine androgyne." Adluri calls the Arjuna-Shikhandi pair "the double androgynes" referring to the former's year as Brihannada. He could have added the instances of Bhangashvana (man to woman by Indra), Ila (woman to man by Shiva), particularly as the story of the former is related by Bhishma and of Samba

(born by Shiva's boon) whose cross-dressing results in the doom of his clan. Adluri, while making the perceptive point that feminist interventions alter the Kshatriya dynasties, as through Ganga, Satyawati, Draupadi, forgets the most important of these, viz. Kunti. If Satyawati abruptly replaces the dynasty sought to be founded through Ganga and the heavenly Vasus by her own, Kunti substitutes her grandmother-in-law's designs by reverting to the gods for progeny. Merely by producing offspring how can Ambika and Ambalika be parallels to Vinata and Kadru? Pandu abdicates in favour of Dhritarashtra. If progenition makes a character a symbol of "the *sristi* aspect of the *pravritti* cycle," then why leave out the amazingly fecund Gandhari? The point is well made that the rejection of Amba creates the void in which the epic action occurs – a space that "rapidly folds in on itself" with her return, for she symbolizes the *laya* (destruction) motif. Germanic study of the New Testament, which is what informs the Critical Edition of the MB, again rears its head with Adluri's reference to "the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of this text". Adluri reaches out very far indeed in claiming that as a crocodile-infested river Amba symbolizes the MB at whose end Arjuna sees Krishna and Balarama as dead crocodiles. In agreeing with Hildebeitel that the text never allows anyone to run amuck (even Parashurama), Adluri overlooks Parashurama and Ashvathama who do exactly that, the latter with the support of Rudra. Instead, he claims that the story of Amba shows Shiva and the Devi acting jointly as the divine androgyne, overcoming gender. He adds a section showing how the number five is significant: the fifth Veda, the five Pandavas, Shuka as the fifth son (the 4 pupils being like sons) who attains moksha, the five elements that combine for creation, the five-tufted Shiva in Uma's lap as the symbol of birth whom Indra seeks to strike and is paralysed.

Adam Bowles focuses on 3 ancillary tales about fish, doves and the ungrateful man. The first of these does not feature in Hildebeitel's list, because, Bowles finds, the list of colophons in the Critical Edition is erroneous (all the more reason for a properly revised edition, a proposal being stoutly resisted by Western Indologists who will only correct typos). These tales

are mirrors for rulers on the art of governance, and resemble those in the Buddhist Jatakas, in which the fish tale occurs (as well as in the *Panchatantra*), and shares concerns found in the *Arthashastra* rather than the *dharmashastras*. These impart lessons on proper alliances, distinguishing traitors from friends and right action. The doves' tale with its motif of sheltering the refugee recurs often, climaxing in Yudhishtira not abandoning the dog accompanying him (but what about abandoning his dying wife and brothers?) Like the female dove, Draupadi exhorts her spouses to practice appropriate dharma. However, to equate the female dove's burning herself on her mate's pyre with Draupadi adopting *sahagamana* is incorrect, because she does not follow her dead spouse. On the contrary, at Yudhishtira's command all the husbands abandon her when she falls. The tale of the ungrateful Brahmin is not the only instance of a Brahmin acting abnormally, as Bowles thinks. Parashurama, Sharadvat, his son Kripa, Drona, his son Ashvatthama, Raibhya, Parvasu and Arvasu all violate the Brahmin code. Further, though this tale comes after the end of the war, it precedes the internecine massacre of the Yadavas where the harbingers of death are, again, Brahmins. These are the arch-rebel Vishvamitra, father of Shakuntala founder of the Bharata dynasty, Kanva her foster father, and the ubiquitous mischief-maker Narada.

Nicolas Dejenne deals with Madeleine Biarreau's crucial contribution in highlighting ignored aspects of the *upakhyanas*. Thus, she considered that Damayanti, a reflection of Draupadi and suffering earth, takes up the role of the avatara, bringing in a new dimension to the epic. That, in turn, prompts rumination on the connection between Krishna as avatara and Draupadi. Biarreau argued that the MB was an ideological instrument countering the prevalence of Buddhism in society. In the R, she posited, the Buddhists were displaced to Lanka as rakshasas. She focused on the "mirror-stories" noting how the *Virataparva* reflects part of the epic plot. Without these tales we would miss significant analogies. It is a great pity that her major study of the MB has not been translated into English.

T. Mahadevan's paper is on Mudgala, the gleaning Brahmin of the MB, the ideal ritualist whose story Vyasa himself narrates in the *Vanaparva* and again in the *Mokshadharmaparva*. He features in the *Rigveda's* Shakala branch in east Panchala and Kosala. These gleaners are presumed by Hildebeitel to be in small kingdoms like the Shungas in the 2nd century BCE, interfacing with Vyasa and writing out the first draft of the MB. Mahadevan finds Mudgala to be a real person with a *gotra* identity, part of a distinct Brahmin group found in the *Rigveda* and continuing through the epic into the future. Vaishampayana, the reciter, is also the redactor of the *Taittiriya Samhita* belonging to Panchala where the elaborate Soma rituals developed. Vyasa's other pupils Jaimini and Paila are founders of Vedic schools of rituals. Mudgala rejects being sent bodily to Swarga, preferring to practise serenity on earth for nirvana. These gleaners were part of Brahmin migrations of whom the Purvashikhas came south around 150 BCE (mentioned in Sangam poetry) followed by the Aparashikhas (6th to 17th centuries CE), both carrying the MB. Epigraphic evidence for them exists. They still exist performing complex soma rituals and narrating the MB in Srirangam, covering a remarkable history of nearly 3000 years and providing evidence of organised Brahmin migrations of at least four *gotra* affiliates—a unique phenomenon. There is a major error here when the 8th regnal year for Rajendra Chola is given as 1929-31 instead of 1022-23.

Simon Brodbeck is the only scholar in this collection to study the *upakhyanas* in the *Harivansha* (HV). Andre Couture is the only other foreign Indologist to research this neglected text. Dr. A. Harindranath and A. Purushothaman have been researching it within India. Brodbeck asks the reader to consider what these ancillary stories might mean to him, for we are as much receivers of the tales as Yudhishtira (to whom 49 of the 67 are addressed) but even more so Janamejaya who, like us, hears them all. Thus, the frame-story is an integral part of the MB. At no stage was it merely a Kuru-Pandava story. Shulman and Hildebeitel argue that the statement that Vyasa made a *Bharata* of 24,000 verses without *upakhyanas* could mean a

digest, not an “ur-text” that was later enlarged. There is no reason why an *upakhyana*-less MB should be a bizarre idea as Brodbeck feels. After all, all the retellings for children in Indian languages are precisely that. Like Couture, Brodbeck argues that the HV is part and parcel of the MB, as it is mentioned in the list of contents of 101 *parvas*, the last being called “the greatly wondrous *Ashcharyaparva*”. Hildebeitel’s list of *upakhyanas* leaves out those of the HV, chiefly the ancillary story of Krishna and his clan. Brodbeck points out that even the MB itself is called an *upakhyana* at 1.2.236, which indicates the risk in treating it as a technical genre. Hence, to depend upon the colophons for the classification is erroneous, specially as they were added much later. Brodbeck adds 4 sub-stories from the HV to Hildebeitel’s 67, two which are alluded to in the *Shanti Parva*. He shows how these four stories serve “as stepping stones” through the text and are inter-related, suggesting a new approach to the *upakhyanas*. For instance, the “Dhanya upakhayana,” which is the last one, contains the birth of Samba by Shiva-Uma’s boon, whose dressing as a woman (a parallel to the androgyne Amba-Shikhandi, Arjuna-Brihannada) precipitates the curse leading to the destruction of Krishna’s clan.

The final paper is Hildebeitel’s study of the geography of the ancillary stories proposing, as suggested by Rajesh Purohit of the Sri Krishna Museum Kurukshetra, that they fit the main story into the spatial and temporal geography of the MB, constructing a Bakhtinan “chronotype”. He suggests that this is the first text to project the Ganga-Yamuna doab “as a total land and a total people,” while the R “envisions India as a total land but not as a total people”. Unfortunately he does not elaborate. These tales also help to build “its cosmograph into its geography” (a concept formulated by R. Kloetzli). Hildebeitel asserts that Kuru and his parents Tapati and Samvarana are invented by the MB composers because the stories are “especially dreamlike and elliptical” – hardly an objective criterion! He shows how the story of Shakuntala is part of accomplishing the devas’ plan by engendering the Bharata dynasty. So is the story of Yayati who divides the world among

his five sons, assigning four to the northwestern lands and Puru to rule in the heartland. There is another series of stories centred on Kurukshetra that imply familiarity with it on part of the composer(s) who “may actually be writing a Mahābhārata ethnography out of their own experience there.” Here he adopts Mahadevan’s thesis of the Purvashikha Brahmins of this area composing the MB around the second to first century BCE.

What we have here a scintillating necklace of twelve iridescent gems with a Hildebeitel solitaire at either end. It is a collection that no Mahābhārata acolyte can afford to miss.

Pradip Bhattacharya

KEVIN MCGRATH, *Rāja Yudhiṣṭhira – Kingship in Epic Mahābhārata*, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, 2017, 246 pages.

“Because he *ranjita*-delighted
all his people,
he was called a raja.”

*Models of Monarchy in the Mahābhārata*¹

“There was a raja named Uparicara, a dharma-following monarch, fond of hunting,”² is how Vaishampayana begins the detailed recital of his guru Vyasa’s Mahābhārata (MB) at Janamejaya’s request, striking what McGrath regards as the keynote of the epic: kingship. Buddhadeb Basu was the first to argue that Yudhishtira, not Krishna or Arjuna, was the protagonist of the MB in *Mohabharoter Kotha* (1974), Englished by Sujit Mukherjee as *The Story of Yudhishtira* (1986). McGrath’s sixth book on the MB studies Yudhishtira as a model of dualistic monarchy, shared with Krishna and his brothers, in a “pre-Hindu,” pre-monetary, pre-literate Bronze Age society of the first millennium BC. This monarchy, based upon agreement of the family, the clan and the people, is juxtaposed with the *Shanti Parva*’s paradigm of autarchy (“more classical, early Hinduism”). McGrath strongly feels that it is Mauryan and, even more so, Gupta epitomes of kingship that are represented here. Vaishampayana ends saying that this “itihasa” named *Jaya* is to be heard by one who desires to rule the earth. The epic, therefore, is focussed on kingship.

McGrath also explores how pre-literacy is portrayed, again dually. Externally, there is the drama of recitation before an audience; internally, the narrative of Yudhishtira’s kinship group which is the foundation for preliterate poetry. The great variations in style are evidence of different poetic traditions that are amalgamated into a single vast poem: Vedic, pre-Hindu,

¹ A shorter version of this review was published on 14.1.2018 in the 8th Day literary supplement of The Sunday Statesman.

² All quotations are from the P. Lal transcreation (www.writersworkshopindia.com)

Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist. McGrath believes that MB became a written text in the time of Samudragupta, which is why a coin of that king features on the cover. However, he falls into the trap of believing that one person could not have composed the MB. What about the enormous output of Isaac Asimov in almost all branches of knowledge in modern times and of Shakespeare in the past with wide stylistic variations?

In a time long long ago north of the Vindhyas lived communities who for protection chose from among Kshatriya families a ruler. The *Shanti Parva* chapters 57, 59, 67 have this to say:-

*tena dharmottarāś cāyam kṛto loko mahātmanā /
rañjitās ca prajāḥ sarvās tena rājeti śabdyate //*

That mahatma ensured
the sway of dharma
in the world.
Because he *rañjita*-delighted
all his people,
he was called a raja.

First find a raja.
Then get a wife.
Then wealth, they say.
Without a raja-
Your wife and wealth,
What good are they?

There is only one Sanatana Dharma
for a raja
who wishes to rule a kingdom:
the welfare of his subjects.
Such welfare
preserves the world.

The raja drew his authority from the people who, in return for his protection, gave him one fiftieth of their animals and gold, a tenth of their grain and the loveliest of their daughters

(*Shanti Parva*, 67.23-24). It was a time when money did not exist and writing was unknown. Wealth acquired by the raja consisting of precious metals, gems, cattle, but not land, was distributed by him during yagyas and other ceremonies. Succession to the throne was not by primogeniture alone and needed ratification by the people.

For instance, Bharata disinherited his nine sons finding them unfit to rule and adopted the Brahmin Bharadvaja as his successor, naming him Vitatha. Yati, Nahusha's eldest son, was not his successor but the younger Yayati. Yayati had to explain to the people why he gave the throne to his youngest son Puru. Brahmins did not agree to enthrone Pratipa's eldest son Devapi who became a sanyasi. So the youngest, Shantanu, became king. Again, it was Vichitravirya's younger son Pandu who was made king.

McGrath makes out a strong case for the MB being about the establishment of Yadava hegemony (pointed out in 2002 in my paper "Leadership and Managing Power: Insights from the Mahābhārata"). The displacement of Yayati's eldest son Yadu in favour of the youngest Puru comes full circle. However, it is not "a son of Krishna" (an error repeated twice) who becomes king at Indraprastha, but his great grandson Vajra, while his sister's grandson rules at Hastinapura. McGrath expands this idea to envisage a conflict in which a matriline defeats a patriline. Actually, it is Satyawati's line that is displaced by her daughter-in-law Kunti's. McGrath appears to be supporting the idea that the matriline represents "indigenous" Dravidian traditions that defeat "intrusive" Indo-Aryans. Thankfully, he refrains from stepping further into this morass.

We find here a new insight: royal authority is portrayed as dualistic, being shared by Yudhishtira with Krishna in both the major rituals of *rajasuya* and *ashvamedha*. Before that, authority is shared between Satyawati, Bhishma and Vyasa. Royal power depends upon support of the community who are represented in the group of ministers chosen from all four classes. Yudhishtira's is also a fraternal kingship shared with his brothers and even with Dhritarashtra. Thus, after Karna is dead, Yudhishtira tells Krishna that now he is raja of the world

along with his brothers. McGrath pertinently points out that “kingdom” has its origins in the Old English “cyn” standing for “kin” and means “the situation or location of kinship” which does not connote rule by one person, which is the model Bhishma presents in the *Shanti Parva*.

When Vyasa is called “brahmarshi kavih” McGrath has problems finding an English equivalent for “rishi”. Not happy with “wizard” he leans towards “shaman”. The Oxford English Dictionary glosses “rishi” as “A Hindu sage or saint”. The exact equivalent would be “seer” in the sense that MB uses it. The “kavi” is a seer-poet.

Shantanu is the only one called “adhiraja”, superior monarch. This is significant because it is the dynasty of his step-father with which Vyasa is concerned, having been inserted into it by his mother to carry it forward. The royalty of the bloodline, therefore, becomes dubious, particularly when Pandu’s wives gets sons from multiple devas. It is interesting that McGrath does not examine this aspect of Yudhishtira’s claim, despite Duryodhana questioning it bluntly. The need for the people’s acquiescence to legitimise the kingship seems to be more implicit than voiced explicitly. McGrath overlooks that Yayati has to explain to the people why he is choosing his youngest son. However, we do not see Shantanu doing the same in the case of Devavrata, nor do the people protest. They only object vociferously when the Pandavas are exiled, but this carries no weight with Duryodhana who appears to represent the “later” type of autocrat, though not a tyrant since the people tell Dhritarashtra they were happy under his reign. The installing of Yudhishtira as crown-prince requires no consent from the public. Their applauding him is not evidence of public opinion featuring as a crucial element in making that decision as McGrath asserts. When he refers to Krishna in his peace-embassy appealing to the kings in the assembly to speak as evidence that Dhritarashtra has to heed the “sangha”, this would be because that is the mode of governance obtaining among the Yadavas. No one in the court responds to this appeal, because the modality of Hastinapura’s monarchy does not envisage such consultative rule. Duryodhana is not bothered about Krishna’s

exhortation to behave so that the great warriors install him as crown-prince. He successfully asserts his right singly.

The dharma of a raja had three qualities: punishing, protecting, donating. He rules, as Kunti tells Krishna, by conciliation, giving gifts, causing division, using force and strategy. Yudhishtira always speaks in terms of not just himself but always including his brothers (the most significant being sharing a wife). All decision-making is fraternal for him, except for the game of dice twice over.

Krishna is referred to as *sanghamukhyo*, leader of the association. According to V.S. Agrawala, in Panini's time the Bharatas' profession was *ayudhajivin* (weaponry) and they lived as a *sangha*. The MB seems to be showing political systems changing from an oligarchic *sangha* and a kinship type of rule to absolute monarchy. Neither Parikshit as full-fledged monarch nor Janamejaya share power with anyone. The Yadavas end up with Krishna's great grandson Vajra ruling in Indraprastha, and the sons of Satyaki and Kritavarma ruling in nearby kingdoms.

McGrath argues that three forms of time coalesce in the MB. There is the recalled pre-monetary, pre-literate time of *sanghas*; the time poetry creates representing an ideal; and both are conveyed through the time of actual performance. Thus there is "a compounding of the historical, the mythical and the performative which coalesce into a single instance or event that has been simply transmitted and then recorded in our present text of the poem." An impressive thesis indeed.

A very interesting proposition in the book is that Parashurama's genocide of Kshatriyas might represent destruction of Buddhist kingdoms east of the Ganga-Yamuna doab. But where is the evidence for this? J. Bronkhorst proposed that the MB's earliest written text is from the time when Brahmanism was imposing itself on eastern regions viz. Magadha. The Bhargava Brahmins, whose tales feature prominently in the MB, would have been linked to this expansion.

It is not clear why the MB should be recalling "an imagined former era" of war-chariots, when Persian armies used them against Alexander. Nor is there a shift away from the Rigvedic

sacrifice which remains central to the MB. In the *Shanti Parva*, however, other ways of achieving liberation are described such as *Sankhya* and Yoga. Ritual sacrifice is even shown as of no consequence compared to the life of *unchavritti* (gleaning). These, as McGrath writes, could certainly be a response to Buddhism and Jainism. There are references to *caityas* (funeral monuments) and *edukas* (ossuaries) in the kingdom of Gaya. Bhurishrava is said to be meditating on *mahopanishadam* and engaged in yoga. The earliest Upanishads are dated to the middle of the first millennium BC. McGrath points out that Arjuna's sword is described as *akashanibham* (blue like the sky). This is the wootz steel which was produced in North India in the 3rd century BC. Further, prior to the battle Uluka refers to the rite of weapon-worship (*lohabhikara*). *Loha* means "coppery, red." McGrath interprets this as indicating bronze weaponry, thus bolstering his thesis about this being a bronze-age heroic culture.

A significant point is that the term *chakravartin*, turner-of-the-wheel, is only applied to ancient rulers, never to Yudhishtira, who, therefore, was never given the status of an emperor despite the *rajasuya* yagya. When finally installed at Hastinapura, he is called *patim prithvyah*, lord of the earth. Other terms used are *mahipati*, *nripa*, *bhumipa*, *narendra*, *nareshvara*, synonymous with "raja". *Chakravartin* is a term that was used by Buddhists and Jains, particularly in the Andhra region along the Krishna River.

There is a curious incident usually overlooked which McGrath points out as an indication that kingship was oligarchic. After the Pandavas have been exiled, Duryodhana, Karna and Shakuni offer the kingdom to Drona considering him as protector, ignoring Dhritarashtra and Bhishma who appears nowhere at the close of the *Sabha Parva*. Where is the consent of the public? This recurs when Duryodhana, rescued by Pandavas from the Gandharvas, offers the kingship to Duhshasana. McGrath proposes that this is the consequence of the *rajasuya* having gone wrong so that royal authority seems to have become mobile. The *Udyoga Parva* has the subjects discussing Duryodhana's destructive thoughtlessness (as

citizens do in Shakespeare's plays), a feature that never occurs in the type of kingdom Bhishma describes in the *Shanti Parva*. The mobile nature of kingship is seen when Karna tells Krishna that Yudhishtira would not accept the kingdom were he to know about Karna's birth. Gandhari, however, is quite categorical that the Kuru kingdom passes by succession. The *rajasuya* instead of making kingship permanent for Yudhishtira completely upsets it. The MB seems to be presenting different claims to kingship without projecting a single model. It is subject to family, kinship, the clan, the public etc.

The king's primary duty is as a sacrificer, which McGrath analyses at length. The primary model is Indra, *shatakratu* (performer of a hundred sacrifices) the rain-bringer, promoting fertility. Satyawati urges Vyasa to provide a successor to the throne as a kingless kingdom gets no rain. As an offshoot of this, in old age the king finally takes to the forest as a renunciant, which does not form part of the paradigm of the later "classical" model of monarchy where he rules till death.

Besides the pattern of the displaced eldest son in the line of succession, there is the feature of sons being born to queens not from their husbands (Ambika, Ambalika, Kunti, Madri). Further, the earliest kings did not take princesses as wives. Yayati has sons from Brahmin and Asura women; Uparichara from Girika, a riverine woman; Shantanu from Ganga and Satyawati, both riverine women. Only in subsequent times we find the practice of restricting the choice to royal families.

McGrath is mistaken in stating that during Pandu's rule Dhritarashtra declares Yudhishtira's right of succession. By the time Duryodhana is born – which is the context of Dhritarashtra's comment – Pandu has long given up the throne to his elder brother, retreated to the Himalayas, been cursed by the deer-sage and has persuaded Kunti to beget a son by the god Dharma. It is interesting that Yudhishtira is referred to as "ajatashatru" (whose foes are unborn), since this is name of Bimbisara's son (491 BC) who killed his father and founded Pataliputra. It is not a name shared with Ashoka's father, as McGrath states, who was Bindusara. Both expanded the

Magadha kingdom considerably. Without conquering Magadha, Yudhishtira cannot become *samraj* (emperor). There is a historical memory here.

Regarding the dice game, McGrath quotes Yudhishtira as having vowed never to refuse a challenge, which overturns the “fraternal kingship” paradigm. He seeks to cover this in a footnote pointing out that on the second occasion all the Pandavas were invited, not just Yudhishtira. He observes that while Draupadi was treated contemptuously, “there is no overt violence and a certain etiquette is observed.” What about being dragged by the hair and sought to be stripped naked?

McGrath points out a fact that has been overlooked by others: Krishna’s report to Yudhishtira about what Dhritarashtra and Gandhari said supporting his rightful claim to the throne do not tally with what we have heard in the Hastinapura court! Similarly, Krishna’s report to Uttanka and to Vasudeva about the events of the war differ significantly from what Sanjaya has reported. Why?

Another interesting sidelight is provided: Karna tells Krishna that Brahmins will recount the Mahābhārata sacrifice. Why not the half-kshatriya *sutas*? This hints at the Bhargava redaction of the epic.

Yudhishtira is said to have been guilty of lying only once although there is a series of lies all the brothers tell Virata. A very rare example of the fury Yudhishtira is capable of even against his own family is the curse he lays upon all women after finding out that Karna was his elder brother. In his aversion for the kingdom his parallel is Balarama who avoids the war. Yudhishtira’s renunciatory bent has parallels in Buddhism and Jainism. In the *Shanti Parva* he uses a metaphor to describe worldly predicament which Shakespeare’s King Lear repeats: “Thus on this various wheel of samsara, like a chariot wheel...” A similar disgust for the kingdom won by slaughtering kinfolk is voiced by Arjuna the perfect kshatriya in the *Ashvamedha Parva*.

McGrath holds that Vyasa is older than Bhishma and is not mortal. The timeline does not indicate that. Devavrata is returned to Shantanu as a teenager. Four years after that

Shantanu weds Matsyagandha who has given birth to Vyasa earlier. Vyasa would be around the same age as Bhishma. Further, he is definitely mortal, not *chiranjivi* like Ashvatthama and Kripa. He is divine only in the sense that much later he tells his disciples that he is an avatara of Narayana.

On page 107 there is a curious error: “Shalya’s driver is killed by Kripa”. This is a good example of the sort of mistake the editors of the critical edition made by ignoring logic to follow blindly the maximum manuscripts agreeing with the Sharada script version. It is Bhima who does this, following up by killing the horses and cutting away Shalya’s breastplate. Further, though displeased, Yudhishtira does not reprimand Bhima for kicking prone Duryodhana’s head, despite being urged by Krishna who does not justify this act as McGrath has it (p.108). Rather, Yudhishtira justifies Bhima’s kicking.

It is good to find McGrath speculating about why the movement of the narrative was impeded by introducing the didacticism of the *Shanti*, *Anushasana* and *Anugita* portions instead of peremptorily rejecting them as interpolations. It is necessary to find out what possibly motivated the redactors to do this, and how it happened. Why stitch together such widely divergent types of poetry? This could only happen in a literate period.

The manner in which Vyasa exhorts Yudhishtira to be king-like and emerge from depression by drawing upon traditions of ancient monarchy can be seen in the Old English poems “Deor’s Lament” and “The Wanderer”. McGrath compares this to the Gupta dynasty seeking to revive the *ashvamedha* rite to legitimise power and using the MB recital for this purpose. Why should we not see this as valid for the revival five centuries before that by Pushyamitra Shunga, a Brahmin general who assassinated his king and attacked Buddhists? The wrongs a raja commits are said to be removed by performing such yagyas and distributing donations.

The archaic nature of MB culture is further exemplified by the absence of icons of deities. There is just a solitary mention of images of devas shaking, laughing, dancing, weeping before Bhishma’s fall. Yet, McGrath mentions Yudhishtira offering

puja to deities before entering his palace after investiture. The first statues come in Ashoka's time and are of animals and *yakshas*. In the late Shunga period (the closing years BCE), we find decorative sculptures depicting human and mythical figures. The MB makes no references to worship of deities in homes or temples or to building of memorials. McGrath opines, "This is because stone sculpture at that time was a solely Buddhist or Jaina phenomenon."

McGrath points out what is seldom realised, viz. that the warrior's way, *kshatradharma*, is first spoken of by Hanuman and is similar to the catalogue in *Arthashastra*. The raja's dharma is first enunciated by Narada at the beginning of the *Sabha Parva*. The *Gita* does not touch upon this, being directed solely at the hero. McGrath examines three instances when Yudhishtira is advised in practical terms how to function as a raja. Arjuna propounds practical tenets of governance; Draupadi holds forth on what is to be done in crisis; Yudhishtira has his own craving for liberation of the spirit. There is no mention of any ministers counselling him in Hastinapura. This characterises Bhishma's picture of kingship. However, it overlooks the episode in the *Adi Parva* where the Machiavellian counsellor Kanika expounds his *niti* to Dhritarashtra for getting rid of the Pandavas.

McGrath argues that the shift in oligarchic monarchy of the earlier books to a single person's rule in the *Shanti Parva* is matched by development of a pre-monetary barter economy into one where currency is exchanged for goods. This is the time dominated by Jain and Buddhist merchant classes when fraternal kingship is replaced by autarchic rule. It is also the time of urbanisation when coins gradually replace land, agricultural produce and cattle as mediums of exchange. The lack of mention of coinage in the *Shanti Parva* is explained away as because it is describing a mythical time, "blurring historic and poetic reality." That is not a satisfactory explanation and undermines the argument.

When McGrath believes that the culture MB depicts is primarily a pre-monetary, pre-literate Bronze Age one as Homer's epics do, why does he contradict himself by saying that it is only "an idealised old world" and "not a portrait of an

historical reality, but a pictured heroic time"? Hasn't evidence of the Homeric world turned up?

The peculiar incident of the Brahmin Charvaka condemning Yudhishtira, which McGrath finds so puzzling, becomes clearer if we look at Duryodhana's dying speech. Here he says that if the ascetic Charvaka, master of eloquence, hears how he has been killed in unfair combat, he will definitely avenge him. Even more intriguing is how Kripa, despite his role in the massacre of the Panchalas and Draupadi's sons, goes unpunished and continues as guru to Parikshit. McGrath proposes that perhaps *Sauptika Parva* was a later phase of the epic's growth featuring Kripa in assisting in the massacre.

Vidura's precepts and Bhishma's discourses on kingship come to be collected in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, which is also an action-less monologue. This picture is an urban one of a classical king and his entourage. What is particularly shocking is Bhishma's advice that Yudhishtira ought to fear kinsmen like death, because Yudhishtira's is all along a familial kingship. But why is the use of spies Bhishma advocates "a new practice" (p. 156) when Duryodhana had all along been using them to track the Pandavas in exile? The two *parvas* are concerned with the king's morals and are devoid of dramatic effect on either Bhishma or Yudhishtira. Only at the very end the *Anushasana Parva* says that Yudhishtira was anointed having obtained the kingdom. The heroic epic re-starts with the *Ashvamedha Parva*. These two books surely belong to a radically different poetic tradition, being upanishadic, not heroic.

In sum, Yudhishtira is not the king Bhishma describes, for he shares his power with Krishna and with his brothers, with approval of his public. He is incredibly gentle and intensely humane. The only instance in which he does not involve his brothers is the disastrous decision to participate in the game of dice. Only twice he displays anger: against Arjuna and Kunti. He is unique for the world-renouncing remorse he feels, unwilling to be king even after the horse sacrifice. Curiously, he shows no signs of spiritual liberation despite the massive discourses of Bhishma. As McGrath pertinently writes, "dharma for him concerns praxis, and it is in no way a medium of

enlightenment. He is a moralist, not a mystic.” This is tellingly brought out in his encounters with Dharma-as-crane and Nahusha-as-python. His counterpoint Duryodhana might have been drawn from a different tradition because of the paradoxical presentation of his death. Why McGrath feels this could be Buddhist or Jain is not clear, nor why “his truculence and minatory belligerence...have been laid upon another kind of earlier character.”

Vyasa presents us with three portraits of kingship: Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana and Yudhishtira. All display a dependence upon public opinion and the subjects appear to have been happy under the rule of all three. When Yudhishtira exits, he hands over the throne to the dual authority of Yuyutsu and Parikshit (the courtiers surround the former; the women the latter). He advises Subhadra to protect Vajra in Indraprastha and not follow adharma (*i.e.* seek to supplant him by her own grandson Parikshit). Like Arjuna much earlier, Yudhishtira enters heaven in his mortal frame – and yet he does not, because he has to experience hell. He is said to be filled with bitter rage here. He will not accept heaven without his brothers, just as he shared earthly power in their company. Only thereafter, having discarded his mortality, is he taken to Swarga.

McGrath makes the very interesting point that the MB is recited at Takshashila, the capital of Gandhara (Kandahar), the land of Gandhari and Shakuni. Kautilya composed his *Arthashastra* here. Ashoka was viceroy here. The oldest manuscripts of the MB are from Kashmir. In his conclusion McGrath puts forward a very important suggestion for studying how the commentator Nilakantha prepared his edition of the text. While McGrath very rightly points out the puzzling omission of the Sindhu-Sarasvati civilization’s urban heritage in one place, in another he asserts it is “obviously recalled” without citing evidence.

Just as in late 6th century BC Athens, in the Panathenaia festival, brought a re-conceived Bronze Age epic poetry into a single Pan-Hellenic form, so the MB integrated all available material on social living in a single collection. McGrath sees it depicting a religion of hero-worship which continues today. He

is certain that the war books and parts of the *Virata Parva* are older, depicting an ancient Bronze Age warrior tradition, than the *Shanti-Anushasana Parvas*. Does the poem hark back only to the older world of Vedic deities? Does it not stress repeatedly the primacy of the Nara-Narayana duo and the underlying presence of Rudra-Shiva? Nor does it elide all Buddhist and Jain experience. There are negative references to *kshapanaka* (naked Jaina mendicant) and *pashanda* (Jains/Buddhists). The *Mokshadharma Parva* incorporates much of their concept of world-abandonment for the sake of individual salvation, quite contrary to the stance of the *Gita* and the kingship the MB portrays. The very concept of the supreme value of yagya is completely undercut at the end of the horse-sacrifice where the half-golden mongoose shows it is much inferior to what is achieved by those living by gleaning. The archetypal seer-king, *rajarshi* Janaka is thoroughly debunked by the female sanyasi Sulabha! In Yudhishtira's intense remorse and obsession with dharma much of Ashoka is surely assimilated.

