

INDIAN PANORAMA IN WROCLAW

PANORAMA INDYJSKA WE WROCLAWIU

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**a volume published to commemorate the 40th anniversary
of the death of Ludwik Skurzak and the 75 years of Indology Studies
in post-war Wrocław**

**tom opublikowany dla upamiętnienia 40. rocznicy śmierci
Ludwika Skurzaka i 75. rocznicy istnienia studiów indologicznych
w powojennym Wrocławiu**

edited by

pod redakcją

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INTRODUCTION

This volume gives us, Indologists from the University of Wrocław's Department of Indian Philology, the opportunity to commemorate two highly important anniversaries in the post-war history of Indology in Wrocław: the 40th anniversary of the death of Professor Ludwik Skurzak (1900–1979) and the 75th anniversary of the foundation of Indology Studies in post-war Wrocław. Professor Ludwik Skurzak, a university teacher and researcher who graduated in History and Oriental Studies from Lwów and Paris, was the founding father of Wrocław's post-war Indology Studies. In July 1945, shortly after the end of the Second World War, he was among the handful who took steps to establish Oriental Studies at the then-budding Polish university in Wrocław. His early efforts at the University of Wrocław went into securing and organising the collection of Indological books previously owned by the German Oriental Institute, which he regrettably found greatly diminished as compared with the preserved catalogue. Ludwik Skurzak was also one of the pioneers whose work resulted in the creation of two Oriental Studies chairs — the Chair of Middle Eastern Studies and the Chair of Indian Philology — at the Faculty of Humanities in August 1945. At the time, both Chairs were headed by Professor Ananiasz Zajączkowski, a Turkologist commuting to Wrocław from Warsaw. However, Poland's communist government did not look kindly on Oriental Studies in Wrocław. The programme was soon reorganised and later terminated, with the Indology institution closed down for several years in the 1950s. This did not discourage Dr Ludwik Skurzak, whose resolve led to the preservation of the post-German library resources in Wrocław and prevented Indology Studies from completely disappearing from the city's academia. After 1956, which marked what is known as the “thaw” in Poland, Indological courses again took off and gradually began to develop. In 1957, an independent Department of Indian Philology was founded, with Professor Skurzak as its Head, only to become structurally incorporated into the Institute of Classical Philology and Ancient Culture (currently the Institute of Classical, Mediterranean and Oriental Studies) in 1969, following the events of March 1968 and the curbing of the autonomy of small teaching and research institutions. Notably, at the very beginning of his academic activity in Wrocław, Ludwik Skurzak managed to launch and ensure

the completion of one cycle of an MA programme in Indology (in the academic years 1947/1948–1951/1952), and thus to educate his student and future successor at the helm of the Department of Indian Philology, Hanna Wałkowska. About three decades later, as a retired Associate Professor of the University of Wrocław, he was less formally involved in the Indological education and PhD project of Joanna Sachse, herself a member of the next generation of Wrocław's Indologists. Sachse studied under and went on to succeed Professor Wałkowska as Head of the Department of Indian Philology. Still, it was not until the following generations of Indologists had completed their studies that a full BA and, shortly afterwards, MA Indology programme was established in Wrocław at the turn of the 2010 s.

This volume also marks the 50th anniversary of the Department of Indian Philology as part of the Institute of Classical, Mediterranean and Oriental Studies. This half-century of the friendly collaboration of Indologists from our Department with colleagues from the Institute's other Departments is particularly worth commemorating, along with the kind support of the authorities of the Institute, the Faculty of Philology and the University of Wrocław, which has helped our Indology division and its staff grow and develop.

The opening papers in this volume reflect the celebration of these various anniversaries as they are dedicated to the memory of Ludwik Skurzak, describe his teaching and research work and recount the pre- and post-war history of Indology Studies in both German Breslau and Polish Wrocław. Appended is also an outline of the academic activity of colleagues from the Department of Indian Philology. In this context, the fact that seven contributions to this volume come from Indologists from our Department appears quite significant.

A more comprehensive commemoration of our important anniversaries was made possible by our colleagues and friends from other Indological and Oriental Studies hubs in Poland and across Europe. With their thematically varied papers, our volume reveals the diversity of Polish and international Indological research and offers a veritably panoramic view of Indology, as heralded in the title. Among the contributors to the *Indian Panorama in Wrocław* are colleagues from all the four Polish universities that boast regular Indology programmes (Warsaw, Cracow, Poznań and Wrocław) and colleagues from other important European Indology centres (such as Zagreb, Sofia and St Petersburg). The volume also features papers by authors based in New Delhi, Warsaw, Cracow, and Wrocław who are either less formally related to or entirely unaffiliated with Indological research centres.

The papers in the *Indian Panorama in Wrocław* address Indian literary studies, linguistics, culture and art, as well as biographical and bibliographical themes. They represent research on Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, Bengali and Romani languages and literatures, as well as modern Indian literature in English. The publication of the volume was preceded by a conference held in Wrocław

on 28th–30th November, 2019 and attended by about forty speakers, including the contributors to this book, who presented the first versions of their papers and took part in discussions on them. In the editing of the volume, we were supported by our fellow Indologists, Polish and European university teachers and researchers, who agreed to review the submissions, enabling our authors to rethink and sometimes hone or expand their manuscripts.

The editors of the *Indian Panorama in Wrocław* would like to express their gratitude to all those who have contributed to the commemoration of the anniversaries which are so relevant to the academic life and activity of the Department of Indian Philology in Wrocław.

Teresa Miązek
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SA MAHĀTMĀ SUDURLABHAḤ:
A REMEMBRANCE OF LUDWIK SKURZAK

Abstract: Ludwik Skurzak (1900–1979) was the outstanding Polish Indologist. He studied theology, history and Indology in Lvov, Rome, Paris and Warsaw. After the Second World War, he settled in Wrocław, where he worked at the University of Wrocław. The main topics of his research were the origin of Indian civilisation, the Greek descriptions (Megasthenes) of early India and the distinctiveness of the civilisation of Magadha.

Keywords: asceticism, ascetics, brahmins, Greek and Latin writings on India, India, Indian law, Magadha, Megasthenes, origin of Indian civilisation, Skurzak, University of Wrocław, Upanishads

Let me start with confessing how deeply moved and honoured I feel to have this opportunity to sketch a portrait of our cherished Professor Ludwik Skurzak. It was my great privilege to meet Professor Skurzak in person. The opportunity to say a few words in the volume dedicated to him revives a lot of memories of him. Right now, I can see Professor Skurzak sitting at his big desk, studying texts, browsing the Monier-Williams and smoking his ever-present pipe...

He was the founder and a long-time head of Indian studies in Wrocław, after the Second World War. He started working at the University of Wrocław in 1945 and retired in 1971. I believe that it was a formative experience for me to have attended his lectures for ethnographers (from 1972 to 1978) and to have spent hours on end, drinking numerous cups of tea in his company, asking timid questions, listening to his memories and witnessing him grapple with multiple issues that busied him at the moment.

In this talk on our Professor and Master, I draw on the many conversations I had with him and with Professor Hanna Wałkowska, his only student, who had collaborated with Ludwik Skurzak since the very beginning

of his “Wratislavian” times. I also build on two short biographies written by Hanna Walkowska¹ and her paper on the history of Indology in Wrocław (1945–1978).²

I discussed Professor Skurzak’s studies on ancient Greek accounts of India during a symposium in Wrocław in 2002³ and at the conference *Teaching on India in Central and Eastern Europe* in Warsaw in 2005.⁴ The materials that I could examine in the Archives of the University in Wrocław confirmed some details provided in the aforementioned publications and also considerably supplemented them.

My aim in this talk is to outline the biography and the *opus magnum* of Ludwik Skurzak, an outstanding Polish Indologist. Its title features a quotation from the *Bhagavadgītā* VII 19: *Sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*, which translates as “A man of such a great soul is very hard to find.”

Ludwik Skurzak passed away 40 years ago. It means that only the eldest among us know how aptly these words depict him. He was modest, silent, gentle and understanding. His knowledge of antiquity, especially of India, but of other ancient civilisations (Sumer, Egypt and Crete) as well, was immense. He was intimately familiar with Sanskrit texts. Suffice it to say that he had read the *Mahābhārata* three times, as I was told by him.

His education started in Lvov, where he entered the University. The long way *via* Lvov, Rome, Paris and Warsaw finally brought him to Wrocław. He lived here in a small villa in Oporów, with his cherished wife Janina and his beloved nephew Zbigniew Kwaśny, who became Professor of History at the same University. Their hospitable house was wide open to friends, and the “haute cuisine” served by Mrs Janina enjoyed great popularity with the University’s community. The family had three cats one by one, with each of them called Mardzuś, a name derived from the Sanskrit word *māṛjāra*, which simply means “a cat.”

In Lvov, Ludwik Skurzak met Stefan Stasiak (1884–1962), his first teacher. Two other famous Polish Indologists, Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz (1901–1981) and Franciszek Tokarz (1897–1973), were also students of Professor Stasiak. Professor Stasiak himself studied Indology in Zurich, Wien and Paris and obtained his doctor’s degree from Sorbonne. He had been in charge of the Chair of Indology at the University in Lvov since 1928, having succeeded to

¹ *Classica Wratislaviensia* IX, 1981: 3–6 and *Sobótka* 1997 (3–4): 301–303.

² W. Tyloch (ed.), *Oriental Studies in the Sixty Years of Independent Poland*, Warsaw 1983: 79–81.

³ *Classics at the Universitas Leopoldina, Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Breslau*, ed. by M. Krajewski, J. Pigoń, Wrocław 2004: 71–77.

⁴ A likewise entitled book was published two years later by Danuta Stasik and Anna Trynkowska.

the position after the death of his brilliant predecessor, Andrzej Gawroński. In 1947, Stefan Stasiak emigrated to London, where he passed away in 1962.

In 1932, Ludwik Skurzak obtained his MA degree in two disciplines: history and Indology, which, by the way, were not his first choice. A few years earlier, as a young graduate of gymnasium in Lvov, he had gone to Rome and studied theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

As an interesting, albeit gruelling, detail, Professor Skurzak had lost all his documents during the war, and he had to find witnesses to confirm that he had indeed completed his studies in Lvov. The relevant testimony was provided by Renata Stark and Kazimierz Majewski.

Over the five years from 1933 to 1937, Ludwik Skurzak lived in Paris, studying Indology at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* and the *Collège de France*. He graduated as “*élève diplômé*.” It was in Paris that he started working on his dissertation on the beginnings of asceticism, under the supervision of Jean Przyluski. In Paris, Ludwik Skurzak also attended lectures given by Jules Bloch and Louis Renou. Another important scholar he met was Sylvain Lévy, who gave him the precious Sanskrit-French dictionary by Stchoupak, Nitti and Renou (printed in 1932). Professor Tadeusz Lewicki, an Arabist, who was in Paris at the same time, recalls that Ludwik Skurzak was held in high esteem by his French teachers and colleagues.

Having returned to Poland in 1937, Skurzak found his place at the University of Lvov. Soon enough, in 1938, he moved to Warsaw and worked with Professor Stanisław Schayer as an assistant. By that time, Skurzak had already completed *Études sur l'origines de l'ascétisme indien*, which Professor Schayer amply appreciated; Schayer's positive appraisal of Skurzak's book has been asserted by Professor Jerzy Kuryłowicz, a linguist, Professor Ananiasz Zajączkowski, a Turkologist, and Professor Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz, an Indologist, who (in one of his opinions on Ludwik Skurzak) assured that he had seen the manuscript with notes by Schayer's hand. It was also Professor Schayer who recommended that the study on the beginnings of asceticism be recognised as the basis of Ludwik Skurzak's *doctor habilitatus* degree in 1939. However, the outbreak of the Second World War changed everything. Ludwik Skurzak was forced to travel to a little village of Brzeżany (in the East of Poland), where he worked as a carpenter. Even in his Wratislavian times, he always had a well-equipped carpenter's workshop in his house. On his arrival in Wrocław in 1945, he offered his services to the University, where the Department of Middle East and Indian Philology was established.

The hasty relocation to Wrocław had at least one serious ramification, as Ludwik Skurzak entrusted some people with bringing his private collection of Indological books, carefully put together in his Parisian times, from Brzeżany to Wrocław. This treasure was irretrievably lost. At the same time,

he found the remnants of the Indological library in Wrocław sparse and rather insignificant. He spent years doing his best to replenish it.

As already said, Professor Skurzak lost all his documents during the war. The 1939 edition of his *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien* shared the same fate, but the typesetting had thankfully survived, and the book was eventually published in Wrocław in 1948. At the end of the volume, Ludwik Skurzak emotionally evoked “vénérable maître Jean Przulski” and “Mme Nadine Stchoupak.” He also remembered “l’affectueuse amitié” shown to him by Stanisław Schayer, who died prematurely, at the age of 42, in 1941.

In November 1946, Ludwik Skurzak obtained the title of a doctor conferred on him at Warsaw University. His university degree obtained in France was recognised as an equivalent of a doctorate. The biographies which I have had at my disposal should be revised since, unlike they state, *Les Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien* was not the basis of Skurzak’s PhD degree. The publication should have been the basis of his *doctor habilitatus* degree, as first proposed by Stanisław Schayer in 1939 and then unanimously recommended by the Philological Faculty of the University of Wrocław. Unfortunately, the motion did not succeed. The reviews were provided by Professor Ananiasz Zajączkowski and Professor Jerzy Kuryłowicz (both of whom relied on Stanisław Schayer’s positive assessment), and by Professor Helena Willman-Grabowska. The “habilitation” documents were withdrawn by Ludwik Skurzak at the end of 1948. In 1955, he was granted the title of “docent,” a then-equivalent of Assistant Professor (importantly, denoting a title, and not a position). The recommendations were offered by Professor Słuszkiewicz and Professor Tadeusz Lewicki.

The formal procedure to promote Ludwik Skurzak to Full Professorship began in 1966. He received glowing opinions recommending his candidacy from, again, Słuszkiewicz and Lewicki. Nine other professors (Orientalists, ethnographers and historians)⁵ supported the process with their short endorsements. All in vain. Typed on a slip of paper, the refusal of the Ministry (1967) consisted of only a few words. No explanation was given.

Ludwik Skurzak retired in 1971. Asked, why he was not a professor, he answered that it was better to be asked why one was not than why one was...

* * *

Articles and books published by Professor Skurzak are short and not many. His two books, *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme Indien* and *Études sur l'épopée indienne* (both in French) are not even eighty pages long, and his

⁵ They were professors L. T. Błaszczuk, L. Godlewski, S. Kałużyński, E. Konik, F. Machalski, K. Majewski, J. Wolski, A. Zajączkowski and W. Zajączkowski.

papers never exceed ten pages. This dry piece of information heralds the character of his works: they are extremely concise; their structure is clear and distinct; Skurzak's line of argument is consistent; and his conclusions are precise, convincing and bold. One can recognise a historian's hand in them.

Professor Skurzak definitely avoided descriptions. When any appeared, they supported the conclusion which followed. Three descriptive pages in his *Études sur l'épopée indienne* are an excellent case in point. They depicted social life in Vedic times, gleaned an image of social life in the Indus-Valley-cities from excavation data and presented the forest-life of the primordial people. These three pages were a telegram, including all the necessary information with no word in excess. The readers could conclude by themselves that there was no room for the eremitical forest-life either among the nomadic Aryas or among the burghers of cities such as Harappa.

Ludwik Skurzak's research was strongly influenced by the then relatively recent excavations in Harappa and Mohenjo Daro in what was Western India at the time. Professor Skurzak discussed them in his two Polish articles: "Najstarsza cywilizacja Indii" ("The oldest civilisation of India," 1946) and "Problemy genezy cywilizacji indyjskiej" ("The problems of the genesis of Indian civilisation," 1967). He also wrote a review of Ernest Mackay's seminal book on the Indus civilisation. He used its Russian translation, because it included an important Introduction authored by Wasilij Struwe (*Archeologia* VII 1957). Two years earlier, he reviewed *Prehistoric India* by Piggott (*Archeologia* V 1955).

The study of the origin of Indian civilisation became Skurzak's life passion. His works were invariably informed by the query whether the phenomenon he was studying was rooted in the tradition brought to India by the Aryans, or in the pre-Aryan civilisation. He had already addressed this problem in his first article on itinerant teachers (Yāyāvara), published in Lvov in 1939.

Examining certain legal regulations (the codes of Apastamba, Baudhāyana and Manu) which concerned two different penances for manslaughter, Professor Skurzak proposed that the genesis of the punishment which involved isolation from society and living in sexual chastity was to be found in the "Austral-Asian cultural sphere" ("From the Sources of the Indian Law," RO 1957).

Also, he argued in "Pochodzenie władzy królewskiej w Indiach starożytnych" ("The origin of the royal power in Ancient India," *Antiquitas*, 1963) that two different views on the royal power, as conveyed in Indian texts, stemmed from the two main sources of Indian civilisation. The same was true for the property of land, in his view (article in English, 1963). General observations on the *genesis of Indian law* were presented by Professor Skurzak in 1967, who, among other insights, observed an interesting ambiguity in the position of women: on the one hand, they were subordinated to patriarchal laws, but on the other they enjoyed relatively considerable freedom

(according to *Arthaśāstra*, which Professor Skurzak compared with the Code of Hammurabi).