Despite the MB's final message that in Swarga there is no animosity, the entire epic has presented mutually destructive rivalry between cousins for the throne. Its message is dualistic like the model of monarchy it presents of a ruler making decisions in consultation with kin and with implicit, if not explicit, approval of the public. This portrait undergoes a development summarising "all the historical possibilities, if not temporal developments, of kingship in Northwestern India" around 950 BCE onwards.

There are two appendices on epic time and on epic pre-literacy. McGrath suggests that the war books plus the *Sauptika Parva* amounting to 23,795 stanzas are the 24000 slokas constituting the *Jaya* that is mentioned by Ugrashrava Sauti. The archaic Bharata legends were combined with Bhargava myths of the classical period. This stitching together occurs within a ring structure: Sanjaya recites to Dhritarashtra; Vaishampayana recites this to Janamejaya; Sauti recites all this and more to Shaunaka. Sanjaya's recital uniquely combines past and present, always beginning with death of a general and then going back to describe how it happened. Time is projected

triply: Dhritarashtra's lament summaries most of the action in 56 verses; the *anukramanika* gives a digest of 100 mini-tales; the *parvasangraha* lists the books and chapters. There is the crucial importance of fertilising women at the right time that is reiterated repeatedly, and it is the violent disturbance of this in the assault on Draupadi that engenders the sterility of war and of the Kuru and Yadava lineages. Narrative time, chronological time and mythical time are "compounded in one unitary sequence of worlds or poetic montage."

McGrath's description of the *krita yuga* as a timeless, changeless, deathless utopia is not correct because monarchs and sages of that period are shown as dying. It is the passage of time that leads to the onset of the *treta yuga*. While acknowledging that no dates with full astrological data are supplied, McGrath seems to accept A.N. Chandra's date for the battle as 3137 BCE. Based upon the same data, widely different dates have been arrived at by a range of scholars, showing that interpretation is highly dubious. McGrath estimates the time-span for the core narrative as spanning fifty years from the infancy of the Pandavas to the investiture of Parikshit. Into it are interwoven tales from the past featuring Vedic divinities as well as the ethos of early Gupta monarchy. The poem oscillates between the microcosm and the macrocosm. Centripetal in form, the stories are narrated in manifold voices creating a tapestry of coruscating brilliance that evokes willing suspension of disbelief.

Just as time in the MB is an illusion, so is space. There is very little description of interiors and topography except in very general terms. It is place-names that feature, not details of terrain. Similarly, details of physique are elided. Individuals are made out mostly by their speech, for it is a world of drama. It is not a poetry of realism but of emotional theatre and didacticism. There is no reference to plastic and visual arts (except a single mention of Shikhandini being adept at "lekhyā" *i.e.* writing or painting), which might be because the first statuary is Buddhist, mention of which the MB seems to avoid.

In the appendix on epic pre-literacy McGrath takes the position that the MB was first written during Samudragupta's

reign combining the pre-literate and literate. Writing is dateable to Mauryan times. The different *parvas* exhibit great stylistic differences, incorporating popular songs about heroes, folklore and formulaic compositions of professional poets. Sanjaya's inspiration, which is visual, differs from Vaishampayana's which is a recital of remembered text. Sanjaya's is filled with formulaic terms and comparatively little narrative. An excellent example of such epic inspiration is found in the Russian *bylina* recorded in 1925 by N. Misheyev.³ Different periods of theological and political thought have been combined along with varied cultural strands. Preliterate narrative is not chronological but proceeds structurally, which we see in the MB. Further, it is based upon the functions of kinship, and its performance is dramatic and metaphorical. Preliterate poetry is also characterised by a pattern of duality (as seen in the *Iliad* too) which is a function of pre-monetary culture where no single currency existed. Society functioned on exchanging services and loyalties defined by rites. Value depended upon kinship. Wealth was distributed in great yagyas and weddings in the form of jewels, weapons, cattle, servants, but not land (gambling is the exception). Writing and coinage seem to have occurred together. This, of course, begs the question about Harappan culture which had seals and a specific system of weights, neither of which the MB mentions despite featuring Jayadratha as king of the Sindhu area.

McGrath's slim volume is a densely written book offering new and rich insights into an aspect of the MB that has not been researched so thoroughly in the past. No one interested in the MB can afford not to read it.

Pradip Bhattacharya

³A woman of 80 in the far north of Russia in an out-of-the-way village suddenly created a new lay, "How the Holy Mountains let out of their deep caves the mighty Heroes of Russia" after reciting the traditional tale of "Why the heroes have vanished from Holy Russia." <http://www.boloji.com/articles/49556/a-modern-russian-bylina>

STEPHAN HILLYER LEVITT, *Collected Papers in Dravidian Studies*, Kaviri Pathippakam, Chennai, 2017.

The latest volume by Stephan Hillyer Levitt is dedicated to Aaron and Rachel Herlick, who instilled a feeling of “A Love of Books and an Interest in Cultures around the World” in him. These values and the extent of his interests can be thoroughly seen in his bibliography, listed at pages XVIII-XXVII, ranging from Art History studies (the latest is *Early Nurpur Nagamala Paintings*, in the “Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art”, n. 28-29, 2013) to the ones on Buddhism (his most recent paper, published in 2011, is entitled *Stories of the Enlightenment Being, Jātakas 201-250*), on *Purāṇa* (for example *Pollution and karman in the Pātityagrāmanirṇaya* published in 1993) and on *Veda* (a recent one is *What does ‘Noseless’ Mean in the Ṛgveda*, published in 1990 in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*), and even on Costume History (see *Chess – Its South Asian origin and Meaning*, in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, 1993). However, in his latest book Stephan Levitt has mostly collected comparative linguistics essays.

Driven by the thought that “Dravidian studies is still very much in its infancy” (p. VIII) and that many fields of research have not been sufficiently explored yet, the author shares again some of his controversial articles, which has generated both positive and negative reactions among the academics, as he himself admits and reports. His works have been published on eminent international Journals, such as *Studia Orientalia*, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, *International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics*, *Indologica Taurinensia*, *Folia Linguistica Historica*, *Journal of Tamil Studies*; however, he thinks that many of them “are not as well known as they should be” and “were published with major printing errors” (p. X, in bold) making it necessary to publish them again to clear up the theories he is supporting.

Levitt’s approach to linguistic problems is comparative, and aims to underline, in a nostraticistic perspective, the links

between the Dravidian and Indo-European languages; to do so, he uses the idioms of the Dravidian family as a starting point, certain that – contrary to what many other academics claim – the Dravidian languages were the first ones to separate from the Nostratic and that “the wealth of information that Dravidian has to offer us has hardly been tapped” (p. VII). He is convinced that “the semantic connections expressed by etymological connection reflect the cultural categories implicit in the languages concerned” (p. 271); most of the times however his studies start from the linguistic and phonological phenomena and examine them with specific attention.

One of the themes he insists on is the alternation of *r* and *l* in the Dravidian languages (*The Alternation of r and l in Dravidian*, pp. 231-245) and of **-l-/*-l-* and **-t-* (*The Alternation of *-l-/*-l- and *-t- in Metathetical Forms in Dravidian*, pp. 215-230). In the first of these essays (1988) Levitt deals with the numbers ‘one’ and ‘nine’ and states that the euphonic alternation of the allophones *r*, *l* and *n* is not different from the one documented in the ancient and middle Indo-European; in the second one (2003) he recreates the genesis of the alternation phenomenon of **-l-/*-l-* and **-t-* assuming that it could be the outcome of a process occurred during the Proto-Dravidic phase of the language, not far from what happened to the Nostratic.

He outlines the same problem in more general terms in the study entitled *Is There a Genetic Relationship between Indo-European and Dravidian?*, already published in *The Journal of Dravidian Studies* in 1998. Relying on a wide bibliography, here the author deals with the etymological relationship between a series of Indo-European terms that he considers “culturally relevant” such as “cow, calf, king, god, fruit, milk, people, speak, leg, kill, folk, dog, skr. *pur*, gr. *dendron*” (pp. 3, 6-10, 14-15), and with some numbers, adjectives, prepositions or articles (pp. 10-13), highlighting the connections with their Dravidic correlatives. The knowledge and the accurate study of the vowel and consonant metamorphosis occurring in the Dravidic languages for euphonic reasons (and that explains why it is difficult to catch the affinity between Indo-European words

and their correlatives from the Indian sub-continent) persuades Levitt to find new evidence to support the theories regarding the existence of deep relations between different groups of languages. Most of the times Levitt starts from English, but immediately he broadens the word boundaries and indicates its etymological correlatives in the Indo-European world – for example: “Eng. *God*, Germ. *Gott* (Pokorny 1.413-14, PIE **ghau-*, **ghaue-* ‘call, summon, invoke [...]’, p. 8), where the possible link with Greek and Latin roots *genos* e *gens* is not considered – than he compares his item with Tamil or Telugu words (respectively *kōvil* and *kōyila* in this case, defining the temple, the “house of God”, where the suffix *-il* defines the “house”). To better demonstrate his theories, to these considerations he sometimes adds a comparison with the Sanskrit root (in this case “*hu-* ‘to call, invoke’) which takes the reasoning to an end. With a new bibliography and further examples, Levitt gets back to the same subject in 2000, in a paper published on the *Journal of Indo-European Studies* (28. 3-4, here at pp. 21-41, *Some more Possible Relationships Between Indo-European and Dravidian*) and in *Dravidian and Indo-European* (in his volume at pp. 42-46). In this essay he discusses and essentially accepts Gnanamuthu Devaneyan’s suggestions; the same topic is resumed in 2014 in *Indo-European and Dravidian: Some Considerations* (published on *Mother Tongue* 19, here at pp. 47-68), where he clears up and explains his thoughts, reaffirming their originality and the chance they could open new fields of research. Comparing his work to some other pioneers’ comparative studies, he states: “Just as when Sir William Jones turned to Persian and Sanskrit, he was able to see the connection between different branches of IE; so, when we turn to Tamil, the most conservative of the Dravidian languages, with a classical literature going back to the early centuries BCE, we are able to see the connection between different families of languages – pointing to a monogenesis of language. It is to this that I attribute the independent observations of G. Devaneyan and myself that Dravidian is related to IE; and within IE, that it is related most closely to Germanic” (p. 47). His method “is to keep semantic

transparency paramount, and to see if there are logical connections between forms that can be argued on this basis, using attested sound correspondences” because, as he says, “It is my contention that many of the sound changes and alterations that appear in Dravidian are very ancient and can be seen in Nostratic in general, no doubt from pre-Dravidian” (p. 48). In fact, Levitt wants to demonstrate how the thesis on the origin and spread of the Proto-Indo-European – he quotes a lot of studies dealing with this subject from different points of view, such as those written by Colin Renfrew, Marija Gimbutas, Haarmann, Goodenough, Telegin and Kuznetsov – should be revised in a nostraticistic perspective, considering Nostratic as the language spoken by the first “anatomically modern man (AMH)” (p. 49) living on the planet. Connecting the common elements of the Australian Aborigine and Dravidic languages and assuming a common substratum, Levitt adds to these evidences the genetic ones (“the Y-chromosome genetic marker M130”) and considers the reconstruction of the migration flows that, according to Oppenheimer, would have led the first men to move from Africa to Asia and Australia; in that way he not only underlines the similarities between the Dravidic languages and other linguistic groups, but he also emphasizes how ancient this bond is.

Leaving out to discuss here Levitt’s fascinating hypotheses about some specific terms, such as the number one (*The number ‘One’*), the words defining the dog and the horse (*Words for ‘Dog’ and ‘Horse’ in Finnish and Tamil*) – linked because both belonging to the eastern branch of the Nostratic languages, gathering agglutinating languages such as the Dravidic and Ural-Altai ones, in addition to the Japanese and Korean, and the Andean-Equatorial – or the word referring to the horse in Chinese and in the Dravidic languages (*A Word for ‘Horse’ in Chinese and Dravidian*) or to some specific phenomena as in *Sanskrit ātmán/tmán and Dravidian *āl, A Possible Solution to a Problem Based on a Postulated Nostratic Sound Correspondance*, it is useful to remind how his investigations aim to support those academics’ studies that, more and more,

deal with the deep bonds that connect (or have connected at the dawn of human history) the big linguistic families.

Besides, the study of specific phenomena allows Levitt to raise some great problems which have not found solutions yet: among these, just to make an example, that of the language (or the languages) spoken by the Indo Valley populations. In this case, the author leads us through evocative theories and shares the results of another of his studies, *The Ancient Mesopotamian Place Name "Meluhha"* (here at pp. 322-345), related to the etymology of the Sumerian word Meluhha; this research allows him to infer that "the Indus Valley Civilization was Dravidian [...] in fact North Dravidian" (p. 155).

The same method and the same show of great and deep learning can be seen in the other articles in the volume; the reader can really find a lot of incentives and some starting points to research a field that indeed can still give many important study possibilities.

In the end, this is a book that, even if it is published with a polemical spirit and with the purpose to reaffirm some ideas not shared by all of the academics, is extremely fascinating, has a very rich and up to date bibliography and cannot be missed by scholars of comparative linguistics.

Gabriella Olivero

PRADIP BHATTACHARYA: *Narrative Art in the Mahābhārata: The Ādi Parva*, Dev Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 2012, 389 pages.

The subject of this book is the first canto, the *Ādi Parva*, of the *Mahābhārata*, the epic-of-epics, eight times larger than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined, denounced as “a literary monster” by Winternitz and as a “monstrous chaos” by Oldenberg. Besides the Introduction, a very exhaustive Bibliography, a genealogical chart of the Kuru dynasty and, most interestingly, a map of India of the *Mahābhārata* days, it contains eighteen chapters analysing each of the seven sub-*parvas* of the *Ādi Parva* in minute detail. A mere perusal of the list of contents may well mislead the reader as the book contains many more stories, besides extremely well-informed commentary underlining the narrative art of an expert raconteur recounting the epic, its grandeur, the conflicts, the tragedies, the comedies, the intricately woven complexities of situations and relationships and how all these combine to lead inevitably towards the ultimate clash of Kurukshetra, annihilating almost all the dynasties in one climactic stroke. The study analyses the baffling nebulous mass of material with which the epic begins, bringing out the central theme of each of the sub-*parvas* to provide insights into the Vyasan vision and the Master’s mastery of his epic art. Truly, the reader does gather an understanding of the “intricate web of inter-connections of events and characters so that a clear, logical and intelligible picture emerges of the very involved and confused panorama of the *Mahābhārata*.”

One of the assets of this work is the effortless elegance of its language. Consider the opening of the Introduction: “Vyasa, master raconteur, weaves together a bewildering skein of threads to create a many-splendoured web from which there was no escape for the listener of those days and there is none even for the reader of today.” Elsewhere, elaborating on the existential predicament of man, he says, “Passions do indeed spin the plot and we are betrayed by what is false within. Then, as now, there is no need to look for a villain manoeuvring

without.” The author handles poetry, too, with equal facility. He translates a Sanskrit text describing the encounter of Surya and Aruna: “When darkness-destroying mighty Surya arose, he saw this pink son of Vinata as resplendent as himself, shining with vitality. Impressed, Surya made him his charioteer and this son of Vinata became immortal when he stepped into the chariot of the all-illuminating, infinitely powerful Surya.”

Bhattacharya presents interesting concepts while leading us through the socio-cultural milieu of an age when the Aryan civilization was steadily taking root. The sanctity of the Guru-Shishya relations, narrated in the stories of Ayodha-Dhaumya and Aruni, Uddalaka and Veda and Veda and Utanka, is one such concept. Curses, flung with great alacrity earlier, had lost some of their inexorability by this time. Under some circumstances the effect becomes conditional. Paushya’s curse on Utanka is futile since his assumption was wrong; Kadru’s curse on her sons needs ratification by Brahma.

The position of women in society is one of the major themes engaging the author’s attention. He has, with empathy and incisive analysis, gone into the very core of the epic to introduce us to the indomitable spirit of women, which has been much appreciated by Wendy Doniger. Shakuntala proudly asserts her integrity and berates the cowardly Dushyanta in open court; Devyani demands that Kacha return her love and imperiously brushes aside a lust-crazed husband; Kunti refuses to pervert herself into a mindless son-producing machine to gratify the twisted desires of a frustrated husband. “Time and again it is woman standing forth in all the splendor of her spirited autonomy as a complete human being that rivets our attention and evokes our admiration.” He then has traced their fall from grace – from being powerful, knowledgeable and independent members of society, enjoying almost equal status with men, to becoming “mere chattel first of the father, then of the husband and finally of children”. The concept of *sahadharmini* gives way to the concept of *putrarthē kriyate bharya*, thanks to sages like Shvetaketu, Dirghatama, Manu and their ilk.

Ethical degeneration too is taking place. Gods are lobbying and sages are indulging in machinations. *Kshatriya* values are

taking a beating; Brahmins are taking bribes. Takshaka succeeds in bribing Kashyapa not to cure Parikshit. Drona, a Brahmin, selling his knowledge to the Kuru princes for a price and manipulating Ekalavya, is a far cry from Dhaumya teaching Aruni just for the sake of teaching.

The *Adi Parva* throws up “a multitude of salient features—thematic, stylistic and eschatological.” The main theme, Bhattacharya holds, “is the recurrent motif of Lust with its attendant Quest for Immortality. Initially they emerge as two separate themes... which coalesce in the existentially tragic figure of Yayati.” This poison seed ultimately destroys the Kuru dynasty. He elaborates this thesis with copious examples from the epic, narrating and analysing the tales of lust of Dushyanta, Pururava, Nahusha, Yayati, Mahabhisha-Shantanu, Vichitravirya, Pandu, Dirghatamas, Parashara and many others. Another important theme that emerges is that of the disqualified eldest son. None of the eldest sons, Yati, Yadu, Devapi, Devavrata, Dhritarashtra, becomes king. Arjuna’s grandson Parikshit becomes king not his elder son, Babhruvahana, or the sons of the other Pandavas. The next motif brought out is the difficulty in begetting successors, beginning with Bharata. The original dynasty disappeared much before the principal actors came on stage, continuing just in name. The Pandavas and Kauravas had no Kuru blood in them though they continued to be known as Kauravas. He discusses the concept of divine or demonic origin of kings and sages and avatarhood to posit a counterpoint to the western lack of understanding of Indian lore. Stylistically, Vyasa uses various methods. He uses prose, Vedic chants, the technique of presenting the pith first and then developing the theme through questions and answers, etc.

It is fascinating to read the remarkable discussion on the historico-political situation of India of the time. Bhattacharya traces the roots of all the political actors and the matrix of alliances that followed casting long shadows on future incidents. He has eminently succeeded in providing “some basic information about the locale” of all the dynasties involved “so that readers approaching the epic can establish some geographical bearings”.

But in this “monstrous chaos” one tends to miss the central point of the epic. The Kurukshetra battle was inevitable, pre-ordained by divine will. Behind all the trials and tribulations of the Pandavas and the intrigues and conspiracies of the Kauravas, lies the tale of Yama’s sacrifice during which death did not occur and the earth became over-populated. “It is to reduce the burden of over-crowded earth that the gods plan the battle of Kurukshetra.” Very perceptive indeed! That is why Krishna says to Arjuna in the *Gita* that it did not matter whether he fought or not; the battle would still occur. We are but pawns in the well-laid plans of the gods!

What enriches the book immensely are the frequent references to other literatures, both oriental and occidental – China, Egypt, Scandinavia, Iran, etc. He has taken help from all editors and commentators in supplementing his discussions. An extremely interesting chapter is devoted to a comparison between Yayati, Yima-Jamshid of Iran, Eochaid Feidlech of Ireland and Uparichara Vasu, indicating how parallels in the themes of the First King dividing and populating the earth, special favour of the Divine, loss of status because of Luciferan hubris, etc are also found in Yayati and Uparichara Vasu. However, not much is mentioned about Feidlech in the discussion. Unfamiliar words pertaining to other cultures like Yggdrasil and Ragnarok pose a bit of a stumble for ordinary readers. Some footnotes would have been helpful.

The book has beautiful pictures portraying various scenes from the epic as added attractions. The printing is good and without any mistake. The book leaves one with a feeling of joy and satisfaction. One does not very often come across a work of such elegance and depth. But this is only the first chapter; there are seventeen more. Here is hoping that we shall hear from him again soon.

Shekhar Sen

The reviewer is a retired Major General. His is the first English translation of the Jaiminiya Ashvamedhaparva.

OBITUARIES

CARLO DELLA CASA (1925-2014)
by Alex Passi and Agata Pellegrini

Carlo Della Casa was born in Torino, Italy. After WW II, during which he briefly served as a paramedic for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, he graduated in Classics from the University of Torino. His M.A. thesis, *Vaiṣṇava Legends from the Narasiṃha Purāṇa* (*Leggende visnuitiche dal Narasiṃha - Purana*) was discussed under the supervision of Mario Vallauri (1887-1964) on July 7th, 1948.

In 1950 and 1951, he was holder of a research grant at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn.

He married Claudia Bertone in 1952. Carlo and Claudia Della Casa had two sons, Stefano, film critic, and Mario, cultural operator on the Torino music scene.

In the Fifties and Sixties, Carlo Della Casa taught humanities in Junior High Schools and High Schools in Torino. His university teaching qualification (“Libera docenza”) dates from 1958. He was appointed professor of Sanskrit in Pavia until 1964.

From 1964 to 1974 he was full professor of Sanskrit at the University of Palermo; in 1974, he was invited to hold the Chair of Sanskrit at the University of Milan, where he remained until his retirement in 2002.

In 1980 he succeeded Enzo Evangelisti (1920-1980) as Director of the Institute for Linguistics and Oriental Languages (“Istituto di Glottologia e Lingue Orientali”) of the University of Milan, which after his retirement (2002) became part of the Department of Ancient Studies (“Dipartimento di Scienze dell’Antichità”). Thus, Della Casa was the last director of a long-standing and illustrious academic institution (*Seminario di Glottologia*, then *Istituto di Glottologia* – 1946, and lastly *Istituto di Glottologia e Lingue Orientali* – 1952) dedicated to the study of comparative linguistics and oriental languages.

Carlo Della Casa was a full member of the IsMEO/IsIAO (Istituto per il Medio e l’Estremo Oriente/Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente), and vice president of its Lombardy

chapter; he was an active member of CESMEO (Centro Studi per il Medio e l'Estremo Oriente), and honorary president of the Italian Association of Sanskrit Studies. He was awarded the gold medal of honor in the field of schooling, education and culture ("Medaglia d'oro ai benemeriti della scuola, della cultura e dell'arte") by the Italian Government, and in 2002, the CESMEO Prize for Oriental Studies ("Premio CESMEO per gli studi orientali"). In 1997, for his 70th birthday, his colleagues and students presented him with a two-volume Festschrift in the fields of Indology and Linguistics.¹ In 1998 Agata Pellegrini Sannino published a select anthology of his *Kleine Schriften*.²

Among the milestones of his work we must certainly quote his monumental translation of the Upaniṣads (1976; partially republished by TEA in 1988), and his monograph on Jainism (1962, republished 1993). But even a cursory look at his papers and publications bears out the fact that his interests were broad-based and manifold: *kāvya*, *itihāsa*, *stotra*, *śāstra*, history of Indian religions, comparative literature, and memorials on key figures of early Italian Indology. For his students, he wrote and painstakingly typeset a comprehensive grammar of Sanskrit, with a full range of exercises and a dictionary, which is still in use today, more than fifteen years since his retirement from active teaching.

To all those who, as undergraduates and graduates alike, had the honour and the privilege of studying or working under his farsighted and benevolent guidance, Carlo Della Casa left a legacy which cannot easily be summed up in dry words. What he gave us "is not to be found in our obituaries", and will be always be cherished.

¹ *Bandhu: scritti in onore di Carlo Della Casa in occasione del suo 70° compleanno*, a cura di Renato Arena, Maria Patrizia Bologna, Maria Luisa Mayer, Alessandro Passi, 2 vols. Edizioni dell'Orso, Torino 1997.

² *Scritti scelti di Carlo Della Casa*, A. Pellegrini Sannino ed., Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Palermo, Palermo 1998.

Publications by Carlo Della Casa

1. *Uddhya e Bhidyā in Pāṇini e Kālidāsa*, in «RSO», XXVI (1951), pp. 67-70.
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Last but not least of Prof. Della Casa's works was the translation of the *Aranyakāṇḍa* of the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*, which was scheduled for publication in a multi-volume edition of the whole epic for a major Italian publisher. Because of financial difficulties, the entire work was put on hold indefinitely while it was already in proofs.

The present writers are happy to announce that that this monumental edition will be soon available under a new publisher.

CARLO DELLA CASA (1925-2014)
by Daniela Rossella

Quattro anni fa, l'8 marzo 2014, moriva il mio Maestro – mio e di tanti altri, s'intende – di cui vorrei proporre qui un breve e sintetico ricordo: Egli, del resto, amava appunto la sintesi e mai, né nelle numerosissime pubblicazioni né in interventi a convegni né durante le lezioni, gli ho sentito scrivere o pronunciare una parola più di quelle necessarie per comunicare, in modo diretto, chiaro e avvincente, i suoi insegnamenti.

La sua carriera è ben nota: allievo di Mario Vallauri, Carlo Della Casa conseguì la laurea a Torino, indi vinse una borsa di perfezionamento che lo portò per quattro semestri a Bonn; dal 1958 fu docente di sanscrito presso l'Università di Torino.³ Insegnò sanscrito all'Università di Pavia dal 1962 al 1965;⁴ cessato l'incarico, si trasferì all'Università di Palermo dove, fino al 1974, divenne straordinario di sanscrito presso la Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia. Nel 1975 venne chiamato come titolare della cattedra di sanscrito presso l'Università degli Studi di Milano; qui mantenne anche la carica di Direttore del fu Istituto di Glottologia dal 1980 fino all'anno del pensionamento.⁵

Sebbene Egli sia ricordato, soprattutto, per l'impeccabile traduzione delle *Upaniṣad* (1976), per i fondamentali studi giainici, per l'attento esame di vari aspetti dell'induismo e per l'insostituibile *Corso di Sanscrito* (1980), Carlo Della Casa ebbe a occuparsi di argomenti i più vari: ricordo, facendo riferimento ai suoi *Scritti scelti*, le traduzioni di opere *kāvya*, di taglio sia religioso sia profano (e sempre in prima versione dagli originali in sanscrito) e gli interventi su Gandhi e su Tagore. E molto altro ancora: penso, per esempio, alla sua straordinaria

³ Carlo Della Casa, *Il giainismo*, Paolo Boringhieri, Torino, 1962 (risolto di copertina).

⁴ Ringrazio per questa notizia, e i documenti relativi inviati a tale proposito, la professoressa Clelia Mora, ordinario di Storia del Vicino Oriente antico presso l'Università di Pavia.

⁵ In *Scritti scelti di Carlo Della Casa*, a cura di Agata Sannino Pellegrini, Palermo, Luxograph, 1998 sono reperibili sia una breve biografia (pp. 11s.) sia una bibliografia (pp. 13-16).

competenza nelle lingue e letterature greca e latina, che hanno fatto di Lui non solo un indologo (sottolineo a questo proposito, con intatta ammirazione, la sua capacità di tradurre a prima vista dal sanscrito) ma un umanista nel pieno senso del termine.

Lo conobbi nel 1975, appena giunto a Milano, e per quasi quarant'anni Egli è stato il mio punto di riferimento: non solo, si badi bene, come uomo di cultura e come insegnante, ma come persona capace di starmi accanto (a me come a tanti altri allievi, naturalmente) col tatto, riservato eppure tangibile, di un padre, qualità che condivideva, peraltro, con la moglie, la Signora Claudia, sposa amatissima e, per quanto mi riguarda, amica e confidente delicata e preziosa.

Docente implacabile, metodico, instancabile e perfezionista, nulla gli sfuggiva delle inesattezze di quanto, a volte, gli dicevano – vuoi a lezione, vuoi durante gli esami – gli studenti: eppure aveva il raro dono di non appalesare mai quella superiorità che indubbiamente possedeva e, sempre, lasciava la consolante impressione di poter migliorare. E, con un sorriso complice, dava a tutti il conforto per una futura prova migliore: non ha mai umiliato nessuno, e questo non è che il primo dei suoi innumerevoli pregi.

Scrivere la tesi con Lui era un'impresa ardua: rammento le numerose riscritture alle quali all'epoca mi sottopose, ma, con rara virtù, correggeva insegnando e così dando, infine, a me (come agli altri laureandi) l'idea di aver compiuto un percorso completo, appagante e autonomo. Dote rarissima, a lavoro fatto (e minuziosamente da Lui letto, commentato e rivisto fin nei minimi particolari), si tirava indietro, lasciando allo studente l'onore di presentare un lavoro che in realtà, senza il suo supporto ed apporto, non si sarebbe mai realizzato. Era fatto così: la luce dei riflettori non gli è mai interessata.

Ma il rapporto con Lui, per chi lo desiderava, non terminava con la laurea: ora che sono vecchia e anch'io prossima a "tirare i remi in barca" posso dire di averlo interpellato decine di volte per i quesiti più vari – da una traduzione ostica alla rilettura per intero di miei libri o di articoli prima della pubblicazione – e sempre, dico sempre, ne ha trovato il tempo e ha proposto correzioni, giunte e ritocchi spessissimo essenziali,

invariabilmente acuti e, soprattutto, offerti con la grazia non di un potente che accorda un barlume della sua competenza ma di un umile collaboratore che, con intimo e quasi pudico piacere, “dava una mano” – per usare la sua espressione – a chi ne sapeva, ahimè, tanto meno di lui.

L’India – inutile dirlo – era il suo campo d’azione preferenziale: ma, come accennavo sopra, l’ampiezza dei suoi interessi ha dimostrato che la specializzazione in un settore non potesse mai procedere disgiunta da un approfondito sguardo d’insieme: che, insomma, occuparsi più a fondo di uno dei molti possibili campi non poteva prescindere da una solida conoscenza degli altri. Da qui l’ampiezza di respiro di tutti i suoi scritti che avevano, anche, il raro pregio di suscitare curiosità: esaurienti (non “esaustivi”, per carità: odiava questo aggettivo!) e appaganti, come una pietanza deliziosa lasciavano la voglia, oserei dire l’appetito, di gustare qualcosa in più, di proseguire lo studio per conto proprio – e qui si nota la grandezza di un Maestro, che non desiderava (e sì che avrebbe potuto) scrivere la parola “fine” a una trattazione o a un argomento, che pure conosceva alla perfezione, ma lasciava nel lettore la smania di andare più in là.

Nell’Istituto di Glottologia (divenuto Dipartimento dopo il suo pensionamento) usavamo tra noi chiamarlo “il Capo”: sorrideva, Carlo Della Casa, a questo appellativo che in realtà ben poco si confaceva a una personalità aliena da brame di potere, profondamente rispettoso di tutti, sempre incline a chiudere un occhio sui difetti o le manchevolezze degli altri e accanito osservatore dei propri (ma quali, perbacco?): in quarant’anni, non gli ho mai sentito dire una parola sgradevole contro nessuno, né di fronte, né, quel che più conta, dietro le spalle. Della Casa era, infatti, un uomo profondamente perbene e onesto.

Che leggesse o scrivesse, vuoi in università, vuoi nel suo studio a casa, era sempre profondamente concentrato, quasi fosse, invece che un Professore, uno studente qualsiasi: Carlo Della Casa, infatti, non ha mai smesso di studiare fino all’ultimo giorno della sua vita. “Riposare sugli allori” è la frase che in

assoluto meno si attaglia a un uomo mai soddisfatto di quanto sapeva e che era perennemente alla ricerca di altro e di più.

Non era serio, “il Capo”: anzi mi piace ricordare il suo squisito senso dell’umorismo. Uморismo, si badi bene: mai sarcasmo o ironia pungente. Sicché l’oggetto dei suoi amabili lazzi – inattesi, fulminei, spiazzanti – era il primo a sorridere e a partecipare a un attimo di divertimento: perché Carlo Della Casa era, fra l’altro, un uomo buonissimo.

Se ora Lui fosse qui, mi direbbe la frase con cui era solito congedare gli interlocutori allorché ci si era detto il necessario: “Va bene...”. A quel punto sapevamo che il colloquio era giustamente terminato. Non desidererebbe che scrivessi di più: e concludo dicendo che era un uomo di moralità integerrima, di sapienza profondissima, riservato eppure sempre disponibile, voglioso di apprendere sempre di più e di far partecipi gli altri delle sue conoscenze, generoso, sincero e incredibilmente amabile. Da Lui non finirò mai di imparare – come studiosa, come insegnante e soprattutto come persona – e per tutti coloro che sono stati suoi allievi sempre Egli resterà il modello al quale aspirare.

Daniela Rossella

Aggiungo qui di seguito un breve ricordo del figlio Mario, dei nipoti Sebastiano ed Elettra e della nuora Simona.

“Mio padre era affascinato dall’acqua. Quella dolce, si intende. Dei torrenti, delle piogge, delle fonti termali (il mare no, con le tre ‘s’ esecrate da tutta la famiglia, sole sabbia sale, responsabili di eritemi, ustioni, fastidio).

La osservava, ci passava ore vicino, ci stava dentro. Quando ero piccolo, passavamo giornate intere sui greti dei nostri torrenti. Per chi lo ha conosciuto solo da anziano, risulta difficile pensare alla sua abilità nel saltare sulle pietre rotonde per guardare i corsi d’acqua. Durante i temporali notturni, si metteva sul terrazzo coperto in alto per guardare la pioggia che scuoteva gli alberi, e al mattino, come prima cosa, si andava a

vedere il Lemme grosso (la piena del torrente vicino a noi a Gavi). Uno degli ultimi ricordi che ho di lui è alla laguna blu, in Islanda, una fonte termale vulcanica dove si può fare il bagno alla latitudine del circolo polare artico: ci sguazzava dentro, felice come un bambino, con i nipoti. E' una passione che ha passato a me e ai ragazzi. E sono contento che adesso riposi vicino all'acqua." (Mario)

“Posso dire davvero che il nonno era la persona con cui passavo più tempo, sia perché dopo scuola andavo sempre a pranzo a casa sua, sia perché spesso studiavo insieme a lui. Gli facevo sempre venire la ‘pancia lunga’, perché anche se uscivo da scuola all’una arrivavo almeno mezz’ora dopo; quando poi veniva a pranzo anche mio cugino Valentino, si mangiava ancora più tardi! Il nonno però lo sapeva, e si organizzava in modo tale che quando noi suonavamo al campanello la pasta fosse giusto da scolare. Poi ci sedevamo a tavola e iniziava la festa: noi tre ci capivamo al volo, e c’era sempre da ridere. In effetti il nonno era stato un importante e illustre professore, ma era soprattutto un nonno. E con il nonno io ci stavo davvero bene. Per me erano fondamentali i suoi consigli, mi hanno fatto crescere e diventare più maturo, ma soprattutto il nonno mi ha insegnato a vedere sempre positivo. Se oggi affronto i problemi con serenità, con la giusta serietà ma con il sorriso sulle labbra, lo devo a lui. Quando si è sereni tutto viene meglio, si sta in allegria, si ride insieme: il nonno sapeva veramente come vivere, e vivere felice. Eppure anche io sono convinto di avergli insegnato qualcosa: pensate, prima che glielo mostrassi io, non sapeva come si accendesse un petardo! Poi ha imparato, chiedete al portinaio...” (Sebastiano)

“Mio nonno era una delle persone più care al mondo, per me. Passavo un sacco del mio tempo con lui in vari modi che potrebbero definirsi banali, ma che in verità con lui erano speciali. Per esempio, quando mi veniva a prendere all’uscita da scuola, facevamo un giro in macchina ed eravamo felici. Poi andavamo a casa sua, dove mi preparava merende davvero uniche. Poi mi accompagnava a casa e faceva cena con noi,

raccontandoci i suoi infiniti ‘episodi’. A volte, quando io e mio fratello eravamo più piccoli, e i nostri genitori erano fuori la sera, il nonno stava in camera nostra finché non ci addormentavamo. Specialmente a me teneva la mano, e invece di addormentarmi io, si addormentava lui! In campagna dimostrava in tutto e per tutto di essere un nonno sprint: zappava nell’orto, piantava gli ortaggi a 88 anni! Spesso poi lo vedevo seduto al tavolo in giardino che leggeva il giornale, e quando ripassavo si era addormentato mentre girava pagina! Insomma, era un nonno eccezionale, il migliore che potessi immaginare, e sono felice che sia capitata a me la fortuna di averlo.” (Elettra)

“Ironico, attento e discreto, un po’ presuntuoso ma capace di diffondere serenità e calore. Bastava stargli vicino. L’episodio più importante: oltre venti anni fa, uno screzio tra sua moglie e la sottoscritta mi aveva molto amareggiata. E’ arrivato nella mia stanza, si è seduto di fianco a me, in silenzio. Poi mi ha guardata con i suoi liquidi e limpidissimi occhi chiari. Gli ho sorriso. Dopo un po’ si è alzato ed è tornato in giardino. E il suo amato orto, dove una mattina d’estate lo trovai seduto tra le piante di pomodori. Per terra. Aveva perso l’equilibrio, e non era riuscito ad alzarsi. E lì aspettava, paziente, che qualcuno (figli nipoti nuora amici), passasse di lì. Così avrebbe trovato qualcuno che l’avrebbe aiutato a rialzarsi. E intanto si godeva la limpida giornata d’estate nel suo orto, nella sua Gavi. Non smetterà mai di mancarmi, ogni giorno.” (Simona)

JUAN MIGUEL DE MORA (1921-2017)
by Wendy J. Phillips-Rodriguez

On Saturday, March 18th, 2017, at the age of 95 years, Professor Juan Miguel de Mora passed away in Mexico City. His life was an eventful one (he was a journalist, a novelist, a playwright, a movie and theater director; not to mention a member of the international brigades during his first youth), but let us devote here just a few words to his love of the Sanskrit language and culture, who led him to 50 years of fruitful academic life at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and at many other high education institutions where he was either a distinguished member of their community (such as the Jain Vishva Bharati Institute, who conferred him a Doctorate honoris causa) or a visiting professor (Delhi University, University of Kuala Lumpur, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Universidade de São Paulo, Universidad de Salamanca, among others).

He studied Sanskrit at École Pratique des Hautes Études under the guidance of Anne Marie Esnoul. Very soon he was aware of the need for direct translations of Sanskrit texts into Spanish in order to attain a real understanding of the classical culture of India in the Spanish speaking world. Indeed, he committed himself to the task and, as of today, still the students reach for his translations of selected hymns of the *Rgveda*, several *Upaniṣad* and Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita*. In terms of research, he also paved the way for many a subject, as is proved by his books on Indian Medicine and Mathematics, the concept of divinity in Hinduism, the principle of opposites in Sanskrit philosophy, just to mention a few. But probably his most beloved subject were always the Sanskrit Epics, where he saw a continuous portrait of humanity. In particular, his book *Visiones del Rāmāyaṇa. La India y el sudeste asiático*, is an essential introduction for the Spanish speaker to the impact of the *Rāmakathā* in India and beyond.

In 1981 at the 8th Sanskrit World Conference held in Delhi he was elected Vice President of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies (IASS) and remained so for the twelve following years. Later on, he requested to withdraw from the post but agreed to become the Regional Director for Latin America until 2012. He did a remarkable job on both roles, engaging and inspiring colleagues and also students to further the contribution of the various regions of the world to Sanskrit Studies and the contribution of Sanskrit to the advancement of knowledge in different regions of the world, as it is the main objective of IASS.

He will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 40 years, Marja Ludwika Jarocka, his son, Carlos Miguel de Mora, and his two granddaughters, Lakshmi and Draupadi, whose names will always be a reminder of two values he both admired and practiced throughout his life: generosity and strength of character. Besides his close family, it would be difficult to number the many dear friends, students and colleagues that will miss him. His towering personality (as it was described by Professor Kutumba Shastri on his condolences note to the family) and his booming voice left a lasting impression on all those who had the chance to meet him. Many will remember him as a mentor who taught not only about India but also greater life lessons.

As a young student he gave me a small wooden statue of Ganesh. I carried it with me for years, until one of its hands got broken. To bid farewell to it I wrote a few lines. Little I knew, back then, that one day I would use those words as my last *praṇāma* to him.

Voy a sumergir en el río
 los ídolos de mi juventud.
 El elefante de madera que fue mi escudo por tantos años
 tiene una mano rota.
 Me parece que es la mano que lleva el hacha
the axe that cuts all attachments,
 pero puede ser la mano que lleva la cuerda

the noose that ties you to eternity?

Mi elefante de madera tiene recuerdos de tardes perdidas
hace años en la ciudad de México
cuando yo y mi maestro éramos más jóvenes
y todo era un comienzo.

Gracias, Ganesh, Señor Elefante, por haber viajado conmigo en
trenes, aviones, autorickshaws.

Gracias por no haber dejado que ninguna de tus manos se
rompiera antes de tiempo.

Vuelve ahora a tu lugar en el Monte Kailás, en un rincón del río,
y no olvides venir de regreso, pronto,
que tengo una sed extraña de comienzos.

ANANDA WAHIHANA PALLIYA GURUGÉ (1928-2014)
by Bruno Portigliatti

Memories of a friend

In 1984, from the 4th to the 7th of September, the city of Turin witnessed a very important event: the International Congress on Buddhism in Europe entitled “L’insegnamento e la pratica del Buddhismo in Europa”, promoted by the European Buddhist Union, the Orientalist Institute of the University of Turin and CESMEO – International Institute for Advanced Asian Studies – with the support of the Embassies of India, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

His Excellency M. A. Piyasekera, Sri Lanka ambassador in Italy, came from Rome with Ananda P. Gurugé, who was the General Secretary of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, and his wife Sujata: our friendship started at that time and lasted until his death.

From that moment on, he came to Turin and Giaveno many times and a productive partnership started with Professor Oscar Botto and CESMEO: they attended many conferences and prestigious congresses, such as “The 9th International Ramayana Conference” held in Turin at Villa Gualino from the 13th to the 17th of April 1992 and the International Congress “La bisaccia del pellegrino: fra evocazione e memoria – Il pellegrinaggio sostitutivo ai luoghi Santi nel mondo antico e nelle grandi religioni viventi” from the 2nd to the 6th of October 2007, launched at the Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali in Turin and then held between Moncalvo and Casale Monferrato, organized by the Regione Piemonte in partnership with the University of Turin – Faculty of Religious Sciences – and CESMEO.

In 2007 a monograph was published in the CESMEO series “Collana di letture”: it was entitled “Il contributo del Buddhismo al progresso umano ed alla Pace nel Mondo” and was presented at the Galleria d’Arte Moderna in Turin on the 1st of October. It was a *Lectio Magistralis* by H. E. Ananda W. P.

Gurugé, held on the 8th of October 2006 in Paris at the UNESCO for the celebration of the year 2550 after Buddha Sakyamuni Parinirvana.

I would now like to quote some particularly important paragraphs:

“I can’t think of a better way to honour the Buddha in this circumstance than acknowledging the extraordinary gift he has given to humankind.

Buddha’s greatness can’t be questioned: he has been a spiritual guide, teaching the Path to deliverance, redemption, freedom, emancipation, salvation or escape from human pain.

However, what Buddha has left to humanity through his personality, his teachings and his principles is far more important and magnificent than all the visible and tangible contribution: his true bequest is in the untouchable spiritual and moral values he has passed down.

Buddhism and its school of thought has been the first to influence millions of people from different ethnic groups and cultures for over two thousand years, becoming a powerful civilizing energy. During this process, not a single drop of blood was spilled, nor it was necessary to resort to persecution or oppression. On the contrary, Buddhism has embraced every culture main beliefs and practices, and has shown an unusually marked ability to integrate and absorb all the different sociocultural characteristics”.

In his short text, Ananda W. P. Gurugé has been able to fully understand the importance of the Buddhist way of thinking, which 2560 years after still sounds modern and carries on a message of tolerance, compassion, harmony and peace addressed to the men of our times and to future generations.

This is my modest contribution to remember a friend with whom I have shared many moments and many important events, as the III International Congress in Paris at the UNESCO from the 7th to the 9th of September 1988, while I was President of the European Buddhist Union. The main theme “Buddhism in the Western countries today” was divided in four specific sessions: “Buddhism and interreligious dialogue, Buddhism and science, Buddhism and society, Buddhism and environment”. The

congress was attended by 500 people, 50 of whom were members of the Huayen Lotus Association from Taipei (Taiwan). At the end of the congress H. E. Ananda W. P. Gurugé, Sri Lanka Ambassador, was named “Patron” of the European Union.

**A SELECTION OF THE PAPERS PRESENTED AT
THE MEETING OF THE ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA
DI STUDI SANSCRITI**

(Rome Sapienza 26th-28th October 2017)

edited by

Raffaele Torella, Marco Franceschini, Tiziana Pontillo,
Cinzia Pieruccini, Antonio Rigopoulos,
Francesco Sferra

Editorial

The *Associazione Italiana di Studi Sanscriti* (AISS) was established in the mid-1970s, founded by Oscar Botto, as the national counterpart of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies (IASS) founded in Paris in 1973. The first conference of the AISS was held in Turin on October 17, 1980, and from then onwards its meetings have been held fairly regularly every two years, each time at a different University where Sanskrit and South Asian studies are taught. The AISS has painstakingly published the proceedings of the conferences as well as summaries of the activities and research projects carried on in the main Italian Universities, thus documenting the developments of Sanskrit and South Asian studies in the last forty years. Recently, an official website of the AISS has been created which offers information on the activities of the *Associazione* and the principal Indological events taking place in Italy as well as abroad:

<http://www.associazioneitalianadistudisanscriti.org>.

The most recent conference of the AISS was held at the University of Rome Sapienza on October 26th-28th, and saw the participation of numerous Italian scholars working at Italian and foreign Universities, along with the participation of a few invited scholars from the Jagiellonian University of Cracow. The first day and part of the second were devoted to the presentation and brief discussion of thirteen papers freely investigating a wide variety of Indological topics. In the final seminar, titled “India and its encounter with the other” fourteen papers were presented and discussed. The articles comprised in this volume were selected by the AISS Board: R. Torella (President), M. Franceschini, T. Pontillo, C. Pieruccini, A. Rigopoulos, F. Sferra, and submitted to the standard process of double-blind peer review.

Raffaele Torella

CHIARA LIVIO

COSMIC PŪJĀ
ŚIVABHAKTI IN ŚRĪKAṆṬHACARITA V

Abstract

The *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita* by Maṅkha (XII CE) can be considered as one of the last *mahākāvya* composed in a Hindu context in Kashmir – the reign of Jayasiṃha (1128-1155) – before the Muslim Sultanate. The author states from the very beginning that his *mahākāvya* is aimed at celebrating not his patron Jayasiṃha, but “that king whose court is Mount Kailāsa”, namely Śiva (ŚKC I 56). This and other *loci* have led the scholars to discuss about the metamorphosis of the *kavi*’s role within the court *entourage* and his ideological conflict with the king. So far, such observations have not considered the subject of the *praśasti* itself, Śiva, whose connection with the poet may be demonstrated by conclusive textual evidence: whilst the whole work is pervaded by the poet’s *bhakti*, it is in the v *sarga*, the *bhagavadvarṇana*, “description of the Lord”, that Maṅkha displays entirely his full devotion. Throughout this section, in fact, the veneration for Śiva assumes the features of a macrocosmic ritual: not only the human devotee, but also Indra, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and all the Hindu pantheon identify the god as *deus optimus maximus*. Maṅkha combines thereby elements of a daily *pūjā* with ritual actions of celestial devotees, creating the new image of a divine ceremony: what else is the *devadeva*

worth of, if not of an everlasting supreme offer, the one made by the gods?

Introduction

The *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita*¹ is a *mahākāvya* in 25 *sargas* written by Maṅkha, one of the most celebrated *kavi* in the XII CE Kashmir.² His work had been composed between the years 1140 and 1144³ under the patronage of king Jayasimha (1128-1155), Lohara dynasty,⁴ and later commented by Jonarāja (Kashmir, XV CE).⁵

Not surprisingly for a poet indebted to the cultural, religious and philosophical inheritance of the previous Shaivite Kashmiri scholars – Maṅkha dedicates the poem to Śiva. The work is, in

¹ Maṅkha's main work was discovered by BÜHLER, G., in "Detailed report of a tour in search of Sanskrit Mss. made in Kaśmīr, Rajputana and Central India", in *Journal of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Bombay, 1877. The only available editions of the text of the *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita* (abbr. ŚKC) with the commentary by Jonarāja (abbr. J.) are: DURGAPRASADA, P., PARABA, K. P., "The *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita* of Maṅkhaka, With the Commentary of Jonarāja", in *Kāvyaṃālā*, Vol. 3, Nirṇaya-Sāgara Press, Bombay, 1887; DURGAPRASADA, P., PARABA, K. P., "The *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita* of Maṅkhaka, With the Commentary of Jonarāja", in *Kāvyaṃālā*, Vol. 3, Tukārām Jāvajī, Bombay, 1900 (2nd rev. ed.); MAṆKHAKA, *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita, With the Sanskrit Commentary of Jonarāja*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1953 (reprint of 2nd rev. ed.). The XXV canto was translated for the first time by KREYENBORG, E., *Der XXV Gesang des Śrīkaṇṭhacaritam. Ein Beitrag zur altindischen Literaturgeschichte*, Philos.-Diss., Münster, 1929, and it is based on the first ed. (1887). Studies on the text have been conducted by BHATT, B. N., *Śrīkaṇṭhacaritam – A Study*, M. S. University of Baroda Research Series-14, Baroda, 1973 and by MANDAL, B. C., *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita, A Mahākāvya of Maṅkhaka, Literary Study with an Analysis of Social, Political and Historical Data of Kashmir of the 12th Century A.D.*, Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, Calcutta, 1991. The most noteworthy translation of *sargas* I.56, II-III, XIV-XV and XXV has been published by SLAJE, W. *Bacchanal in Himmel und andere Proben aus Maṅkha*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2015. The ŚKC has not been fully translated yet.

² The Kashmiri historian Kalhana quotes his name in his *Rājataranginī* VIII.2422-2423 and 3354. See STEIN, A., *Kalhana's Rājataranginī, or Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*, Vol. I-II, Archibald Constable and Co., Westminster, 1900.

³ See SLAJE, W., *op.cit.*, pp. 13-14.

⁴ STEIN, A., *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 104-106.

⁵ See SLAJE, W., *Kingship in Kaśmīr (AD 1148-1459): from the pen of Jonarāja, Court Paṇḍit to Sulṭān Zayn al-'Abidīn*, Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis, Halle an der Saale, 2014.

fact, a panegyric for the deity, named Śrīkaṇṭha – the “beautiful-throated” –, through the storytelling of his great deeds. Within the many myths regarding the god, the author selects more specifically the well-known episode of the cosmic battle between Śiva and the enemy cities of Tripura.⁶ Despite the presence of a specific plot, the actual narration of the main event – *i.e.* the battle and the subsequent defeat of the *asuras* by the gods – covers only a few *sargas*,⁷ while the other sections are mostly dedicated to other “descriptions”, *varṇanas*.⁸ This way of treating the mythological narration is not new to the ornate poems in Sanskrit and it is common to keep the plot in the background while analysing more diffusely other aspects of the matter – the description of the army or the gathering of the troops, for instance.⁹

Nevertheless, even if Maṅkha complies with these *mahākāvya* precepts closely, the ŚKC remains quite atypical: it is one of the few *kāvyas* holding information on the *kavi* – his life, family, beliefs and opinions (ŚKC I-III) – and describing a *sabhā*, the assembly of the poets gathered to assist the reading of the poem itself (ŚKC XXV). The poem, therefore, appears to be extremely interesting from a historical point of view,¹⁰ and it has attracted modern scholars’ attention also for the political implications some details might arise:¹¹ why does Maṅkha declare his loyalty to Śiva, and not to the king (ŚKC I 56)?¹² Is the *praśasti* of king Jayasiṃha being left aside deliberately?

⁶ The *Tripuradahana* story has been mentioned in *Brāhmaṇas*, in the *Karṇaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* and in the *Purāṇas*. See BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 10-20 and MANDAL, B. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

⁷ The actual battle occurs in ŚKC XXIII-XXIV. See BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

⁸ A complete index of the *varṇanas* is placed at the beginning of the three printed editions (see fn. 1).

⁹ ŚKC XVIII-XXI. See BHATT, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁰ See OBROCK, L. J., *Translation and History: The Development of a Kashmiri Textual Tradition from ca. 1000-1500*, South and Southeast Asian Studies UC Berkeley, 2015, pp. 78 ff.

¹¹ POLLOCK, S., “The Death of Sanskrit”, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 43, No. 2, Apr 2001, pp. 392-426; HANNEDER, J., “On The Death of Sanskrit”, in *Indo-Iranian Journal*, Vol. 45, Kluwer Academic Publishers, The Netherlands, 2002, pp. 293-310.

¹² POLLOCK, S., *op. cit.*, p. 399 and SLAJE, W., *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

Why does the *sabhā* take place at Alamkāra's house, Mañkha's brother, and not at court, in front of the king? It really seems that the author is intentionally disrespectful towards Jayasiṃha and his leadership.¹³ Such questions are legitimate, considering the historical events occurred shortly thereafter – the decay of the Hindu kingship in Kashmir and the rise of the Muslim Sultanate.

However, the *kavi*'s intention is clearly to eulogize Śiva: therefore, it is also necessary to examine in depth the approaches and strategies adopted by the poet to celebrate the god himself to fully understand the poem. The present paper analyses them: firstly, by critically discussing some lines of the fifth canto, the ones which clearly deals with the establishment of a cosmic ritual as supreme act of devotion for Śiva; secondly, by trying to read the images in a non-poetic context, to better understand if they can relate to practices possibly in vogue at Mañkha's times.

The *pūjā* ritual in the V *sarga*

Among all the twenty-five *sargas*, the V canto, the *Bhagavadvarṇana*, is the only one manifestly dedicated to the "description of the Holy", Śiva, but it seems to be much more than just a mere representation of his appearance. All the 57 stanzas¹⁴ are indeed centred on the celebration of the god's majesty, but it is also a declaration of faith, which expresses itself even through the convolution of the images. Śiva, quoted by name only in the first line (ŚKC V 1: *devaḥ svayam*) and then mentioned again along the *sarga* through relative and demonstrative pronouns, is the *devadeva*, the one and only.

¹³ POLLOCK, S., *op. cit.*, pp. 399-400.

¹⁴ The canto has never been translated before. It can be divided in two metrical parts, as follows: ŚKC V 1-47 (*vasantatilakā*); ŚKC V 48-57, various metres: 48 (*śārdūlavikrīḍita*), 49 (*mālinī*), 50 (*śārdūlavikrīḍita*), 51 (*mandākrāntā*), 52 (*śārdūlavikrīḍita*), 53 (*śikharinī*), 54 (*mandākrāntā*), 55 (*śārdūlavikrīḍita*), 56-57 (*sragdharā*).

Such literary device, not new neither to Mañkha¹⁵ nor to Indian classical poetry,¹⁶ while allowing the *kavi* to maintain an overall unity within the text, even in the diversity and complexity of the images employed, is keeping the audience locked on his beloved Śiva, the main subject of the section.

We notice, since the beginning, that the author satisfies well the *mahākāvya* prerequisites: showing an undoubtful and deep knowledge of Daṇḍin's rules,¹⁷ he presents the protagonist as a "skilful and noble hero"¹⁸ within the gods. In a non-poetic but religious perspective, Śiva is clearly the *deus optimus maximus*, the supreme lord. It is evident that Mañkha intends not only to display the god's distinctive traits through some references to iconography and mythology, but also to declare his own strong and personal devotion: considering his cultural and religious background,¹⁹ the deity is without any doubt the poet's object of *bhakti*. Such consideration is not just an assumption: both Mañkha in the text (ŚKC V 3 and 4) and Jonarāja in the commentary (comm. to ŚKC V 3, 4 and 11) use the word *bhakti* to explain the motive for the composition and for the actions described.

To strengthen the extraordinary role played by Śiva in the *sarga*, Mañkha has to introduce unique devotees: the god of the gods appears to be the core of a cosmic ritual, a divine *pūjā*, performed not by just some human beings, but exceptionally by the deities of the Hindu pantheon. This is the most peculiar feature of the *sarga*: each god occupies one or more lines, in which he – or she – is intent on a specific act of reverence, such

¹⁵ Mañkha applies the same structure also to other cantos. It is worth noticing particularly the IV *sarga*, which quote the subject *kailāsaḥ* only in the first line (ŚKC IV 1).

¹⁶ One of the best examples within the *mahākāvya*s is the *incipit* of Kalidāsa's *Kumārasaṃbhava*, which seems to be the inspiration for ŚKC IV. See SMITH, D. (trad.), *The birth of Kumara by Kālidāsa*, Clay Sanskrit Library, New York, 2005; BOCCALI, G., "La descrizione del Himālaya nel *Kumārasaṃbhava* (I, 1-17) di Kālidāsa", in *Indologica Taurinensia*, Vol. 37, Torino, 2011, pp. 75-106.

¹⁷ See RADDI ŚĀSTRĪ, R., POTDĀR, K. R., *Kāvyaḍarsa of Daṇḍin*, BORI, Poona, 1970.

¹⁸ See DANḌIN, *Kāvyaḍarśa* I.17.

¹⁹ For a detailed presentation of Mañkha's life and work see SLAJE, W., *op. cit.*, pp. 13-18.

as playing instruments, preparing lights, flowers, water and the like. The deities, forcing themselves to arrange a ceremony, lower themselves to a completely human status, boosting more Śiva's leading position. In fact, by mentioning these actions and materials either openly or implicitly, Mañkha is thinking of the earthly procedures and supplies, the *upacāras* or "sequence of services" required for the *pūjā* ceremony.

In the V *sarga*, the opening verses – the *incipit* (ŚKC V 1-4) – along with ŚKC V 6, 12 and 42 are the ones which illustrate more significantly the correlation between the grandiosity of Śiva and the *pūjā* ritual, although also other lines might be read as impregnated with underlying references to the cult of Śiva.

*vṛndārakādhipaśiroruhapārijāta-
sragbandhubhir madhukarair upavīṇitāṅghriḥ |
devaḥ svayaṃ jagadamugrahakelikāras
taṃ bālaśītakiraṇābharaṇo 'dhiśete || ŚKC V 1 ||*

“With His feet played as a *vīṇā* by the bees,
attracted by the coral-tree flowers' garlands
placed on the hair of the chief of the gods,
the God himself, adorned by the crescent Cold-rayed,
producing this pastime thanks to the grace for the
worlds,²⁰ sleeps upon it”

The grammatical subject of the line, the *devaḥ* Śiva, is not acting as the agent of the scene: the god must be venerated and thus he is playing a passive role, simply lying and sleeping on *taṃ*, the mount Kailāsa.²¹ On the contrary, the name of the active protagonist is expressed by the words *vṛndāraka adhipa*, the “chief of the gods”, Indra, who occupies symmetrically in the first hemistich the exact same *padas* of his counterpart Śiva.

²⁰ Or “creating this pastime [the playing and singing] as a grace for the worlds”. *kelau vīṇāgānam ucitam* J.

²¹ *taṃ [...] adhiśete [=] kailāsam āśrayati* J. The mount Kailāsa is the subject of the previous *sarga*. *taṃ* is seamlessly connecting the IV canto with the V one, continuing the so beloved game of pronouns-recalling.

Indra is depicted as wearing on his head a garland consisting of white *pārijāta* flowers,²² whose perfume attracts the *madhukaras*, the “honey-makers” (*i.e.* the bees). The latter, however, are not only imagined as flying around Indra’s wreath, but they are also described as involved in a musical performance before Śiva’s feet: his toes are charmingly “made resounding like a *vīṇā*”²³ by them buzzing. How the connection between the *madhukaras* on the head of the first god and the ones on the toes of the second can be explained? Only through the movement of bowing: Indra, bended, makes the bees on his forehead being close to Śiva’s feet as well. What a better declaration of inferiority if not from the contact between the purest part of the body, the head, and the most impure one, the feet? Evidence for the previous interpretation lays in the commentary, where Jonarāja notes down *indro’pi taṃ namati*, “even Indra is bowing before him [Śiva]”. It is obvious that the poet deploys such strategy to describe a relationship between the two gods: *indraḥ api*, even Indra, the most powerful of the gods, is bending before the magnificence of Śiva.²⁴

The other details of the stanza must not be ignored: the instrumental music of the *vīṇā*, the garland of *puspas* at the feet of the deity, and lastly the mountain Kailāsa, which serves as

²² The presence of these type of flowers fits well Indra’s iconography, since the *parijat* is one of the five trees of the *indraloka*.

²³ *upaviṇīta* is a denominative form from *vīṇā*, lit. “[the feet which are] made sounding like a *vīṇā* by the bees”.

²⁴ Such image is not unconventional, especially in Indian hymnal literature, the one incorporated into the *mahākāvya*s: some “stereotyped themes are used over and over again: in submission to the Almighty, the diadems of other gods touch the feet of mighty Śiva, or are compared to bees that swarm humming around Śiva’s lotus-feet” (LIENHARD, S., *A History of Classical Poetry: Sanskrit – Pali – Prakrit*, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1984, pp. 130-131). References to the same image have been already found in ŚKC I 56, where the the *makaras* on Indra’s head – thus, his ornaments – are said to be kissing the dust at Śiva’s feet (See SLAJE, W., *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39). Moreover, it is possible to draw a parallel between ŚKC V 1 and Kālidāsa’s *Raghuvamśa* XII 29: the *pārijāta* flowers are in the latter case *kirīṭakoṭicyutā*, *i.e.* shaken on the *deva*’s head – Indra’s – while bending before Śiva, the *devadeva*, and thus falling on his feet (See ĀCHĀRYA, N. R., *The Kumārasambhava of Kālidāsa*, Nirnaya Sagara Press, Bombay, 1955 (14th ed.), p. 263 and DEVADHAR, C. R., *Works of Kālidāsa*, Vol. II, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 2004 (reprint), p. 188. I am grateful to Professor Franceschini for bringing this passage to my attention.

the god's *āsana*. It really seems that Mañkha is willing to set the preliminary arrangements for a *pūjā*, which intertwines both the human and the divine sides. In fact, on the one hand the *kavi* applies to a non-terrestrial occasion some completely earthly *upacāras*, the ones commonly used in daily ceremonies; on the other hand, the worshiper is a god, which elevates the ritual to a macrocosmic level.

The whole “divine devotee – human *upacāras*” dichotomy is not fully maintained in the second stanza, even if it does deal again with the ritual action of bowing. The agent, here, is different: not a god, but a “someone”, *kasya*, possibly an unknown male devotee. The complexity of the line, though, results not from the ambiguity of the nature of such worshiper, but from the presence of two other individuals: *yena*, *i.e.* Śiva, mentioned through the first of the many relative pronouns we encounter in the canto; *bhālapālī*, the actual grammatical subject of the line.