In his research, Ludwik Skurzak not only focused on Indian sources, but also studied Greek and Latin writings on India. He mastered both classical languages perfectly; there was a short period in his university career when he even had to teach Latin.

A few of Ludwik Skurzak's papers were devoted to Greek writers. Most of them were in French: "Études sur les fragments de Mégasthène, Brahmanas — sarmanas" (1954), "Études sur les fragments de Mégasthène, Hylobioi" (1960), "Le traité Syro-Indien en 305 BC" (1964) and "En lisant Mégasthène" (1979). Two of his articles in Polish dealt with Aristobulos and Onesikritos, both historians of Alexander the Great who accompanied him in his Indian adventure.

Professor Skurzak employed these classical writings on India not only to determine simple facts, but also in order to document his conception of the origin of Indian civilisation. He combined his interest in the roots of Indian civilisation with his predilection for history. He had, so to speak, a special feeling, the sixth sense of a historian, which made him examine the sources with careful attention. He would say that it was too early to formulate definitive conclusions about the Indian past and that the archaeology had many a surprise in store. He considered the excavations in Bihar, the area where the kingdom of ancient Magadha had flourished, to be especially promising.

In this context, a short talk I once had with Professor Skurzak comes to my mind. I complained that a newly published book on ancient Indian history was unavailable to us (it was in the 1970s). Professor Skurzak answered: "To my knowledge, no new important discoveries have taken place recently. No revolutionary excavations. Given this, all that even brand-new books can do is present or interpret well-known events... No reason to worry."

The confrontation of Greek depictions of India with native Indian sources makes us believe that, although the most important Greek texts are not fully preserved and we are therefore doomed to rely on abridgements, the image of India they convey seems to be surprisingly accurate. Admittedly, this is not exactly the case for so-called *thaumasia* serving as an ornament in these texts and catering to the pursuit of the sensational. However, on closer scrutiny, even these wonders often prove confirmable by the Indian sources.

Therefore, the accounts provided by Greek and Latin authors may be a precious source for historians. Megasthenes's *Indika* was the starting point for Ludwik Skurzak's vibrant and convincing hypothesis on the distinctiveness of the civilisation of Magadha, and thus of its sources as well. This hypothesis was fully articulated in Professor Skurzak's last article, but its roots go back to his early observations on the complexity of Indian culture.

To remind, Magadha is a large kingdom situated in the north-eastern part of India in the lower Ganges Valley. It played the significant part in the history

of India in the first millennium BC and was closely connected with the development of Buddhism.

Megasthenes's description of India's divided society contained (in the fragments preserved by Strabo) detailed information concerning "brahmanes," that is Brahmins, and more mysterious "sarmanes. As for the description of Brahmins, the exactness of the Greek traveller's observations is truly admirable. Therefore, there is no reason to doubt the correctness of his portrayal of the other group, that of the sarmanes. At the root of this word lies the Sanskrit term *śramaṇa*, i.e. an ascetic. However, there is not enough source evidence to identify them as Brahmanical or/and Buddhist ascetics. Megasthenes characterises them as physicians, sorcerers, exorcists and priests who attended funeral ceremonies.

The point is that the Brahmanical law forbids Brahmanical ascetics to perform the practices with which Megasthenes's sarmans were so preoccupied. This was similarly forbidden for the Buddhist monks. There must have been, Ludwik Skurzak reasoned, another group of priests — priests of pre-Aryan tribes — still playing an important role in the Kingdom of Magadha.⁶ Some passages of Megasthenes's account suggest that Brahminism penetrated into the kingdom of Magadha and, at the same time, the older Indian culture assimilated Brahminism.

Megasthenes also reports on the celebrations of New Year's Eve in "his" India, that is to say, in the kingdom of Magadha. The festivities were accompanied by prophecies concerning the coming year. The problem is that the Brahmanical tradition does not mention such a feast at all. The point was investigated by Otto Stein, among other researchers.⁷ Before him, Christian Lassen tried in vain to identify it in the Brahmanical codices. Surprisingly, the feast is known to have been celebrated in the Babylonian civilisation, where it was also accompanied by prophecies for the coming New Year.⁸ The discovery of this analogy was of importance. Interrelations between the civilisations of India and Mesopotamia and even of Egypt has been discussed by Orientalists⁹ in the context of the great civilisations of the third millennium BC. Megasthenes, however, relates that the New Year's Feast was annually held in the kingdom of Magadha in India in the 4th century BC. Where did it come from? It is not impossible that these festivities in India date back to the primeval civilisation of the Indus (due to its relationship with Sumer and Babylon). This notion inspired Ludwik Skurzak to regard Magadha as a successor of the culture of the great towns in the Indus Valley.¹⁰ In his last publication

⁶ Skurzak 1954: 95–100.

⁷ *Megasthenes und Kautilya*, Wien 1922: 282ff.

⁸ Skurzak 1979: 72.

⁹ S. Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, London 1952: 132–213.

¹⁰ Skurzak 1979: 71.

on Megasthenes and his panorama of India under the reign of Chandragupta in Magadha (published in French, in 1979), Professor Skurzak states with his telegraphic conciseness that certain elements of culture in India resemble those of the much older great civilisations of the Middle East (Sumer, Babylonia) and even Egypt.

Given this, Professor Skurzak suggests, Magadha should be recognised as an heir of the culture of the so-called cities of Indus, which for reasons yet unexplained had collapsed one thousand years earlier, but whose founders and members must have moved somewhere.

That they should have moved to the East was only natural, obvious and easiest, for geographical reasons. This is, by the way, corroborated by the adjective *dakṣiṇa*, i.e. being on the righthand side. Dekan is on the righthand side when one moves to the East.

Last, but not least, one of Professor Skurzak's fond topics was the oldest Upanishads. As early as in Paris, when he attended Jean Przyluski's lectures on these ancient philosophical texts, he had the boldness not to share the traditional notion of the Indo-European roots of the oldest Upanishads. Unfortunately, Ludwik Skurzak never published these insights, which he shared with Professor Stanisław Schayer. I have only managed to find a few short remarks on the issue, scattered across his writings, among others in his paper on "Problems of the genesis of Indian civilisation."¹¹ However, I had ample opportunity to listen to his argumentation, which cited the geographical background, the flora and fauna, the position of women (much higher than among the patriarchal Aryans), the attitude towards the varṇas, the higher authority of the kshatriyas than of the Brahmins (as in Brahmins becoming pupils of the kshatriyas), the attitude to the sacrifices holding that they cannot lead to liberation and the attitude to life comprising a disapproval of this world and a search for liberation... These observations prompted Professor Skurzak to look for the homeland of the Upanishads in the sub-Himalayan regions in the middle Ganges Valley rather than in the homeland of the *Rgveda*.

Such a view has significant implications: the last and highest level of the Vedas should not be seen as resulting from the evolution of the Vedic thought, but rather as an independent and masterful product of the intellectual tradition which, while admittedly accepted by the Brahmins, had been developed by the pre-Aryan population of this part of India. Today, this idea is sometimes pondered by scholars.

The oldest Upanishads, as Professor Skurzak sought to demonstrate, could have had something in common with the inheritors of what we consider today India's most ancient culture.

¹¹ Skurzak 1967.

At the beginning of my talk, I insisted that “Mahātmā” was a fitting name for our beloved Professor, given the virtues of his heart. Now, having outlined his bold observations and conclusions, I would like to sum up my story of Ludwik Skurzak’s life and work in one simple sentence: “He was a man Rich in Spirit.”

Concluding, I cannot resist citing an anecdote about the pipe which Professor Skurzak incessantly smoked. I have heard it from Professor Wałkowska who swore it was true. Once, a speck of tobacco dropped from the pipe Professor Skurzak was smoking onto a Sanskrit text in transcription which he was just studying. It landed exactly under the letter “t” and forced him to admit that he did not know the word with this cerebral “ṭ.” He became irritated... He impatiently shoved the book away and — lo and behold! — the speck disappeared, and the mysterious word turned out to be quite familiar...

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OLD INDIAN ASCETICISM IN LUDWIK SKURZAK'S FRENCH RESEARCH WRITINGS

Abstract: In his two French studies, published in 1948 and 1958, Ludwik Skurzak described various forms of ancient Indian asceticism: specific rules of behaviour, religious duties, possible origins, and textual changes in prescriptions of the ascetic way of life in the Vedic and Greek sources. The Dravidian culture and the Indus Valley Civilisation were described by Ludwik Skurzak as possible birthplaces of old Indian asceticism.

Keywords: Ludwik Skurzak, asceticism, *Mahābhārata*, Indology, dharmasūtra, religion, yoga, philosophy

Asceticism, understood as “rejecting all kinds of social bonds, conceiving of salvation as the union with the Absolute and dismissing the religious part could not find itself in opposition to the ideas of the world and life of the Indo-European Aryans,” Ludwik Skurzak wrote in *Étude sur l'épopée indienne* (1958: 13), the fruit of his long-term studies of renouncers, hermits and ascetic orders in ancient India. Following his own *Życie ascetyczne w Indiach* (1938), in *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien* (1948) Ludwik Skurzak divided the ascetic types into three groups: *vānaprastha* as “hermite” (a hermit or a forest dweller), *vānaprastha* as “l'ascète errant dans la forêt” (a forest wanderer), also called *āraṇyaka-muni* (the forest sage), and *parivrājaka* or *saṃnyāsīn* as “l'ascète errant en tout lieu” (a wanderer in every place). Skurzak based his research on the Vedic, Buddhist and Greek sources: dharmasūtras (the *Āpastamba* and the *Baudhayana*), dharmasāstras (the *Mānava*, the *Gautama*, the *Viṣṇu*, the *Vāsiṣṭha* and the *Yājñavalkya*), the Upaniṣads (the *Chāndogya*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, the *Kuṇḍika*, the *Kaṭhaśruti* and the *Jābala*), the *Mahābhārata* (particularly the *Ādiparvan* and the *Sāntiparvan*),

the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, the list of the *dhūtaguṇas*, the *Pātimokka* and the works of Herodotus, Megasthenes, Strabo and Arrian. Skurzak focused on the period between the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, when ascetics had not yet been named, and the first centuries of the common era, when they were known as orthodox and identified by the *dharmaśāstras*.

1. Asceticism in ancient India

By the sixth or fifth century BCE, asceticism — or renunciation for spiritual purposes — had developed in the Vedic tradition and outside the orthodox ideology, most notably in the Jain and Buddhist traditions (Flood 1996: 75). However, ascetic practices are depicted in the *saṃhitās* and exemplified by the *Keśins* and the *Vrātyas*, as noted by Gavin Flood (1996: 77):

(...) the important religious figures are priests who officiate at the ritual and the inspired seers (*ṛṣi*) who receive the Veda. There are, however, some references in the vedic corpus to figures who do not have a ritual function and seem to be outside the brahmanical, vedic community.

The new ideology of renunciation (*saṃnyāsa* or *tyāga*), linked to the knowledge of liberation (*jñāna*) cultivated through sacrificial heat or effort (*tapas*), is witnessed in the Sanskrit and Pali traditions from the ninth to the fourth centuries BCE. Hence, the figure of a renouncer (*śramaṇa*, *bhikṣu*, *parivrājaka* or *vānaprastha*) became a model of a *dharmic* seekers of spiritual liberation through giving up worldly responsibilities (Bronkhorst 1993: 68–11). This new ideology brings into relief interaction between the Vedic and non-Vedic traditions of meditations or asceticism, wherein Buddhism may have influenced the Brāhmanical model of the ascetic and the Vedic *saṃnyāsīn* may have influenced the Buddhist renouncer.

The new ideology of renunciation is understood from at least two points of view: as a natural development of Vedic ritual and as a non-Vedic practice (Flood 1996: 87, Bronkhorst 1998: 5–12) that originated from the same tribal traditions or in regions outside of India. The orthogenetic theory of renunciation envisages a continual development from the Vedic *grhastha* ideology of the *śrauta* ritual to the ideology of renunciation. As Gavin Flood (1996: 87) recalls:

The term “orthogenetic” is used by Heesterman (1985) to refer to this gradual, internal development within vedic thought. In other words, renunciation is not an idea coming from outside the vedic community, perhaps from the pre-Aryan Dravidians, but is a development within vedic culture. Ultimately there is little difference between the ideal Brahman and the ideal renouncer, save one of emphasis. (...) The idea of the ritual as a private process develops, on

Heesterman's account, into the upaniṣadic ideal that the true ritual is its internalization or transcendence, and renunciation develops as a consequence of this internalisation.

Madeleine Biardeau (1995) and Charles Malamoud (1976), along with early researchers (Hermann Jacobi, Georg Bühler, Friedrich Max Müller, Hendrik Kern and Jakob Wilhelm Hauer), also insist on the continuity of ascetic practices within the Vedic tradition, stating that they stem from the Vedic revelation. For their part, Rhys Davids (*Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part 1, 1899), Paul Deussen (*The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, 1906), Richard Garbe (*Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte*, 1903) and recently Louis Dumont (*Homo Hierarchius: Essai sur le système des castes*, 1966) and Patrick Olivelle (*The Āśrama System...*, 1993) argue for the non-Vedic origin of renunciation. In their view, although the same elements of asceticism are present in the householder's rituals, the roots of asceticism can be found outside the Vedic culture. On this model, asceticism was incorporated into the Vedic ideology as a response to non-Vedic ascetic activities. However, Bronkhorst (1998: 9–11) notes a third possibility, positing that Indian asceticism derived from two sources: Vedic and non-Vedic, and thus the different forms of asceticism belonged to at least two movements. He (1998: 82) explains:

(...) early India knew ascetic practices in two different religious contexts. On one hand there were the non-Vedic religious currents which encompassed, and gave rise to Jainism and other śramaṇic beliefs and practices, and which shared a conviction in rebirth as a result of one's actions, and sought ways to stop it. On the other hand there was Vedic religion which, for reason of its own, required ascetic restrictions in connection with the execution of the sacrifice. (...) This led to the existence, side by side, of essentially two different type of ascetics in ancient India (...). Both among the Śramaṇas and among the Brahmins a further twofold division can be observed. Early sources, including Megasthenes, confirm these distinctions (...) both kinds of asceticism became more and more blurred, and characteristics of the one came to be ascribed to the other, and vice versa. The final result of this process is the classical doctrine of the four *āśramas*, in which all distinctions have become blended, or rather added on to each other.

In ancient Indian society, asceticism can be seen as lawful practices of the denial of physical desires through entirely breaking away from social bonds in order to attain spiritual goals (Bhagat 1976, Bronkhorst 1993, Chakraborti 1973, Doniger O'Flaherty 1973, Fuchs 2006, Olivelle 1992 and 1993). Asceticism is seen as an essential factor in spiritual growth. It encompasses a broad range of practices: the deprivation of nourishment (fasting), celibacy, the cultivation of moral qualities such as self-restraint or self-discipline, seclusion or

solitude as a complete withdrawal from society, restricting oneself to the bare necessities and homelessness (Khundayberganova 2018: 24). The two major forms of renunciation are *tyāga* (relinquishing a desire for actions to produce effects) and *saṃnyāsa* (abandoning family, social and economic life and ritual activity) in order to pursue ultimate liberation. The texts depict a wide variety of renouncers, hermits and ascetics living in wild, secluded places, such as jungles and woods. Among such ascetics were those who lived on wild fruits and plants, accompanied or not by their wives. Some of them maintained the sacrificial fire, whereas others lived without any religious commitment and were indifferent to what they ate and received from others. In the middle centuries of the first millennium BCE, many individuals known as *wanderers* (*parivrājaka* or *śramaṇa*) emerged in India to partly oppose the oldest Vedic religion and to advocate new ideas, methods, and spiritual goals. They were associated with particular places, especially with isolated and secluded areas, such as forests, deserts, jungles and caves, or else they wandered homeless to indicate their complete withdrawal from society. Asceticism as a practice of life denoted to the moral discipline of a sage who perfected self-mastery and self-denial and refused to live in society. The notion was bound up with the cultivation of a strict, ethically and physically controlled conduct, involving solitary life outside family or other human collectives, self-restraint, fasting, seclusion or living in a wilderness with the aim of pursuing religious or spiritual goals.

Asceticism plays an especially prominent role in the three principal Indian religions: Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. All these traditions originated more or less concomitantly out of the same religious and philosophical *milieu*. All of them also posed the new religious goal of escape or release from the cycle of rebirth, variously called *mokṣa* (“liberation”), *nirvāṇa* (the “extinguishing” of suffering and rebirth) or *kevala* (“isolation” or “perfection”).

2. Ludwik Skurzak on old Indian asceticism

It was within this understanding of asceticism that Ludwik Skurzak analysed the Vedic, Greek and Buddhist sources bearing witness to the origins and features of the oldest forms of the Indian renouncing mode of life. The Hindu texts written in the wake of the wanderer movement often extolled the householder’s life. However, as new ideas fostering new modes of life appeared in Buddhist and Upaniṣadic contexts in the first centuries CE — in some sources the four stages in the life seem to have been regarded as four different types of life (Olivelle 1974, Bronkhorst 1998: 5 and 20) — the tradition settled into conceptualising the system of the four *āśramas* as a progressive way of living one’s life. Ludwik Skurzak champions this idea by, referring to the second and the sixth books of the *Mānavadharmasāstra*. From the viewpoint

of Brahmanical theology, this text is the first exposition of the four *āśramas* as four successive stages (Bronkhorst 1998: 30–33).