*yenāṅghripīṭhahaṭhasaṃtatavṛṣṭiniryat*²⁵
tiryakkiṇā jagati kasya na bhālapālī |
daivānadhītanavadivyaśubhākṣarālī-
nyāsecchayā nihitakākapadeva cakre || ŚKC V 2 ||

“For whom in the world has the Forehead Guardian,
that curved callus produced by the continuous,
obstinate rubbing
against the base of His pedestal,
not been made into an added *kākapada*
out of the desire of inserting a new,
celestial, and splendid
line of syllables, still unread by the Fate?”

²⁵ *vṛṣṭi* [=] *ghṛṣṭir gharṣaṇam* J. The manuscripts I have studied so far present: *trṣṭi* P□ (Pune, BORI, MS 197/1875-76, fol. 12v; l. 8); *ghṛṣṭi* P□ (Pune, BORI, MS 200/1875-76 fol. 30r; l. 2); *vṛṣṭa* J□ (Jammu, Rangunath Temple Library, MS 494 k, fol. 14r, l. 10); *ghṛṣṭi* J□^{text} (Jammu, Rangunath Temple Library, MS 753, fol. 52v, l. 12); *ghṛṣṭirgharṣaṇam* J□^{ṭikā} (Jammu, Rangunath Temple Library, MS 753, fol. 53r, l. 2); *ghṛṣṭi* L□ (London, India Office Library, MS IO 2548, fol. 18v, l. 1); *ghṛṣṭirgharṣaṇam* L□^{ṭikā} (London, India Office Library, MS IO 2033, fol. 30v, l. 1).

The real interpretative difficulty arises when analysing the actual subject, *bhāla-pālī*. On the one side, the commentator reads the compound as *bhāla-pālī*, meaning “the female protector (*pālī*) of the forehead (*bhāla*)”²⁶ and connected with *kiṇā*:²⁷ the goddess Bhālapālī is, indeed, the callus (*kiṇā*) which scars the devotee’s forehead. How is it formed? By ceaselessly hitting the basement of Śiva’s *mūrti* (*āṅghripīṭha*) with the head, while bending on it for devotion. On the other hand, Maṅkha also plays with the possibility of reading in the name of the goddess the word *ālī*, “line”, which is again linked to the shape of the callus.²⁸

The poet complicates the image much more: the *kiṇā-bhālapālī* is curved into the shape of a *kākapada*. Such compound, literally meaning “crow’s foot”, is diffusely used to indicate a v-shaped symbol which marks an omission in the text of the manuscripts: usually put by the scribe either on the left or the right margin of a defective line, it recalls the traces left by these birds on the ground. Maṅkha places such *kākapada* mark on the worshipper’s forehead, slipping through the idea that Śiva wishes to add here something previously missing.

The meaning of the image becomes clear only in the second half of the stanza: it is on the forehead that, for Indian beliefs, the Fate writes down the destiny of the human beings.²⁹ Declaring that there is “a line of syllables (or words) – new, divine and splendid – [still] unread by Daiva” on a prayer’s head amounts to saying that not even the Fate, the actual guardian of the forehead and supreme decision-maker, is able to read the non-written destiny that Śiva has planned for a devotee who shows such an extreme and fervent *bhakti*. It is the devotee himself who is

²⁶ *sā bhālapālī J.*

²⁷ I translated the compound as a *bahuvrīhi*.

²⁸ [...] *teṣām āliḥ pālī J.*

²⁹ KENT, E. F., “What’s Written on the Forehead Will Never Fail: Karma, Fate and Headwriting in Indian Folktales”, in *Asian Ethnology*, Vol. 68, No. 1, Nanzan University, 2009: 1-26, p.2: “The destiny so inscribed often takes the form of a set of verses indicating the most important features of a person’s life”.

acting like a scribe, instead: while repeatedly hitting Śiva's icon with his head – and thus adding on his forehead a scar which acts as a *kākapada* –, it is he who inserts on the manuscript of his life a new and positive destiny.

As we can see, Mañkha is slowly laying the foundations for the description of a complex *pūjā* ritual: although what attracts the attention first is Śiva's incredible power of control over both human and god devotees, the keywords for a proper reading of the situation are two: the compound *aṅghri-pīṭha*, which highlights the physical presence of a statue (possibly a *śivaliṅga*), and the word *bhāla*, the forehead, which carries once again the idea of a devotional downward motion.

The image of a bowing worshiper seems to be the common thread of the *incipit*, and it occurs again in the next line. Moreover, the opening word of the third stanza, *i.e.* *bhakti*, clarifies the main topic of this section, namely the “devotion” towards Śiva. The devotee is again a deity: Viṣṇu takes Indra's place in performing the *pūjā*. The action, explicitly presented in the first hemistich with the expressions “kissing the earth” and “bowed in devotion”, places the emphasis on Śiva's feet. In this case, the “Enemy of the Demons” is offering to Śiva's *caraṇas* the thunders and the clouds flocking around his head, while scattering apart on the soil the flowers of the garland he is carrying on his chest.

*bhaktyā natena purato 'vanicumbimūrdhnā
puṣpotkaraṃ vikiratā vanamālayeva |
daityāriṇā caraṇayoḥ kacameghavidyud-
oghair adāyīṣata yasya balipradīpāḥ || ŚKC V 3 ||*

“Bowling to Him for devotion,
with his head kissing the soil in front of him,
as if scattering apart sprinkles of blossoms
with the garland of the *vanamālā*³⁰

³⁰ *vanamālā* lit. garland of wood and wild flowers to be worn on the chest, said to be also Viṣṇu's prayer beads.

with the streams of flashing thunders
 from the clouds on his head
 lanterns for the oblation were offered at Śiva's feet
 by the Enemy of the Demons"

Three elements associated to the human ritualistic practice are well described here: *dhūma*, the smoke of the burning incense (*dhūpa*); *dīpas*, the lamps for the *pūjā*; *mālā*, the garland, whose blossoms are scattered all over the soil. It would have easily been the description of an earthly ceremony, if it weren't for the true nature of the materials involved: Viṣṇu uses the stormy clouds on his head to produce the smoke of the incense, and their thunders as lights for the *pūjā*.

Jonarāja does not explain in his commentary whether the clouds have the function of *dhūma* or not, but we can assume the correlation between 'grey clouds - water bearers' and 'smoke of the incense' on the basis of another stanza which contains the exact same simile.³¹

The pattern of a god offering its own naturalistic attributes to perform a ceremony for Śiva becomes increasingly more precise as the text continues. In fact, right at the opening of the fourth line, the word *pūjā* appears. Along with *bhakti*, it makes obvious what was only supposed before: the *kavi* is consciously describing an ongoing ritual, the one performed by the deities, and he is openly claiming this through his lexical choices.

pūjāsu bhaktirabhasātirasādhirūḍhas
tāmyann aśeṣakusumaprakaravyayena |
yasmai cikīrṣati punar druhiṇo 'pi nūnam
abhyarcanaṃ nijanivāsasaroruhena || ŚKC V 4 ||

"At the peak of the extreme emotion"³²

³¹ *dhūpadhūmam abhivyañjan bhairāṇavapayonmucām | dattadīpālikāḥ śrīṅgaprajvalattapanopalaiḥ || ŚKC IV 38. navameghair hetubhir dhupadhūmam iva prakāṣayan J.*

³² Jonarāja does not comment the word *atirasa*, which can be therefore read both as *atirasa*, "extreme emotion", and *atirasā*, "very succulent", the name for a plant. In the

born for the ardour of his devotion during the *pūjās*,
 exhausted for the expense of a heap of entire flowers,
 even now, again, Druhiṇa wishes to perform for Śiva
 the worship with the lotus, his own abode”

The protagonist of the stanza, Brahmā-Druhiṇa, supports Indra and Viṣṇu in the worship of Śiva: even the three most important gods of the Hindu pantheon lower themselves to the roles of devotees. Moreover, not only has Brahmā already offered heaps of *aśeṣakuṣuma*, but also, he desires to perform again a *pūjā*, although exhausted. Two details make the image even more powerful. The first one is the use of the prefix *ati* to intensify the word *rasa*: the “emotion” is qualified as “extraordinary”, either because it consists in Brahmā’s one, a divine devotee, or because of the exceptional nature of Śiva, the object of devotion. The second one is the kind of *puṣpa* Brahmā wishes to offer again: the *saroruh*, the lotus which is traditionally thought as Brahmā’s *āsana*.

After having dealt with images specifically related to the *pūjā* ceremony, Mañkha introduces in ŚKC V 6 a new image. The *kavi* deals here with the rite of the *parisamūhana*,³³ according to Jonarāja “the action of a [devotee’s] wet hand which makes a circular movement from left to right [along the perimeter of] a fire”.³⁴ During such sacrifice, also “a heap of *kuśa* grass [is] scattered all around [the fire]”³⁵ and “an oblation (*āhuti*) is offered in the fire”.³⁶

second case, the most sensible translation would be “mounted on the *atirasā* because of an excess of *bhakti*”. I chose to follow the first interpretation for two reasons: firstly, *atirasa* fits well with the co-text, which presents the words *rabhasa* “ardour” and *bhakti* “devotion”, which point to Brahmā’s deep involvement into the *pūjā*; secondly, the compounds indicating the flowers are placed at the end in both the hemistiches, unlike *atirasā*. However, Mañkha might have intended the actions of climbing up on a plant different from the lotus as a consequence: certainly, Brahmā cannot abide on his *saroruh* while offering it to Śiva.

³³ See BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*, p. 102.

³⁴ [...] *pāthaḥ prṣanti jalakañāstaiḥ parīsamūhanaṃ jalārdreṇa pāñināgneḥ pradakṣiṇī karaṇam J.*

³⁵ [...] *kuśastarā vahnēṣ caturdikṣu vikīryamāṇā darbhāstair vyāpte J.*

³⁶ [...] *cāgnāv āhutiḥ dīyate J.*

*krodhottamāṅgadhutilolakirīṭhasindhu-
pāthapṛṣatparisamūhanasiktadikke |
ruddhāntike bhrukuṭipakṣmakuśastaraughair
yo manmathāhutim adatta vilocanāgnau || ŚKC V 6 ||*

“*In the fire of his eye, almost closed,
sprinkled all around by the parisamūhana
of the water drops of the Diadem-River,
shaken and agitated on his head out of anger,
with the scattered heaps of kuśa grass,
his eyelashes at the contraction of the brows,
There he was offering the oblation Manmatha*”

It is not clear if Maṅkha is placing this *upacāras* within a *pūjā* context or into a completely unrelated sacrifice, but what is certain is that even such ritual can be easily read as twofold. In fact, thanks to a quadruple *rūpaka*,³⁷ the human acts co-exist with divine performers, as follows:

1. *kirīṭa sindhu* [...] *parisamūhana*, “The *parisamūhana* [...] [of his] diadem-river”.
The worshipper, the Gaṅgā, occupies the upper part of the god’s matted hair like an ornament (*kirīṭa*). She is sprinkling her own waterdrops around Śiva’s third eye – on his forehead – because shaken by the god sudden movements.
2. *vilocana-agni*, “the fire of his eye”.
The circular inflamed cavity of Śiva’s third eye is the place for the oblations.
3. *pakṣma-kuśastara*, “the *kuśa* grass of his eyelashes”.
The eyelashes resemble in shape the blades of such sacrificial grass.
4. *manmatha-āhuti*, “the oblation [consisting of] Manmatha”.
Kāma is what it is being offered as oblation in the fire during the sacrifice.

³⁷ See GEROW, E., *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, Mouton, The Hague, 1971, pp. 239 ff.

At a first sight, it seems that Mañkha is willing to narrate the mythological episode of the annihilation of God Kāma by the enraged Śiva. However, at the same time, we can notice that all the elements can be easily connected to an erotic scene as well: the sweat on the forehead, the trembling of the head, the contraction of the brows, the eyes half-closed, and finally, as an oblation, Manmatha, the god of love who “shakes the mind”. Maybe this is the reason why Jonarāja reads within the lines the compound *tripurasundarīnām* to qualify the word *krodha*: he links “rage” not with Śiva but with “the women of Tripura” angry because of love.³⁸ Quoting the women of the *āsuras* here is out of context, and we believe in a much simpler explanation: the god is depicted while performing a solemn sacrifice which has Kāma’s death as its effect.

Another line in which the god is celebrated as the active protagonist of a cosmic ritual is ŚKC V 12.

*siddhāṃ cireṇa vidhisūdahaṭhaprayatnāt
samrakṣitām atha mukundapurogavena |
yaḥ kevalo ’vagirate nikhilām salīlam
lokatrayīrasavatīm pralayotsaveṣu || ŚKC V 12 ||*

“Śiva alone, in the excitement
during the symposium that is
the destruction of the universe
playfully swallows down
the whole sacrificial food of the three worlds,
prepared slowly by the obstinate care
of the cook, the worshipper,
then checked by his executive chef, Mukunda”

The god Śiva, *yaḥ*, is presented while swallowing the *trilokas* – heaven, earth, and underworld – at the end of the *kalpa*. Again, the *kavi* intertwines the everyday ceremony with a divine one by

³⁸ It is likely that Jonarāja is involving here the *tripurasundarīs* in the light of the following lines, which has got these women as subject. See *vaktrāṇi* [...] *purakuraṅgadṛśām* (ŚKC V 7) and *tripurasundarīṅām mukhāni* J.

the means of a *rūpaka*, *i.e. lokatrayī-rasavatīm*: “the *rasavatī* (food offering, meal) of the three worlds”. Commonly arranged for the god and piled before his statue during the *pūjā*, such celestial food is here prepared by two worshippers: the “executive chef” or *purogava*³⁹ Viṣṇu-Mukunda, along with the *sūda*, his “sous-chef”.⁴⁰ In such macrocosmic perspective, the *rasavatī*, usually consisting of rice boiled with butter or milk, is now identified with the three worlds.

The image becomes much more vivid if we consider all its three interpretative levels at once: not only the ritualistic and the mythological ones (preparation, offering and consumption of the sacrificial food – annihilation of the three worlds at the end of the *kalpa*), but also the narrative aspect of the plot hidden between the lines, *i.e.* the tearing down of the Tripura cities along with the *triloka*’s ones.

The description of another type of sacrificial food offering occurs later in the *sarga*, where Maṅkha is being demonstrated as a master in the knowledge of the daily *pūjā* prescriptions, but also to be well acquainted with some customs related to more ancient traditions.

*yasmin vinirmitavati prasabhaṃ prakopād
atyugranigrahanavānubhavopadeśam |
udghoṣyate kratuṣu yājñīkatantravidbhir
adyāpi piṣṭacarubhājanam abjabandhuḥ || ŚKC V 42 ||*

“Having Śiva established – violently because of anger –
the prescription of a new custom
through his extremely fierce punishment,
even now, during the ceremonies,
the Moon’s Companion
is invoked as vessel for the mashed *caru*
by the experts of the sacrificial rules”

³⁹ *purogava* [=] *sūdādhyaṅga* J. *i.e.* the director-superintendent of the kitchen.

⁴⁰ Is the sous-chef Brahmā, the one who creates the world after coming out of Viṣṇu’s lotus-navel? Such interpretation is not certain and Jonarāja does not mention the name of Brahmā in the commentary.

This line is particularly fascinating because of its intended lack of clarity: the expressions “new custom” (*navānubhava*), “fierce punishment” (*atyugranigraha*) and “mashed sacrificial food” (*piṣṭacarū*) are placed together with reference to a ceremony not better described in the text.

Jonarāja’s commentary gives us some useful hints for the comprehension of this stanza: first, the word *arka*, “Sun” as a comment to the subject *abjabandhu*, the “Companion of the Moon”; second, two related compounds, *danta-bhaṅga* “fracture of the teeth”, and *unmūlita-danta* “uprooted teeth”, both referred to the condition of the Sun itself and to his punishment.

Who is the Sun, and why is he toothless?

The episode of the “uprooting of the teeth” is present in the story of the god Pūṣan:⁴¹ Rudra-Śiva, being angry because uninvited at a sacrifice performed by the other gods, attacks the assembly while it is still gathered around the altar. The cruellest fate happens to be Pūṣan’s one: he is violently deprived of his teeth. Even though there are various versions of the same myth,⁴² which roots back to the *Ṛgveda* at its early stage,⁴³ three are the main common features:

1. The episode takes place in the context of a cosmic sacrifice.
2. In every narration, Pūṣan is an *āditya* – thus belonging to the solar dynasty.
This must explain Mankha’s *abjabandhu* and the word *arka* in the commentary to qualify the protagonist of the stanza.
3. The “plucking out” of the teeth causes Pūṣan’s inability to eat solid food.

⁴¹ See KRAMISH, S., “Pūṣan”, in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 81, No. 2, Apr-Jun 1961, pp. 104-122.

⁴² See DONIGER, W., *Ascetism and eroticism in the mythology of Śiva*, Oxford University Press, London, 1973, p. 116. Pūṣan is related both with the episode of the incest of Brahmā and with the one of Dakṣa’s sacrifice.

⁴³ See KRAMISH, S., *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

A special offering should be served to him, boiled and soft: a sort of gruel (*karambha*,⁴⁴ *piṣṭa-caru*⁴⁵) must be prepared by the devotees due to the god's impairment. Such duty is seen thus as "new practice", *navānubhava*, not applied to the other deities but to Pūṣan alone.

If we have a look at the text of the *Mahābhārata*,⁴⁶ one of the many sources for Pūṣan's story, we might notice that Maṅkha's word choice is not accidental: the cosmic ritual is described with the word *yajña*, term employed here also by Maṅkha (*yājñika*). Moreover, in the *Mahābhārata* the god assumes function of a supply for the ritual, and in Maṅkha's text too the god Pūṣan becomes the inflamed vessel for the oblations (*bhājana*). Neither in the epic nor in the ŚKC it is specified whether Pūṣan's mouth resembles a cup on account of its toothless circularity or not. In any case, the whole cause-effect relationship – between the enraged Śiva and the mutilated Pūṣan – leads to a completely unexpected consequence, the new type of offering.

***Pūjā* and *kāvya upacāras*: a comparison**

The lines translated and analysed above have been selected among the others because of their specific images related to the *pūjā* ceremony and its *upacāras*. In the rest of the *sarga* as well there are hints which made me believe that Maṅkha's intention is to follow a specific pattern. I could not avoid considering the text in its entirety and, in this case, a study of the lines as *muktakas* is extremely misleading: the author must have had in mind a uniform plan, since even from the beginning we can recognize such intra-textual references. For instance, the first line is not only related to the last one of the previous canto – by

⁴⁴ See KRAMISH, S., *op. cit.*, pp. 104, 118-119.

⁴⁵ See BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁴⁶ *Mahābhārata* X 18 1-26.

the means of the pronoun *tam*, as seen before⁴⁷ –, but it is also connected to the following stanzas both in a grammatical and in a poetic perspective. Despite the relative pronouns' help in maintaining the text stylistically consistent, yet it is only by means of the poetic contents that the sense of an overall unity is evoked. The images dealing with the divine devotees performing a human ritual are indeed a constant in the *sarga*, and it is impossible that Mañkha is juxtaposing such themes only accidentally: the *kavi*, an erudite and skilful literate, must have employed everything in his power to ensure the effectiveness of his *mahākāvya*, as well as its cohesiveness.

Which begs the question: since we stated that a ritual, in both its human and cosmic aspect, is here described, to which extent does the poet satisfy the description of its performance? Before answering, it is essential to distinguish between traditional *upacāras*, the ones practiced also nowadays in the temples, and what we might call “*kāvya-upacāras*”, the ones described in the ŚKC text and poetically revisited by the *kavi* for the sake of art.

Since anthropological or literary studies regarding such ceremony in medieval Kashmir have not been conducted yet – and they are generally difficult to pursue for the wide variety of local traditions – I relied on Bühnemann's and Einoo's works on *pūjā*⁴⁸ to trace and list the *upacāras* Mañkha might hide behind the complex structure of his composition. Even though they do not specifically deal with the Valley, they are, so far, the best starting point to catalogue the most common steps of such ceremony.

Both Bühnemann and Einoo identify sixteen standard *upacāras*, together called *ṣoḍaśopacāra pūjā*, whose performance (*prayoga*) can be summarized, in order, as follows: 1. invocation of the god (*āvāhana*); 2. offering of a seat (*āsana*); 3. offering of water for washing the feet (*pādya*); 4. offering of water for the respectful reception of a guest (*arghya*); 5. offering of water for sipping (*ācamanīya*); 6. water for the bath

⁴⁷ ŚKC V 1.

⁴⁸ See BÜHNEMANN, G., *Pūjā, A Study in Smarta Ritual*, Institut für Indologie der Universität Wien, Vienna, 1988 and EINO, S., “The Formation of the Pūjā Ceremony”, in *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, Vol. 20, 1996, pp. 73-87.

of the *liṅga* – if Śiva – (*snāna* or *mahāsnāna*); 7. offering of clothes and garments (*vastra*); 8. offering of the sacred thread (*upavīta* or *yajñopavīta*); 9. offering of sandalwood paste or unguents for smearing on the idol (*gandha* and *anulepana*); 10. offering of flowers and leaves (*puṣpa*); 11. offering of incense (*dhūpa* or *dhūpaka*); 12. offering of lamps (*dīpa* or *dīpaka*); 13. offerings of food (*naivedya* or *nivedana*); 14. offering of mouth perfume (*mukha-vāsa*); 15. recitation of hymns (*stotra*) and prostration before the deity (*praśama*); 16. circumambulation around the statue of the god (*pradakṣiṇā*) and dismissal of it (*visarjana*).⁴⁹

The previous list is meant to be a guideline to our interpretation of the *V sarga*, particularly in the parts related to the *Śiva-pūjā*, aiming firstly to a better understanding of the internal structure of the canto, and secondly to a redefinition of the section as non-accidental but consistent. In our case, however, a certain level of abstraction and standardization is necessary to refer to the holy services. As a matter of fact, two factors must be considered:

1. The *pūjā* and the materials employed are not always explicitly mentioned in the *sarga*, but they are mostly implied in the non-primary meanings of the lines. Therefore, it is anything but simple to distinguish simple poetic images from actual descriptions of *upacāras*.
2. As a *kāvya* composition, the text is not prescriptive, thus it is meant to celebrate Śiva rather than to instruct the devotees.⁵⁰ Therefore, we must not demand a linear and step-by-step order in the description of the ritualistic practices.

⁴⁹ See BÜHNEMANN, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-17 and EINO, S., *op. cit.*, p.73.

⁵⁰ Normative texts are already existing and widespread. See BÜHNEMANN, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-19.

traditional <i>upacāras</i>	<i>kāvya-upacāra</i>		
<i>ṣoḍaśopacāra pūjā</i> + additions (*)	ŚKC V		
	yes/no	line	keywords
1. <i>āvāhana</i>			
2. <i>āsana</i>	x	1, 2	<i>taṃ</i> (Kailāsa); <i>aṅghripīṭha</i>
3. <i>pādya</i>			
4. <i>arghya</i>			
5. <i>acamanīya</i>			
6. <i>snāna</i> or <i>mahāsnāna</i>	x	6	<i>sikta</i> ; <i>pāthapṛṣat</i>
7. <i>vastra</i>			
8. <i>upavīta</i> or <i>yajñopavīta</i>			
9. <i>gandha</i> and <i>anulepana</i>	x	1	
10. <i>puṣpa</i>	x	1,3,4	<i>pārijātasraj</i> ; <i>vanamālā</i> ; <i>puṣpotkara</i> ; <i>atirasā</i> (?); <i>saroruh</i> ; <i>aśeṣakusuma</i>
11. <i>dhūpa</i> or <i>dhūpaka</i>	x	3	<i>megha</i> ;
12. <i>dīpa</i> or <i>dīpaka</i>	x	3	<i>vidyut</i> ; <i>balipradīpa</i> ;
13. <i>naivedya</i> or <i>nivedana</i>	x	12	<i>sūda</i> ; <i>purogava</i> ; <i>rasavaṭī</i> ; <i>piṣṭacarū</i>
14. <i>mukha-vāsa</i>			
15. <i>stotra</i> and <i>praśama</i>			
16. <i>pradakṣiṇā</i> and <i>visarjana</i>			
* <i>pariṣeka</i>	x	6	<i>parisamūhana</i> ;
* <i>namaskāra</i>	x	1, 2, 3	<i>haṭhasamtatagrṣṭi</i> ; <i>nata</i> ; <i>avanicumbimūrdhan</i> ; <i>carāṇa</i>
* <i>kuśa</i> grass	x	6	<i>kuśastara</i>
* <i>bali</i>	x	6	<i>manmathāhuti</i>
* music	x	1	<i>upavīṇita</i>

* objects	x	42	<i>bhājana</i>
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Table 1: Depicts cross-references between the standard ritual and the one of the ŚKC

As the Table 1 pinpoints, most of the services normally employed in the human *pūjā* are also introduced by the poet. Moreover, as seen before, the *kavi* himself uses in the text the keywords *pūjā* and *bhakti*, which dispel the doubts of the type of ceremony he intends to describe.

However, despite the image of the establishment of a *pūjā* being very clear, in some lines we come across a terminology which seems to lead to different and more ancient types of rituals, such as the fire oblations in a *yajña*. As Lidova writes, “*yajña* held pride of place as a solemn rite in the Vedic time, while *pūjā* became widespread in the post-Vedic era to become the central ritual of Hinduism”.⁵¹ Why then Mañkha, a twelfth-century author, is mentioning sacrificial practises related to Vedic times within the description of the performance of a *pūjā*? We can solve the case of *yajña*, i.e. “sacrifice”, in ŚKC V 42, with the following two considerations. First, Mañkha is narrating a specific mythological episode, which deals with an open-air sacrifice at the end of a *kalpa* performed by the gods.⁵² In other words, by using the same terminology of the epics and the Purāṇas, its antecedents, he is providing the audience with a correlation between the cosmic aspect of the ancient ritual and the one of the ŚKC. Second, even though “in *pūjā* rituals, the sacrifice of flowers, incense, food, and water was usually offered without fire as intermediary”,⁵³ Mañkha might have added it for the sake of producing more effective images: since he is celebrating Śiva, whose third eye is said to be inflamed, it would

⁵¹ See LIDOVA, N., “The Changes in Indian Ritualism, *Yajña* versus *Pūjā*”, in HIMANSHU, P.R. (ed.), *Archaeology and text: the temple in South Asia*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, p. 205. For other continuities, see EINO, S., *op.cit.*, and EINO, S., “The formation of Hindu Ritual”, in EINO, S., TAKASHIMA, J. (ed.), *From material to deity: Indian rituals of consecration*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 8-9.

⁵² ŚKC V 42.

⁵³ See LIDOVA, N., *op. cit.*, p. 211.

have been strange not to mention the fire, one of the most characteristic elements of the god's iconography. After all, the Vedic "havir-yajña type [of ritual] – varieties of *agnihotra*, which was based on simple fire sacrifice [...] was incorporated totally unchanged in the ritual system of the *pūjā* to make one of the stages of the ritual".⁵⁴ Despite such considerations, this is certainly Mañkha's smart way to embed his incomparable erudition into the *mahākāvya*.

Apart from the *upacāras* listed in the Table 1, many more are the details related to the *pūjā* ceremony that we can only assume by the context, without them being openly presented by the poet. For instance, in the case of "bowing" as act of *namaskāra* (ŚKC V 1-2-3) it is just the overall image resulting at the end that unveils the correct interpretation. Such strategy of leaving "unexpressed" the true meaning, subject therefore to the audience's various readings, is typical of *kāvya* and it is indeed Mañkha's forte. In his work, the images are complex not only because of their prescribed elaborate structure – the words must fit the metrics, they must be both innovative, and yet freshly astonishing – but also because the poet himself is reticent on what he really wants to express as profound and non-immediate meaning. As a matter of fact, sometimes not even the commentator Jonarāja is able to explain the unusual depictions or the fancy terms Mañkha chooses to use, and a modern reader must interpret the text without the help of the glosses.

Conclusions

Does Mañkha derive his knowledge – and thus his poetic descriptions – from rituals performed in Kashmir at his time? It is difficult to answer exhaustively to such question, since at present we are lacking a full translation of the text and its commentary: the ŚKC requires further studies, and it would be premature to make assumptions without a complete knowledge

⁵⁴ See LIDOVA, N., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

of all the intra-textual references.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, as far as I could understand from my preliminary translation of the *V sarga*, the primary aim of the *kavi* is here very clear: even if he does not intend to instruct the audience on “how to make a *pūjā*”, it is indeed the religious practice the basis of all the images described. I believe that Maṅkha was familiar with the procedures adopted in the temples, and the sacrifice was widespread at the time of the poet⁵⁶ – it would have been surprising otherwise. However, what strikes the modern reader is not the actual rite, but the strategy adopted by the poet to create his unique ritual, poetic and timeless: by combining acts and materials of a traditionally human *pūjā* with extraordinary figures, the divine devotees. In my opinion, such a way of presenting a common scene – familiar to the audience, yet in a non-chronological order and in a completely transcendent context – must not be read as the poet’s lack of accuracy, but, in the *kāvya* perspective, as artistic license, which makes room for the *kavi*’s impressive creativity.

⁵⁵ The work of Bhatt (BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*) is the first attempt of a complete study on the text, which is undoubtedly valuable for its historical, social and religious data, but it does not present a translation of the text.

⁵⁶ See BHATT, B. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 100-103.

CINZIA PIERUCCINI

HUNTING, FARMING, AND PROTECTING ANIMALS.
REMARKS ON *MIGADĀYA* AND *MṚGAVANA*

These pages are to be seen as continuation of the research I have so far made on some places which the literary tradition associates with the life and preaching of the Buddha. The general assumption I have previously advanced is that certain places situated on city limits and connected by the texts with accounts of the Buddha's wanderings and preaching, normally referred to as "parks" or "groves" in translation and on which the canonical texts offer only scant details, apart from their names, location and in various cases owners, are to be considered areas primarily and originally associated with economic and productive activities.¹ Here, returning in part to and developing some observations previously presented, my aim is to propose some hypotheses on the places where the Buddha would linger and preach, which the Pāḷi Canon calls *migadāya*, focusing, of course, especially on the famous site of Isipatana. Investigation on the absolute and relative chronology of the sources I will use is beyond the scope of this paper; at any rate, these sources are the most ancient available on the subject. Of course, as a whole, the form in which they have come down to us is much later than the period to which the life of Siddhārtha is attributed. Nevertheless, we may reasonably

¹ See Pieruccini Forthcoming (2018), also for further details on the methodology, and bibliographical references on the actual pleasure parks and gardens situated outside cities, later attested mainly by *kāvya*. Here we return to and elaborate upon a number of observations contained in that article.

expect that from this analysis some indications will emerge on the use of certain extra-urban areas, if not precisely in the times of the Buddha, at least around the last century BCE and the first centuries CE.

1. Buddhist sources

As we know, after the Enlightenment, the Buddha went to a place on the city limits of Vārāṇasī, or better, according to the Pāli form used in the Canon of Sri Lanka, Bārāṇasī. Here the Buddha delivered his first sermon, known as the setting in motion of the wheel of the Law (SN V.56(12).11; M I.6),² and is said to have offered various other teachings subsequently. A common formula to introduce the location, with reference to the Buddha or the presence of other monks, is *bārāṇasiyaṃ [...] isipātane migadāye*, i.e., according to a standard translation, “at Bārāṇasī in the Deer Park at Isipātana”.³ The variants of this formula provide the same geographical indications, and no further details. As we know, this place corresponds to present-day Sarnath, near the modern city of Varanasi.⁴

“Deer Park” is, in fact, the customary translation for the Pāli *migadāya*, corresponding to Skt. *mṛgadāva*, a spelling that also appears as a variant in Pāli. The Pāli terms *dāya* / *dāva* / *dava* and the Sanskrit terms *dāva* / *dava* are etymologically connected

² With a few exceptions that will be specified in the bibliographical references together with the abbreviations, the Pāli and Sanskrit texts are examined and quoted here according to GRETIL and the numbering of the passages given there. In the numbering and in the quotations of the texts I introduce some minimal, standardizing formal adjustments. As for the Pāli Canon, I follow the PTS edition, input by the Dhammakaya Foundation, Thailand, 1989-1996.

³ Thus, for instance, Bhikkhu Bodhi in his translation of the *Samyutta Nikāya* (Bhikkhu Bodhi 2000), where the formula occurs 24 times.

⁴ It is commonly accepted that the name Sarnath comes from Sāraṅganātha, “Lord of deer”. “General Cunningham suggests that the modern name Sārnāth is derived from ‘Sāraṅganātha’ meaning ‘Lord of the Deer’, i.e., Gautama Buddha. It is interesting to observe that Sāraṅganātha is also an epithet of the Brahmanical deity Siva, and the name is still borne by the little Mahādeva shrine situated half a mile east of the Buddhist remains of Sārnāth” (Sahni 1933, p. 1, *sic*).

with fires (Skt. root *dū-*)⁵ that densely wooded areas are, of course, subject to. However, Buddhist tradition also reinterprets *dāya* as deriving from the root *dā-*, “to give”, insofar as it refers to a place “given” to animals to live there in safety; see below. We will deal with the “deer”, *miga* / *mṛga*, shortly. As for *isipātana* (and variants), the post-*suttas* textual traditions interpret the name with reference to the “fall” or “descent” into this place of Paṅcēkabuddhas / Pratyēkabuddhas, a category of enlightened beings, thus equating the word, basically and most meaningfully, with Skt. *ṛṣipātana*.⁶ However, Colette Caillat (Caillat 1968) has convincingly argued that the term is, rather, to be seen as equivalent to Skt. *ṛśya-* or *ṛṣyavṛjana*.⁷ This latter compound may well, as Caillat suggests, be translated as “enclos, parc, domaine des antilopes” (*ibid.*, p. 181), and so the two compounds, *migadāya* and *isipātana* – despite the fact that the latter became a place name – would basically have the same meaning.

Deer, antelopes, and elsewhere also gazelles: these are the terms normally used to translate Skt. *ṛśya* / *ṛṣya* and *mṛga*. The definitions offered by Monier-Williams (*s.v.*, standardising the spellings) are, respectively, “*ṛśya* or (in later texts) *ṛṣya*, *as*, m. the male of a species of antelope, the painted or white-footed antelope”, and “m. (prob. ‘ranger’, ‘rover’) a forest animal or wild beast, game of any kind, (esp.) a deer, fawn, gazelle, antelope, stag, musk-deer”. Close analysis of the meanings of these terms is offered by Francis Zimmermann. He remarks that *ṛṣya* can have been used for specific reference to the nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*, Zimmermann 2011 [1982], p. 82). Far more important is the term *mṛga*, which, as Monier-Williams shows, and as all Sanskritists know, is a very common

⁵ Cf. the PTS Pali-English Dictionary and Monier-Williams Dictionary, *s.v.*

⁶ Cf. the well-known passage MV I.357-359: here five hundred Pratyēkabuddhas choose to ascend into the air and be consumed in fire, and their relics then “fall back” to earth: *ṛṣayo ‘tra patitā ṛṣipātanaṃ*, MV I.359. The place is defined here as “a great forest” (*mahāvanakhaṇḍaṃ*) at a *yojana* and a half from Vārāṇasī (MV I.357). On sources connecting the Paṅcēkabuddhas with Isipātana, cf. Caillat 1968, p. 178; Levman 2014, pp. 395-396; and, also for fuller treatment of the Paṅcēkabuddhas, Kloppenborg 1974; Norman 1983; Levman 2014, 191-196.

⁷ Cf. also Levman 2014, pp. 394-396.

term covering a great range of meanings. According to Zimmermann, and slightly simplifying his analysis, *mṛga* has, on the one hand, a meaning in terms of “mental category”, and so is applied both to all quadrupeds and, specifically, to game, or even all wild animals, including predators. On the other hand, at the level of “biological reality”, it refers to the antelope (“game par excellence”), or the antelope “considered as the model of a class, *mṛga-jāti*, which includes *Antilopinae*, *Tragelaphinae*, and *Cervidae*” (*ibid.*, p. 88). Hence, as Zimmermann points out, depending on the context the term may also be translated correctly as gazelle (for example, “woman with the eyes of a gazelle”, *mṛgadṛś*), or as deer.

In the depictions of the preaching in the “Deer Park”, Indian Buddhist art offers significant evidence as to how the category of the *mṛgas* was conceived. These, in fact, appear in depictions of the Buddha’s preaching, typically in pairs at the foot of the throne upon which the Enlightened One is seated. Alternatively, in so-called aniconic Buddhist art, where the Buddha is not represented anthropomorphically, they may be depicted by the empty throne or the wheel of Dharma with the same meaning, *i.e.* evoking the *migadāya*. Analysing a series of reliefs of this type, from Greater Gandhāra to Andhra Pradesh, Alexandra van der Geer has identified these animals – with more or less certainty – as various horned herbivores, namely the *Antilope cervicapra*, the blackbuck, the *Gazella bennetti*, the chinkara, the *Axis axis*, the spotted deer or chital, and the *Boselaphus tragocamelus*, the nilgai.⁸ The first two appear more often, but in any case it does not seem possible to associate preferences with specific areas or periods. In short, the sculptors who set about evoking the preaching of the Buddha evidently had an empirical conception of the *mṛgas* in terms of *mṛga-jāti*. Note, however, that in the reliefs examined by van der Geer various other *mṛgas*, such as the sambar (*Cervus unicolor*), or the barasingha or swamp deer (*Cervus duvauceli*), which might by rights appear in the images, do not figure at all.

⁸ van der Geer 2008, pp. 59-60, figs. 22-25; pp. 276-277, figs. 344-347; pp. 70-71, fig. 47; pp. 117-118, figs. 113-114.

Let us now return to the *migadāya*. Although undoubtedly the most famous, the Isipatana “Deer Park” is not the only one recorded by the Pāli Canon as visited by the Buddha; mention may also be made of the *migadāyas* of Kaṇṇakatthala near Ujuṇṇa in Kosala,⁹ of Añjanavana near Sāketa, again in Kosala,¹⁰ of Bhesakalāvana on Mount Suṃsumāragira in the country of the Bhagga,¹¹ and of Maddakucchi near Rājagaha.¹² The *migadāya* would, then, appear to be a place belonging to a particular typology unless, of course, these other *migadāyas* are to be seen simply as ideal replicas inspired by the great prototype of Isipatana. At the same time, if the *migadāya* is a typology of place, we might wonder whether all the depictions of the preaching of the Buddha involving the representation of *mṛgas* refer solely to Isipatana.

In the Buddhist interpretation of the *migadāya* certain accounts in the *Jātakas* (*Jātakatṭhavaṇṇanā*) are of particular importance. These accounts express some of the fundamental values of Buddhism, namely *ahiṃsā*, nonviolence, and compassion, *karuṇā*, towards living beings, and specifically towards animals. In the account of the *Nigrodhamiga Jātaka*, to satisfy the appetite for meat of the king of Bārāṇasī, who interrupts their work every day to send them hunting, his subjects decide to supply an enclosed park (*uyyāna-*) with water and grow fodder there, and then drive a great number of *migas* to it and shut them in. They belong to two herds whose leaders are, respectively, Nigrodha, the future Buddha, and Sākha, the future Devadatta. The two deer are so magnificent that the king immediately grants them immunity. The king then goes hunting in the park but, to prevent unnecessary wounding of animals, Nigrodha suggests to Sākha the expedient of arranging for the

⁹ Cf. in particular the *Kaṇṇakatthalasutta*, MN II.4.10(90) (*ujuṇṇāyaṃ [...] kaṇṇakatthale migadāye*).

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. SN I.2.2.8.1; V.46(2).6(6).1 (variant: *añcanavane*); V.48(4).43(3).1 (*sāketē [...] añjanavane migadāye*).

¹¹ Cf. e.g. SN III.22(1).1(1).1; IV.35(1).131(8).1 (*bhaggesu [...] suṃsumāragire bhesakalāvane / bhesakalāvane migadāye*).

¹² Cf. e.g. SN I.1.4.8.1; I.4.2.3.1 (*rājagahe [...] maddakucchismiṃ / maddakucchimhi migadāye*).

life of a deer to be offered spontaneously to the king's kitchens every day, supplied in turn by each herd. But when it is the turn of a pregnant doe, while Sākha takes an inflexible position the generous Nigrodha goes to offer himself in her place. The king is moved, and not only spares him and the doe, but finally grants safety to the animals of every kind.

A somewhat similar account appears in the *Nandiyamiga Jātaka*,¹³ where, in much the same way, for the use of the king of Kosala his subjects enclose the *migas* in the *uyyāna* called Añjanavana, which we have already met as a *migadāya* of Sāketa – again in Kosala – visited by the Buddha. Here the future Buddha is the generous deer Nandiya, who first allows himself to be captured to save his parents, and then showing no fear offers himself to the arrow of the king, who, however, does not succeed in shooting it. And again the account ends with the king granting immunity to all the animals.¹⁴ Finally, an account close to that of the *Nigrodhamiga Jātaka*, with the theme of the two herd leaders and the pregnant doe, is to be found in the Sanskrit *Mahāvastu* (I.359-366). Here the noble herd leader is similarly called Nyagrodha, the sovereign is Brahmadata king of Kāśī, but the “park” strategy makes no appearance, for the proposal to offer a victim a day for the royal kitchens is made in consequence of the sovereign's hunting in the forest (*vanaṣaṇḍa*, *vanakhaṇḍa*), during which many *mṛgas* are uselessly wounded and a great many of them fall prey to the other animals. Above all, however, the text identifies this wood where the deer are finally granted immunity precisely as the *mṛgadāya* of Ṛṣipattana (MV 1.366; this is the spelling here), *i.e.* Isipatana, and interprets the term *mṛgadāya* as meaning “gift to the *mṛgas*”, deriving the term *dāya* from the root *dā-*, “to give”.¹⁵

¹³ The text of this *Jātaka* itself contains explicit reference to the *Nigrodhamiga Jātaka*.

¹⁴ As for the stanzas, as well-known the most ancient parts of this category of texts, in the *Nigrodhamiga Jātaka* they show no trace of the episode recounted in the parts in prose; some traces emerge in the stanzas of the *Nandiyamiga Jātaka*, at least insofar as they mention Añjanavana.

¹⁵ MV I.366: *mṛgāṇāṃ dāyo dinno mṛgadāyo ti ṛṣipattano*. However, in the *Mahāvastu* the spellings are usually *ṛṣipātana*, *ṛṣivadana* and *mṛgadāva*. Cf., again, Caillat 1968 and Levman 2014, pp. 395-396.

The same line seems to be followed by Buddhaghosa, who sees a *migadāya*, at Isipatana or elsewhere, as a place which he defines *ārāma*, or *uyyāna*, or again *ramaṇīyo bhūmibhāgo*, offered to the *migas* to dwell there in *abhaya*, *i.e.* in complete safety.¹⁶ Visiting the place of the Buddha’s first sermon, the Chinese pilgrim Faxian (400 ca.) notes in his accounts of travels that “[t]here are always wild deer reposing in it for shelter” (Beal 1884, vol. 1, p. LXVII). In turn, the pilgrim Xuanzang (first half of 7th century) associates the site with the episode – which he briefly recounts – of the deer that are offered immunity thanks to the generosity of the Bodhisattva deer volunteering to take the place of the pregnant doe. As we have seen, this association is made in the *Mahāvastu*, and as in this text, also in Xuanzang the events occur in the forest; here, too, moreover, the meaning of the place name is given as “the forest given to the deer” (cf. Beal 1884, vol. 2, pp. 50-51).

It is, of course, obvious that these accounts which interpret the *migadāya* as a place where the deer are offered safe refuge reflect a conception, and a situation, clearly characterised in ideological terms: it is, in fact, a place where *ahiṃsā* reigns. At least as from the times of Aśoka, who had one of his inscribed pillars raised there, Isipatana became a major centre of worship and monastic residence. The archaeological remains show particular flourishing during the Gupta period; Xuanzang describes the place as rich in *stūpas*, and mentions a thriving community of monks residing there (cf. Beal 1884, vol. 2, pp. 45 ff.). However, if the *migadāyas* actually existed in the times of the Buddha or, better, as might be inferred, existed even before his preaching, then clearly we cannot see them as sites inspired by nonviolence, for this attitude towards animals derives from the movement of the *śramaṇas*, or in other words from Buddhism itself and the other new religious trends of the

¹⁶ *migānaṃ abhayadānavasena dinnattā migadāyasāṅkhāte ārāme*, SPK III.296, quoted in Levman 2014, p. 396, with reference to Isipatana; *uyyānaṃ [...] migānaṃ pana abhayavās’ athāya dinnattā: migadāyo ti, vuccatī*, SV, p. 349, with reference to Khema, “Quiet”, considered as an ancient name for Isipatana; [...] *ramaṇīyo bhūmibhāgo. So migānaṃ abhay’ athāya dinnattā: migadāyo ti, vuccatī*, SV, p. 471, with reference to Kaṇṇakatthala.

time. It is indeed noteworthy that through the narrative structure the two Pāli *Jātakas* bring together two types of “park”: one for animals to be captured, and another where the animals are granted safety.

2. In the *Arthaśāstra*

In some passages, the *Arthaśāstra* mentions *mṛgavanas*; Skt. *vana* is generally translated as “forest”, “wood”, “grove”, and we can obviously consider the compound essentially equivalent to the Pāli *migadāya*.

Before examining the passages it is, however, necessary to dwell more specifically on the meaning of the terms *vana* and *araṇya*, which we will also be encountering soon.¹⁷ Etymologically, and in the first place, *araṇya* designates territory other than the disciplined area of human activity: the wilderness, desert, forest, while *vana* is used eminently for a wild place where trees grow. Nevertheless, in the late Vedic and Brahmanical literature the two terms become largely interchangeable, at least from the point of view of their religious significance, which is that of a “forest” as the place favoured for practice of asceticism, self-sacrifice and spiritual questing.¹⁸ In much Sanskrit literature the “forest”, in general, is the realm of the unknown, of danger and the unfathomable, populated by fierce animals, fearsome creatures and “savages”. And yet, in the use we encounter in these pages, as well as in other compound words which in Pāli literature define some other places frequented by the Buddha,¹⁹ *vana* has a sense that we might describe as humanised; in fact, while still representing an area characterised by vegetation and external to human

¹⁷ On the forest and in general its role in ancient India, see, at least: Mayrhofer 1956-1980, s.v. *āraṇaḥ*, *āraṇyam*, *vānam*; Zimmermann 2011 (1982), *passim*; Sontheimer 1987; Malamoud 1989, Chapt. 4; Thapar 2001.

¹⁸ A good example is Manu VI.1-4.

¹⁹ See Pieruccini Forthcoming (2018).

settlements, at the same time it remains in constant contact with human activities.²⁰

Let us begin with the passage that describes the park reserved for the pleasure of the king and other “reserves”, all, of course, according to the approach taken in this text, conceived as the result of direct intervention by the sovereign, or in other words the fruit of state centralisation. Here is Patrick Olivelle’s translation:

2. He [the king] should allot wild tracts (*araṇyāni*) to recluses for Vedic study and Soma sacrifice [...] where all mobile and immobile creatures have been granted immunity (*abhaya-*) from harm.

3. He should get an animal reserve (*mṛgavanam*) [...] established for the king’s relaxation (*vihārārtham rājñah*) – a reserve with a single gate, protected by a moat, and containing shrubs and bushes bearing tasty fruit, trees without thorns, shallow ponds, tame deer and other game (*dāntamṛgacatuspadaṃ*), vicious animals with their claws and fangs removed, and male and female elephants and elephant cubs for the use in the hunt.

4. At its border or as dictated by the lay of the land, he should get another animal reserve (*mṛgavanam*) established where all the animals are treated as guests (*sarvātithimṛgam*).

5. He should also establish a forest for each product classified as forest produce, as well as factories attached to the produce forests (*dravyavana-*) and foresters living in the produce forests.

(AŚ II.2.2-5, transl. Olivelle 2013, pp. 101-102; my additions in brackets).²¹

²⁰ Cf. Zimmermann 2011 (1982), p. 50.

²¹ *pradiṣṭābhayasthāvarajāṅgamāni ca brahmasomāraṇyāni tapasvibhyo [...] prayacchet / 2 / [...] ekadvāraṃ khātaguptaṃ svādupalagulmaguccham akaṅṭakidrumam uttānatoyāśayaṃ dāntamṛgacatuspadaṃ bhagnanakhadaṃṣṭravayālaṃ mārgayukahastihastinikalabhaṃ mṛgavanam vihārārtham rājñah kārayet / 3 / sarvātithimṛgam pratyante cānyan mṛgavanam bhūmivaśena vā niveśayet / 4 / kupyapradīṣṭānām ca dravyāṇām ekaikaśo vanāni niveśayet, dravyavanakarmāntān aṭavīś ca dravyavanāpāśrayāḥ / 5 /*

Elsewhere Olivelle defines the *mṛgavanas* as “game reserves [...] for the royal hunt” (Olivelle 2002, p. 35), and this meaning for the term is often taken for granted. The interpretation can apply to the first *mṛgavana* cited here, although the text makes no explicit reference apart from the mention of elephants destined for this purpose. Hunting is, of course, the sovereign’s classical pastime, but the description of the place evokes a greater assortment of pleasurable attractions and, effectively, a sort of park.²² It is worth noting that reference here is clearly to an enclosed area, given the mention of the one entrance and the moat (*ekadvāraṃ khātaguptaṃ*). The second *mṛgavana* evoked in the passage, in AŚ II.2.4, also gives rise to some significant questions. Let us compare the translation by R. P. Kangle, accentuated by his additions in brackets:

And he should establish on its border or in conformity with the (suitability of the) land, another animal park where all animals are (welcomed) as guests (and given full protection).

(AŚ II.2.4, transl. Kangle 1992 [1963], p. 59).

The point lies in the translation of the expression *sarvātithimṛgaṃ*; Olivelle remarks (note to AŚ II.2.4) that the compound is of doubtful interpretation. In a note to the passage, Kangle glosses: “this appears to be a sort of zoological garden” (Kangle 1992 [1963], p. 59). Olivelle holds that Kangle is probably exaggerating, but he adds “this may be a park with tame animals that people were forbidden to hunt” (note to AŚ II.2.4). In any case, the term *atithi* evokes the sacredness of the guest, and thus the utmost respect for those considered to be so.

Elsewhere, in fact, the *Arthaśāstra* mentions places of this kind, where the animals are guaranteed protection, calling them *abhayavanas*, the “woods of no fear”, without associating them with the needs of Vedic ascetics and sacrifices. For wild places reserved for the latter purpose, the passage quoted above uses,

²² While a similar, extremely pleasant place is undoubtedly a hunting park in the later Kāmandaka’s *Nīṭisāra*: on the subject see Singh 2016, pp. 324-326.

instead, the term *araṇya* (AŚ II.2.2; cf. III.9.26), although also connecting them with *abhaya*. Now, if we examine the occurrences of the terms *vana* and *araṇya* in the *Arthaśāstra*, we can see a clear-cut distinction in their use; they are certainly not interchangeable. In the case of *araṇya* reference is undoubtedly to the wilderness; as for the term *vana*, we will shortly be coming to it.

On the *abhayavanas* we read in particular:

The Superintendent of Abattoirs should impose the highest fine for tying up, killing, or injuring deer, game animals, birds, or fish that are legally protected from harm and that are living in sanctuaries (*abhayavana-*) [...].
(AŚ II.26.1, transl. Olivelle 2013, p. 157, my additions in brackets).²³

A couple of other mentions of the *abhayavanas* in the *Arthaśāstra* fully bear out the protected status granted to the animals in these places.²⁴ We may certainly conclude that also the *mṛgavana* of AŚ II.2.4, where animals have to be treated as guests, has to be considered an *abhayavana*.

Instead, elsewhere in the *Arthaśāstra* we find perfectly clear reference to a *mṛgavana* as a place where the *mṛgas* held there are destined to supply meat and skin:

Between a deer forest and an elephant forest (*mṛgahastivanayoḥ*), deer are abundant, provide benefits

²³ *sūnādhyakṣaḥ pradiṣṭābhayānām abhayavanavāsinām ca mṛgapaśupakṣimatsyānām bandhavadhahimsāyām uttamam daṇḍam kārayet* [...].

²⁴ Apart from the passage quoted above, where it appears twice in relation to a variation in the fine, the compound *abhayavana-* recurs in II.26.4 and III.10.31. In II.26.4, in the context of the tributes he is to exact, the order is for the Superintendent of Abattoirs to free in such places a sixth of the birds and *mṛgas*, which are normally killed and “not enclosed” (*aparigrhītānām*, II.26.3), should they be captured but still alive. In III.10.31 it is recommended to drive away without harming (*yathāvadyās*) the *mṛgas* of *abhayavanas* or “enclosed” found to be grazing where they should not. Cf. also II.26.14: if they become dangerous, the animals of every sort living in *abhaya* (*abhayacāriṇaḥ*) must be killed or led outside the protected areas (*guptisthānebhyo*).

with an abundance of meat and skin, cause little trouble with regard to fodder, and are easily controlled. (AŚ VIII.4.44, transl. Olivelle 2013, p. 342, my additions in brackets).²⁵

In the passages quoted so far, we have seen mention of produce forests (*dravyavana-*) and, here above, elephant forests. In the *Arthaśāstra* *vana* has in fact the meaning of a very clearly delimited and regulated place for production and breeding:

Forest preserves (*vanaparigraho*) for game animals, deer, produce, and elephants – these constitute “forest” (*vanam*). (AŚ II.6.6, transl. Olivelle 2013, p. 109, my additions in brackets).²⁶

In AŚ II.17 we find a detailed list of the products supplied by the *vanas*: trees, animals, metals, and so on. As for the animals, the *Arthaśāstra* attributes particular importance to the *vanas* for elephants, which the first passage quoted above then goes on to deal with.²⁷ Recurrent in the text is the compound *dravyahastivana*, which seems to sum up the main purposes of the *vanas*: “produce and elephant forest”.²⁸

To summarise, then, the *Arthaśāstra* seems to indicate various categories of *mṛgavanas*: places where animals are kept for the sovereign’s pleasure and which probably also constitute his personal hunting reserves, places where, by contrast, the animals are granted safety and protection, and then sorts of farms for the purpose of produce. Note that these different categories can go under the same name thanks also to the polysemy of the term *mṛga*, emerging clearly in the passages

²⁵ *mṛgahastivanayoḥ mṛgāḥ prabhūtāḥ prabhūtamāmsacarmaupakāriṇo mandagrāsāvakleśīnaḥ suniyamyāś ca.*

²⁶ *paśumṛgadravayahastivanaparigraho vanam.* *Paśu* might be translated differently (“cattle”).

²⁷ Specifically on elephants in the *Arthaśāstra* cf. Olivelle 2016.

²⁸ Detailed analyses of the *dravyavanas* and the *hastivanas* of AŚ VII.11.13-16 and VII.12.6-12 confirm that these are the two fundamental categories. There is also one occurrence of the compound *mṛgadravavyavana* (AŚ IV.10.4).

quoted from the *Arthaśāstra*, where the term evidently is not only meant to apply to deer and suchlike.

Some further remarks have to be made on the two *mṛgavanas* of AŚ II.2.3-4. Zimmermann erroneously bundles them together in his discussion, taking the whole passage to describe a place where animals – the dangerous ones having been made harmless – are allowed to enjoy *abhaya*, and having in mind an institution similar to the Achaemenid imperial park mentioned by Xenophon (Zimmermann 2011 [1982], p. 61). The Achaemenid imperial park, *i.e.* the celebrated *parádeisos*, according to the term with which, as from Xenophon, the Greek authors reproduced the original Persian designation meaning “enclosed garden”, is, however, explicitly taken by Xenophon to have to do with the sovereign’s hunting activities.²⁹ Actually, if anything, it is only the *mṛgavana* of AŚ II.2.3 that shows some affinity with the Achaemenid institution. This park for recreation and, presumably, hunting could in fact come within the area of the influences exerted by the Achaemenid world on the early Imperial patterns in India, long suggested by scholars. As said before, the *mṛgavana* of AŚ II.2.4 has to be considered, instead, an *abhayavana*.

Now, the concept of nonviolence applied to animals and the wish to protect them according to these principles came about, as we have said and as is widely recognised, with the movements of the *śramanas*, which gave rise to Buddhism, Jainism, and certain Brahmanic-Upanishadic currents. The Pāli Canon evidences use of the “parks” situated on the city limits being made not only the Buddha and his monks, but also by the wandering ascetics of other currents, as places for religious discussion and rest. It is in fact precisely in such “parks” that the textual tradition traces the origins of the first Buddhist monasteries.³⁰ In principle, we cannot rule out the possibility

²⁹ Cf. *Anabasis* I.2.7: ἐνταῦθα Κύρω βασιλεία ἦν καὶ παράδεισος μέγας ἀγρίων θηρίων πλήρης, ἃ ἐκεῖνος ἐθήρευεν ἀπὸ ἵππου, ὅποτε γυμνάσαι βούλοιο ἐαυτὸν τε καὶ τοὺς ἵππους: “Here Cyrus had a palace and a great park (*parádeisos*) full of wild animals, which he used to hunt on horseback whenever he wished to exercise himself and the horses” (my translation). On the Achaemenid *parádeisos* important studies are Lincoln 2003 and 2012.

³⁰ See Pieruccini Forthcoming (2018).

that, in the *Arthaśāstra*, the *abhayavanas* represent a concession to the principle of nonviolence and hospitality towards religious wanderers; in short, we might conjecture a form of official protection for certain places of this type as religious areas. Nevertheless, interpretation along these lines does not appear to be borne out by the passages in which the *abhayavanas* are mentioned in the text. On the other hand, the text is quite explicit about the need to protect living creatures in the wild areas reserved for the Vedic ascetics, in accordance with the well-known ideal of pacification of all the natural world which applies to the forest places inhabited by *ṛṣis* or *vānaprasthas*.³¹

Possibly closer to the point is a brief note by T. R. Trautmann, who, while considering the *mṛgavana* mentioned in AŚ II.2.3 a “kind of pleasure-grove”, and referring in general to places where hunting appears to be banned, holds that “[w]e should probably infer from this that hunting was going on at a scale that caused animal numbers to decline, and that kings took steps to protect animals because of it” (Trautmann 2012, p. 103). Although the idea of real ecological decline might be somewhat exaggerated, it is not entirely implausible to conjecture the existence of repopulation farms situated preferably “at the border” of the royal hunting and pleasure park.

3. Conclusions

The questions to raise at this point are obvious. In the first place, can we find correspondence between one of the *Arthaśāstra* typologies and the *migadāyas* which tradition associates with the episodes in the Buddha’s life? An answer that immediately comes to mind takes us in the direction of the *abhayavanas*, but, as we have seen, tempting as the hypothesis may be, the evidence does not suffice for a sure interpretation.

³¹ Let us remark that the *Arthaśāstra* mentions also the *tapovana*, “ascetic grove”; the term appears a couple of times with reference to disputes over the limits (AŚ III.9.23), or a fine for cutting vegetation (AŚ III.19.29).

Secondly, given all the sources dating back to periods subsequent to the dissemination of Buddhism, one cannot help wondering what a *migadāya* might have been in the times of the Buddha, if we interpret his visits to such places as facts of some historical value. Here, rather than parks dedicated anachronistically to *ahimsā*, it would be more natural to picture some sort of reserve – for recreation, for stock raising, or even for the sovereign to go hunting, the latter being a possibility that emerges in the tales of the *Jātakas*. But it is also possible that in situating his first sermon at Isipatana, and repeating the scene with other sermons held here and in other *migadāyas*, the redactors of the texts had the precise intention of conveying, between the lines, a message of peace-making with the animal world. Whether or not this was in fact the intention, the setting shows great symbolic potential, which appears to have been well developed in the later Buddhist tradition. Like the pacified nature of the forest retreats of *ṛṣis* or *vānaprasthas* – a theme which runs through all Brahmanical literature – the *migadāyas* offer Buddhism the possibility to conceive of spaces in which total harmony is achieved between man and the animal world. In these terms, too, the transformation evoked by the *Jātakas* seems to be the most significant indication. Thus, whatever their origins may have been, the *migadāyas* ultimately emerge as a component of the Buddhist message of nonviolence and compassion.

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Last access to web sources January 2018.

- AŚ *Arthaśāstra*
 M *Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga*
 Manu *Manusmṛti*
 MN *Sutta Piṭaka, Majjhima Nikāya*
 MV *Mahāvastu*
Nandiyamiga Jātaka
Nigrodhamiga Jātaka
 SN *Sutta Piṭaka, Saṃyutta Nikāya*
 SPK *Sāratthappakāsinī*. Ed. by F. L. Woodward. 3 vols. London: Pali Text Society – Milford 1929-1937 (cf. Levman 2014).
 SV [*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*] *The Sumaṅgala-Vilāsinī, Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Dīgha-Nikāya, Part II (Suttas 8-20)*. Ed. by W. Stede, from Materials Left Unfinished by T. W. Rhys Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter. London: Pali Text Society – Luzac & Company 1931.
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PAOLA PISANO

VĪRYAŚULKĀḤ KANYĀḤ:
ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S DEPENDENCE
IN THE *MAHĀBHĀRATA* AND IN OLD GREEK SOURCES

1. Premise*

1.1. As is well known, the *Manusmṛti* and the *Mahābhārata* mostly exhibit a strict attitude towards women's dependence. According to Manu's statement,

pitā rakṣati kaumāre bhartā rakṣati yauvane |
rakṣanti sthavire putrā na strī svātantryam arhati ||
(MDhŚ 9.3)

“Her father guards her in her childhood; her husband guards her in her youth and her sons guard her in her old age; a woman does not deserve independence”.

This belief corresponds to the Brahmanical point of view and is often found in other ancient Indo-European societies, such as the Iranian and Greek ones.

Men have to prevent women from acting on their own initiative (MDhŚ 9.2: *asvatantrāḥ striyaḥ kāryāḥ*; MBh 1.161.16: *na svatantrā [...] yoṣitaḥ*). Women are given (the

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verb is *dā*) by the father to the husband when they are of child-bearing age (MDhŚ 9.4: *kāle 'dātā pitā yācyah*).

However, opposite evidence does exist, especially referring to an earlier time, as testified by the character of Urvaśī who in RV X.95 is depicted as ‘a resolute and hard-hearted female anxious to return to her carefree life with her fellow Apsarases and happy enough to abandon her child in order to get free’, and also by what Pāṇḍu has to say in MBh 1.113 about the boundless freedom of women in the olden days.

Moreover, in the *Mahābhārata* (e.g. in MBh 1.67.26; 5.173.3-5), referring to the same period, one also comes across elements of an epoch when doubts on women’s dignity and autonomy were being raised.¹ This probably came about within the awkward attempt by the Brahmanical reformers to regulate and/or discredit the different matrimonial practices which were at odds with their orthodoxy, but deep-rooted in the *kṣatriya* milieu, such as the *svayaṃvara* and the *gāndharva vivāha*.

1.2. Referring mostly to these last institutions, my paper focuses on some contradictory instances of the ancient Indian concept of women attempting to detect and explain them by analysing comparable Greek texts. In this regard, I should like to begin by focusing on the topic of *vīryaśulkaḥ kanyāḥ*, i.e. of girls whose *śulka*² in the Sanskrit epic is an act of bravery.