Although the ascetics depicted in the texts were obligated to follow the dharmic rules of ascetic life, the their prescribed dwellings and rites differed. A *forest dweller* and a *parivrājaka* performed daily rituals of keeping the sacrificial fire. However, a *forest dweller* stayed alone or with his wife in a hut in the forest or the jungle, whereas a *parivrājaka* wandered across the world. A *forest wanderer* did not perform sacrifices as he had cut all bonds with society and religion. However, he followed the dharmic rules of conduct laid down for a homeless muni roaming the wilderness.

3. *Życie ascetyczne w Indiach (Études sur origines de l'ascétisme indien)*

Życie ascetyczne w Indiach (Ascetic Life in India) by Ludwik Skurzak is a long Polish review of the talk given by Stanisław Schayer at a meeting of the Warsaw Scientific Society on 9th March 1938 and published by Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie (in 1938, Nr XXXI, pp. 537–539). The résumé is a synopsis of Skurzak's more detailed analyses of Indian asceticism — *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien*, planned for publication in 1939. The French title of the résumé, i.e. *Studies on the origins of Indian asceticism (Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien)*, is not a literal translation of the Polish title — *Ascetic life in India (Życie ascetyczne w Indiach)*.

The dissertation of Stanisław Schayer discusses the beginnings of Indian asceticism and its oldest form on the basis of the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the works of Herodotus and Megasthenes, which were the first writings on the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilisation.

It is commonly agreed that two types of asceticism can be traced in the literature:

1. *vānaprastha*: a *forest dweller* living in a hut alone or with his consorts, eating fruits and devoted to spiritual practices and rituals; this type of forest hermits can be subdivided into two categories: 1) ascetic families where religious functions were passed down from father to son. Although the origin of such families is still unknown, it is certain that they were *brāhmaṇas* and often also practised the warrior way of life (depicted in the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* and the *Mahābhārata*); 2) a forest hermit living alone (*apatnika*) or with his wife (*sapatnika*), a *grhastha* who decides to leave his son's house in order to install himself in the forest;
2. *parivrājaka/saṃnyāsin/yati*: a *wanderer* without a home, visiting holy places and living on charity; such priests (shamans) of the indigenous tribes of North-Eastern India were already mentioned

already in the *Mānavadharmasāstra*, the *Arthaśāstra* and in the *Indica* of Megasthenes.

Vedic literature, the Buddhist sources and Greek accounts of Indian society portray also a third type of ascetic. He is called *vānaprastha* as well, but his obligations differ from those of the previous forest dweller. He is a *forest wanderer*, also referred to by another Sanskrit term: *āraṇyaka-muni*, a forest sage. He only wanders through forests, having no fixed residence, dwelling at the foot of trees and feeding solely on roots and fruits. At the beginning of the Buddhist *sangha*, the first monks were *āraṇyaka-munis*; after the ceremony of *upasampadā*, they embraced the life of a forest wanderer. With the appearance of the *Pātimokkha*, the tendency towards monastic life became more popular, and the *Vinaya Piṭaka* eventually established the monastic rules of conduct which almost entirely rejected the practices of *āraṇyaka-muni*. Forest wanderers were also portrayed in Herodotus' descriptions of Indian religious practices. The *Āraṇyaka-muni* from the oldest texts was connected to the cult of Rudra-Śiva, who "according to the latest research is a god of non-Aryan origin, adopted from the indigenous tribes and incorporated into the Aryan pantheon" (Skurzak 1938: 539). The remnants of his cult have been found in Mohenjo Daro. These ascetics were the first priests of Siva, who joined the brahmanical religion by worshipping him, according to Schayer.

4. *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien*

Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien (*Studies on the origin of Indian asceticism*) was published in *Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* (*Travaux de la Société des Sciences et des Lettres de Wrocław*) in 1948. The fifty-six-page-long work is an explanation of Stanisław Schayer's talk; three kinds of ascetics are characterised by their own rituals and rules of religious conduct, and the oldest form of Indian asceticism is of said to have been of non-Vedic origin. Skurzak augments Schayer's ideas with his own analyses of Indian ascetic practices based on ancient texts. The manuscript of his Skurzak's study prepared for publication in 1939 was destroyed during the Second World War. Skurzak expresses his strong emotional bonds with and gratitude to his teachers: Nadine Stchoupak, Stanisław Schayer, Jean Przyłuski and Marcel Lalou.

4.1. The structure of the *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien*

The work is divided into two parts, devoted, respectively, to the three varieties of Indian asceticism and the origins of this threefold division.

Introduction

I. Première Partie (Part one):

1. *Les différents types d'ascètes (Different types of ascetics, pp. 7–18):*
 - 1.1. *Ermite habitant une hutte (A hermit living in a hut, pp. 7–12)*
 - 1.2. *Ascète errant en tout lieu (An ascetic wandering in all places, pp. 12–16)*
 - 1.3. *Ascète habitant la forêt (An ascetic living in a forest, pp. 16–18)*
 2. *Les ascètes chez Hérodote (The ascetics in Herodotus, pp. 18–20)*
 3. *Les ascètes dans les sources bouddhiques (The ascetics in the Buddhist sources, pp. 20–35)*
 - 3.1. *Ermite dans une hutte (A hermit in a hut, p. 24)*
 - 3.2. *Le Vihāra (The Vihāra, pp. 25)*
 4. *Les ascètes dans les sources brahmaniques (The ascetics in the brahmanical sources, pp. 35–40)*
- II. Seconde Partie (Part two):
1. *L'origine d'ascètes errants en tout lieu (The origin of the ascetic wandering in all places, pp. 41–43)*
 2. *L'origine d'eremites (The origin of the hermits, pp. 43–49)*
 3. *L'origine d'ascètes errants dans la forêt (The origin of the ascetics wandering the forest, pp. 49–54)*
- Conclusion (pp. 54–55)

The main idea of the *Études sur l'origine sur l'ascétisme indien* is based on Schayer's research and identification of three types of asceticism, of which *the forest wanderer* is the oldest, dating back to the indigenous traditions of the Indus Valley Civilisation.

4.2. Different types of ascetics and their origins

The Vedic tradition mentions three types of ascetics: the *wandering ascetic (parivrājaka)*, the *forest hermit* and the *forest wanderer*.¹

	<i>Baudhayāna Dharmasūtra</i>	<i>Āpastamba Dharmasūtra</i>	<i>Mānava Dharmasāstra</i>	<i>Vaikhānasa Dharmasūtra</i>
<i>Vanāprastha 1</i> (a forest dweller)	II, 11, 14 (as <i>vaikhānasa</i>)	II, 9, 22–24	VI, 1–24	no reference to passages
<i>Parivrājaka</i>	II, 11, 16–25	II, 9, 1–17	VI, 41–58	–
<i>Vanāprastha 2</i> (a forest wanderer)	–	II, 9, 21–22	VI, 25–31	–

¹ Old forms of Indian asceticism have recently been analysed by Olivelle (1992, 1993, and 2011), Bronkhorst (1998) and Kłeczek (2011).

The oldest the Upaniṣads knew only an ascetic who roams the woods, consuming only water, wind and fruits. The later Upaniṣads, in particular the *Jābala* and the *Mānavadharmasāstra*, prescribe specific rules for the four ascetic types.

4.2.1. A forest dweller (*vānaprastha* 1)

The first type of *vanāprastha* (Skurzak 1948: 7–12, 43–49), *ermite habitant une hutte* (a hermit, a forest dweller), lives in a hut alone (*apatnika*) or with his consort (in which case he is called *sapatnika*). After renouncing family life within society, he keeps the sacrificial fire in order to perform rituals and other religious obligations.

The *Vaikhānasadharmasūtra* lays down the rules for *sapatnika* and *apatnika vānaprasthas*. In the Indian astronomy a *sapatnika vaikhānasa* leaves his family to live in the forest with his wife and to keep three or five sacrificial fires. He takes ritual baths and, by observing purity, seeks to self-perfection in ascetic practices: renunciation, vows of silence, offerings and meditation. He only subsists on forest plants. After undergoing the rites of passage, an *apatnika vānaprastha* leaves his home without a wife; he installs himself in the forest and performs rites with sacrificial fire. He wears a sacrificial cord and carries an alms bowl.

Skurzak examines three other dharmic texts to describe a *vānaprastha*. In the *Baudhayānadharmasūtra* II, 11, 14, a *vānaprastha*, who is called a *vaikhānasa*, lives in the forest, feeding on fruits and roots or on meat not killed by anybody, wearing the bun and dressed in wild animals' skins. He honours the ancestors, *ṛṣis* and gods by sacrificial fire, and he receives guests. In the *Āpastambhadharmasūtra* II, 9, 22, 6–23, a *vānaprastha* lives in seclusion with his wife and children, or he stays alone in a hut outside the village. He has two pairs of kitchen utensils with him. He passes his days studying the Vedas, offering hospitality to everybody and collecting seeds to feed himself. This dharmasūtra prescribes special rules for clothing and offerings.

To describe the special rules, Skurzak cites the *Mānavadharmasāstra*. Passage VI, 1–24 formulates specific ordinances for ascetics concerning: food, habitation, sacrifices, mortification and clothing. When a householder sees that he is wrinkled and grey, he should withdraw from society upon the birth of his grandchildren, going into the wilderness with his consort or alone. He should eat vegetables, flowers, roots and fruits, avoiding anything grown on ploughed land. He should carry the sacred fire and the utensils of worship to accomplish the five great rites, using pure food, herbs, roots and fruits. He should stand on tiptoe all day tending to the fire, with no other shelter but clouds during the rainy season, and wearing wet clothes in winter. Moreover, he should wear only gazelle skins or bark clothing and let his hair, beard and nails grow untrimmed.

Based on his sources, Skurzak proposes a twofold division of *forest dwellers*: 1) families of hermits and 2) a hermit dwelling in a hut. Families of hermits were those where the ascetic tradition and hermit practice were passed down from fathers to sons (the *Mahābhārata* I, 8, 9; I, 130; III, 116; III, 143, the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* VII, 13–18 and the *Āpastambhadharmasūtra* II, 22, 8). These families were Aryan forest clans, or they were Aryanised and admitted into the Brahmanical system. Apart from exercising religious duties and mortifications, they were warriors. After the ceremony of *saṃpradāna*, the old householder would leave his family and society to lead an ascetic life, thus becoming a hermit (the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* II, 15, Herodotus III, 98–102, passages 35 and 40 from Megasthenes). During the first centuries CE, the hermit lifestyle spread so much that this type of asceticism was recognised as part of the official religious system.

4.2.2. A wandering ascetic (*parivrājaka*)

Parivrājaka (Skurzak 1948: 12–16, 41–43) denoted *ascète errant en tout lieu* (an ascetic wandering in all places) without a fixed dwelling place. He left his home without fire and sought the ātman, keeping the vow of silence, reciting the Vedas and wearing old clothes... He had to shave his head except a curl of hair (the *Āpastambhadharmasūtra* II, 9, 1–17, the *Baudhayānadharmasūtra* II, 11, 16–25, with the most complete description in the *Mānavadharmasāstra* VI, 41–58). The *Vaiḥānasadharmasūtra* briefly presents the rites involved in the process of becoming a *parivrājaka*.

The life of a *forest wanderer* was a unique form of ascetic life known from the earliest historical sources (Skurzak 1958: 41). The first mention of this practice is found in the *Indica* by Megasthenes and in the *Arthaśāstra* by Kauṭilya. Passages 59 and 60 of the *Indica* describe a special kind of sages whom Megasthenes calls philosophers and distinguishes from the brahmins and the *śramanas*. They would travel from village to village and were experts in the formulas of funeral rites. When they entered the brahmanical system, the brahmins sought to limit their prerogatives in an attempt to becoming involved in liturgical life (Skurzak 1958: 42). The *Arthaśāstra* II, 1 provides descriptions of these ascetics and implies that they were not tolerated by the Brahmins. Referring to the *Mānavadharmasāstra*, Skurzak (1958: 43) dates the recognition of wandering ascetics by brahmanical orthodoxy at the beginnings of the common era.

4.2.3. A forest wanderer (*vānaprastha 2*)

The other type of *vānaprastha* (Skurzak 1948: 16–18, 49–54), *ascète habitant la forêt* (a forest wanderer) is a homeless individual who lives under trees, eats fruits and sprouts and does not keep the sacrificial fire. This figure is associated with the oldest Ṛgvedic and non-Ṛgvedic sources connected to the Rudra cult and the Indus Valley Civilisation.

He lives at the foot of a tree eating only fruits and roots, and he is without any artificial shelter. This type of ascetic is often confused in the sources with the hermit who has a stable abode; so much so that often the same term — *vānaprastha* — is used to refer to both of them (Skurzak 1958: 16). An essential difference between them is the rite of the departure from the house to the forest. The hermit who must live in a fixed place takes all his sacred fires with him and observes the liturgical rites like a *grhastha*. For his part, the ascetic wandering in the forest is exempt from all the obligations of liturgical life. When he leaves his house, it is only in himself that he puts down the sacred fire, and he lives without any artificial shelter. The rules for a manu are almost identical, but the dharmasāstra registers a change in dietary principles. In addition to roots and fruits found in the forest, a forest wanderer is allowed to beg for food and ask for alms from the Brahmins or other *dvijas*. One day, he must head towards the North-Eastern region, walking straight ahead and living on air and water, until his body dissolves (Skurzak 1958: 17).

When investigating the origin of the forest wanderer, Skurzak (1958: 49–54) studied Vedic and non-Vedic sources, therein ancient Greek accounts of India (the *Indica* by Megasthenes, the *Geographica* by Strabo and the *Indica* by Arrian) and the culture of the Indus Valley. He relied heavily on sir John Marshall's *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization* (III, London, 1931).² The oldest type of the Indian ascetic lives in the forest without any shelter, naked or dressed in bark, eating fruits, herbs or air.

Skurzak compares the remnants of pre-Vedic practices in the *Vedas* and the Brahmanical tradition. Hymn 136 in the 10th book of the *R̥gveda* is the oldest text to mention the forest wanderer. Its last verse — “with Rudra he drank from the cup of poison” — is essential as it associates asceticism with Rudra. From the earliest times on, ascetics were closely connected to and Rudra-Śiva; in the hymn *Śatardriya* of the *Yajurveda*, Rudra is the god and patron of those who live in the forests. In later mythology, Rudra-Śiva is himself a great ascetic who lives in the Himavat, engrossed in penitential exercises in the mountains and in cemeteries, walking naked covered in ash (MBh. X.7.11; XII.328). Drawing on Arbman's *Rudra. Untersuchungen zum altindischen Glauben und Kultus* (Upsala, 1922), Skurzak ascribes the origin of the concept of Rudra-Śiva to the ancient cult of death. In the primitive idea, an uninterrupted evolution from Rudra to Śiva takes place, and the concept contrasts sharply “with the fragility and the decadence of the other vedic gods” (Skurzak 1958: 50). Rudra

² In 1920, John Marshall initiated digging in Harappa. In 1922, the archeological work began at Mohenjo-Daro. The findings of the excavation were published in the *Illustrated London News* on 20th September 1922. Professor Archibald Sayce linked the artefacts from Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa to the ancient civilisation of Sumer and Mesopotamia in an article published in the same journal on 27th September 1924.

is a pre-Ṛgvedic god. In later times, the theologians built on the *Ṛgveda* to construct the character of Rudra, and he was subsequently replaced by Rudra-Śiva (Skurzak 1958: 50). In the *Bhāgavata-Purāna* IV, 2, the Brahmans' hostile attitude to Śiva is highly visible, which seems to corroborate the non-Brahmanical origin of the Rudra-Śiva cult. This cult was encountered by the Aryans when they entered India. This is confirmed by the excavations at Mohenjo-Daro, where clay seals were found, which Skurzak (1958: 52) describes as follows:

Some of them represent a three-faced divinity seated in the posture of a yogin (...). Sir John Marshall identifies all the marks of Rudra-Śiva in this god: 1. the multiple faces (...) 2. the posture as the sign of divinity identical with that of the historical Śiva 3. this god is surrounded by animals like Śiva-Paśupati. This indicates that we must seek the origin of Rudra-Śiva in the pre-Aryan religion and, therefore, the ascetic type that we associate with him must also be pre-Aryan; consequently, its sources should be looked for in the pre-Aryan past.

4.3. The non-Vedic sources

4.3.1. Herodotus

In his studies on the sources of Indian asceticism, Skurzak starts with Herodotus' work, specifically with passage I, 3 of the *Histories*, where Herodotus described ascetic life in India between the sixth and the fifth centuries BCE. This description (based on the oldest sources) depicts a *vānaprastha* (*ascète errant dans la forêt*) who is homeless, eats only herbs and dwells in solitude when dying or suffering (Skurzak 1958: 19). This information is substantiated by the *Āpastambha Dharmasūtra* II, 9, 22 and the *Mānavadharmasāstra* VI, 3, 1. Skurzak cites Lassen's analysis from *Indische Altertumskunde* (Vol. II, p. 640).