I shall mainly consider how the marriages of Sītā (R 1.65-68; R 2.110.36-52), Draupadī (MBh 1.174-85), and of Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālikā, the princesses of the Kāśis (MBh 5.170-73) were arranged.

¹ Cf. A. Hildebeitel, *Dharma*, Honolulu 2010, pp. 89-108.

² *śulka*, the Sanskrit word for bride-price, does not originally involve a marriage by purchase, but rather a wedding gift that elicits a complementary counter-gift. A *śulka* may be wealth, service, even sacrifice, as in the case of Bhīṣma who in MBh 1.97.13-14 uses the word *śulka* to indicate his own renouncement regarding offspring: *tvam apatyam prati ca me pratijñāṃ vettha vai parām || jānāsi ca yathāvṛttaṃ śulkaheṭo tvad antare* |, “Yet you know the sovereign vow I have sworn concerning offspring, and you know what befell when your bride price was to be paid” (transl. van Buitenen).

The Homeric wedding gifts (ἔδνα) given to the bride’s father by the future son-in-law seem to be equivalent to *śulka*. See M. I. Finley, “Marriage, Sale and Gift in the Homeric World”, *Revue Internationale des Droits de l’Antiquité*, iii, vol.2.1955, pp. 167-94: pp.178ff.

2. Sītā as vīryaśulkā kanyā

2.1. Sītā was raised by King Janaka of the Videhas as his favourite daughter. Her name means furrow, since she sprang up behind his plough as he was tilling the earth. Although every ruler on earth desired her hand, Janaka was unwilling to give the girl in marriage without previously testing each suitor's strength, since he was convinced that this selfsame strength should be her only bride-price because of her extraordinary origins:

*bhūtalād utthitā sā tu vyavardhata mamātmajā |
vīryaśulketi me kanyā sthāpīteyam ayonijā ||* (R 1.65.15)³
“Sprung from the earth, she has been raised as my daughter, and since she was not born from the womb, my daughter has been set apart as one for whom the only bride price is great strength” (transl. Goldman).

When Sītā's wooers meet in Mithilā, Janaka asks them to string Śiva's bow which was extremely heavy and hard to pull. The kings test themselves with little success, since they were unable to hold the bow, let alone lift it.

2.2 Later on, young Rāma, coming from Ayodhyā, asks and is allowed to see the bow: he succeeds in holding it and manages to draw it without any difficulty, even breaking it. (R 1.66.17). Janaka rejoices at having requested this trial of worth (*vīryaśulka*), since this has given him the chance to find his ideal son-in-law. Rāma is not only remarkably strong, but also Daśaratha's son and by marrying him Sītā will bring prestige to the Janaka lineage.⁴

³ Cf. R 1.65.17; 1.66.23; 1.66.25; 1.67.7; 1.70.20-22. Janaka continuously underlines in the Bālakāṇḍa that a *vīryaśulkā kanyā* is an asset of extraordinary value, which must not be wasted.

⁴ R 1.66.22-23: *janakānām kule kīrtim āhariṣyati me sutā | sītā bhartāram āsādyā rāmaṃ daśarathātmajam || mama satyā pratijñā ca vīryaśulketi kauśika | sītā prāṇair bahumatā deyā rāmāya me sutā ||*, “With Rāma, Daśaratha's son, for her husband, my daughter Sītā will bring glory to the House of the Janakas. And so, Kauśika, my vow that

2.3. The marriage agreement is drawn up between the two fathers-in-law (R 1.68.12-14). Moreover, Sītā's younger sister Ūrmilā, (R 1.70.20-23; R 2.51) and two female cousins (R 1.71.5-6) are also bestowed on Daśaratha's three other sons. This highlights the importance of the wedding alliance between royal families and the character of marriage as an exchange relationship.⁵ In particular, Sītā is an asset to be wisely invested, in order to bring benefits to her father and his clan, but she is not considered as being an independent person. Even when she mentions her *svayaṃvara*⁶ in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa, she stresses her dutiful acceptance of her father's will⁷ without referring to any personal choice:

*evaṃ dattāsmi rāmāya tadā tasmin svayaṃvare |
anuraktā ca dharmeṇa patiṃ vīryavatāṃ varam ||*
(R 2.110.52)

“And that is how I was bestowed on Rāma, there at the self-choice ceremony, and as is right I love my husband, the mightiest of men” (transl. Pollock).

3. Evidence of *vīryaśulka* in the Greek tradition

In the oldest Greek tradition there are analogous instances of *vīryaśulka*⁸ with similar implications for the role of the brides

great strength should be her only bride-price has been proved true. For my daughter Sītā, as dear to me as life itself, shall be given in marriage to Rāma” (transl. Goldman).

⁵ Cf. N. K. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India, A Comparative Study*, New Delhi 1975, p. 147; p. 154; S. W. Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife*, New York and Oxford 1996, pp. 207ff.

⁶ In the Ayodhyākāṇḍa Sītā mentions her *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara* three times (R 2. 110. 23, 37, 52). On the contrary, in the Bālakāṇḍa Janaka does not say whether the trial takes place during a *svayaṃvara*; nor is it stated whether Sītā is present during the test and she also plays no part in her father's actions.

⁷ At the end of the Bālakāṇḍa (R 1.76.15) it is also said that Sītā was naturally dear to Rāma, for she was the wife his father gave him

⁸ This is not surprising in an ancient society. Several Greek and other Indo-European parallels to the *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara* disprove the hypothesis of a non-Aryan origin of the *svayaṃvara*. Cf. H-P. Schmidt, *Some women's rites and rights in the Veda*, Poona 1987, pp. 94ff.; R. Barlow, “The Will to Marry: Did Indo-European Brides Choose Their Husbands?”,

who are generally the daughters of kings and chieftains. Some examples deserve due consideration.

3.1. Othruoneus from Kabesos,⁹ in asking for Kassandre's hand, offers no gifts (ἔδνα) to her father, but promises him that he will perform an extraordinary deed (μέγα ἔργον), *i.e.* *vīrya*, withdrawing the Achaean army from Troy. Old Priam agrees to give him his most beautiful daughter.

3.2. The soothsayer Melampous was the only one of her many suitors who was able to win for his own brother (*Od.* 15.237) the hand of Pero, Neleus' daughter. By bringing back Iphikles' cattle, he managed to accomplish an extremely difficult task, allowing him to recover substantial wealth for Pero's father.¹⁰

3.3. Alexidamos¹¹ won his bride in a foot race¹² arranged by Antaios, a Libyan king, among his daughter's suitors. He involved a great number of his noblest kinsmen and just as many foreigners so that he could accomplish (φύτεύω "to plant" v.111) the most glorious marriage for his famous fair-haired daughter. She dressed up in her finest attire and sat at the finish line. As the grand prize, whosoever first leapt forward and touched her dress could take her away with him. Alexidamos won the race, took the cherished maiden by the hand and then led her through the throng of Nomad horsemen.

3.4. A 'historical' marriage contest is described by Herodotus (6.126-31). Around 570 BCE, Kleisthenes, the despot of Sicyon (Peloponnesus), arranged a complex

in *Der antike Mensch im Spannungsfeld zwischen Ritual und Magie*, hg. v. C. Zinko-M. Zinko, Graz 2015, pp.1-18: p.13.

⁹ A place in the Hellespontine area. Cf. *Il.*13.363-69.

¹⁰ *Od.*11.287-297; 15.226-42. Cf. Arjuna's regaining of cattle at Virāṭa's court (MBh 4.33-67).

¹¹ Pindar (*Pyth.*9.103-125) reestablishes the ancient glory of Alexidamos, an ancestor of Telesikrates, the victor in the Pythian games of 474 BCE.

¹² According to Pausanias (3.12.1), Penelope's father promised her to the victor in the race won by Odysseus.

competition since he wanted to marry his daughter Agariste to the best man he could find in Hellas. He publicly invited all the Greek citizens who deemed themselves worthy of becoming his kinsman, to come to Sicyon within an appointed date. He kept the suitors with him for a year, testing their capabilities not only in running and wrestling, but also their skills in music and conversation, observing them during common meals, in order to assess their manly worth (ἀνδραγαθίη).¹³ When the appointed day came for the celebration of the marriage feast, Kleisthenes announced that he had chosen the Athenian Megacles.¹⁴ Albeit in a different context,¹⁵ many significant features, such as the aims of the competition, the public summoning of the suitors, the detailed list of the contenders, the hospitality offered by the despot, some of the requested trials and also the elimination of a suitor,¹⁶ are very reminiscent of an Indo-Aryan *vīryaśulka*.¹⁷ The main similarity specifically concerns the condition of women. Along with Sītā, Agariste, whose marriage bolsters the standing and the political interests of her father and husband's family, can be considered a *vīryaśulkā kanyā*: she is not present while her marriage feast is being held (Hdt.6.129.1); she is only mentioned after her betrothal to the man her father has chosen and, as a matter of fact, we never actually see her (Hdt.6.130.2).

¹³ Hdt.6.128.1. In so doing, Kleisthenes combines the Greek heroic tradition with his own political interests. See S. West in A. Heubeck, S. West, and J.B. Hainsworth, *Omero, Odissea, Introduzione, Testo e Commento*, Milano 1981, p. LXXIX n.1.

¹⁴ Megacles, the great-grandfather of Pericles, belonged to the family of the Alcmeonidae. Herodotus, (6.131) points out that this was how the fame of this family spread abroad in Hellas.

¹⁵ The abilities of the suitors are not evaluated in a formal competition. Moreover, Kleisthenes does not want to offend the pride of any excluded suitors, so he rewards them by giving them a talent as compensation.

¹⁶ The Athenian Hippocleides was disqualified because of his bad behaviour in performing an indecent dance (Hdt.6.128.2-129).

¹⁷ This is not a *svayamvara* since Agariste is not even given a nominal right to choose her own husband.

4. Draupadī's marriage contest

4.1. On the contrary, in *Mahābhārata* 1.176-179, Draupadī, the daughter of Drupada, the mighty king of the Pāñcālas, seems to hold a prominent position in her marriage contest, the most spectacular *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara* of the Sanskrit epic. She shows herself to the suitors descending into the arena, freshly bathed, splendidly attired and adorned with all manner of ornaments.¹⁸

After various wooers have failed to win her hand, Arjuna, Pāṇḍu's son and a great warrior, tries and succeeds.

Draupadī announces the result by giving him the winner's garland and following him.¹⁹

4.2. Even though this behaviour is formally presented as Draupadī's self-choice, she is explicitly instructed by Dhṛṣṭadyumna to observe the ritual:²⁰

*ete cānye ca bahavo nānājanapadeśvarāḥ |
tvadartham āgatā bhadre kṣatriyāḥ prathitā bhuvī ||
ete vetsyanti vikrāntās tvadarmaṃ lakṣyam uttamam |
vidhyeta ya imaṃ lakṣyaṃ varayethāḥ śubhe 'dya tam ||*
(MBh 1.177.21-22)

“These and many other princes of many country-sides, all these barons renowned on earth have come to sue you, my dear. These brave men shall shoot at the great target to win you. The one who hits it, he is the one you should choose today, beautiful princess” (transl. van Buitenen slightly modified).

¹⁸ MBh 1.176.29-30. S. W. Jamison (“Penelope and the Pigs, Indic Perspectives on the Odyssey”, *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 18, No 2/Oct., 1999, pp. 227-272: pp. 249ff.) highlights the ritual character of the scene.

¹⁹ MBh 1.179.22-23. The custom of placing a garland on the man who is chosen in a *svayaṃvara* ceremony is common to many Indo-European societies. Cf. M. L. West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, Oxford 2007, pp. 434ff.

²⁰ Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Drupada's son, officially explains the details of the trial to her suitors. As well as Sītā and the other Greek maidens mentioned above, Draupadī's father also fixes a bride price for her: in MBh 1.185.23 she is explicitly said to be *pradiṣṭaśulkā drupadena rājñā*.

Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna probably wants to prevent his sister from acting on her own initiative and going against Drupada's wishes. In actual fact, Draupadī had previously rejected Karna, who first performed the test successfully, because he was thought to be the son of a charioteer.²¹

4.3. As a matter of fact, Drupada had always secretly hoped that the hero Arjuna would marry his daughter since king Pāṇḍu was his great friend.²² This specific aim led him to organize a contest based on strength and skill, which could only be won by Arjuna:²³

*yajñasenasya kāmas tu pāṇḍavāya kirīṭine |
kṛṣṇāṃ dadyām iti sadā na caitad vivṛṇoti saḥ ||
so 'nveṣamāṇaḥ kaunteyān pāñcālyo janamejaya |
dr̥ḍhaṃ dhanur anāyamyam kārāyām āsa bhārata ||
yantram vaihāyasaṃ cāpi kārāyām āsa kṛtrimam |
tena yantreṇa sahitaṃ rājā lakṣyam ca kāñcanam ||*
(MBh 1.176.8-10)

“It had always been Yajñasena's wish to give Kṛṣṇā to the diademed Arjuna, but he did not divulge it. Since he hoped to search out the Pāṇḍavas, the Pāñcālya had a very hard bow made, well-nigh impossible to bend, O Janamejaya Bhārata. He had a contraption built in the sky, and onto the contraption he had a golden target fixed” (transl. van Buitenen).

In this way, the suitors who were eliminated only had their own weaknesses to blame.

²¹ Cf. MBh 1.178.17 footnote [1827*3]: *nāhaṃ varayāmi sūtam*, “I will not choose a charioteer”. Drupada agreed with her daughter's judgement and arranged for the contest to be repeated. This passage is omitted in the Crit. Ed., but seems to be well supported in the MS tradition. See Jamison, “Penelope”, p. 246 n. 48.

²² MBh 1.185.18-19. On Drupada and Pāṇḍavas' wedding politics cf. Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age*, pp. 156; 187f. Drupada's army might have backed the Pāṇḍavas' push to reclaim the throne, which happened to coincide with Drupada's own vengeful plot against Droṇa. See F. W. Alonso, *The Mahābhārata and Greek Mythology*, Delhi 2014, p. 312.

²³ See G. Germain, *Genèse de l'Odyssee: Le fantastique et le sacré*, Paris 1954, p. 16.

5. A Greek *vīryaśulka* woman: Penelope

As many scholars have observed, the story of the archery contest to choose Draupadī's bridegroom finds its parallel in the competition for Penelope's hand depicted at the end of the *Odyssey*. The details often coincide in a striking manner and both also display a very similar narrative framework.²⁴ In particular, Odysseus' wife, the queen whose husband's fate is unknown, proposes herself, *i.e.* the realm of Ithaca, as the prize for the contest (ἄεθλον) and asks her suitors to demonstrate their strength and skills.²⁵ Significantly, Penelope comes to this important decision by herself.²⁶ She always plans and acts on her own initiative; she herself takes the bow and the quiver to the room where the competition is to be held (*Od.* 21.56-79), and she is also apparently the one to hand the axes to Eumaeus the swineherd.²⁷ Even though Telemachus, her son, having come of age is considered as her guardian,²⁸ he only later officially announces her proposal to the wooers (*Od.* 21.103ff.). Odysseus himself, who has returned to Ithaca disguised as a beggar has yet to reveal himself to his wife. He is in favour of Penelope's plan (*Od.* 19.582ff.), but not the one who suggested it. Penelope is free to choose a new husband,²⁹ but does not really want to find one: she is only trying to postpone this happening (*Od.* 2.87-106) and has thus organized a test that she thinks only her

²⁴ See N. Allen, "Pénélope et Draupadī: la validité de la comparaison", in *La Mythology et l'Odyssee. Hommage à Gabriel Germain, Actes du colloque international de Grenoble 20-22 mai 1999*, Genève 2002, pp. 305-12; Alonso, *The Mahābhārata*, pp. 319ff. The motif of the archery contest is supposed to belong to Bronze Age Egypt. See M.L. West, *The East Face of Helicon*, Oxford 1997, p. 432.

²⁵ The trial involves the stringing of the king's bow (*Od.* 21.56) which Odysseus had left for safekeeping, and the shooting of an arrow through the rings of twelve aligned axes (*Od.* 19.572ff.; 21.73ff.).

²⁶ According to a Homeric idea, men's decisions are motivated by an impulse from a god. See B. Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*, Göttingen 1975, Vierte neubearbeitete Auflage, pp. 35ff.

²⁷ *Od.* 21.80-82. See V. Di Benedetto, *Omero: Odissea*, Milano 2010, p. 1089.

²⁸ In actual fact, there is some uncertainty in the *Odyssey* about who has control over Penelope.

²⁹ *Od.* 4.770f.; 18.285-9; 19.524-9; 20.341f.

husband can win.³⁰ From an Indo-Aryan perspective, she has arranged a *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara*, a fixed one just like Drupada. But Penelope's specificity is that she is a woman who has assumed the duties of a father or an elder son. She is both giver and given, both subject and object: she is a *vīryaśulka* woman whose bride-price has been fixed and, at the same time, she is the one who cleverly establishes her own price.

6. *vīryaśulka* and *gāndharva vivāha*: the choice of Ambā

6.1. According to MBh 5.170-173, the *svayaṃvara* arranged by the king of the Kāśis for his daughters Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālikā, is a *svayaṃvara* of the *vīryaśulka* type that Bhīṣma turns into an abduction. Bhīṣma, whose aim is to find a wife for his brother Vicitravīrya, arrives in the city of Benares during the ceremony. He sees the assembled kings, as well as the three adorned maidens, and knows that their bride price is a manly deed, even though the exact nature of the contest is never stated.³¹ Lifting the girls onto his chariot, Bhīṣma challenges the kings, compelling them to fight against him and defeating them. According to the values of the *ṛṣatriya* tradition, he regards his fighting and his victory over the suitors as a real act of bravery

³⁰ Cf. Germain, *Genèse*, p. 16; Alonso, *The Mahābhārata*, p. 325.

³¹ MBh 5.170.13: *vīryaśulkās ca tā jñātvā samāropya ratham tadā | avocaṃ pāthivān sarvān ahaṃ tatra samāgatān | bhīṣmaḥ śāntanavaḥ kanyā haratīti punaḥ punaḥ ||*, "Knowing that their bride price was an act of bravery, I lifted them on to my chariot and told all the kings gathered there: 'Bhīṣma, son of Śāntanu, is taking these girls!'" (transl. van Buitenen).

The story of MBh 1.96 is quite different: the three princesses have to choose their bridegrooms from a host of assembled suitors without a formally set contest. Moreover, Bhīṣma, who abducts the maidens while their *svayaṃvara* is taking place, justifies himself by referring to a legitimate procedure: the *rākṣasa* type is the best form of marriage and the most customary one for warriors. M.R. Yardi, *The Mahābhārata: Its Genesis and Growth. A Statistical Study*, Poona 1986, p.157, considers MBh 1.96 as belonging to the so-called Sauti layer, which is more recent than MBh 5.170-173 classified as a part of the Suta layer.

(*vīrya*).³² As a consequence, the maidens are now his by right. On his return to Hāstinapura, he says:

imāḥ kāśipateḥ kanyā mayā nirjitya pārthivān |
vicitravīryasya kṛte vīryaśulkā upārjitāḥ ||
 (MBh 5.171.2)

“I have won these daughters of the Kāśi king for Vicitravīrya at the bride price of bravery by defeating the kings” (transl. van Buitenen).

6.2. Surprisingly, while Bhīṣma is preparing for his brother's wedding, Ambā, the eldest princess, asks him to release her from the marriage abduction in accordance with the Law, since she had already chosen Śālva, the king of Saubha, as her bridegroom: she had fallen in love with him and, unbeknown to her father, he too had chosen her secretly.³³ Bhīṣma reveals this fact to Satyavatī and to the councillors, Brahmins and priests and then allows Ambā to leave.³⁴ She goes up to Śālva but he rejects her because she had previously belonged to another man and also because he was afraid of Bhīṣma (MBh 5.172.22). Ambā's reaction to her beloved's refusal is not just an emotional one. She is aware of her condition and refuses to be a passive victim.³⁵ As she leaves Śālva, she utters a monologue expressing her thoughts (*cintayām āsa*): she regrets the fact that she had not jumped off Bhīṣma's chariot at the right moment to

³² As Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife*, p. 225, points out, “in this way the fighting was brought within the orthodox system of gift and counter-gift and the maidens' abduction was made equivalent to other types of marriages (e.g. Ārṣa and Āsura) where such gifts change hands.”

³³ Theoretically, the *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara* does not seem compatible with Ambā making a personal choice: it is not clear how she would have managed if the king of Śālva had not won the competition. In actual fact, Ambā is opposed to the *vīryaśulka* and to her father.

³⁴ Interestingly, in MBh 1.96.47-50 Ambā, who speaks for herself at the assembly of the Brahmins, is presented as a virtuous maiden (*satī*), who had chosen her bridegroom according to her father's wishes. This account seems more consistent with Brahmanical orthodoxy.

³⁵ Bhīṣma has become the main actor in her situation interfering in her *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara*. In the end, she devises the plans for her vengeance which will tragically affect both her own and Bhīṣma's destiny.

run towards Śālva, and then curses Bhīṣma, Śālva and her foolish father:

*dhig bhīṣmaṃ dhik ca me mandaṃ pitaraṃ
mūḍhacetasam |
yenāhaṃ vīryaśulkena paṇyastrīvat praveritā || (MBh
5.173.5)*

“A curse on Bhīṣma, a curse on my dull-witted mindless father, who thrust me forth like a harlot for the bride price of some derring-do” (transl. van Buitenen slightly modified).

She does not accept Bhīṣma’s *kṣatriya* values and mostly censures her father who, in her opinion, has offered her like a woman for sale as a prize to the highest bidder, because of the *vīryaśulka*. This striking criticism might also refer to a custom that is known in the non-Kṣatriya strata of society. According to Arrianus (*Ind.*17.4), to avoid either giving or taking dowries, the fathers of Indian maidens publicly offered them (προάγοντες ἐς τὸ ἐμφανὲς καθιστᾶσι ἐκλέξασθαι) to the victors of boxing matches, running contests or other manly exercises.³⁶

6.3. In the story which precedes her denunciation of the *vīryaśulka*, Ambā is described as an intellectually independent person, who is strong-willed and learned in the Law. When Śālva refuses to accept her as his wife, she tells him that the abandonment of lovers is not praised in the Law (*Dharma*).³⁷ Moreover, she stresses her own fidelity, chastity and love, asking Śālva to love her (*bhajasva mām*) since she has never dreamed of anyone but him: she is not another man’s woman, but a virgin (*kanyā*) who has come to him of her own free will (*svayam*).³⁸

In uttering these words Ambā does not endorse the fact that someone who is in love must also be loved in return, but rather,

³⁶ This report, attributed to Nearchos, Alexander the Great’s admiral, is also mentioned in Strabo 15.1.66.

³⁷ MBh 5.172.10.

³⁸ MBh 5.172.14-16.

she demands that Śālva legally acknowledges her right to become his wife by referring to her previous choice and to their mutual agreement:

mayā śālvapatih pūrvaṃ manasābhivṛto varaḥ |
tēna cāsmi vṛtā pūrvaṃ rahasy avidite pituh ||
kathaṃ mām anyakāmām tvaṃ rājañ śāstram adhītya
vai |
vāsayethā gr̥he bhīṣma kauravaḥ san viśeṣataḥ ||
 (MBh 5.171.6-7)

“In my heart I had chosen the king of Śālva as my bridegroom, and he too had chosen me secretly, unbeknownst to my father. How can you, who have learned the scriptures, force me to dwell in this house, when I am in love with someone else, Prince Bhīṣma, you being a Kaurava to boot?” (transl. van Buitenen).

6.4. As Jamison points out,³⁹ Ambā’s formulation is very close to the legal definition of the *gāndharva vivāha*, the union of a lust-driven couple, kept secret from their parents.⁴⁰

As a matter of fact, she also refers to the *gāndharva vivāha*, when she says that she comes to her beloved of her own free will (6.3) and also when she finally expresses her regret about her decision not to jump off Bhīṣma’s chariot and run to him (6.2). Ambā seems to consider that *gāndharva vivāha* is a legal alternative to *vīryaśulka* and to the dependence of women entailed therein.

Her bond with her betrothed and her right to rejoin him were unanimously recognized by Bhīṣma, Brahmins and by society in

³⁹ Cf. Jamison, “Penelope”, p. 247 n. 51.

⁴⁰ ViSmṛ 24.23: *dvayoḥ sakāmayor mātāpitṛrahito yogo gāndharvaḥ*. Cf. MDhŚ 3.32: *icchayānyonyasaṃyogāḥ kanyāyās ca varasya ca | gāndharvaḥ sa tu vijñeyo maithunyah kāmasāmbhavaḥ ||*, “When the girl and the groom have sex with each other voluntarily, that is the ‘Gāndharva’ marriage based on sexual union and originating from love” (tr. Olivelle 2005). According to Jamison (“A Gāndharva Marriage in the Odyssey: Nausicaa and her Imaginary Husband”, in J. Greppin and E.C. Polomé, eds., *Fs. J. Puhvel*, Washington 1997, pp.151-60: pp. 158ff.), a trace of Gāndharva marriage is implied in some passages in the Odyssey. Cf. also M. Alberro, “Formas de matrimonio entre los antiguos celtas y otros pueblos indo-europeos”, *Zephyrus*, 57, 2004, pp. 249-61: p 251ff.

general (6.2). This may suggest that Ambā, who opposed her father and obtained her freedom from Bhīṣma, possesses the legal standing to give herself away and, therefore, that she can become a legal wife (*bhāryā*).⁴¹

Theoretically, it is an extraordinary acknowledgement of women's autonomy and self-choice, which seems to be guaranteed by the Gāndharva marriage. It is also extremely significant that the recognition of her independence occurs in the same context as Ambā's (and possibly Bhīṣma's) fierce denunciation of the *vīryaśulka*.

What could be paradoxical and inconsistent with such an extraordinary acknowledgement is the fact that once Ambā has been rejected by Śālva, she has no way out and nobody on whom she can rely (MBh 5.173.1), whereas her sisters can happily go on with their lives, adoring the handsome Vicitravīrya (MBh 1.96.55). However, the precariousness of an action, recognized on the one hand and refused on the other, is characteristic of *gāndharva vivāha*, as is demonstrated by the Śakuntalā episode, and probably connected to its origin.⁴²

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the above-examined instances of *vīryaśulkāḥ kanyāḥ* in the Sanskrit epic are not at all consistent. In fact, they provide a variety of approaches, which are also found in parallel examples in ancient Greek. Striking similarities to elements in

⁴¹ The Śakuntalā episode clearly shows the legal standing of a maiden to give herself away in the 'Gāndharva' marriage (MBh 1.67.15; 1.67.25ff.). See G. Dumézil, *Mariages indo-européens*, Paris 1979, pp. 43f.; Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife*, p. 212; p. 250. This part, which according to Yardi (*The Mahābhārata*, p. 157) belongs to the so-called Sauti layer, seems to be more recent than the Ambā episode described in MBh 5.170-173.

⁴² Cf. Ya.V. Vasilkov, "Draupadī in the Assembly-Hall, Gandharva-Husbands and the Origin of the Gaṇikās", *Indologica Taurinensia*, XV-XVI 1989-90, pp. 388-398; pp. 395f. Both Strabo (15.1.30) and Diodorus (19.33.2-4) who associate the origin of *sahagamana* with an old marriage custom, probably a previous form of the Gāndharva-marriage, remark that it led to infidelity and crime. Cf. P. Pisano, "A Virtuous Woman Must Follow Her Husband", in *Cross-cutting South Asian Studies, An Interdisciplinary Approach* ed. by S. Bindi, E. Mucciarelli and T. Pontillo, New Delhi 2016, pp. 224-62; pp. 247ff.

ancient Greek literature, such as the politics of marriage, the procedure of the *vīryaśulka svayaṃvara*, the way of obtaining a wife by returning a stolen herd to her father, and the habit of trying to find a wife for one's brother, possibly also bespeak a common Indo-European inheritance.

Some parallel examples in both the Indian and Greek contexts may also help to throw light on aspects that are somewhat puzzling if taken alone, for example, Agariste's marriage or Penelope's freedom to choose her own husband or the archery contest.

As the episodes of Penelope and Ambā show, there is an ambivalence in the range of action which is either recognized or denied to women and which warns against any standard one-sided ideas of their position.

Abbreviations

HDT	Herodotus
IL	<i>Iliad</i>
IND	Indica
MBh	Mahābhārata
MDhŚ	Mānava Dharmasāstra
OD	<i>Odyssey</i>
PYTH	Pythian Odes
R	Rāmāyaṇa
ṚV	Ṛg Veda
ViSmṛ	Viṣṇu Smṛti

MARGED FLAVIA TRUMPER

*THE IMPACT OF THE ARRIVAL OF SOUND
TECHNOLOGY ON HINDUSTANI VOCAL MUSIC
AND ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN NORTH INDIAN
ART MUSIC*

In Hindustani music the vocal element has always had a central role and this is reflected in the fact that all traditional styles, schools and genres developed on the vocal repertoire, and the voice has always been regarded as the instrument par excellence since its origins.¹

North Indian art music as we know it today has been refined in courts at least since the XV century in a context where sound technology would have not been necessary, as its main recipients were rulers and their restricted entourages, while the performer used to sit at a very close distance from the audience of connoisseurs, who in turn interacted actively with the artist through requests and manifest cheering and appreciation. The main instruments used were those aimed at enhancing the vocal movements, such as *sāraṅgī* and *vīṇā*, and drums, such as *pakhāwaj* and *tablā*, for vocal accompaniment.

The modal concept of *rāg* at the base of the Indian music system could only be refined in such a closed setting thanks to the mutual interaction between the artist and the listeners

¹ The Sanskrit word for music itself, *saṅgīta*, has the original meaning of “song with [dance and instrumental] accompaniment”. Moreover, the great masters who shaped Hindustani music before the recording era were all exponents of the vocal tradition, see Van Der Meer, Wim, *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague, 1980.

through impromptu live creations that could never be exactly the same twice in order to allow the tradition to go on without fossilising in a mere duplicate.² For this reason the arrival of sound technology had a huge impact on the nature and performing style of North Indian art music.

It all started when the Gramophone Company brought the newly born recording industry to India. The first expedition sent by the Company, then called GTL, was led by William Geisberg, a musician and early sound engineer from the USA, who had assisted Emile Berliner in creating his gramophone, inspired by Edison's recording inventions at the end of the XIX century. The expedition reached Calcutta by the end of October 1902 and had to select popular local artists to record for printing their performances on shellack discs to be sold in India. Geisberg did not know anything about Indian music, so he relied on the agent previously sent by the Company, who introduced him to some musicians in Calcutta.³

At that time Calcutta was actually one of the best places for music, because in 1856 the last Nawab of Avadh, Wajid Ali Shah (1822-1887), was exiled just outside the city by the British, who had used the excuse of the ruler's love for arts to dismiss him on the accusation of neglecting politics. The Nawab was the greatest patron of the feminine semiclassical vocal genre called *thumrī*, to the point that some even erroneously consider him its inventor,⁴ but he was also very fond of *kathak* dance, drama and poetry and was himself a dancer, musician and composer. Once settled in Calcutta he tried to recreate the artistic environment of his Lucknow court and thus all the most talented musicians had gathered there to perform for him.⁵

² Van Der Meer, Wim, *ibid.*, 192; Raja S., Deepak, *The Rāga-ness of Rāgas, Rāgas beyond the Grammar*, D. K. Printworld, New Delhi, 2016, 5-6, refers to this process as "continuity within change".

³ Sampath, Vikram, *My name is Gauhar Jaan! The life and times of a musician*, Rupa Publications, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 76-78.

⁴ Du Perron, Lalita, *Hindi poetry in a musical genre – thumrī lyrics*, Routledge, London, 2007, p. 52.