4.3.2. Buddhist Sources

The oldest Buddhist texts describe many types of ascetic practices. The most popular of the include those performed by ascetics who live in the forest, in a hut or in a *vihāra*. Skurzak quotes long sections from the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (in particular, ones concerning the *pabbajā*, the *upasampadā* and the schism of Devadatta), passages of the *Pātimokkha*, and the list of thirteen *dhūtaguṇas*, or primitive rules of religious life.

The image of secluded life is very rich in the Buddhist texts. A forest wanderer lives in the same way as the Brahmanical ascetic of this type. The rules for a Buddhist hermit resemble those for a Brahmanical ascetic, with one difference, though: a Buddhist hermit always lives alone, without the sacred fire. Tradition has it that the first *vihāra* was founded in the times of Buddha (the *Cullavagga* VI, 1), but the first documented reference to the *vihāras*

is found in the *Pātimokkha*. This text provides monks with the rules for the *bhikkhu*'s model of life, for the *kuṭi* and for the *vihāra*. Modifications are introduced in the practice of solitary wandering in the forest, as instead of living at the foot of a tree, a lonely monk begins to have a shelter; this is the origin of *kuṭi*. Over time, the *kuṭi* expands and takes the name of the *vihāra* (Skurzak 1948: 25). However, it is the forest wanderer devoid of any shelter or hut that represents the oldest type of Buddhist asceticism, as recorded in the sources.

In the conclusion to the *Études sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien*, Skurzak (1958: 54–55) restates that the existence of three types of asceticism in ancient India are proven by the Greek, Brahmanical and Buddhist sources. One of them — the forest-wanderer variety of *vānaprastha* — originated in pre-Aryan beliefs, traces of which were discovered in Mohenjo-Daro.

5. *Étude sur l'épopée indienne*

Étude sur l'épopée indienne (*Studies on the Indian Epic*) is a condensed work of twenty-four pages published in *Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* (*Travaux de la Société des Sciences et des Lettres de Wrocław*) in 1958. The study comprises four chapters: 1) “Sur les āśramas” (“On the āśramas”), pp. 5–10; 2) “Sur les Āraṇyakas” (“On the Āraṇyakas”), pp. 11–12; 3) “Polémique contre le mouvement ascétique” (“A polemic against the ascetic movement”), pp. 13–17; and 4) “Familles érémitiques” (“Hermit families”), pp. 18–24. The work does not have any introduction or a conclusion. The title *Étude sur l'épopée indienne* can be misleading because the study in fact does not analyse the epic. It is rather a continuation of Skurzak's previous studies on old Indian asceticism, this time but now through the lens of some passages from the *Mahābhārata* and the Upaniṣads.

5.1. *Sur les āśramas* (pp. 5–10)

In “On the āśramas,” Skurzak outlines the social evolution of the concepts of four periods of human life, as captured in the oldest Upaniṣads and selected stories from the *Mahābhārata*. The old Upaniṣads (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Chāndogya*, *Kaṭhaśruti* and *Kuṇḍika*) uphold the theory of three āśramas. The idea of four āśramas — *brahmacarin*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *parivrājaka* — is first expounded in the *Jābāla Upaniṣad*... Ludwik Skurzak's main claim is that it took several centuries to establish the four periods of human life.

With reference to his previous analysis in the *Étude sur l'origine de l'ascétisme indien*, Skurzak reiterates his doubts regarding Winternitz's (*Zur Lehre von der Aśramas*, 1926) position on the development of the four āśramas: “the evolution of the āśramas was not as harmonious as we could suppose on the basis of the texts he [Winternitz] cites.” (Skurzak 1958: 6). Skurzak justifies this insight by referring to passages of the *Āpastamba*, one of the oldest dharmasūtras.

The *Āpastamba* II, 9, 21 describes the four *āśramas*: *brahmacarin*, *gṛhastha*, *muni* and hermit. Skurzak concludes that the first edition of this dharmasūtra expounded only one ascetic type: a *muni* whose rules combined the ordinances for a *parivrājaka/bhikṣu* (*l'ascète errant*) and a *vānaprastha* (*l'ermite*). In ancient times, a *muni* was the fifth type of the ascetic.

Skurzak finds his reasoning on the various depictions of *āśramas* in the *Mahābhārata*: the *Ādiparvan* and the *Śāntiparvan* (Skurzak 1958: 6–8): “These passages are very precious because they help us can witness the development of particular institutions and life in India. This is the case of the *āśramas*” (Skurzak 1958: 8).

In his examination of the four passages from the Mahabharata, Skurzak only provided details of the asramic states as depicted in the first of them and merely cited their names as worded in the classifications offered by the remaining three (Skurzak 1958: 6–8):

<i>Mahābhārata</i>	<i>Śāntiparvan</i>	<i>Ādiparvan</i> 91 (first description)	<i>Ādiparvan</i> 91 (second description)
<i>Brahmacarin</i> Obedience to the teacher Mortification Chastity	<i>Brahmacarin</i>	<i>Brahmacarin</i>	<i>Brahmacarin</i>
<i>Gṛhastha</i> Raising a family in favour of pursuit of private gain Offering sacrifices Studying and teaching	<i>Gṛhastha</i>	<i>Gṛhastha</i>	<i>Gṛhastha</i>
Hermit Daily ablutions Animal as clothes Banned to enter a vil- lage and to cut hair	Wandering ascetic	<i>Vānaprastha</i>	<i>Muni</i>
The fourth state The most perfect “Incomparable pil- grimage to the highest goal” No possessions Living under the trees Seeking the union with the ātman	Hermit	<i>Bhikṣu</i>	

Though considered an encyclopaedia of Indian asceticism, the *Māhābhārata* is not univocal on the question of the *āśramas*. To explain this ambiguity or diversity, Skurzak summarises the large body of the *Mahābhārata*, which comprises many textual layers (Skurzak 1958: 7): “*Mahābhārata* is not the work of one hand (...) it contains contributions of various *milieux* and scattered passages which present the same problem from the other perspectives.”

In the next step, Skurzak seeks to establish the provenance of the *āśramas* and traces the roots of asceticism back to the organisation of primitive societies (Skurzak 1958: 8–10). Referring to the Upaniṣads (*Kauṣītaki* II, 15 and *Kaṭhaśruti* II, 3) and to similar traditions in Africa, Australia and Melanesia, he asserts that economic conditions prompted the third period of human life, i.e. old age, to transform into/embrace? asceticism.

5.2. *Sur les Āraṇyakas* (pp. 11–12)

As a complement to the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas were composed to be studied in the woods. Whereas the Brāhmaṇas stipulated rules for performing sacrifices, the Āraṇyakas sealed the sacrifice with mysticism and symbolism (Skurzak 1958: 11). Having examined Deussen’s, Winternitz’s and Oldenberg’s studies on the *Mahābhārata* (V, 174; XII, 61), the *Āruneya Upaniṣad* 2 and the *Viṣṇusmṛti* 74, 7 Skurzak draws a threefold division of hermits: those who live in the forest together with their families and wives, those who are alone, and those who lead a chaste life with their wives in the forest (Skurzak 1958: 12).

5.3. *Polémique contre le mouvement ascétique* (pp. 13–17)

The chapter begins with an assertion that nowhere else does the war between two ideologies — proto-Indian or native and Indo-European — appear as distinctly as in the struggle against asceticism (Skurzak 1958: 13). As an encyclopaedia of the ascetic life (and chivalrous values), the *Mahābhārata* contains various descriptions of ascetic characteristics. However, there are passages where asceticism is repudiated, while still being prescribed for its religious function. It seems that the *Mahābhārata* embodies ambiguities over the role of asceticism in Indian society, and that asceticism opposes the ideas of the Indo-European Aryans. Skurzak illustrates this by citing three stories: a tale of Jarātkāru (MBh. XII.13), a dialogue between a father and his son (MBh. XII.175) and Yudhiṣṭhira’s decision to behave as an ascetic (MBh. XII.13). Skurzak refers to the studies of de la Vallée-Poussin and Oldenberg.

Two former stories vividly bring out the conflict: on one hand, Brahmanism condemns new ascetic currents, while on the other hand, the religious values of Vedic practices are requisite for the union with the *ātman* — the quest for the immortal principle dwelling in the heart of living creatures. In the third

story, a veritable, fierce war is launched against ascetic values, which are framed as enemies of Vedism ("l'ascétisme est ennemi de la religion," Skurzak 1958: 15):

Asceticism has little value in comparison with a state as noble as that of the householder. (...) The best asceticism is living according to the prescriptions of Śruti. The most severe expiation is to keep the eternal prescriptions, namely, to return the honour to the gods, to study the Vedas, to offer sacrifices to the ancestors, and to live under the power of the master. (...) Everything depends on the householder. (...) From the point of view of chivalry, asceticism is nonsense.

In this polemic, two visions of the world and life vie against each other as the Vedism of the Aryans, which values having sons and cattle, accumulating wealth and offering sacrifices, is pitted against the ideology of the native inhabitants of ancient India. It is not an intra-religious battle, as Vedism could neither be the origin of the asceticism nor transform to fully accommodate ascetic values (Skurzak 1958: 17).

5.4. Familles érémiques (pp. 18–24)

Four stories from the *Mahābhārata* (Śunaḥśepa, MBh. XIV.3, Rṣyaśringa, MBh. III.110, Śakuntalā, MBh. I.69 and Sāvitrī, MBh. III.293) and a description of the families of forest dwellers in the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* II.9.8 form the basis for establishing the origin of asceticism: after building a hut, a hermit dwells in the woods with his wife and children, keeping the sacrificial fire. He eats roots and fruits.

6. Possible non-Aryan origins of Indian asceticism

Along with exploring Indian asceticism in his French studies, Skurzak investigates the origin of Indian civilisation in an attempt to capture the possible roots of Indian culture, philosophy, society and religion. He addresses three concepts of the possible origin of Indian asceticism. Firstly, he rejects the idea that it was invented by the Indo-Europeans or the Aryans since their cherished values included wealth, force and wellbeing. Secondly, Skurzak briefly scrutinises and describes the Indus Valley Civilisation (Skurzak 1958: 23). Finally, he posits that Indian asceticism is derivable from the indigenous tribes of ancient India, which inhabited the region of the Comorin Cape and the Vindhya Mountains. The native population lived in forest, jungles and wild places, and their lifestyle is reflected in the life of hermits (Skurzak 1958: 23). While some of these tribes at least partly embraced the Vedic tradition, the natives retained some of their practices intact, including the practices of self-denial in the forest.

Besides the two recognised creative elements of modern Indian civilisation, i.e. the civilisation of Indus and the Aryan civilisation, the author presents a third one: the civilisation of North-Eastern India; this civilisation is best embodied in Magadha. The author calls this factor the Sub-Himalayan Civilisation. His statement is based on sources, primarily on Megasthenes. The India that we know from the Brahmin sources and the India of Megasthenes are two different worlds. (...) The community which is described by Megasthenes in no way conforms to the rules of the Brahmin system (Skurzak 1966a: 11).

In his two later works, i.e. *Historia starożytna (Problems of the Origin of Indian Civilisation)*, Skurzak 1966a) and *Prawo starożytne (On the Origin of Ancient Indian Law)*, Skurzak 1966b), Ludwik Skurzak proposes that the Indus Valley Civilisation was possibly continued in the culture of Magadha, an ancient Indian kingdom in southern Bihar. Several Śramaṇic movements, which existed before the sixth century BCE, influenced both the *āstika* and *nāstika* traditions of Indian philosophy (Ray 1999: 237–249). The Śramaṇa movement gave rise to an array of heterodox beliefs, including the endorsement or denial of the concept of the soul, atomism, antinomian ethics, materialism, atheism and agnosticism. The śramaṇic beliefs also ranged from fatalism to free will, from the idealisation of extreme asceticism to the idealisation of family life, and from strict ahimsa (non-violence) and vegetarianism to permitting violence and meat-eating (Jaini 2001: 57–77). According to Indologist Johannes Bronkhorst, the culture of Magadha differed in many respects from the Vedic kingdoms of the Indo-Aryans. He argues for recognising a cultural area called “Greater Magadha,” defined as roughly overlapping with the region in which the Buddha and Mahāvīra lived and taught (Bronkhorst 2007, Witzel 1997).

On the one hand, Skurzak argues for the connection between Magadha (and thus, the Indus Valley Civilisation) and the sub-Himalayan peoples and religious practices (Skurzak 1966b: 73, 77; Skurzak 1966a: 6–9, 11–12).

It seems that we should follow this direction in order to solve the mystery of the state of Magadha, which appears suddenly in the Buddhist sources as a perfect organism. This state continued the tradition of statehood of the Indus civilisation, absorbed elements of the civilisation of the sub-Himalayan peoples and became a nucleus of Indian statehood and civilisation. (Skurzak 1966b: 77)

On the other hand, he locates the origin of the civilisation of Indus in the large context of the Persian Gulf civilisation (Skurzak 1966a: 5; Skurzak 1966b: 70–71, 75). The origin of the Indus Valley Civilisation:

(...) cannot be exactly established. It belongs to the civilisation of the Persian Gulf, a civilisation that stretched over Sumer, the Isle of Bahrein and the Indus basin. Despite individual differences, these civilisations are fundamentally similar (Skurzak 1966b: 75).

Conclusion

In his studies on the old Indian tradition of renunciation, Ludwik Skurzak analysed several types of ancient Indian ascetics encountered both in Brahminical culture and in Buddhist forest and monastic life. He provided lengthy descriptions of ascetics referenced in the Brahmanical, early Buddhist and Greek sources. He proposed a hypothesis concerning the oldest type of an ascetic — *l'ermite errant dans la forêt* (the ascetic wandering in a forest). Skurzak perceived the fourfold division of *āśramas* as an evolutionary process which unfolded over centuries, as Aryan traditions and customs penetrated into the indigenous Indian regions. This idea is consistent with the current research findings (Bronkhorst 1998, Olivelle 1974, 1992, 1993, and 2011). In his research on the origin of Indian culture, Skurzak boldly posited that the oldest ascetic type may have originated in the Indus Valley Civilisation (which itself was linked to the Semitic culture of the Persian Gulf), in the Dravidian culture or in the kingdom of Magadha, which he called the heir of the Indus Valley Civilisation.

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SANSKRIT IN BRESLAU: THE FIRST PART OF A LONG STORY

Abstract: The history of Indological studies at the University of Breslau up to the end of World War II is an important part of the history of Indology in general. The present paper traces this development, focussing on the main figures: A. F. Stenzler, A. Hillebrandt, B. Liebich, O. Strauß and P. Thieme. It is shown how major trends of German political and intellectual history are reflected in the microcosm of Indology in Breslau.

Keywords: history of Indology, University of Breslau, A. F. Stenzler, A. Hillebrandt, B. Liebich, O. Strauß, P. Thieme

This paper is a modest attempt to gather basic pieces of information on the history of Indological¹ research and teaching at the University of Breslau² up to the end of World War II.³ This history is not only rich and interesting in itself, but it is also an important part of the history of Indology in general, as will

¹ For stylistic reasons, I will use the terms Indology, Indian Studies, and Sanskrit Studies synonymously in this paper.

² As this paper deals with a time when the city of Wrocław belonged to the Prussian and, later, to the German state and was a predominantly German speaking town, I will use the German form of its name.

³ I would like to express my sincere gratitude to prof. Marek Mejer (University of Warsaw), who not only first introduced me to the present topic some thirteen years ago, but also provided me with valuable information and resources from the Archiwum Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego. Apart from these documents, which I managed to supplement during my own stays at the University Archives, the main source of unpublished material for the present study was the Secret Prussian State Archives (Geheimes Preußisches Staatsarchiv) in Berlin. For general biographical information, I have regularly consulted the useful volume by Stache-Rosen 1990; additional literature is cited in the sections

be clear from a glance at the appended schema, which shows that a multitude of eminent Indologists were more or less strongly connected with the University of Breslau. My argument will mainly focus on presenting the line of professors teaching Sanskrit and Indology in Breslau. It may come as something of a surprise that the first person to be mentioned in this context is Georg Heinrich Bernstein, rather than the well-known Friedrich Stenzler, who held the chair for the bigger part of the 19th century.

Bernstein⁴ (1787–1860) was a scholar of Syriac studies, who became ‘extraordinary professor’ (roughly equivalent to associate professor) in Berlin in 1812 and then moved to Breslau as a full professor in 1821. As we learn from his handwritten CV in the University Archives, after serving as a cavalry officer in the Napoleonic Wars, he undertook a scholarly trip to England, where he spent some time in London, ‘mainly to learn the Sanskrit language, which was still little known in Germany at that time.’⁵ The knowledge he acquired there enabled him to institute the first Sanskrit courses at the University of Breslau as early as in 1822.⁶ He continued to teach his courses — with the help of his booklet *Hitopadesi particula* (1823), based on reading passages from the *Hitopadeśa* — until Stenzler’s arrival in 1833.