⁵ Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1989, pp. 66-67.

When Geisberg got to see the first Indian musicians perform, he was not too well impressed, he actually found the music loud and unrefined, lacking harmony and unpleasantly based on the rhythmic element. Very different was his impression though, when he attended a performance of the then most renowned courtesan of Calcutta, Gauhar Jan (1873-1930). She was of Anglo-Indian origin, knew how to present herself to an international audience and the American gentleman found her vocal skills very pleasing. He also noticed how the local populace crowded the streets outside her performance hall and thought it would have been a profitable business for the GTL to print and sell her records, so he invited Gauhar Jan to their first recording sessions in India a few days later.⁶

Apart from Gauhar Jan, a couple of other courtesans were included in the first session, but only because they were part of the theatrical company invited on that occasion. She was actually the first Indian recording “diva” and even became the advertising image of the Company, as she would later pose for the cover of their catalogue. She recommended a few other musicians recorded in the first expeditions, like Moujuddin Khan (1889-1926), Peara Saheb (1870-1945) and Janki Bai (1880-1934).



Figure 1 - Singer Gauhar Jan at an early recording session in Calcutta

⁶ Sampath, Vikram, *My name is Gauhar Jaan!*, cit., 81-86; Lubinski, Christina, “The Global Business with Local Music: Western Gramophone Companies in India before World War I”, *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, 2012, pp. 69-72.



Figure 2 - *Singer Gauhar Jan on the Gramophone Company catalogue (1907 ca.)*



Figure 3 - *Singer Jankibai at an early recording session in Calcutta*

Most of the early recordings featured vocal music by courtesans and probably this choice had different reasons, firstly the difficult situation for professional women musicians at that time leading them to search for new sources of income and recognition. Another reason was the insecurity of great *gharānedār* male singers, the maestros from music lineages, because their music could have been copied or the recording could stress possible mistakes, moreover the audience could not be selected, while the *gharānā* (traditional music lineage) system had been based on the selection of learners and audiences.⁷ Last, but not least, musicians did not certainly like to perform without a visible audience as in a traditional *baiṭhak* (music gathering). This aspect will be in part restored with LPs since they would allow recordings of live performances and depict Hindustani music closer to its traditional context.⁸

The only women who could perform in India until then were courtesans. In some families “respectable” women could learn in order to teach children or to display such skills privately for their relatives, but were never allowed to perform publicly. If a courtesan was really skilled she could gain fame and money, but her name or contribution would never leave an acknowledged trace in history, she would remain outside the *gharānā* system,⁹ and be considered as a mere entertainer. Usually these women were both dancers and singers, because their performances were primarily meant to attract and involve patrons and sponsors emotionally so as to make them a steady source of income. The most talented ones were carefully trained in all arts and well-mannered, thus they could become very respected, still their art was considered inferior to that of men singers and there was always some social prejudice against them, because of the

⁷ Raja, Deepak, “The influence of amplification and recording technologies on Hindustani Music”, *Pt. V. N. Bhatkhande Memorial Lecture*, Mumbai, 2016, <https://youtu.be/zMsFwD0duZs>.

⁸ In one of singer Moujuddin Khan’s early recordings the spurs of an audience can be heard, see Chandvankar, Suresh, “Gramophone Celebrities”, *The Journal of the Society of Indian Record Collectors*, vol. annual 2006, p. 4.

⁹ Even if they could be sometimes associated with a *gharānā*, they could not bring the tradition forward officially as *gurus*.

smartness they had to practice for a living and because of the social freedom they were allowed.¹⁰

In the last decades of the XIX century, the puritan anti-nautch movement started. Courtesans were called nautch girls from the anglicised version of the Hindi word *nāch* (dance) and some British Christian groups demonstrated publicly against corruption and licentious lifestyles and more so after the spreading of the social disease. The British residents had been accepting the cultural customs of Indian courts for a long time, but suddenly were no longer allowed to be entertained by local courtesans. The anti-nautch movement had moral arguments, but as the facts of the last Nawab of Avadh had showed, targeting the courtly culture was first of all a precise political move for the benefit of the British Raj.

These protests were adopted by some local movements through the English educated middle class, that had been raised despising all representations of traditional Indian culture, therefore courtesans were banned from society and in the XX century professional women musicians had to reinvent their identity in order to fit in the new situation and to keep their art alive. This way they were soon able to turn the hostile middle class in their new sponsor in need to revive traditional arts and boost the sense of nationalism and identity after the Independence (1947).¹¹

Those who continued pursuing the arts had to change their performing style in order to suit a new audience after the end of the courtly era as well as to avoid the connection with their original background. The arrival of the recording industry helped them in this endeavour together with the soon to come amplification, this is why courtesans were promptly open to the new media. The modern technology not only served them to broaden their audience, promotion and income, but let them leave their mark on music history through the announcements they had to make at the end of the first records stating their names. The discs were, in fact, initially printed in Germany and

¹⁰ Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives.*, cit., pp. 45-50.

¹¹ Sampath, Vikram, *My name is Gauhar Jaan!*, cit., pp. 183-190.

the singer had to mention his/her name to help the labelling process, thus the name of women singers, who were previously soon forgotten, were now fixed in everyone's mind and fame made it easier for them to be more in demand across the country.¹²

In the first recording sessions the electronic technology wasn't yet available, so the singers had to practically shout as loud as possible in a big horn fixed on the wall, keeping their hands and head still. Thus the voices audible in those records sound far, high-pitched and full-throated. This was particularly true with Indian voices, not only for the rudimentary technology, but because of the lack of amplification.¹³

Indian performers of both genders mainly chose such devices as singing in full-throated and high-pitched voices¹⁴ in order to reach the audience as further as possible; this did not allow the performers to enhance the melodic element in detail, so they would generally emphasize more the rhythmic element.¹⁵ This explains the remarks made by Geisberg after hearing the first performances. He had also written: "Only one or two male singers were recommended to us and these had high-pitched effeminate voices. There was absolutely no admiration or demand for the manly baritone or bass, and in the Orient vocalists in these categories would starve to death."¹⁶

Gauhar Jan's biographer Vikram Sampath states that male singers probably sounded effeminate for their attempt at emulating courtesans' vocal techniques and gaining their same popularity. Indian musicologist Deepak Raja¹⁷ confirmed that the reason was, instead, their pre-acoustic vocal technique. After consulting a few sources I came to the conclusion that the first recorded male singers had actually an effeminate style as they

¹² Sampath, Vikram, *ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

¹³ Sampath, Vikram, *ibid.*, 85-86.

¹⁴ Van Der Meer, Wim, *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century*, *cit.*, pp. 169-70.

¹⁵ Raja, Deepak, "The influence of amplification and recording technologies on Hindustani Music", *cit.*

¹⁶ Sampath, Vikram, *My name is Gauhar Jaan!*, *cit.*, p. 84.

¹⁷ Personal communication.

were semiclassical specialists suggested by Gauhar Jan¹⁸ such as Moujuddin Khan and Pearsa Saheb. These two in particular had adopted women's *thumrī* singing, Pearsa Saheb was also a dancer known for his skills in *thumrī* performed seated with *kathak abhinaya* (dramatic gestures and expressions), just like in the courtesans' performing style, and it seems that his performances were very well paid and popular. Nevertheless all male singers in general used a high-pitched voice for acoustic reasons even if they did not sing in an effeminate style.

The recording industry aimed at making a profit out of music, so they searched for the most popular and sought-after artists reflecting the tastes of the largest part of people who could afford to buy discs. As a result, music was spread outside the small niche of listeners from the courts and suddenly democratised to some extent. The fact that the first music popularised thanks to recordings was mostly by women courtesans had a great impact on the life and music of all women musicians from then on.

Initially, discs were 78rpm and lasted more or less 3 minutes. A normal live performance of a piece of music at the time would probably last from around 20 to 40 minutes,¹⁹ so the artist had to condense it in less than 3 minutes, another possible reason why maestros would not accept to record. Singers like the *bājī*-s accepted the challenge and managed to cut down the duration while still maintaining the mood of compositions and *rāg*-s intact. Due to this limit, the recordings did not exactly represent the performing style of the time, but they served as a promoting medium especially for women singers.

The preference for women singers for the first recordings was not specifically due to the fact that they mostly sang semiclassical light genres, because there are recordings of their

¹⁸ In Sampath, Vikram, *My name is Gauhar Jaan!*, *cit.*, Geisberg's statement "they were recommended to us" is reported and in Chandvankar, Suresh, "Gramophone Celebrities", *cit.*, p. 10, it is specified that Moujuddin Khan was recommended to GTL by Gauhar Jan, it is explained that Pearsa Saheb was one of the very few male singers recorded in the early sessions.

¹⁹ Raja, Deepak, "The influence of amplification and recording technologies on Hindustani Music", *cit.*

classical *khyāl*-s as well; but lighter genres such as *ṭhumrī* and allied forms would certainly fit better in a shorter time frame and even singers who usually refused to perform them publicly recorded them on discs, as it was the case with Kesarbai Kerkar (1892-1977).²⁰ At first the choice was simply made by selecting the most popular singers who were also more keen on recording their voices, *i.e.* professional women singers.

Another remarkable change happened with the advent of amplification and electromagnetic recording technology around the mid 20's. This deeply influenced the vocal technique, dynamics, genres and styles of not only Hindustani singing, but of Hindustani music in general, and I believe the role of amplification has not been stressed enough by music scholars for its stylistic impact on Hindustani music and its genres. Firstly, the melodic element started gaining more attention as vocal harmonics and details were enhanced by microphones, thus enabling singers to turn to a more intellectual and refined approach to sound production without needing to sing in a high-pitched and far projected voice. This is a possible reason, according to Deepak Raja,²¹ why more aggressive masculine and rhythm-oriented styles, both in *dhrupad* and *khyāl*, lost popularity, as in the case, for example, of Darbhanga *bānī* versus Dagar *bānī* in *dhrupad* or of Agra *gharānā* versus Kirana and Jaipur *gharānā* in *khyāl*.

This last consideration led me to the conclusion that even the *ṭhumrī* of the *pūrāb āṅg* (Eastern style) could possibly find its renewed format thanks to the vocal techniques allowed by amplification and the incredible adapting skills of Hindustani women singers, in search of a new means of expression and artistic identity right at that historical time.

Ethnomusicologist Peter Manuel, in his book on *ṭhumrī*, states that the advent of the recording industry did not influence much classical and semiclassical music evolution, as discs were not so spread, and thus did not popularise those genres as much as cassettes would do later with Hindi film songs, light *ghazal*-s

²⁰ Raja, Deepak, *ibid.*

²¹ Raja, Deepak, *ibid.*

and folk music. Moreover, art music remained a niche product in its refinement and never benefited much from selling records.²²

Although on one hand I agree that the recording industry has acted more as a promotional means for classical artists in India, rather than as a source of income, I believe that, on the other hand, the amplification and electronic recording technologies have had a strong role in the stylistic revolution of not only classical genres, but namely on *ṭhumrī*.

Manuel notices that the passage from the faster rhythmic *bandīs kī ṭhumrī* (based on a composition) of the courts to the expressive slower middle class *bol banāo kī ṭhumrī* (with word interpretation) happened just around the Twenties and how *khyāl* performing tempo was dramatically decreasing as well at that same time. This is why, rather than considering this tempo decrease in *ṭhumrī* as a specific influence from *khyāl* and a general consequence of social changings as Manuel suggests, I would see both as a result of the new vocal technique allowed by amplification. *Bol banāo* passages were already present in fast *ṭhumrī*-s as it was apparent from early recordings, but only in the late Twenties the technique became the main feature of this genre as the tempo slowed down.²³

Professional women singers of that time needed to adapt their repertoire and performing style to the middle class public audience, but they were now also allowed to finally affirm themselves as artists and express their own feelings, no longer only the feelings they were expected to express towards their patrons. This is how the dance part was removed, the lyrics were sanitised and the words started being explored thoroughly.²⁴ Therefore what was now given the most attention was the melodic elaboration and interpretation, whilst the rhythmic variations found less scope thanks to the new sound technology.

²² Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives, cit.*, p. 74.

²³ Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives, cit.*, p. 83.

²⁴ Du Perron, Lalita, *Hindi poetry in a musical genre – ṭhumrī lyrics, cit.*, pp. 55-57.

This was the era of the great *bol banāo kī thumrī* female specialists such as Siddheshwari Devi (1908-1977), Beghum Akhtar (1914-1974), Rasoolan bai (1902-1974), Vidyadhari bai, Badi Moti bai who all highly contributed to make *thumrī* the most refined semiclassical genre in Hindustani vocal music and certainly the third most important genre in Hindustani music after *khyāl* and *dhrupad*. It was definitely thanks to recordings that the names of these important artists who stylized the genre in its present format remained in music history. There were a few important *thumrī* male exponents as well then, but we would have probably heard much less the names of the female singers of the time and known less about their contribution to this genre if it weren't for their recordings.²⁵

Amplification also allowed women to finally compete with men on the field of vocal music even without a powerful voice. This is possibly one of the main reasons why Indian women singers chose not to pursue semiclassical genres as much as in the past. While on one hand semiclassical genres were for long more easily associated with the courtesans and still seen as more entertaining and feminine in nature, on the other hand, the changes brought in the performing style by courtesans also contributed to make singing a more suitable career for middle class women,²⁶ although these latter felt much less the need to find their own voice, and more that of challenging their men colleagues.

Moreover, it is important to mention that the great *khyāl* exponents who took interest in performing female genres such as *thumrī* at that time, like Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1902-1968) and Abdul Karim Khan (1872-1937), used it mainly as a shorter entertaining final piece for their classical concerts and thus definitely contributed to popularize the genre, but also to stigmatize it as a lighter form. This made less singers interested in pursuing *thumrī* seriously and once more the result was the marginalization of women's voice.

²⁵ Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives, cit.*, p. 86.

²⁶ Pradhan, Aneesh, "Perspectives on Performance Practice: Hindustani Music in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Bombay (Mumbai)", *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 27, 2004, pp. 343-4.

It is typical to very seldom see professional women singers from the courtly era allowing their daughters to become professional singers, because they did not want them to suffer the stigma of that identity. This is another reason why the old female repertoire is being lost.

Meanwhile, vocal music started losing its prominence through the process initiated by amplification, now that instruments could develop a solo repertoire²⁷ and began being requested for well-paid tours abroad, since instrumental music sounded “exotic” enough for the new market, but not as “ethnic” as vocal music. As a result, middle class women artists found more space in the classical vocal field, being less encouraged by families and society to travel abroad, which actually made them more keen on holding steady academic jobs and teaching privately or in institutions. Women are also generally considered more reliable educators, because they fall outside the category of possible harassers for young students.²⁸ Although there isn’t still a definition for a woman guru in India, nowadays they have become important music teachers as much as men.

Basically, *thumrī* has been a great means to professional realization for North Indian female artists during a crucial historical time, and this allowed the singers who lived in between courtly society and Independence to bring it to its maximum magnificence then, but as soon as it served its scope, most women artists wanted to move away from the semiclassical genres and relegate them to easier and shorter conclusions in classical concerts. The few ones who can still bring the *thumrī* tradition forward in its own right are the artists who have been able to retain its expressive peculiarity and classical traits without expecting it to fossilise in its old format, as a great feature of *thumrī* has proved to be adaptability. It is the case of the great *thumrī* specialist Girija Devi (1929-2017),

²⁷ Raja, Deepak, “The influence of amplification and recording technologies on Hindustani Music”, *cit.*

²⁸ It is not uncommon to find some male *gurus* in India who consider it normal to expect sexual favours from female students, especially if they come from the traditional music families.

who had elaborated her personal performing style of this genre, through which she would literally depict the lyrics in a melodic representation.

Another field where courtesans reinvented their identity was the upcoming film industry. Initially, most of the music and dance repertoire in Hindi movies was delivered by them, this is why dance and vocal music retained their connection in that context, although the trick to adapt it to the middle class audience was to shape the female vocals in a very childish high pitch, also made possible by the amplification technology. This kind of vocals began in turn to influence even classical female singers in the last century, as they privileged virtuosic *tān*-s (fast scales) rather than melodic exploration and expression.

Courtesans set the trend of the acting style in popular Indian cinema, but the more these movies became popular, the more their music lost a traditional connotation and any similarity with semiclassical music. Even the bourgeois actress/dancer could differentiate her role from that of the singer thanks to playback technology.

Generally speaking, amplification technology has created more distance between the performer and the audience, even encouraging the development of a star system, and this has deeply affected the nature of *rāg* music.²⁹ In regards to this, *dhrupad* singer Uday Bhawalkar stated in a recent interview³⁰ that sound check and microphones usually interrupt the mood established in the green room, which is essential in performing a *rāg*. He has then added, anyway, that the interaction with the audience is not created by closeness with it, but by the artist's connection with the *rāg* itself, thus the process would only be a little different, but not made totally impossible.

For professional women singers at the beginning of the 20th century the distance from the audience created by new sound

²⁹ Raja, Deepak, "The influence of amplification and recording technologies on Hindustani Music", *cit.*

³⁰ Uday Bhawalkar: *A brief Encounter*, video interview for First Edition Arts, October 2017,

https://www.facebook.com/firsteditionarts/videos/1168120663332973/?hc_ref=ARRx-t2jr1FNzZQ7WD45SR5qcFzD0HrIL4cYWBILQNiguuPjzfHrAgXvOHQJ1X8UNNU.

technology was actually quite useful to help them shape a new identity for themselves. In fact, speed and improvisation techniques were not the only differences between fast and slow *ṭhumrī*. In courts, it was meant for dance, thus the lyrics were rich in description of a scene, using a rhetorical literary language and serving as material for rhythmic manipulations. The compositions were a celebration of the skilled (male) composer and an erotic adulation of the recipient/patron.

Ethnomusicologist Paul D. Greene describes the practice of some professional male performers in South India of faking the feelings of genuine female weepers in order to prevent women from expressing their actual voice.³¹ This was also the case of *ṭhumrī* in courts where male composers used to describe women's feelings and have them represented as stereotyped by courtesans to the amusement of the patron.

In order to remove any connection with the courtly milieu, slow *ṭhumrī* never comes with a composer's name³² and it shows a simpler folkish language allowing greater elaboration on the emotive content. This shifts the focus on the interpreter as she no longer needs to fake the feelings for a patron. Other specific features of *bol banāo kī ṭhumrī* communication are the frequent use of the figure of a confidante who can listen to the heroine's pain, and the freedom to insert exclamations such as *oh!*, *e!*, *rī!*, *erī!*, *hāy!* etc. I argue that these do not particularly reflect the need to interact with the audience in a more distant context than the court, but rather the request for the singer's voice to be heard. *Bol banāo kī ṭhumrī* lyrics are also based much more on the feeling of separation than those of fast *ṭhumrī*³³ and the slow pace and expression of sorrow for a distant lover make this genre a perfect means of self-expression for these women in search of recognition. As over-stressed self-expression is considered unwanted in classical music and somehow socially beyond control, once again this feminine

³¹ Greene, Paul D., "Professional Weeping Music, Affect and Hierarchy in a South Indian Folk Performance Art", *Ethnomusicology OnLine* 5, 1999, https://www.umd.edu/eol/5/greene/Greene_0.htm.

³² Du Perron, Lalita, *Hindi poetry in a musical genre – ṭhumrī lyrics*, cit., p. 76.

³³ Du Perron, Lalita, *ibid.*, p. 37.

voice has often been disguised as a devotional, rather than secular, representation.

After the disc era, cinema, radio and television followed. Of these, certainly radio had the most impact on Hindustani music allowing the broadcast of longer live performances, with the All India Radio offering a steady income to many musicians. After LPs, India saw a much later advent of musicassetes and CDs, but these ones mostly affected the pop and folk music scenes.³⁴ What is actually making a certain difference nowadays for Indian art music is the Internet through social media and sharing platforms such as Youtube, Facebook, Instagram and the like. Until the arrival of the World Wide Web, Hindustani music was known abroad mainly thanks to touring artists, but nowadays anyone from anywhere can listen to, or even watch, a lengthy live performance. Moreover social media are intuitive means of self-promotion for artists who no longer have to depend on third parties for advertising.

We still have to see where this globalization of the market will lead Hindustani music to, but although many complain about the end of the recording market due to the Internet, I am hopeful that the global platform will open the niche of Hindustani music to a new audience and in a less limited format than that of a disc or CD. This is specifically a new chance for Indian women singers, as they tend to tour abroad much less, and have therefore been less known outside India until now.

³⁴ Manuel, Peter, *Thumri in historical and stylistic perspectives, cit.*, p. 74; Manuel, Peter, "The cassette industry and popular music in North India", *Popular Music vol. 10/2*, 1991, pp. 190-91; Manuel, Peter, "The regional North Indian Popular Music Industry in 2014: from Cassette Culture to cyber culture", *Popular Music 33*, pp. 389-412.

MASSIMO VAI

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT VEDIC SUBORDINATION

In a famous article in KZ 33 (1895), Eduard Hermann wondered whether there could be subordinate clauses in Indo-European. His argument is especially based in searching for features which possibly distinguished main clauses from subordinate ones in various Indo-European languages. Finally, Hermann 1895, 504 claims that no features existed in Indo-European to clearly distinguish main clauses from subordinate ones. For instance, the Vedic accent (*udātta* tone) which characterizes all the verbs in subordinate clauses, should have arisen where it was not yet a subordination mark, but in some cases it was only a marker that distinguished between verbs in the context of contrast. This fact can still be seen in Vedic in several examples:

MS 2.5.1

sóma	evā_smai	réto	dádhāti
Soma-NOM	PTC_to-him-CL	seed-ACC	√dhā-3SG
pūṣā	paśūn	prájanayati	
Pūṣan-NOM	creatures-ACC	PREV-√jan-CS3SG	

“Soma supplies him with seed, (whereas) Pūṣan completes creation”

In this case, the verb of the first clause **dádhāti** is accented, although it does not occur in a subordinate clause: the accent is present due to the contrast with the verb **prájanayati** in the second clause, accented on the preverb, but not on the verb, as is usual for main clauses.

According to Hermann, the position of the verb in the clause also does not play a crucial part in distinguishing main from subordinate clauses. This was because, according to the rule pinpointed by Delbrück 1878, the verb moves towards the beginning of the sentence from its normal position at the end of the sentence, in cases where it receives a particular “emphasis” (see Vai 2016).

However, as regards the existence of relative pronouns (and relative clauses) in Indo-European, Hermann (1912: 341) seems to take an opposing view to what was expressed in Hermann (1895: 492), as Bonfante (1930: 4) also pointed out.

A century after Hermann 1895, Kiparsky 1995 asks the same question:

On the evidence of Vedic, Greek, and Hittite, the Indo-European proto-language had two left-peripheral operator positions corresponding to those in Hale (1987) [...] However, it lacked the category of complementizer and had no syntactically embedded sentences. Finite subordinate clauses, including relative clauses and sentential complements, were syntactically adjoined to the main clause, exhibiting “main-clause properties”, such as topicalization of constituents to clause-initial position.

However, this last approach has been superseded by Rizzi’s *Left Periphery Theory*,¹ according to which topic and focus (and related projections) are no longer considered as specific to main clauses alone.

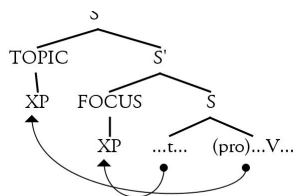
Kiparsky 1995, 141 adds these remarks:

In most daughter languages, including those of the Germanic family, subordinate clauses became syntactically embedded, taking up argument or modifier positions within the main clause, losing their main-clause properties and becoming headed by C° [...] *Id.Ib.*, 153:

¹ Rizzi 1997.

As in Germanic, Indo-European had two left-peripheral operator positions. As in Germanic, the inner of these positions hosted focal elements, in particular *wh*-phrases (relative and interrogative) and other focused elements, such as demonstratives [...] The key difference is that there were no complementizers, and therefore no CP, and no embedding.

This is the scheme Kiparsky proposed to illustrate his hypothesis:



Vedic clauses introduced by yád.

Vedic clauses introduced by *yád* (morphologically identical to relative pronoun neuter) correspond semantically to propositions of several functions. However, differently from the homophone pronoun *yád*, this kind of *yád* does not take the place of an argument of the clause in which it occurs, as instead happens in the following example:

RV 1.179.3

ná	mṛṣā	śrāntám	yád	ávanti	devā
NEG	vain	labor-NOM	REL-ACC	√av-3PL	gods-NOM

“Not in vain is the labor that the gods help”.

In this case, in fact, *yád* is co-referential to the subject *śrāntám*, but has the function of the object of *ávanti*. However, in cases when *yád* introduces the sentences, this element is not an argument of the proposition. This also happens in Italian where (*il fatto*) *che* (lit.: “the fact that”) can introduce sentences

in which the arguments of the verbs are already completely saturated, e.g.:

il fatto che Gianni ha mangiato la pizza mi rallegra.
Lit.: “the fact that Gianni ate the pizza makes me happy”.

As compared to:

il fatto che Gianni mi ha raccontato mi rallegra.
Lit.: “the fact that Gianni told me makes me happy”.

In Vedic too we can find cases analogous to the first, in which what formally appears as the neuter of the relative *ya-* is not the subject of the verb:

RV 1.164.23

yád	gāyatré	ádhi	gāyatrám	āhitam
yád	gāyatrī-line-LOC	PREV ²	gāyatrī-hymn-NOM	PREV-√dhā-P.P.
traīṣṭubhād	vā	traīṣṭubham	nirátakṣata	
triṣṭubh-line-ABL	CJ-CL	triṣṭubh-line-NOM	PREV-√takṣ-IMPF3SG.ATM	
yád	vā	jágaj	jáगत्य	āhitam
yád	CJ-CL	jagatī-line-NOM	jagatī-hymn-LOC	PREV-√dhā-P.P. foot-NOM
yá	ít	tád	vidús	té
REL-NOM.PL	PTC	DEM-N.SG	√vid-PF3PL	DEM-NOM.PL
			immortality-ACC	√amś-PF3PL

“(The fact) that the *gāyatrī* line is based upon a *gāyatrī* hymn or that a *triṣṭubh* line was fashioned out of a *triṣṭubh* hymn, or that the *jagatī* line is based on the *jagatī* hymn, only those who know this have reached immortality”.

In this case, the arguments of *ā-√dhā-* and *nis-√takṣ-* are the verses *gayatrī*, *tristubh*, *jagatī* and the corresponding hymns composed in these metres: in this case *yád* is not an argument of the sentence, but introduces the propositions whose content is resumed with *tád* in the main clause.

To sum up: in these cases, *yád* is not an argument of the proposition which it introduces: *yád* seems to behave as an introducer of particular types of sentences which Hettrich 1988, 395, on the basis of Delbrück 1900, 324, classifies as

² For the notion of “preverb”, see Booij-van Kemenade 2003.

Explikativsätze of temporal, conditional, causal, final, concessive and explanatory value.

As seen in the first examples, these sentences may depend on a noun, for which they provide an explanation:

RV 1.94.14

tát te bhadráṃ yát sámiddhaḥ své dáme
 this of-you-CL.benefit *yád* PREV-√idh-P.P.own-LOC house-LOC
 sómāhuto járase mṛṣayáttamaḥ
 sóma-ā-√hu-P.P. √*h₁ger³-2SG.ATM most-merciful-NOM
 “This is your benefit, that, kindled in your own house and bepouring
 with soma, you remain wakeful as the most merciful”.

According to Delbrück 1900, 324, this value of *yád* has developed from temporal sentences, therefore: “this is your grace (/ benefit / gift), when ...”.

Instead, according to Chantraine (1953: 288) “Les propositions déclaratives sont issues de propositions complétives de cause”. In any case, they are introduced by the neuter *ō* < **H₁od* in Greek too, where *ō* is formally identical to Vedic *yád*.⁴ In general, Delbrück’s opinion⁵ is that “*yád* erscheint bereits im RV als fertige Conjunction, so dass wir ihre Entwicklung aus dem Neutrum des Relativums in dem überlieferten Sanskrit nicht mehr verfolgen können”.⁶

These are other cases where *yád* has an explanatory value:

RV 2.13.11

supravācanām táva vīra vīryam
 good-to-proclaim-NOM your hero-VOC heroism-NOM
yád ékena krátunā vindáse vásu
yád one-STRUM power-STRUM √vid-2SG.ATM good-ACC
 “Your heroism, o hero, is good to proclaim: that with your power
 alone you take possession of goods”.

³ LIV² p. 245; EWAIA p. 574.

⁴ Beekes (2010: 1117).

⁵ Delbrück (1888: 572).

⁶ “*yád* already appears as a complete conjunction in RV, so that we can no longer follow its development from the neuter of the relative pronoun in Sanskrit that has been handed down”.

RV 3.33.7

pravācyam śaśvadhā vīryam tād
 to-be-praised-NOM ever-anew heroic-act-NOM that-NOM
 índrasya kárma yád áhiṃ vivṛścát /
 Indra-GEN deed yád serpent-ACC PREV-√vraśc-INJ3SG
 “This act of heroism is to be proclaimed ever anew, the deed of Indra
 when he hewed apart the serpent”.

In general, these clauses are propositions that can have different values, for example, they can be subjects:

RV 1.93.4

ágniṣomā cēti tād vīryam vām
 Agni-and-Soma-VOC √cit-AOR.PASS-3SG this heroic-deed of-you-two-CL
 yád ámuṣṇītam avasám paṇiṃ gāḥ
 yád √muṣ-IMPF2DU food niggard-ACC cows-ACC
 “Agni and Soma, this heroic deed of you two has become conspicuous, that
 you two stole the food from the niggard, the cows”.

Or these propositions may have the value of an object, *e.g.*:

RV 1.131.4

vidúṣ te asyá vīryasya pūravaḥ
 √vid-PF3PL of-you-CL DEM-GEN deed-GEN Pūru-NOM.PL
 pūro yád indra śāradīr avātiraḥ
 castles-ACC yád Indra-VOC autumnal-ACC PREV-√tī-IMP2SG
 sāsahānó avātiraḥ
 √sah-PT.PF.ATM.NOM PREV-√tī-IMP2SG
 “The Pūrus know of this deed of yours, o Indra, that you brought
 down the autumnal strongholds, being victorious you brought (them)
 down”.

Here the arguments that saturate the verb *ava-√tī-* are: the agent of 2SG (*i.e.*, Indra) and the patient *pur-* “stronghold”; in any case, although *yád* is not the subject of the sentence, it is explanatory with respect to *vīryasya*.

The proposition introduced by *yád* can also have adverbial value, *e.g.*:

RV 1.158.2

kó	vāṃ	dā́sat	sumatáye	cid ⁷	asyaí
who-NOM	you-two-CL	√dās-INJ3SG	favor-DAT	PTC	DEM-DAT
vásū	yád dhéthe	námasā	padé	góḥ	
Vasu-VOC.DU	yád √dhā-SUBJ.AOR.2DU.ATM	homage-STRUM	place-LOC	cow-GEN	

“Who will serve you two for this very favor, when, Vasus, by (his) homage you two will take your place in the place of the cow?”

The explanatory proposition can appear without a nominal head in the main clause: in this case, only a demonstrative pronoun occurs in the main clause, indicating the syntactic function of the explanatory proposition:

RV 5.31.7

tád	ín	nú	te	káranam	dasma	vipra_
this	PTC	now	of-you-CL	deed	wondrous-VOC	poet-VOC
áhiṃ	yád	ghnánn	ójo	átr_ámimīthāḥ /		
serpent-ACC	yád	√han-PT.PR.NOM	strength	there_√mā-IMPF2SG		

“Just this now is your deed, wondrous poet: that smashing the serpent, you measured your strength there”.

Here the cataphoric *tád* in the main clause indicates that the explanatory proposition has the value of a subject.