To digress somewhat, another non-Indologist with a sound knowledge of Sanskrit was Franz August Schmölders (1809–1880),⁷ who originally even studied Sanskrit with Schlegel and Lassen in Bonn, alongside other oriental languages. Later, he devoted himself mainly to Arabic studies and taught this subject as a professor in Breslau. Nevertheless, he also offered a limited number of Sanskrit courses between 1845 and 1860.

In spite of Bernstein’s pioneering Sanskrit classes, which were among the very first courses of this kind in Germany, there is no doubt that the real beginning of Sanskrit Studies at the University of Breslau are marked by Adolf Friedrich Stenzler’s appointment as an extraordinary professor “für Orientalische Sprachen”⁸ in 1833. As many of the leading German intellectuals of his

devoted to respective scholars. Some sources mentioned in this paper have already been presented in Sellmer 2012.

⁴ For more biographical information, see Bickell 1875.

⁵ “... hauptsächlich, um die in Deutschland damals noch wenig bekannte Sanskritische Sprache zu erlernen” (AUWr F25: 12).

⁶ He had already pioneered Sanskrit courses in 1820 at his former university, in Berlin (see Sengupta 2005: 17).

⁷ On Schmölder’s life and career see Weber 1892.

⁸ This is the formulation used by Stenzler himself in his hand-written CV (AUWr F25: 22). Cf. also the order of the Minister of Education addressed to the Faculty of Philosophy dt. 17.12.1832, where Stenzler’s expertise in Sanskrit is explicitly mentioned (“in Rücksicht auf seine vorzüglichen wissenschaftlichen Leistungen in den orientalischen Sprachen, und besonders im Sanskrit” — GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 33).

time, Stenzler (1807–1887)⁹ was the son of a Protestant preacher. He was born in the small, provincial small town of Wolgast in Western Pomerania, but being keenly interested in Oriental languages as early as in his school years, he nevertheless managed to find private teachers both for Hebrew and Arabic.¹⁰ He studied first in Berlin (1827) with Franz Bopp, who introduced him to Sanskrit, and then in Bonn (1827–28) with August Wilhelm Schlegel and Christian Lassen, whom he regarded as his main teacher. He received his doctoral degree in Berlin (1829), and subsequently went to Paris and London in order to continue his studies. Many circumstances surrounding his appointment in Breslau remain rather obscure, but there are strong indications that Wilhelm von Humboldt's and August Wilhelm Schlegel's support played an important role in it.¹¹ In particular Wilhelm von Humboldt, a well-known admirer of Sanskrit, was a figure of enormous influence within the system of higher education in Prussia at that time, and it is hardly doubtful that the establishment of Indology at Breslau University was to a large degree a result of his policies.¹²

There is an interesting testimony (adduced by Pax 1939) which sheds some light on the public reaction to Stenzler's appointment. It is included in the memoirs of August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, one of the founders of Germanic philology and a popular writer (nowadays best known for being the author of the present German national anthem), then working as extraordinary professor in Breslau:

Everyone shouted: Sanskrit in Breslau! In Breslau, where they only study the subjects that can nourish their man; where the students are so poor that they do not even attend a public lecture because they would have to pay 2½ silver pennies for health insurance; where *two* students, as they say, have only *one* pair of boots.¹³

Actually, the scepticism apparent in these words proved justified to a certain extent: The number of students attending Stenzler's lectures turned out to be very modest,¹⁴ and it seems that Indology as a subject continued to be rather

⁹ The richest and best source on Stenzler's biography is Pax 1939.

¹⁰ See Stenzler's CV (AUWr F25: 22).

¹¹ See Sellmer 2012: 29, n. 9.

¹² On W. von Humboldt's and A.W. Schlegel's role in initiating Sanskrit teaching at German universities, see Rabault-Feuerhahn 2013: 81–83.

¹³ "Alle Welt schrie: Sanskrit in Breslau! In Breslau, wo man nur Brotwissenschaft studiert, wo die Studenten so arm sind, daß sie nicht einmal ein Publicum belegen, weil sie 2½ Silbergroschen dann an die Krankenkasse entrichten müssen, wo zwei Studenten, wie man sich erzählt, nur Ein Paar Stiefel haben" (Hoffmann von Fallersleben 1892: 194).

¹⁴ In a report to the Minister of Education, the Extraordinary Plenipotentiary (Außerordentlicher Regierungsbevollmächtigter) Heinke gives attendance numbers between two and five students for Stenzler's courses in 1834–1835 (GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 15).

isolated inside the university, though it received some support within the Faculty of Philosophy.¹⁵ Stenzler generally had to face many difficulties in this period of his life, but his laborious work (not only as a researcher, but also as a university librarian) and several spa stays funded by the Ministry of Education gradually improved his situation.¹⁶ Being well-liked and respected as a person,¹⁷ he was promoted to full professor “für das Fach der orientalischen Sprachen”¹⁸ in 1845 (albeit only after an unusually long time as extraordinary professor), and even served as Rector of the University in 1862/63.¹⁹

In spite of Stenzler’s rather marginal position inside the university, he managed to become, in his own quiet way, one of the most influential Indologists of the 19th century, simply through educating several eminent scholars, which is especially astounding in view of the overall small number of his students. In his *Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und Indischen Altertumskunde*, Windisch (1992, p. 222) even speaks of a “Breslauer Schule,” which continued and replaced the Bonn school, founded by A. W. von Schlegel and Lassen. The most important researchers trained by Stenzler included Weber, Kielhorn, Rhys Davids, Eggeling and Pischel (see the schema below). Stenzler’s own publications, though not prolific, represented high standards of scholarship, as exemplified, for instance, by his edition of the *Mṛcchakaṭikā* (1847) and, of course, his certainly best-known work, the *Elementarbuch der Sanskrit-Sprache* (1st ed. 1868), which has seen no fewer than nineteen German editions to date, has been translated or adapted into numerous languages and is still being used at universities.

¹⁵ It is almost moving to read that in 1845 the Faculty endorsed Stenzler’s attempts to become a full professor with the argument that his promotion may enhance students’ interest in Indology: “believing that this may help in achieving greater attention and diligence among our students for an important part of philology and literature, which so far they have but poorly frequented and studied” (“zumal da sie glaubt, daß dieses dazu beitragen kann, die Aufmerksamkeit und den Fleiß unserer Studierenden einem wichtigen bis jetzt noch wenig von ihnen besuchten und betriebenen Theile der Philologie und Litteratur zuzuwenden” — GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 43).

¹⁶ For more details on Stenzler’s struggles due to ill health (he probably had tuberculosis), financial problems and a high additional workload as a librarian in the University Library, see Sellmer 2012: 29–30. Cf. also Rabault-Feuerhahn 2007: 309–310.

¹⁷ In a letter of support, Alexander von Humboldt calls him “the most charming of all Indianists” (“der liebenswürdigste aller Indianisten” — GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 25); the Extraordinary Plenipotentiary Heinke, writing to the Minister of Education, underscores that he is also well-liked outside the university (GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 33).

¹⁸ See GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Vf Lit.S. Nr. 33.

¹⁹ During his time as the rector, he seized the opportunity to address the members of the university in two speeches (see Stenzler 1863 and 1865), promoting the role of Indology and explaining its importance (cf. Sellmer 2012: 30–36).

In spite of the health problems which afflicted his younger years, Stenzler lived to old age, and during the more than fifty years of his professorship in Breslau, the landscape and the position of Indology had changed considerably. Consequently, after his death — and partly even earlier — his duties were taken over by two successors. One of them was Friedrich Conrad August Fick (1833–1916), who became full professor of comparative historical linguistics (“für vergleichende Sprachgeschichte”).²⁰ In line with a general tendency of the time,²¹ his field of research split from Sanskrit studies and became part of the evolving science of linguistics. (Needless to say, Fick knew Sanskrit very well; he had studied it with Benfey in Göttingen.)

Stenzler’s real successor was Alfred Hillebrandt (1853–1927).²² Born not far away from Breslau, Hillebrandt first studied with Stenzler himself, completed his studies in Munich under Martin Haug in 1875 and submitted his habilitation thesis in Breslau, where he became extraordinary professor (“für Sanskrit und vergleichende Sprachforschung”) and finally full professor “für Sanskrit”²³ in 1888. As an Indologist, he is mainly known for his research on Vedic mythology and religion, and the English translation of his *Vedische Mythologie* (1st ed. 1891–1902) is still regularly reprinted in India. But his activities were by no means restricted to his academic work. He served in various capacities in the academic self-administration and was a highly engaged conservative politician; as such he was the representative of the University of Breslau in the Prussian House of Lords (Herrenhaus) for many years.²⁴ This fact alone indicates how highly esteemed he was among his fellow professors, who also elected him twice as Rector of the University (1901/02 and 1910/11). His rectoral speech of 1901²⁵ shows an attitude that is very different from Stenzler’s explanatory and popularising tone thirty-nine years earlier. Hillebrandt paints a picture of Indian Studies as a field of research that “stands in full bloom”²⁶ and is acknowledged and avidly practised both in Europe and America. It turned out, however, that Hillebrandt was overoptimistic as to the position of Indology in relation to other

²⁰ See GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Va Sekt. 4, Titel IV N r 36 Bd. 14, Nr. 156.

²¹ Concerning the rise of comparative linguistics in this time, see Rabault-Fuerhahn 2013: S. 175–180.

²² For a much richer characteristic of Hillebrandt than can be given in this paper, see the sympathetic and well-informed review of his work in the obituary by Liebich 1928.

²³ See GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Va Sekt. 4, Titel IV N r 36 Bd. 14, Nr. 156.

²⁴ His conceptual work for the organisation and development of Oriental Studies and for educational and research policies in general was notable as well (as witnessed by the papers published in Hillebrandt 1916).

²⁵ See Hillebrandt 1901 and the discussion in Sellmer 2012: 37–39.

²⁶ Indology is “eine[] jetzt zu voller Höhe emporgeblühte Wissenschaft” (Hillebrandt 1910: 5).

disciplines. At least, so it seems, because when his retirement came in 1921, the Ministry of Education wanted to install a second professor for comparative linguistics, which would have meant the end of Indology in Breslau. This transpires from a letter that the classical philologist Ernst Kornemann, Hillebrandt's colleague and friend, sent to the Ministry. Using a draft formulated by Hillebrandt himself,²⁷ Kornemann insisted that the Faculty was strongly in favour of continuing the tradition of Indology in Breslau.²⁸ All in all, the fact that the discipline of Indian Studies was ultimately preserved at the University may well have been in large measure due to Hillebrandt's lasting influence and authority.

Bruno Liebich (1862–1939), who had finished his studies in Göttingen, done his habilitation in Breslau and been appointed extraordinary professor there as early as in 1892, was chosen as Hillebrandt's successor but served in this capacity comparatively briefly, until 1928. His publications, most of which concern the Indian grammatical tradition, are not very voluminous, but represent an exceptionally high quality, which is borne out by the fact that none other than the great Louis Renou wrote an article dedicated to presenting Liebich's work.²⁹ At present, a volume with Liebich's minor works, funded by the Glasenapp-Stiftung, is being prepared by Dragomir Dimitrov (University of Marburg).

The name of this foundation takes us to the next chapter in the history of Indian Studies in Breslau. The first person on the list of Liebich's possible successors drawn up by the Faculty of Philosophy was Helmuth von Glasenapp, who however decided to accept a position in Königsberg (today's Kaliningrad), where the death of Rudolf Otto Franke left a chair vacant at the very same time. Consequently, Otto Strauß (1881–1940),³⁰ a student of Paul Deußen in Kiel and the second candidate on the list, was invited to Breslau and heeded the call. Similarly to his teacher, his main interest was in philosophy, and the fact that his *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie* was re-edited as recently as in 2004 is a testimony both to the quality of his scholarship and to his talent for presenting difficult topics in an understandable way. Unfortunately, Strauß, who was of Jewish origin, became a victim of the Nazi regime a mere few years later. To be sure, he was not removed from his post in 1933, unlike many Jewish professors in Germany who lost their jobs then on the grounds of the ill-famed Law for the Restoration of the Professional

²⁷ See AUWr F100: 280–281.

²⁸ See AUWr, F100: 289–293.

²⁹ See Renou 1932.

³⁰ For a lively and warm portrait of Strauß, see the obituary by his student, the linguist Wolfgang Pax (1950), who converted to Catholicism after the war and entered the Franciscan order, where he took the name of Elpidius.

Civil Service (Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums).³¹ Soon enough, however — in 1935 — he was indeed forced to give up his chair, because as a Jew he was stripped of his German citizenship by the even more discriminatory Law of the Reich Citizen (Reichsbürgergesetz) and relegated to the lower category of “members of the German state,” which blocked him from continuing his career as a civil servant. After this event, which is certainly among the most shameful episodes in the history of Indology at Breslau University,³² Strauß left Breslau. He first went to Berlin and then emigrated to the Netherlands, where he died of heart failure in 1940.

Given these circumstances, Paul Thieme (1905–2001),³³ who was the next Indologist to be employed at the University — first, in 1936, as a “Dozent” and, then, from 1939 as extraordinary professor, before going to Halle in 1941 — can hardly be regarded as Strauß’s successor in the usual sense. Undeniably, the careers of many young German academics of that time, which were facilitated, if not made possible, by the outrageous discriminatory policy of the Nazi regime, started under a shadow, as it were. But Thieme himself seems not to have sympathised with the Nazi ideology, and in any case the moral doubts surrounding his engagement by no means imply that he was not qualified for the post. On the contrary, Thieme was certainly among the most brilliant young Indologists of his time and became one of the most respected Indological scholars of the second half of the 20th century, especially in the field of Vedic studies. During his comparatively short stint in Breslau, he published his classical study *Der Fremdling im R̥gveda* (1938), where one of his central claims — that *ārya* originally had the meaning of “wirtlich” (hospitable) — can well be seen as containing a veiled criticism of the Nazi ideology of “Aryanism.”

After Thieme left, no new professor was appointed, but Alexander Ziesenis (1899–1945)³⁴ came as a “Lehrbeauftragter” (lecturer) from Hamburg and so

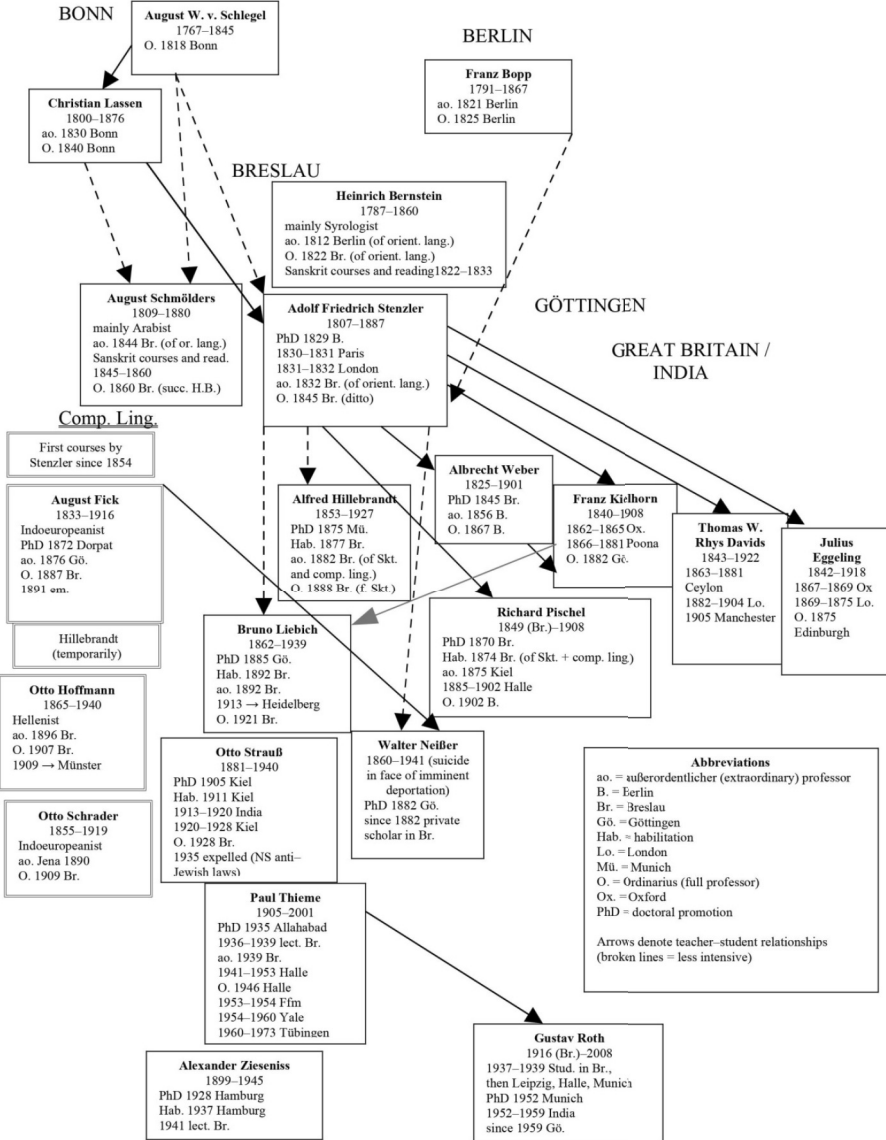
³¹ I was unable to find documents explaining why he had been spared this fate, but it is highly likely that Strauß’s service as a front soldier in World War One exempted him from that law.

³² Even more saddening is the fate of Walter Neißer (1860–1941), an Indologist, who was not formally affiliated with the University of Breslau, but started out as a student of Stenzler’s, completed his dissertation in Göttingen (1882) and lived afterwards as a private scholar in Breslau, devoting himself mostly to lexical research on the *R̥gveda-Saṃhitā*. As a person of Jewish origin, Neißer was subjected to various forms of repression even in his old age: among other things, after 1935 he was no longer allowed to use the University Library, which no doubt was particularly hard to bear for him. He committed suicide in 1941, when he was in danger of being deported to a concentration camp.

³³ For more information on Thieme’s life and personality, see, first of all, Söhnen-Thieme 2003, who also reports interesting details about his time in Breslau.

³⁴ Cf. the obituary by von Glasenapp 1949.

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ensured the continuity of Indological teaching until the end of the war. He also was a gifted scholar, and in von Glasenapp’s opinion (1949), made valuable contributions to our knowledge of Indian cultural influences in South East Asia and, especially, to the development of Śaiva siddhānta. Like many other civilians, he was ordered to take part in the defence of Breslau against the Red Army and died in the last days of the war.

The end of WW2 marks a turning point in the history both of the city and of the University of Breslau. Nevertheless, as the very publication of the present volume proves, Indological Studies would soon return to the city. This, however, is quite another story.

Abbreviations

AUWr — Archiwum Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

GStA PK — Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

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THE POST-WAR HISTORY OF INDOLOGY STUDIES IN WROCLAW

Abstract: The history of Indological studies in Wrocław after the Second World War commenced in July 1945, when Ludwik Skurzak began his work at the University of Wrocław. Dr Skurzak's teaching and organizational activity made it possible to initiate courses in Indian Philology in the academic year 1947/1948. As a result of political and administrative decisions of the then communist central government, Indology was removed from the list of degrees at the University of Wrocław after the academic year 1951/1952. In October 1957, the Indological unit was reactivated as an independent Department of Indian Philology (Pol. Katedra Filologii Indyjskiej). However, as a result of political and administrative decisions, the Department again lost its organizational autonomy in 1969, and was incorporated into the Institute of Classical Philology and Ancient Culture (Instytut Filologii Klasycznej i Kultury Antycznej). Today it is the Institute of Classical, Mediterranean and Oriental Studies (Instytut Studiów Klasycznych, Śródziemnomorskich i Orientalnych), and the Department of Indian Philology (Zakład Filologii Indyjskiej) is its integral and important part. The history of Indological studies at the University of Wrocław is primarily the history of the academic work of all generations of Wrocław-based Indologists who have taught and done research at the Department of Indian Philology.

Keywords: Indology, University of Wrocław, Department of Indian Philology, university teaching, university research, Ludwik Skurzak, Hanna Wałkowska, Joanna Sachse

The history of post-war Indology at the University of Wrocław, particularly in the first decades after the Second World War, largely reflects the difficult and complicated political realities of communist Poland, which were also difficult and complicated for the academic community.

Immediately after the war, in July 1945, Ludwik Skurzak (1900–1979), who had graduated in History and Oriental Studies from Lwów (at the Faculty

of Humanities of the Jan Kazimierz University) and Paris (at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* and the *Collège de France*) before the war, came to Wrocław to start his academic work here.¹ He began his work at the budding Polish university by securing and organizing the Indological book collection previously owned by the German Oriental Institute, on the 3rd floor of a building at 49 Szewska Street. Skurzak found the once rich collection (as evidenced by the preserved catalogue) considerably truncated as a large part of the books had most probably been taken out of Wrocław. For a researcher — philologist, the fact that many text editions were missing was particularly inconvenient.²

Despite severe academic staff shortage³ and the depleted book collection, two Oriental studies chairs were established among other units of the Faculty of Humanities as early as in August 1945. These were the Chair of Middle Eastern Studies and the Chair of Indian Philology, which were to become the foundation of a future Oriental Institute. Professor Ananiasz Zajączkowski, a Turkologist commuting from Warsaw, became the head of both chairs, and both units were temporarily referred to as the Oriental Studies Centre (*Studium Orientalistyczne*). However, barely a year later (in April 1946), the Ministry of Education rejected the project of developing either Middle Eastern or South Asian studies in Wrocław, and refused to authorize any Oriental institution as a structurally independent university unit. Both chairs were incorporated into the Department of Linguistics (*Katedra Językoznawstwa*), headed by Professor Jerzy Kuryłowicz, and were named the Section of Oriental Studies (*Sekcja Orientalistyczna*).

The governmental decisions did not weaken the didactic and organizational enthusiasm of the few teachers affiliated with the Section. Despite organizational precariousness, Dr. Ludwik Skurzak managed to launch a degree programme in Indian Philology at the Section of Oriental Studies in the academic year 1947/1948. A Near and Middle East Seminar was also founded within the same organizational framework. In 1951, the first and then only

¹ The academic biography of Ludwik Skurzak, the founder of post-war Indology at the University of Wrocław, was presented by his student and the academic colleague, Hanna Wałkowska (Wałkowska 1981). See also the papers by Joanna Sachse and Nina Budziszewska in the current volume.

² Wałkowska 1981: 4.

³ Cf. Sachse 1993: 6: “Orientalistykę wrocławską reprezentowali w tym czasie prof. A. Zajączkowski (turkolog dojeżdżający z Warszawy), p. R. Stark-Kochowa, wkrótce doktor turkologii, lektor języka tureckiego mgr T. Zimnicki oraz L. Skurzak, wówczas jeszcze doktor, organizujący seminarium indologiczne.”

[Oriental studies in Wrocław were represented at that time by Prof. A. Zajączkowski (a turkologist commuting from Warsaw), Ms. R. Stark-Kochowa, soon a PhD in Turkology, a teacher of Turkish, M.Phil. T. Zimnicki, and L. Skurzak, than still a PhD, organizing a Seminar in Indology].

group of students completed a full 4-year Indology studies cycle, and two graduates obtained their Master's degrees. One of them was Hanna Pachnowska, later Wałkowska, who was to become Skurzak's colleague and the closest collaborator as a member of the second generation of Wrocław's Indologists.

After the academic year 1951/1952, the entire Section of Oriental Studies was closed down again by the ministerial authorities, and the Indology programme was scrapped as well. Dr. Skurzak became a teacher of Latin at the Foreign Language Centre (Studium Języków Obcych), he also taught courses on the history of the Ancient East to the students of History and Classics.

The political thaw in Poland after 1956 had a propitious effect on Wrocław's Indology. In 1957, a small Indological institution was reactivated as an organizationally autonomous Department of Indian Philology, headed by Associate Professor Ludwik Skurzak. Hanna Wałkowska (1921–2013) became his assistant and pursued a full-fledged academic career from the moment she got a position at the University.⁴ Subsequent important developments in the history of Wrocław's Indology followed in 1969, when as a result of structural changes at the University of Wrocław small units lost their organizational autonomy yet again, with the previously independent Indological institution converted into a dependent Department of Indian Philology. The Department became part of the Institute of Classical Philology, and the Institute was renamed the Institute of Classical Philology and Ancient Culture in the wake of its merger with the Indological institution. Ever since, for over fifty years, the Institute and the Department have coexisted relatively peacefully and on quite a friendly footing, and the constantly developing Department of Indian Philology has become an important part of the Institute. The Institute itself goes now by the name of the Institute of Classical, Mediterranean and Oriental Studies, which certainly better reflects its current profile. In fact, Indology has become the germ of more broadly conceived Oriental or East Asian studies at the Institute, which is dedicated today to the study and teaching not only of the Classics and Indology but also of Korean, Chinese and, recently, Japanese languages and cultures.

Professor Skurzak was the head of the Department until he retired in 1971. After his retirement, Hanna Wałkowska became the head of the Department (as Associate Professor from 1972, and Professor Extraordinarius from 1982). In 1991 Joanna Sachse (as Associate Professor from 1988, Professor Extraordinarius from 1993, and Professor Ordinarius from 2002), a student of Professor Wałkowska, became the head of the Department,⁵ and served in this

⁴ For an account of the academic biography of Hanna Wałkowska, see Sachse 1993: 5–12.

⁵ Cf. the academic biography of Joanna Sachse written by Przemysław Szczurek (Szczurek 2017–2018a; 2017–2018b).

capacity until 2013. This position is currently held by the author of this paper (Associate Professor or Professor of the University of Wrocław according to the current terminology, from 2016), who was a student of Professor Sachse.

Over the years, Wrocław's Indology has been housed in a range of University buildings. Directly after the war, from 1945 to 1952, as Oriental studies developed, it had its seat on the third floor of a building at 49 Szewska Street, where the German Oriental Institute had been located before the war. The entire building is now taken up by the Institute of History. After its reactivation in 1957, the Department of Indian Philology was established on the first floor of the neighbouring building at 48 Szewska Street, where the Institute of Archeology is to be found today. After joining the Institute of Classical Philology, the Department of Indian Philology moved back to its old home at 49 Szewska Street, but settled on the second floor. In 2011, the entire Institute was relocated to its probably temporary address, in a building at 21 Komuny Paryskiej Street (the former University hall of residence called "Ul," i.e. "[Bee]Hive"). The Department of Indian Philology takes up several rooms on its third floor and two library rooms on the ground floor. In recent years, the growing Institute has been allocated some extra teaching space and a library rooms, on the first (library) and second floors of an impressive former monastery of the regular canons of St. Augustine at 3/4 Świętej Jadwigi Street (which previously housed the Department of Manuscripts and Old Prints of the University of Wrocław Library). Some Indology courses have been taught there for the last few years, simultaneously with an ongoing refurbishment of several rooms. Therefore, there is a good reason to believe that the odyssey of the Department of Indian Philology has not ended yet, and there is no really telling when it will end.

Over the post-war decades, the courses offered by Wrocław's Indology department have changed and evolved. Apart from the short episode of an MA programme launched in the wake of the war's end, for over 50 years to follow, teaching was based on optional courses for students of various degree programmes (mainly from the Faculty of Philology), who were interested in India and Indian culture as well as on some mandatory courses in certain Departments of the University. It was not until the first decade of the 21st century that the efforts of the staff of the Department of Indian Philology to found a degree programme in Indological studies finally succeeded. From the 1950s, generations of teachers had taught Sanskrit courses of varying difficulty for students enrolled in different faculties and programmes. Indologists had also offered optional lectures on the history, literature and/or philosophy of ancient India. Some of the Indological courses were more formalized as one of the requirements for the completion of a given portion of studies. This was the case for the History of the Ancient East, taught by Prof. Skurzak to the students of History and Classics, Ancient Indian Law and Customs, taught

by Prof. Skurzak and Prof. Wałkowska to the students of Ethnology and Classics (as so-called monographic lectures) and Ancient Indian Philosophy taught by Prof. Wałkowska to the students of Religion Studies.⁶

Because the Department of Indian Philology teachers were formally affiliated with the Institute of Classical Philology and Ancient Culture, two generations of Wrocław's Indologists obtained their university education in Classics, and in some cases this was their first degree. Therefore, besides teaching Indological courses, both Joanna Sachse and her three students — Mariola Pigiłoniowa, Hanna Urbańska and Przemysław Szczurek — also taught classes in Classics up to the early 2000s, including ancient Greek language, reading Latin and Greek texts, or a Greek literature proseminar (the latter taught by Joanna Sachse). In the 2010s, Przemysław Szczurek taught classes that combined his classical and Indological interests, i.e. monographic lectures on Greek and Roman accounts of ancient India for the Classics students.

At the end of the 1980s, when Professor Wałkowska and Doctor and a little later Professor Sachse were the only teachers at the Department of Indian Philology, the idea of further developing Indological courses emerged and an Indology Specialisation with six hours of coursework a week was opened as an option chiefly for students of the Faculty of Philology. The specialisation was conceived as an extended version of an elective course, and was based on a Sanskrit course (and the reading of Sanskrit texts at a more advanced level), and lectures on the history, literature, philosophy and religion of ancient India. Mainly Classics undergraduates at various points of their programmes enrolled in this specialisation (including the author of this paper, for four years of his studies).

About thirty years later, when the Department, then headed by Professor Joanna Sachse, already had five teachers, collaboration started with Teresa Miązek, and a little later with Joanna Browarska, both of them teachers of Hindi, Indology graduates from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and as of now colleagues at the University of Wrocław's Department of Indian Philology. As a result of this cooperation, an Indological specialization programme of eight hours of coursework a week was launched in the academic year 2007/2008. The two-year specialisation included Sanskrit and Hindi courses, as well as one-semester courses in the history, literature, philosophy and culture of both ancient and modern India. It was the first step towards striking a curricular balance between courses focused on ancient and modern or contemporary India.

Shortly afterwards, in the academic year 2009/2010, a full-time BA degree in "Indian Philology and the Culture of India" was offered for the first time, followed by an MA degree in Indology in the academic year 2016/2017.

⁶ Cf. Wałkowska 1981: 5; Sachse 1993: 10.

In 2010, the Institute of which the Department of Indian Philology is a prominent part re-named as the Institute of Classical, Mediterranean and Oriental Studies as a natural consequence of its development and the expansion of its teaching and research. As already mentioned, the Institute has recently also added Korean, Chinese and Japanese studies to its repertoire.

Currently, the staff of the Department of Indian Philology includes eight university teachers and researchers in Indology, and a tendency towards proportionate development of studies on Sanskrit and Hindi language and literature is observable. For historical reasons, Sanskrit continues to be a dominant field (particularly in terms of research). At the same time, however, the expectations of a considerable number of students unmistakably centre on Hindi and modern India studies. Therefore, BA and MA degrees in Indology at the University of Wrocław are based on the pillars of two languages: Sanskrit and Hindi courses. Students also attend courses in Indian history, Sanskrit and Hindi literatures, Indian philosophy, religion, mythology, art, ancient Indian legislation and customs, political and cultural trends of modern India, as well as linguistics, literary studies and theory of translation. Joanna Browarska, one of the Hindi teachers, also teaches optional Urdu classes. Some of the core lectures and seminars have a monographic form. Third BA students and MA students can choose an educational path in either Sanskrit or Hindi, with one of the languages and literatures (either Sanskrit or Hindi) taught at an advanced level, and the other limited to the necessary minimum. To the joy of the teachers, students not infrequently choose to take courses in both paths, regardless of their selected specialisation. Since the academic year 2018/2019, graduate students have had the opportunity to continue their studies and research work at the PhD level, on an equal footing with students of other programmes at the Faculty of Philology. Marta Monkiewicz, representing the first group of MA graduates from Wrocław's Department of Indian Philology, now a teacher of Sanskrit and Hindi, was the first to join the University's PhD programme.

Both the students of Indian philology in Wrocław and the teachers of the Department of Indian Philology highly value the various possibilities of collaboration with foreign Indology centres, especially in Europe and India. Some of our students annually go to India to take part in a one-year Hindi course (at the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan in Agra) funded by the Government of the Republic of India or enroll in two-year MA programmes in Sanskrit or Hindi, at various universities under the ICCR scholarship scheme (Indian Council for Cultural Relations; also funded by the Government of the Republic of India). Less regularly they participate in one-semester studies within the ERASMUS + program. The teachers of the Department are committed to networking with (predominantly European) Indological centres, attend Indology conferences and go on short academic visits which sometimes involve formal teaching or research grants as part of bilateral inter-university cooperation. Briefly,

the foreign Indology hubs with which Wrocław's Department of Indian Philology has had the most robust and long-standing collaboration include the Department of Indology and Far Eastern Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies at the University of Zagreb; the Classical East Department of the Faculty of Classic and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"; Far Eastern Studies at the Faculty of Asian and African Studies, St. Petersburg State University; and the Department of Indian Languages and Cultures of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Ghent University.

Over the years, the Polish inter-university teaching cooperation has involved several interesting didactic episodes. In the academic year 1985/1986, Professor Hanna Wałkowska commuted to Warsaw every week, where she taught a course in the history of ancient Indian civilization for the University of Warsaw's Indology studies, at the Chair of South Asian Studies of the Faculty of Oriental Studies.⁷ For two academic years (2000/2001 and 2001/2002), Professor Joanna Sachse collaborated with the Department of Indian Studies (now the Department of Languages and Cultures of India and South Asia, part of the Institute of Oriental Studies) at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, teaching Sanskrit courses (during which she read tales of the *Pañcatantra* with students), lecturing on the *Mahābhārata* and running an MA Sanskrit seminar.⁸ For six academic years (from 2011 to 2017), Przemysław Szczurek had an opportunity and a privilege to cooperate with the Chair of South Asia at the Department of Oriental Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, teaching Sanskrit, ancient Indian history and Sanskrit literature. At the same time, in the academic year 2013/2014, Professor Marek Mejor from the University of Warsaw commuted to Wrocław to conduct courses in the history of Buddhism and the history of Indological studies for our students. For a few years (until the academic year 2019/2020), our Department was also didactically supported by Mr. Mandar Purandare, an Indian Hindi teacher, employed by the Chair of South Asia, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, who taught Hindi courses at different levels.