Sentences in Greek introduced by ὅ may also contain a cataphoric τό/τά in the main clause:

II.1.120

λεῦσσετε γὰρ τό γε πάντες ὅ μοι γέρας ἔρχεται ἄλλῃ.
 “For you all see this, (**Hiod*) that my prize goes elsewhere”.

II.19.421

εἶ νυ τό οἶδα καὶ αὐτὸς ὅ μοι μῶρος ἐνθάδ’ ὀλέσθαι

⁷ Lühr (2016: 284-5): “The accentless and thus unstressed focus particle *cid* ‘even’ is a scalar focus particle assigning to its domain an extreme position on a scale formed by its contextually relevant alternatives”.

“I well know this even of myself, (**Hiod*) that it is my fate to perish here”.

Il. 9.493

τῷ φρονέων ὄ μοι οὐ τι θεοὶ γόνον ἐξετέλειον

“Thinking this, (**Hiod*) that the gods did not grant me a son”.

However, different authors have interpreted the same facts in various ways. Thus, according to Speyer 1896, 87: “Der *yad*-Satz ist ein Inhaltssatz [...] Dieser Typus ist ved. und skt”.

Speyer quotes some Vedic examples, *e.g.*:

RV 8.62.8

gṛṇé	tád	indra	te	śáva	upamám	devátātaye
√gṛ-1SG.ATM	that	Indra-VOC	of-you-CL	strength	utmost	godhead-DAT
yád	dhámsi	vṛtrám	ójasā		śacīpate	
yád	√han-2SG	Vṛtra-ACC	might-STRUM		lord-of-might-VOC	

“I praise that utmost strength of yours, Indra, for the divine assembly, that you smash Vṛtra with your might, o lord of might”.

Speyer observes that the demonstrative in the main clause is often lacking with verbs of knowing, thinking, believing, etc., with which *yád* introduces an object clause, *e.g.*:

Ch. Up. 4.10.5

vijānāmy	aham	yat	prāṇo	brahma			
PREV-√jñā-1SG	I	yád	life-NOM	<i>Brahman</i>			
kaṃ	ca	tu	khaṃ	ca	na	vijānāmi	iti
ka	CJ-CL	PTC	kha	CJ-CL	NEG	PREV-√jñā-1SG	íti

“I understand that Brahman is life. But I do not understand [that Brahman is] *ka* and *kha*”.⁸

Kaṭha Up. 1.1.22

devair	atr	āpi	vicikitsitam	kila		
gods-STRUM	here	even	vi-√cit-DES.PPP	PTC		
tvaṃ	ca	mṛtyo	yan	na	sujñeyam	āttha
you	CJ-CL	death-VOC	yád	NEG	easy-to-understand	√ah-PF2SG

⁸ Radhakrishnan (1994: 413): “I understand that life is Brahman. But joy and ether I do not understand”.

“Even the gods had doubt, indeed, as to this, and thou, O Death, sayest that it is not easy to understand”.⁹

Contrary to Delbrück and Speyer, Haudry 2012, 22-23, quoting the last two examples, claims: “La proposition complétive conjonctive régime d’un verbe de ce genre est totalement inconnue en védique, y compris dans la prose, et n’apparaît pas avant les *Upaniṣad*”. Moreover, Davison 2009b: 286 argues that the use of the relative form *joo* as a complementizer is an innovation of Neo-Indo-Aryan (see below). However, as we have already seen in the above-mentioned cases of *yād*, this does not seem to be such a late innovation.

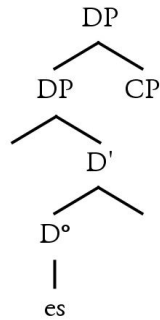
It may be possible that the occurrence of the correlate demonstrative pronoun makes Rigvedic completive sentences look less prototypical than other subordinate clauses. However, in this case, the problem should also arise for some modern Indo-European languages which use cataphoric pronouns co-indexed with the subordinate clauses, *e.g.*:¹⁰

weil Peter **es** bedauert, **dass** er krank ist

Various analyses have been proposed for these sentences, among which:

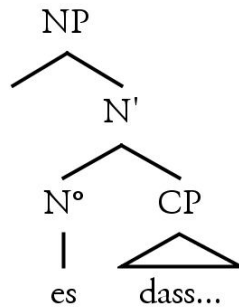
⁹ Radhakrishnan (1994: 604).

¹⁰ Sudhoff (2016: 23-24).

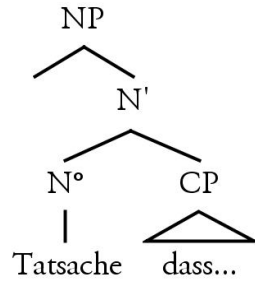


According to this analysis, DP is the place of adjunction of the subordinate clause. However, according to Sudhoff (2016: 27), this analysis does not consider the fact that the subordinate clause in this representation is an adjunct, rather than an argument of the sentence.

Thus, Müller's analysis¹¹ - adapted by Sudhoff (2016: 28) - would be preferable:



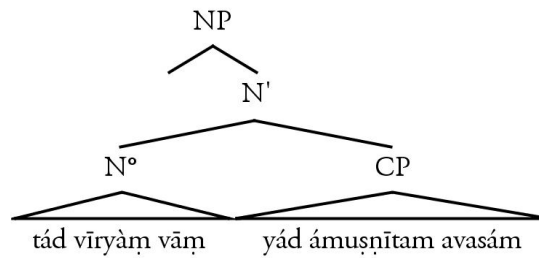
¹¹ Müller (1995: 231).



In this analysis, the sentence introduced by *dass* reverts to being a possible argument of the superordinate sentence. It is thus no longer an adjunct, but a complement of a nominal head – the argument of the proposition – which houses the element *es*.

The same analysis could also be applied to the sentences introduced by *yád* in Vedic and *ὅ* in Greek: these sentences are complements of the arguments *tád*, *τό* which are contained in the superordinate clause, e.g.:

RV 1.93.4



J- complementizers in Middle Indo-Aryan.

The reluctance to attribute true subordinate clauses to Old Indian also continued in successive phases of Indo-Aryan. For instance, Davison 2009b: 286 starts from the assumption: “As classical Sanskrit continued to be used as a literary language for many centuries, and there are no known texts surviving from the intermediate period between Middle Indic and the early modern language, it is very hard to define a chronology before the seventeenth century”. Thus, according to Davison, the first documentation useful for this purpose is a text in Braj Bhasha: “One of the earliest modern texts from a variety of Hindi, Braj Bhasha, show two changes. One is that a relative form *joo* is used as a complementizer introducing a complement clause”:¹²

so	tānasena-nē	kahī	[jo	[jīnanē	yaha	kīrtana
this	Tansen-ERG	say-PF	that	rel-ERG	this	hymn
kiyau	hai,]	so	braja	mē	rahata	hai]
do-PF	is	that	Braj	in	stay-IMPF	is

“Tansen said that the one who made this hymn lives in Braj”.

Davison quotes this example to show the presence of the complementizer *jo*, and, moreover, that the placement of the relative clause introduced by *jīnanē* follows the complementizer. This shows that the relative clause is added to TP, hence below CP: “I take this example to mean that Braj Bhasha of this period had syntactic subordination, with the relative *joo* reanalysed as a lexical non-relative complementizer [...] This trend continues with the borrowing of Persian *ke/ki* as a lexical complementizer”.

However, at least the presence of the complementizer *jo* can already be traced back to apabhramśa which, according to Chatterji (1986: 87) and Sen (1973: 11; 25),¹³ is closely related to the Neo-Indo-Aryan languages.

In Hemacandra’s grammar¹⁴ we find *e.g.*:

¹² Davison (2009b: 287). The example is quoted from Snell (1991: 71). I follow Davison’s analysis, but use Snell’s transliteration.

¹³ See also Nara (1979: 2-3).

¹⁴ Cardona-Jain (2003: 211).

Hc 351, 1¹⁵

bhallā	huā	ju	māriā	bahiṇi	mahārā	kantu
samyag	bhūtaṃ	yan	mārito	he bhaginy	asmākam	kāntaḥ
properly	was	<i>yād</i>	was-killed	o sister	our	beloved

lajjejjantu		vayaṃsyahu
alajjishyata	vayasyābhyo	vayasyānām vā
would-be-ashamed		with-friends

jai	bhaggā	gharu	entu
yadi	bhagno	ham	âgamishyat
If	defeated	home	would-come

“It was well, o sister, that my beloved was killed. He would be ashamed in the presence of my friends, if he had returned home defeated”.

Hc 418, 2¹⁶

kantu	ju	sīhaho	uvamiai	taṃ	mahu	kaṇḍiu	māṇu
kānto	yat	siṃhasyo	pamīyate	tan	mama	khaṇḍito	mānaḥ
beloved	<i>yād</i>	to-lion	is-compared	for-this	of-me	is-broken	pride

sīhu	nirakkhaya	gaya	haṇai	piu	paya-rakkha-samāṇu
siṃho	arakṣakān	gajān	hanti	priyaḥ	padarakṣān samānam
lion	unguarded	elephants	kills	lover	bodyguards together

“(The fact) (*yad*) that my beloved is compared to a lion, that (*tad*) puts down my pride: for a lion kills unguarded elephants, my lover (kills them) along with bodyguards”.

In both cases the Sanskrit translation of apabhraṃśa *ju* is *yad*, therefore a neuter, which in this context should only be a complementizer with an explanatory value “(the fact) that”. See also Pischel (1981: 356): “§427. The relative pronoun *ja-* [...]”

¹⁵ Hc 351, 1 = Vaidya (1954: 284); Pischel (1877: 157; 1880: 188): “Es ist gut, o schwester, dass mei geliebter getödtet worden ist”. Er würde sich vor der freundinnen schämen, wenn er gebrochen (*i.e.* besiegt) nach hause käme”. Sen (1973: 129): “It was well, O sister, that my husband was killed. He would put it to shame in the presence of my friends, if he had returned home defeated.”

¹⁶ Hc 418, 2 = Vaidya (1954: 256): “*padarakṣaiḥ samam*”; Pischel (1877: 173; 1880: 213-214): “Dass der geliebte mit einen löwen geglichert wird, der stolz (darauf) ist mich zu nichte gemacht”. Der löwe tödtet unbewachte elephanten, der geliebte ebenso die elephantenwärter”. Sen (1973: 137): “It puts down my pride (it ashes me) that my lover is compared to a lion; for a lion kills elephants without watchman, while my lover kills them along with bodyguards.”

In the nom. acc. sing. neut. A[pabhraṁśa] has *ju* too (Hc. 4, 350, 1; 418, 2) [...].

A similar use of *jo* is present in Hindi too. Some grammars report a use of the relative *jo* as a conjunction, which is a recessionary use now, but more widespread in Nineteenth Century literature (see e.g. Caracchi 1996, 229). This kind of *jo* may have conditional value (“if”, often in the correlation *jo...to*); a final and consecutive value and it may also correspond to the Italian complementizer *che* (“that”):

acchā	huā	jo	ve	log	cale	gae
good	was	that	they	PLUR	moved	went

“It was good that they went away”.

Coexistence of complementizer and quotative in some Indo-Aryan languages.

In some modern Indo-Aryan languages there is a formal and syntactic distinction between a complementizer to the left of a sentence and a quotative placed on the right. For instance, in Bengali, a complementizer *je* and a quotative *bole* are distributed according to the following scheme (from Bayer 2001):

[[V [*je* S]]
[[S *bole*] V]

Here V is the verb of the main clause and S is the sentence introduced by *je/bole*, see also Thompson 2012: 238-239.

It is clear that the quotative *bole* is a grammaticalized form of the verb “to say”, whereas the origin of *je* is the subject of much discussion.

According to Bloch 1965: 310-312: “Old Sanskrit has two procedures for denoting subordination: 1) the use of the subjunctive, which in this case has no modal value, and becomes just a grammatical tool [...]; 2) The accentuation of the verb [...] Classical Sanskrit and middle Indian have no longer any grammatical process for denoting subordination.

Clauses introduced by the relative *yat* and by the other relative adverbs *yavat*, *yadi*, *yathā*, etc. are formed as if they were independent [...] The meaning of the particles has hardly yet been evolved: even in *yat* which comes the nearest to a true particle, the relative sense is still on the surface; its use after the verbs “to say, believe, know” is not generalized”. In particular, as far as Marathi is concerned, Bloch (1970: 285) claims that: “Only during the modern epoch has been formed a sort of subordinate proposition opening, either with *jem* (cf. Skr. *yat*) “that” following the principal one, or with *kim* “that”. [...] Nowadays *jem* in this usage has gone out of use but it does not necessarily follow that *jem* preceded *kim*. It is probable that the latter conjunction was the model for the other. Whatever the case may be, *kim* in Marathi is probably borrowed from the Hindustani *ki*”. However, no agreement has been reached regarding the origin of *ki*: for instance, according to Meenakshi 1986, *kim* should be traced back to a Middle-Indo-Aryan *kimti*, which itself finally goes back to Old Indian *kim + iti*.

Indirect interrogative sentences introduced by ya-

In Vedic the non-frequent indirect (subordinate) interrogative sentences are introduced by pronouns or adverbs from the theme *ya-*, so it is not always easy to distinguish them from true relative sentences (see Etter 1985, 195).

Delbrück 1888, 569 adopts the following criterion for verbs such as *e.g.* “to say”. He considers interrogative subordinate sentences as being those clauses in which the subject generally does not agree with the demonstrative pronoun of the main clause, or when the demonstrative pronoun is completely lacking.

He thus considers the following as a true relative clause:

RV 1.170.1

kás tád veda yád ádbhutam
 INT-NOM.SG DEM-N √vid-PF3SG ya-N wonder-N
 “who knows what is wonder?”.

Whereas, the following example results as an indirect interrogative sentence:

RV 8.92.18

vidmā hí yás te adrivas
 √vid-pf1pl PTC ya-NOM of-you-CL armed-with-stone-VOC
 tvādattaḥ satya somapāḥ
 by-you-given-NOM true-VOC drinker-of-Soma
 “For we know what of yours was given by you – possessor of the stone, real drinker of soma”.

In some cases the sentence containing ya- depends on the verb *prach-* “to ask”.¹⁷

RV 1.145.2

tám ít prchanti ná simó ví prchati
 him-ACC PTC √prach-3PL NEG himself-NOM PREV √prach-3SG
 svéne_ya dhíro mánasā yád ágrabhīt
 own-STRUM_like clever-NOM mind-STRUM ya-ACC.N √grabh-AOR3SG
 “They ask him, (but) he himself does not ask (in turn), what he has grasped, like a clever man, with his own mind”.

Hettrich 1988, 522 adopts this similar criterion in order to differentiate between relative and indirect interrogative sentences in Latin:

Plautus, *Captivi* 1-2

[*Hos quos videtis stare hic captivos duos*];

†*illi qui astant, hi, stant ambo, non sedent*

“These two captives, whom you see standing here, those who are standing, they are both standing, and are not sitting”.

¹⁷ Etter (1985: 200).

Even though the correlate pronoun is rarely expressed in indirect questions, whenever it is present, it appears as the neutral *id*. This is because it is not just the correlate of a phrase, as in the case of relative clauses, but also of the entire interrogative sentence:

Plautus, *Stichus* 363

Tum tu igitur [qua causa missus es¹⁸ ad portum]i id_i expedi
 “So then, you, explain this to me, why you were sent to the port”.

Returning to Vedic sentences and applying this criterion, Hettrich 1988, 524 believes that it is possible to ascribe the indirect interrogative meaning to the following sentence introduced by *ya-*:

KS 7.15 (69.2)

na	hi	tad	veda	yam	ṛtum	abhijāyate
NEG	PTC	this	√vid-PF3SG	ya-ACC	time-ACC	PREV-√jā-3SG
yan		nakṣatram				
ya-ACC		constellation-ACC				

“Because he does not know at what time of the year he will be born, under what constellation”

In fact, in this case, the neuter *tád* is cataphoric with respect to the whole sentence introduced by *ya-*.

Homeric Greek also has some sentences containing a **Hio*-pronoun which can be analyzed as indirect interrogative sentences. In this regard, Schwyzer observes that indirect interrogative sentences may not only be dependent on “to ask”, but also on other verbs, such as “to say” and “to know”.¹⁹ Chantraine 1963, 238 quotes the following example:

¹⁸ See Bennett (1910: 120).

¹⁹ Schwyzer (1950: 631): “Vor indirekten Frage stehen aber nicht nur Verba des Fragens, sondern auch des Sagens (Zeigens) und Wissens, z.B. *ich kann dir sagen* (oder *ich weiss*), wer du bist, weiter des Hörens, Überlegens u.a.; so griech. εἰπεῖν, (οὐκ) εἰδέναί, ἀκούειν (bes. Imper.), αἰσθάνεσθαι, μερμηρίζειν, σκοπεῖν, φροντίζειν u.a. Nach den Verba εἰπεῖν usw. (γνώμεναι, ἰδεῖν, τὸν νοῦν προσέχειν, δῆλον) stehen auch εἰ, ἕάν, ἦν, εἶτε - εἶτε, ob (oder ob)”.

Π. 2.365-366

γνώση ἔπειθ' ὅς θ' ἡγεμόνων κακὸς ὅς τέ νυ λαῶν
ἦδ' ὅς κ' ἐσθλὸς ἔησι

“You will know then who among your captains is a coward, and who among your men, and who too is brave”.

Davison (2009b: 281) claims that: “Sanskrit has several ways of marking sentential complements: simple parataxis of the complement clause, prefixation or suffixation of the quotative *iti* ‘thus’, or else the interrogative complement is put in relative form, with an interrogative interpretation [...] So Sanskrit expresses a semantic selection relation, but this selection relation can be expressed syntactically in Vedic Sanskrit only by the very general CP-CP adjunction, sanctioned by the relative form of one of the clauses”. As a result, syntactic subordination should be absent in Sanskrit. In particular, Davison (2009a: 232) claims that: “Interrogative subordinate clauses cannot be marked as interrogative. [...] If a question is in a dependent complement clause, Vedic Sanskrit substitutes a relative *y*-determiner for the *k*-interrogative [...]”.

We also find the relative pronoun in cases of indirect interrogative sentences in Homeric Greek. This use may have been determined by reasons of general semantic ambiguity between relative and indirect interrogative sentences.

Moreover, Viti (2007: 220) interprets the same use as an incipient syntactic change from a non-embedded to an embedded completive clause, since, in her opinion, indirect interrogative clauses are the only subordinates with a completive function that commonly present an embedded structure in the *Rig-Veda*.²⁰

On the other hand, Hock (1982: 44) claims that an indirect question in Vedic may also be introduced by an interrogative pronoun, *e.g.*:

²⁰ Viti (2007: 220): “This syntactic change from a non-embedded completive clause [...] to an embedded completive clause [...] presumably starts from indirect interrogative clauses [...], which are the only subordinates with a completive function that commonly present an embedded structure in the *Rig-Veda*”.

RV 8.33.7

ká īṃ veda suté sácā
 int-NOM him-ACC √vid-PF3SG pressing-LOC together
 pībantaṃ kád váyo dadhe
 √pā-PT.PR.ACC INT-ACC vigor-ACC √dhā-3SG.ATM

Hock: “Who knows of him [...] what strength he puts on”.

Geldner: “Wer kennt ihn beim Soma, wenn er trinkt, welche Stärke er annimmt?”.

But Jamison-Brereton: “Who recognizes him when he drinks when (the soma) is pressed? What vigor has he assumed?”

In this case, the indirect interrogative should be contained in a direct interrogative clause. However, the clause *kád váyo dadhe* cannot be analyzed as a subordinate clause, because the verb *dadhe* is unaccented. Etter 1985, 195 believes that in these cases there may be a semantic relation between the sentences of the text, which, however, is not formally expressed.

Interrogative sentences introduced by prach + iti, cfr. Delbrück (1900: 272).

The verb *prach-* “to ask” can also select an interrogative sentence containing the quotative *īti*:

RV 10.34.6

sabhám eti kitaváh pṛchámāno
 gambling-house-ACC √i-3SG gambler-NOM √prach-PT.PR.ATM-NOM
 jeṣyām īti
 √ji-FUT1SG_QUOT

“The gambler goes to the gambling-house asking himself, “will I win?”

As opposed to Vedic Sanskrit, Davison 2009a: 233 observes that Hindi/Urdu has an available subordination marker (*ki*) that distinguishes interrogative and also other complement types as being syntactically distinct from main clauses.

Benveniste’s idea 1958, 47 suggests a *reductio ad unum* of the previously described cases, according to which **yo-* assumes the role of a definite article: in this way, the sentence introduced by this element assumes the function of a proposition

with the function of a substantive, which could be adapted to both the role of a relative clause and to that of an indirect interrogative sentence.

Questions about minimality.

In order to show the substantial divide between the syntax of Old Indian and Hindi/Urdu, Davison 2009a: 235 uses the analysis of a sentence quoted in Delbrück 1888: 550:

ŚB 4.1.5.4

yát kím ákaraṃ tásmād idám ápadi

Eggeling: “This has come to pass for something or other I have done!”

It should be noticed that, according to Speyer (1896: 87): “*yad* hat ganz die Bedeutung des causalen “weil”. Hier ist *tasmād*, *tena*, in B. auch *etad* correlative”, *e.g.*:

ŚB 4.1.5.7

yán n āvedīṣaṃ tēnā himsiṣaṃ (*yad...tena*)

yád NEG_√vid-AOR.1SG DEM-STRUM_√hims-AOR1SG

Eggeling: “Because I knew thee not, therefore have I offended thee”.

According to Davison 2009a: 233 minimality violations in Hindi/Urdu (and in other languages like English and Italian), including violations of the Complex NP condition, prevent the questioned phrase from being extracted from a relative clause.

In general, minimality concerns the satisfactory formation of chains between displaced elements and their respective traces (or silent copies), *e.g.*:

How did you solve the problem <how>?

but:

*How do you wonder who could solve this problem <how>?

Rizzi formally defined minimality in 1990; 2001:

Y is in a Minimal Configuration (MC) with X if there is no Z such that:

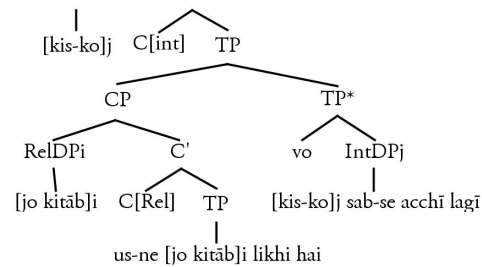
- (i) Z is of the same structural type as X, and
- (ii) Z intervenes between X and Y

Davison 2009a: 233 notes that in Hindi, an interrogative phrase can be extracted from the main clause, but not from the correlative sentence, *e.g.*:

	[[jo	kitab] _i	us-ne	t _i	likhī	hai]	vo
REL	book	him/her-ERG	write-PF-PT	is	that (one)		
	kis-ko	sab-se	acchī	lagī?			
INT-DAT	all-from	good	seemed				

“Who likes best the book [that he/she wrote]?”

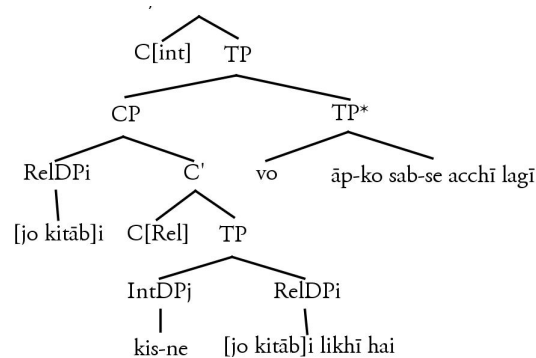
According to Davison 2009a, 234 this sentence is grammatical in Hindi because “the relative DP, *RelDP_i* has a copy in the nearest CP projection, which is typed as a relative clause”. The relative clause [[*jo kitab*]_i *us-ne t_i likhī hai*] is adjoined to TP*, containing an interrogative *in situ* (*kis-ko*). According to Davison 2009a: 234 “The TP structure is the complement of a C[Int], with a copy of the interrogative phrase, *IntDP_j* in its specifier”, *i.e.*, in the specifier of the interrogative phrase, at LF. “This specifier is the closest such position to the interrogative phrase. This conforms to Rizzi’s (1990) Minimality requirement”, because there is no Z such that: i) Z is of the same structural type as X, and ii) Z intervenes between X and Y. Thus the whole clause is projected as a question, and the restrictive relative is interpreted within the scope of the question. The syntagmatic representation is the following:



On the contrary, in the following sentence, which is ungrammatical in Hindi, both *RelDP_i* and *IntDP_j* originate in the same TP, which is projected as a relative clause:

*[jo kitāb_i kis-ne t_i likhī hai] vo
 REL book int-erg write-PF-PT is that (one)
 āp-ko sab-se acchī lagī?
 You-DAT all-from good seemed
 Davison: “*Who_j did You like best the book [that t_j wrote]?”

The structural representation should be the following:

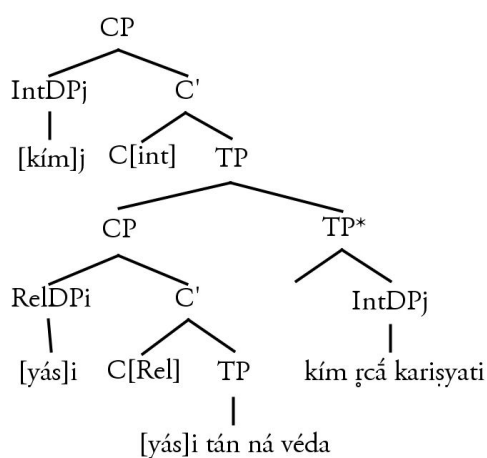


In this ill-formed sentence, both RelDP_i (*jo kitāb*) and IntDP_j (*kis-ne*) originate in the same TP, which is projected as a relative clause. Davison 2009a: 235 observes that: “Nothing is wrong with the relation between the relative specifier and RelDP_i ; this is the closest specifier position. But the interrogative, IntDP_j is copied to a specifier position which is not the closest to it, as the relative specifier with RelDP_i intervenes”.

However, more than one example exists in Vedic that is also grammatical in Hindi, such as the following:

RV 1.164.39

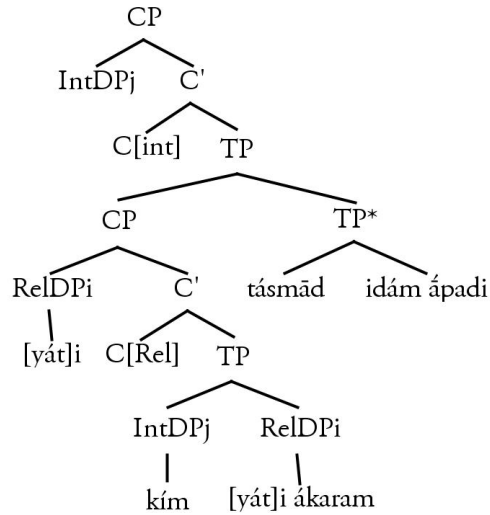
yás tán ná véda kím ṛcā kariṣyati
 REL-NOM.SG DEM-N NEG $\sqrt{\text{vid}}$ -PF3SG INT-N verse-STRUM $\sqrt{\text{kṛ}}$ FUT3SG
 “He who does not know that, what will he accomplish by his verse?”



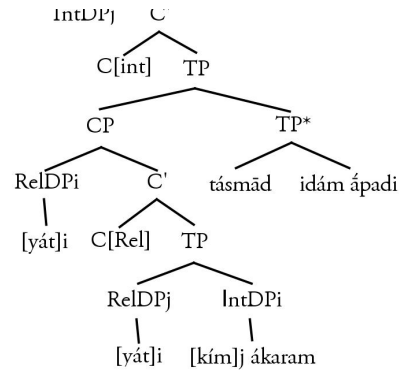
In this case, the specifier to which the relative *yás* moves does not intervene between the interrogative *kím* and its copy in the IntDP .

However, on the basis of the example quoted in Delbrück (1888: 550) (ŚB 4.1.5.4) *yát kím ákaraṃ tásmād idám āpadi*

(lit.: “because I do what?, therefore this happened”), Davison 2009a: 235 argues that unlike Hindi, Sanskrit does not appear to have a minimality contrast, because a relative clause in Sanskrit does not asymmetrically c-command its correlate in TP. If Sanskrit had the same asymmetric adjunction [TP CP TP] as Hindi, we would expect a sentence containing a relative *yád* and an interrogative *kím* in the same subordinate clause to be made ungrammatical by minimality, as shown in the following diagram:

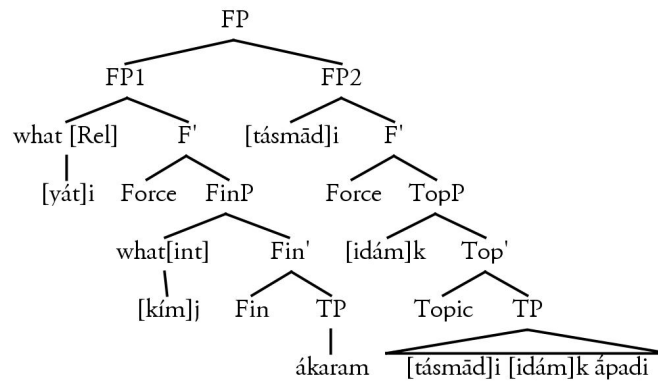


In this ill-formed structure, both RelDP_i (*yád*) and IntDP_j (*kím*) originate in the same TP, which is projected as a relative clause. There is no violation of minimality in the relation between the relative specifier and RelDP_i, because this is the closest specifier position. But the interrogative, IntDP_j is copied (at LF) to a specifier position which is not the closest one to it, since the relative specifier RelDP_i intervenes between the interrogative *kím* and its silent copy. Even if we started from a *yát kím* order in the lower TP, the relative *yád* would intervene between the interrogative *kím* and its silent copy:



In both cases we have: $yát_i \ kím_j \ \dots \ t_i \ t_j$, with a violation of minimality.

In order to separate the operator positions of relatives and questions, Davison resorts to Rizzi's (1997) proposal of *Left Periphery*, according to which a CP projection may be a series of related, but semantically distinct functional projections. In the following diagram (from Davison 2009a: 236), the relative *yád* is placed in ForceP, whereas the interrogative *kím* is in Fin(iteness)P; Top(ic)P and Foc(us)P are projections between ForceP and FinP:



However, Davison 2009a: 236 notes that this diagram also has a minimality violation in FP_1 (the same as in the case of $[TP CP TP]$ structure). There is also a minimality violation in FP_2 , which depends on whether $TopP$ involves operators or not, *i.e.* if *tásmād* and *idám* need to be moved or not, when they are dislocated in the *Left Periphery*, depending on whether they are base-generated *in situ* or not. Finally, this analysis does not take into account that, according to *Relativized Minimality*, the intervening element must be of the “same structural type”: if the *yád* introducing a subordinate clause is a head, there is no minimality violation.

Conclusions

As already claimed by Delbrück 1888, 572, Vedic *yád* already occurs with the value of a subordinating conjunction with the meaning of “(the fact) that”, “when”, “if”, and thus its development cannot be followed starting from the neuter of the relative pronoun. However, it seems that the idea of the lack of a syntactic subordination structure in the Indo-European protolanguage has sometimes also been projected to Vedic and, in general, to Old Indo-Aryan; this leads to the hypothesis that true subordinate clauses were only really created in more recent

phases of Indo-Aryan and through induction from other languages (*e.g.* the borrowing of Persian *ke/ki* as a lexical complementizer, see Davison 2009b: 287).

Co-presence with postponed quotatives has probably contributed to the emergence of this theory, but it is clear that the whole question deserves further consideration, also starting from the data of the Middle-Indian stage and the results of *yád* in the different modern Indo-Aryan languages.

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