Another developmental element in the evolutionary history of post-war Indology studies can be noticed. It concerns the steadily growing numbers of PhD students and PhD degrees conferred. Professor Ludwik Skurzak supervised one PhD thesis, which was produced by his student Hanna Wałkowska. Professor Wałkowska was the supervisor of her student Joanna Sachse's PhD thesis and two other dissertations, written by young researches from Warsaw and Kraków. Professor Sachse supervised as many as six PhD theses, five of them being written and defended by the teachers of the Department of Indian Philology at the University of Wrocław.

⁷ Cf. Sachse 1993: 10.

⁸ Cf. Szczurek 2017–2018a: 11.

The Department of Indian Philology is committed to fostering students' active engagement in research and networking. In this respect, the students of the Department have made a key contribution to an event which, to my knowledge, stands out as unique in the history of university studies (or at least in Indology/Asian studies), inter-university contacts and exchange programmes. It is MESIC — Middle European Student Indology Conference — an annual international Indology conference organized for students and by students. Since 2009, Indology students of three Central European academic hubs — the University of Zagreb, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the University of Wrocław — have taken turns to hold annual conferences in Zagreb, Poznań and Wrocław, respectively. From the very beginning, the venture was joined by students of various universities (in Poland, Croatia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Germany, Austria, Lithuania, Italy and India). At MESICs, young researches and people of passion have had the opportunity to share their interests and research on different subjects and aspects of ancient and modern India.

To present the varied interests and research of several generations of colleagues from the Department of Indian Philology in a short and general paper is a sheer impossibility. One can only outline the main research directions in the scholarship of Wrocław-based Indologists. As a result of their education and interests, studies on ancient Indian literature, history, philosophy, legislation and customs dominate in their research. The topic of Greek and Latin sources describing ancient India, undertaken by a few colleagues, also looks quite interesting.⁹ Only in recent years, along with the employment of two Hindi teachers, has the research profile of the Department been augmented with studies on modern Indian literature, addressing selected issues of Hindi literature and Indian literature in English.

Ludwik Skurzak studied the issue of Indian ascetism on the basis of the oldest testimonies. In his work *Études sur l'origine de l'ascetisme indien* (1948), he sought to establish the origin of Indian ascetism as a social phenomenon with

⁹ In a paper dedicated to the biography of Ludwik Skurzak, Hanna Wałkowska (Wałkowska 1981: 5–6) briefly outlined his Indological research. On Skurzak's research work, see also the papers by Joanna Sachse and Nina Budziszewska in the current volume. Joanna Sachse (Sachse 1993: 7–10) discussed the research fields and publications of Hanna Wałkowska in a paper on the latter's academic biography. In two other papers, she has outlined the main research fields of the Indologists from the Department of Indian Philology, up to the early 21st century, including, on the one hand, works on Greek and Latin authors who wrote about ancient India (Sachse 2004) and, on the other hand, strictly Indological works (Sachse 2007). Przemysław Szczurek (Szczurek 2017–2018a; 2017–2018b) characterised the research and publications of Joanna Sachse in papers presenting her academic biography and bibliography.

a tradition long enough, in his view, to be traced back to pre-Aryan thought. He took a similar position in his studies of the Indian epic (*Études sur l'épopée indienne*, 1958), where, based mainly on the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, he presented the complexity of the ascetic tradition. Ludwik Skurzak also authored several papers in which he analysed Greek and Latin testimonies about India, thus initiating to a mini research series to which later other authors from the Department contributed. Ludwik Skurzak's papers in this series examined the testimonies of Alexander the Great's historians and above all Megasthenes. These publications were also informed by Skurzak's main idea of exploring the significant pre-Aryan influence on the civilization of ancient India, primarily the impact of the Indus Valley Civilization, which the author based on his interpretations of Megasthenes' testimonies.¹⁰

Professor Hanna Wałkowska's research interest centred on the legislation and customs of ancient India. She devoted two books and several papers to this subject, published between the early 1960s and the early 1990s. The most important of these are both of her books. The first book, *Formy zawierania małżeństw w Indiach starożytnych, ich geneza i rozwój* (*Forms of Marriage in Ancient India, their Origin and Development*, 1964), was her revised PhD thesis, while the second, *Kult zmarłych w Indiach starożytnych* (*The Worship of the Dead in Ancient India*, 1973), was her post-doctoral (habilitation) dissertation. In these books, Wałkowska discussed two extremely important aspects of ancient Indian life and culture on the basis of the Dharmasūtras and the Dharmaśāstras, ancient codes regulating Indian legislation and customs. Besides these main sources, she also investigated a broader source material, including Vedic Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas, some Gṛhyasūtras (books describing mainly home and family rituals), Jātakas (i.e. early Buddhist tales and stories composed in Pāli), and both great epics (*Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*).

In her studies on marriage rites and forms, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, on funeral customs, manners and forms (such as interment, hiding in caves, cremation, abandoning the corpse, water burial, air burial, i.e. corpse exposition, mumification, corpse dismemberment, or corpse consumption), Hanna Wałkowska explored her source materials side by side with non-Indian rituals; in her works on the origin of Indian customs and manners, she searched for ethnographic similarities and parallels with the customs of other Indo-European peoples. She also referred to the probable non-Indo-European and pre-Aryan influences on the culture of Vedic and Brahminic India, therein the Dravidian culture of South India, Tibetan customs and the Indus Valley Civilisation. This is partly at least a testament to the formative impact that Ludwik Skurzak, Wałkowska's teacher and mentor, had on her concepts.¹¹

¹⁰ See e.g. Skurzak 1954; 1963a; 1979.

¹¹ Cf. also e.g. Wałkowska 1981.

Based primarily on the literature of Dharmasūtras and Dharmaśāstras, Wałkowska studied the complex questions of property inheritance law in ancient India. In an extensive paper, she analysed, among other things, the rules of succession among the male descendants of the deceased father, issues of the mother's property, rules and regulations of inheritance in mixed marriages (i.e. among the descendants of parents from different castes), categories of sonship, niyoga (or levirate), adoption, the purchase of a son, or the remarriage of women.¹²

Hanna Wałkowska also researched the Dravidian South of the Indian Subcontinent.¹³ She took part in discussions on the appearance of Dravidians in India, and on the so-called Brahminisation of the Indian South. Among other ideas, she subscribed to the hypothesis that the ancestors of the highly developed urban civilization in the North-West regions of India (the so-called Indus Valley Civilization) had arrived in India independently, as had the members of the Dravidian civilization, which dominated the southern regions of India. She also argued that the "Aryanisation" or "Brahminisation" of the Indian South had been a much later process than the Indo-Aryan settlement in the North-Western India, pointing out superficiality of this process (noticeable mainly in its external form and terminology), as well as the fact that the Dravidian South has retained its distinctiveness in terms of customs, ritualism and legislation.

Professor Joanna Sachse's research bears out her extensive range of academic interests. In one of her research fields, she combined her university studies in Classics with Indology in order to competently deal with both Greek and Roman sources related to ancient India and old Indian sources related to the Greek and Roman world. Some of her favourite topics which stand out among her other interests include studies on the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Mahābhārata*, Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta*, works of certain gnostic movements, primarily the Rosicrucians, and translations from ancient and modern languages.

Megasthenes o Indiach (*Megasthenes on India*, 1981), Joanna Sachse's revised PhD dissertation, is her most important publication on ancient Greek and Latin texts describing India. This is the first and, so far, the only Polish study dedicated to the life and work of Megasthenes, a Hellenic historian and geographer from the turn of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC, who spend several years in the Magadha kingdom at the court of Candragupta as an envoy and/or ambassador of Seleukos I Nikator. The result of Megasthenes' stay in India and the materials collected there was a work called *Indiká* ("A Description of India"), of which only about 40 fragments survived. In the ancient Greek and Roman world *Indiká* was considered the primary source of knowledge

¹² Wałkowska 1963.

¹³ Wałkowska 1974a; 1974b.

about India. Apart from this bigger work, Joanna Sachse commented, both descriptively and analytically, on ancient India in Greek and Latin sources in several papers.¹⁴

Prof. Sachse's study on the *Bhagavadgītā* must be considered the culmination of her research work and translation interests. She has produced multiple papers and three books on the *Bhagavadgītā*, whereof one is a study of the poem (the only Polish monograph fully devoted to it; Sachse 1988) and two are its various commented translations.¹⁵ In both the monograph and the papers, Sachse advocates the uniformity and consistency of the teachings in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Among Joanna Sachse's research interests, studies on the *Mahābhārata* have been an important topic for over twenty years, what can be considered a natural consequence and, in a way, an extension of her research on the *Bhagavadgītā* (formally an episode of the great epic). Crucially, Joanna Sachse has repeatedly stated in her publications that she agrees with the view expressed most probably for the first time by French indologist Sylvain Lévi that the *Bhagavadgītā* should be recognised as the heart of the *Mahābhārata*. She has discussed the *Mahābhārata* in nine papers, in the form of academic essays.¹⁶

As part of her academic work, Joanna Sachse is also involved in translation. She has published translations from Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, French and English. The translations from Sanskrit comprise the two aforementioned translations of the *Bhagavadgītā* (one in rhythmised prose and the other in verse), which are 30 years apart, and *Meghadūta* by Kālidāsa (Polish: *Meghadūta. Obłok — Pośląncem*, Sachse 1994), a famous kāvya lyric poem. All these translations are accompanied by introductions and explanatory footnotes. The first *Bhagavadgītā* translation (Sachse and Wałkowska 1988a) symbolically connected the first three generations of Wrocław Indology: Joanna Sachse is the author of the translation and the footnotes to the translated text, Hanna Wałkowska wrote the introduction, and the book was dedicated to the memory of Ludwik Skurzak.

Dr. Mariola Pigoniowa's research primarily focuses on kāvya, elaborate ancient Indian court poetry composed in Sanskrit. Her book based on her PhD dissertation (Pigoniowa 2002) and several of her earlier and later papers¹⁷ analyse the poetry of Kālidāsa, who is widely recognised as the greatest playwright and poet of ancient India. By studying mainly the terminology and phraseology associated with the description of women and rivers in Kālidāsa's poetry, Pigoniowa shows the artistry and consistency of his poetic language.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. Sachse 1982; 2001.

¹⁵ Sachse and Wałkowska 1988a; Sachse 2019.

¹⁶ See e.g. Sachse 1997; 2007; 2013.

¹⁷ See e.g. Pigoniowa 2014a; 2014b.

*Rāmāyaṇa*¹⁸ and the Sanskrit anthology *Subhāṣitaratnaśa*¹⁹ form another part of Pigiŋniowa’s scholarship. In her research, Mariola Pigiŋniowa also focuses on the issues of lamentation and consolation in ancient Indian literature, both in *kāvya* and in the two great Sanskrit epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.²⁰ With background both in Indology and Classics, Pigiŋniowa relies on her double research toolbox. This is vividly exemplified in a comparative article which juxtaposes two literary lamentations of fathers after the death of their sons, the lamentation of Rāvaṇa after the death of Indrajit in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the lamentation of Mezentius after the death of Lausus as depicted in Vergilius’ *Aeneis*.²¹

In the academic year 2018/2019, Dr. Nina Budziszewska launched three-semester Postgraduate Studies in Classical Yoga as a brand-new academic programme at the Department of Indian Philology. With Dr. Budziszewska as the director, the course has proved a great organisational and didactic success. It is no coincidence that Nina Budziszewska is the head of this undertaking, because the exploration of yogic texts lies at the heart of her research.²² She addresses a range of issues such as: the image of a yogi in ancient Indian literature; the depiction of the practice and discipline of yoga in Sanskrit texts; the ethical value of yogic practice; the levels of yogic awareness, etc. The main texts she uses are the Upanishads, Sanskrit epics and the literature of Haṭhayoga.²³ She is also interested in the issues of common tantric motifs in Haṭhayoga and Tibetan Vajrāyana. Moreover, she extends her interests to the medical aspects of yoga therapy, understood in a triple sense as body — breath — mind (*āsana — prāṇāyāma — dhyāna*).

Dr. Budziszewska’s newly published book entitled *Mokṣadharmaparvan*²⁴ (Sanskrit. *Mokṣadharmaparvan*), being a revised version of her PhD dissertation, is the first Polish study devoted to a long series of instructions contained in the 12th book of the *Mahābhārata*. The author discusses in it the varied and many-layered testimony of philosophical and religious teachings in ancient India, concepts, theories, ontological notions and psychosomatic descriptions of man in accordance with the traditions of pre-classical *sāṃkhya* and yoga.

Dr. Hanna Urbańska dedicated her PhD project to examining the presence of tales and stories from the *Pañcatantra* in Polish literature, in both literary

¹⁸ Pigiŋniowa 2013.

¹⁹ Pigiŋniowa 2017–2018.

²⁰ See e.g. Pigiŋniowa 2005; 2007.

²¹ Pigiŋniowa 2019

²² See e.g. Budziszewska 2016b; 2018.

²³ See e.g. Budziszewska 2016a; 2017.

²⁴ Budziszewska 2021.

and folk tales. She traced the motifs of individual stories in her extensive and comprehensive work, trying to follow their path and transfer tradition from India to Europe, and above all to Poland. She took into account the mediating role of Persian, Arabic and later Turkish versions of the Sanskrit text, as well as medieval European (mainly Latin) collections and compendia. Besides offering a general outline of the history of the literary versions of Sanskrit tales, and their Middle Eastern literary mediations, Hanna Urbańska's book focused on selected plots and motifs from the *Pañcatantra* tales as rendered in Polish literary and folk tales, complementing textual analysis with Polish translations of the Indian narratives.²⁵

Hanna Urbańska is the first and so far the only Wrocław-based Indologist to deal with Malayalam literature. In this part of her research, she primarily seeks to identify ancient Sanskrit texts which have inspired selected authors and works of modern Malayalam literature.²⁶ Dr. Urbańska's latest papers as well as her forthcoming books, analyse the philosophical works of Nārāyaṇa Guru (1854–1928), a South Indian philosopher and social reformer who lived at the turn of the 19th century and founded his philosophy and original literary works (composed in three languages: Sanskrit, Tamil and Malayalam) on an array of concepts and ideas coming from the early Upanishads, the basic works of Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Vedānta philosophies, the texts of Śaiva traditions etc.²⁷

A comprehensive paper dedicated to the problem of aniconic representations of the Buddha in the earliest stages of Buddhist art (mainly in bass-reliefs) reflects one of the didactic and research interests of Dr. Alicja Łozowska, which is the art of ancient India.²⁸ Her interests also include Polish translations of the *Bhagavadgītā*.²⁹ She devoted her PhD dissertation to this issue.³⁰ Based on general trends in translation theory, she compared the ways of rendering philosophical terms, the nicknames of the heroes, stylistics and foreignization in the Polish translations of the poem (of which there are more than ten).

Przemysław Szczurek's research interests pivot on ancient Indian literature and Greek and Roman texts describing India. Both of these research fields stem from his academic background and both converged in his postdoctoral book dedicated to the analysis of the oldest sources depicting the (in)famous practice of widow self-immolation in India.³¹ The monograph discusses old Indian

²⁵ See Urbańska 2016.

²⁶ See e.g. Urbańska 2005; 2013b.

²⁷ See e.g. Urbańska 2015a; 2015b; 2017–2018.

²⁸ Łozowska 2012.

²⁹ Łozowska 2008b; 2017–2018.

³⁰ Łozowska 2021.

³¹ Szczurek 2013a.

testimonies referring to *satī* and compares them with ancient Greek and Latin writings on the subject. The argument of the book is additionally underpinned by non-Indian medieval and later texts (mainly authored by Europeans who travelled in India between the 14th and the 18th centuries and witnessed the practice) and by the testimonies of Indian material culture commemorating the self-immolated women (such as *satī* memorial stones, *satī* shrines and sanctuaries).

Szczurek's interest in the reception of ancient India in Greek and Latin literature are reflected in other shorter projects.³²

Fascinated with the method of textual analysis of the *Bhagavadgītā* proposed by the Croatian scholar Mislav Ježić, which allowed him to discover the layers of the text and to thoroughly trace the editorial processes of the poem, Szczurek dedicated his doctoral dissertation and several papers to this issue.³³ He has also employed the same philological method to analyse several passages in the *Mahābhārata*.

In his work on ancient Indian literature, Przemysław Szczurek also investigates the polemical meaning of some texts. He traces, on the one hand, those parts of the Pāli Canon that contain polemical statements about Brahminical (Vedic, Upanishadic) ideas,³⁴ and on the other hand, the popular texts of brahminical provenance (such as the *Bhagavadgītā* or some didactic parts of the *Mahābhārata*) that contain polemical allusions towards early Buddhist thought.³⁵

Dr. Teresa Miązek is the first Wrocław Indologist to fully devote herself to research into Hindi literature. In her doctoral project, she studied the stories of Ajñeya (whose real name was Sachchidanand Hiranand Vatsyayan, 1911–1987), an outstanding Hindi writer and poet of the 20th century, in the light of *rasa*, the ancient Indian theory of esthetics.³⁶ She is currently working on a Polish translation of Ajñeya's short stories. In her research, she explores the influences of the ancient literary tradition on the works of contemporary Hindi writers, with a particular emphasis on drama.³⁷ Another strand of her research focuses on reverberation of the most recent Indian history and culture in Hindi literature, as exemplified in her paper on, among others, Asgar Wajāhat's plays in this volume.

Joanna Browarska, another teacher of Hindi at the Department of Indian Philology, has for several years made her special mark by teaching optional

³² See e.g. Szczurek 2013b.

³³ E.g. Szczurek 2002; 2005.

³⁴ Szczurek 2015; 2016–17.

³⁵ E.g. Szczurek 2007; 2008; 2020.

³⁶ Teresa Miązek has published the results of her PhD research in several papers; see e.g. Miązek 2013 and 2015b.

³⁷ See Miązek 2015a; 2017–2018.

Urdu courses. She divides her research work between two areas. One of them concerns the role of Hindi and Urdu in the political, social, cultural and religious history of India and Pakistan.³⁸ The other encompasses contemporary Indian literature in English. She is working on a monograph devoted to the life and works of Khushwant Singh (1914–2015).

Marta Monkiewicz, the youngest colleague at the Department of Indian Philology, graduated from Indology at the University of Wrocław and Nano-engineering at the Wrocław University of Technology and Science. With this dual background, she opens new horizons for the research of her colleagues at the Department and seeks to combine the two disciplines she studied at the Universities. She is primarily interested in ancient science, in particular astronomy (*jyotiṣa*) and mathematics.³⁹ She also wants to devote her time to the analysis of Vedāṅga texts, ancient ritualism and juridical literature, above all to the Dharmasūtras.

The lives of five generations of teachers and researchers, as well as many more generations of students, have intertwined in the post-war history of Wrocław's Indology. Professors from the first two generations made sure that Wrocław's Indology did not disappear from the field of academic activity. Thanks to their efforts, Polish Wrocław can be said to have continued the work of the famous Indologists from Königliche Universität zu Breslau (from 1816) and Schlesische Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität zu Breslau (from 1911), headed by Adolf Friedrich Stenzler (1807–1887) and Alfred Hillebrandt (1853–1927). Picking up this work, the members of the later three generations of Indologists eventually succeeded in founding regular Indological studies at the University of Wrocław over ten years ago. Preceded by a dedicated conference, this volume commemorates the 40th anniversary of the death of Ludwik Skurzak, a representative of the first generation of Polish Indologists in Wrocław, the founding father of post-war Indology at the University of Wrocław. As a fitting intergenerational link, the conference was co-organised by Marta Monkiewicz, a member of the youngest, fifth generation of Wrocław Indologists. On behalf of all the generations of Wrocław-based Indology scholars, those who watch over our endeavours from above and those who are still struggling in everyday life and work to earn a place above, let me express my fervent hope that Wrocław's Indology will be proudly represented and, most of all, developed by many generations of students, academic teachers and researchers to come.

³⁸ See Browarska and Małkiewicz (*forthcoming*).

³⁹ See Monkiewicz 2017–2018.

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EUGENIUSZ NOWOSIELSKI (1894–1970) NIEZNANY UCZEŃ STEFANA STASIAKA

Abstract: Eugeniusz Nowosielski (1894–1970), an officer in the Polish pre-war army and a worker in exile in Great Britain after the Second World War, began his spiritual journey to India in London. His search for knowledge about India brought him in touch with immigrant Polish Indologists: Jadwiga Makowiecka, Stefan Stasiak and Włodzimierz Szajan. Nowosielski's preserved correspondence contains letters from these three scholars. Nowosielski developed a close master-student relationship with Stefan Stasiak, with whose help he grappled with the complexities of Sanskrit grammar. Professor Stasiak assisted Nowosielski in choosing Sanskrit texts to study and assessed his Sanskrit translations.

Keywords: Eugeniusz Nowosielski, Stefan Stasiak, Jadwiga Makowiecka, Włodzimierz Szajan, Sanskrit, *Pañcatantra*, translations

Eugeniusz Nowosielski urodził się w 1894 roku w Łukowie na Podlasiu, obszarze należącym po rozbiorach Polski do Rosji. W 1905 roku był jednym z przywódców strajku szkolnego w Gimnazjum Łukowskim¹. Strajkujący chcieli, aby językiem wykładowym w szkole, w której prawie wszyscy nauczyciele i uczniowie byli Polakami, był język polski. Władze rosyjskie nie okazały

¹ Dane biograficzne zawdzięczam dr. Józefowi Nowosielskiemu, synowi Eugeniusza. Zostały one w podobnej formie przedstawione w moim artykule pt. *Unknown Polish Translation of Purnabhadra's Pancatantra* (w: *Oriental Languages in Translation — Publication of the Oriental Committee of Polish Academy of Sciences*, red. A. Zaborski, M. Piela, s. 125–130), opublikowanym w 2008 roku. W późniejszym czasie rodzina Nowosielskich postanowiła przekazać dokumenty ze spuścizny Eugeniusza do Archiwum Nauki PAN i PAU w Krakowie. W niniejszej publikacji wykorzystuję materiały, które nie były jeszcze przedstawiane, a pokazują polskich indologów na emigracji w Londynie i kontakty Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego z nimi, wynikające z jego żywego zainteresowania nauką sanskrytu.

jednak zrozumienia dla tego pomysłu, co więcej, przywódcy strajku, w tym Eugeniusz Nowosielski, zostali usunięci z tzw. wilczym biletem, a to oznaczało, że Nowosielski nie mógł już uczęszczać do jakiegokolwiek innej szkoły średniej w rosyjskim zaborze. Przeniósł się i zamieszkał w Siedlcach (zabór austriacki), gdzie skończył gimnazjum filologiczne im. Tadeusza Radlińskiego. Brał czynny udział w walce o niepodległość Polski — był kurierem między Piotrkowem a Lublinem, przynosząc dokumenty, amunicję i broń palną, a począwszy od 1914 roku, jako żołnierz uczestniczył w kilku bitwach. Po odzyskaniu przez Polskę niepodległości w 1918 roku pozostał w polskiej armii jako oficer, następnie zdobył uprawnienia instruktora wojskowego w szkołach średnich i harcerstwie. W 1929 roku wziął urlop i wyjechał do Stanów Zjednoczonych. Był nauczycielem języka polskiego i wychowania fizycznego w Cambridge Springs, a następnie pracował w San Francisco. W 1931 roku Eugeniusz Nowosielski wrócił do Polski i kontynuował karierę w polskiej armii. W 1938 roku podjął studia w Szkole Nauk Politycznych w Wilnie, które przerwała II wojna światowa. Po zajęciu Wilna przez bolszewików 18 września 1939 roku uciekł z Litwy do Francji, a po jej kapitulacji przeniósł się do Wielkiej Brytanii. W 1946 roku został przyjęty do School of Slavonic Languages na Uniwersytecie Londyńskim, jednak z powodu braku funduszy nie mógł kontynuować studiów. Pracował na budowach, następnie w fabryce zabawek, gdzie był narażony na działanie trujących substancji, co miało bardzo poważne konsekwencje dla jego zdrowia. Przez wiele miesięcy mógł się poruszać tylko na wózku inwalidzkim, a sprawność odzyskał wyłącznie dzięki własnemu wysiłkowi i uporowi. Znalazł posadę nocnego stróża w fabryce szkła aptecznego. Miał wtedy dużo czasu podczas nocnych dyżurów i wykorzystywał go na czytanie książek.

W tym czasie kupił zbiór *Hitopadeśa*, dzieło wyrastające z tradycji sławnej *Pañcatantr*², a przetłumaczone na język angielski przez Charlesa Wilkinsa w 1787 roku. W życiorysie, który Nowosielski pozostawił, napisał, że być może wybór ten spowodowany był wspomnieniami jego rozmów z matką chrzestną, Jadwigą Marcinowską³. Marcinowska, zachęcana przez znaną pisarkę Elżbę Orzeszkową, napisała kilka dramatów, a potem rozpoczęła okres intensywnych podróży po całym świecie. W 1911 roku wyjechała do Indii i pozostała tam do 1913 roku, studiując filozofię indyjską i pisząc⁴. Eugeniusz Nowosielski wspominał w życiorysie, że była uczennicą Mahatmy Gandhiego i miał okazję słuchać jej opowieści z podróży, ale wtedy Indie i ich kultura oraz literatura znajdowały się z dala od jego zainteresowań. Możliwe, że jej

² O *Pięćoksięgu* więcej w: Urbańska 2016.

³ Więcej o twórczości Jadwigi Marcinowskiej w haśle autorstwa Celiny Gajkowskiej zamieszczonym w internetowym Polskim słowniku biograficznym <http://www.ipsb.nina.gov.pl/index.php/a/jadwiga-marcinowska>

⁴ Np. sztuka *Jak ptak...* powstała w sierpniu 1911 roku w Madrasie.

historie skłoniły go do sięgnięcia po dzieło tak silnie związane i kojarzone z Indiami. Nie był zadowolony z angielskiego tłumaczenia sanskryckiego dzieła, mając wrażenie, że dalekie jest ono od doskonałości. W lokalnej bibliotece znalazł natomiast tłumaczenie na język angielski *Kathāsaritsāgara*⁵ sporządzone przez C. H. Tawneya, wydane w dziesięciu tomach, z obszernymi objaśnieniami i załącznikami, zredagowane przez N. M. Penzera w latach 1924–1928. I to monumentalne dzieło olśniło go. Nowosielski pisał, że brak mu kompetencji, aby porównać tę pracę z dziełami Homera lub Wergiliusza, wydawało mu się jednak, że ten epos z Kaszmiru, którego echa rozbrzmiewają w *Dekameronie* Boccaccia, ma tyle czaru i wdzięku, że nie można winić jego autora za pożyczki ze starożytnej *Pañcātantry*, której wersja skrócona to *Hitopadeśa*. Przyznał, że czytał tę urzekającą opowieść przez całe noce, a towarzyszyło temu nieodparte pragnienie przetłumaczenia go.

Wkrótce jego żona podarowała mu najbardziej w tym czasie pożądany prezent: sanskrycki tekst *Pañcātantry*, a także słownik sanskrycko-angielski Moniera Monier-Williamsa. Teraz pozostawało już tylko nauczyć się sanskrytu. Czy Nowosielski musiał zmierzyć się z tym sam? W Londynie była School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Od 1922 roku aż do emerytury w 1954 roku profesorem sanskrytu był tam Ralph Lilley Turner. W latach 1946–1948 uczył tego języka w SOAS John Brough, w latach 50. Cyril Alexander Rylands⁶, a potem inni; np. w latach 60. był to J. Clifford Wright, obecnie emerytowany profesor. Nie było to jedyne miejsce w Londynie, gdzie można było się uczyć sanskrytu. W tym czasie sanskryt coraz mocniej wrażał w tkanekę School of Economic Science (SES), działającą również pod nazwą School of Philosophy i School of Practical Philosophy, która jest ogólnosiwiatową organizacją z siedzibą w Londynie, założoną przez Leona MacLarena. Nauka sanskrytu w SES rozpoczęła się pod koniec lat 60. XX wieku i stała się formalną częścią tak zwanej szkoły średniej w 1977 roku.

Należy jednak zwrócić uwagę na fakt, że po II wojnie światowej w Wielkiej Brytanii ukonstytuowało się polskie środowisko indologiczne. Tuż przed wojenną zawieruchą w Londynie znalazł się Arnold Kunst (1903–1981), uczeń Stefana Stasiaka (1884–1962), pod którego opieką napisał magisterium we Lwowie oraz Stanisława Schayera (1899–1941), u którego na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim kontynuował studia indologiczne i pracę nad doktoratem. W latach 1938–1939 pracował pod opieką Ericha Frauwallnera w Wiedniu. Kunst został wykładowcą w SOAS, a w latach 1945–1947 starszym wykładowcą

⁵ Na temat zbioru *Kathāsaritsāgara* zob. Sudyka 1998.

⁶ Dane biograficzne dotyczące tych uczonych znaleźć można w bazie prowadzonej przez Klause Karttunena *Persons of Indian Studies* (<https://whowaswho-indology.info/a/>). Dziękuję dr Lidii Wojtczak, lektorce sanskrytu w SOAS, za dodanie nazwiska C. R. Rylandsa do tej listy sanskrytologów związanych z londyńską School of Oriental and African Studies.

buddyzmu i filozofii indyjskiej. W latach 1947–1963 w służbie ONZ dużo podróżował po Azji, ale w 1963 roku powrócił do wykładania w SOAS⁷.

Od 1947 roku na emigracji, właśnie w Londynie, przebywał jego były nauczyciel Stefan Stasiak, który studiował filologię indyjską w Paryżu. Został następcą Andrzeja Gawrońskiego (1885–1927) jako kierownik Seminarium Filologii Indyjskiej na Uniwersytecie Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie, gdzie od 1925 roku uczył sanskrytu. Jednym z jego pierwszych uczniów był przyszedły iranista, Franciszek Machalski. Oto jego wspomnienia pierwszego kontaktu ze Stasiakiem jako nauczycielem sanskrytu:

Niewiele mówiąc, nie zdjawszy nawet płaszcza, wziął Stasiak kredę do ręki i zaczął pisać dziwaczne, a intrygujące znaki alfabetu dewanagari. Trwało to długo, wypełniając cały pierwszy wykład. Na następną lekcję, na której było już tylko 3–4 studentów, przyniósł Stasiak pod pachą potężne tomisko. Było to, jak się niebawem okazało, kalkuckie wydanie *Mahabharaty*, eposu indyjskiego, znanego nam dotąd tylko z nazwy. Otworzywszy tajemniczą dla nas księgę, szukał w niej, milcząc ciągle, fragmentu, który miał z nami czytać i interpretować. Znalazłszy, kazał nam skupić się około książki i odcyfrowywać litera po literze, wyraz po wyrazie tekst sanskrycki. Byliśmy skonsternowani i jakby zawiedzeni. Jednakże na trzeciej, czwartej lekcji z niesamowitej gmatwaniny kresek i linii pisma sanskryckiego zaczęły się wyłaniać proste i zrozumiałe wyrazy, układające się lekko w zdania. Pierwsze zdanie, które wprowadziło nas w czarodziejski krąg staroindyjskiej mowy i literatury brzmiało: *āsīd rājā nalo nāma vīrasena suto balī* (był król Nala imieniem, Wiraseny syn mocny...)⁸.

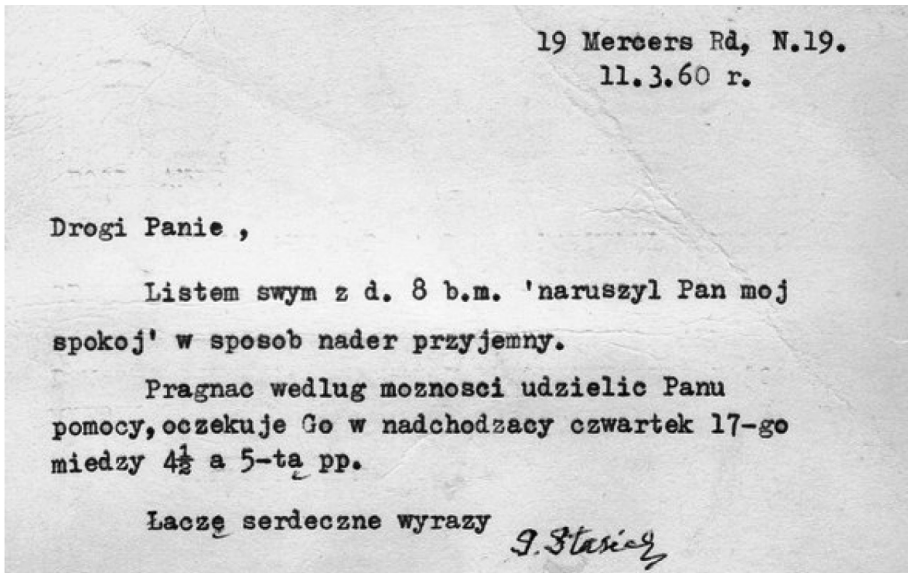
W 1960 roku Eugeniusz Nowosielski poznał Stefana Stasiaka. To on czuł od tej pory nad jego postęпами w sanskrycie. Nie odbywało się to jednak w ramach zajęć na uczelni i to nie tylko ze względu na sytuację życiową Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego. Stasiak nie przyjął żadnej propozycji wykładania na brytyjskich uczelniach, utrzymując się z tłumaczeń i pomocy zaprzyjaźnionych osób, chociaż indologii nigdy nie porzucił. Jak podaje Marek Mejor: „organizował tylko w swym mieszkaniu seminaria, w których uczestniczyli zarówno Polacy, jak i obcokrajowcy”⁹.

Z korespondencji zachowanej przez rodzinę Nowosielskich dowiadujemy się, że w trakcie prób samodzielnej nauki sanskrytu Eugeniusz Nowosielski postanowił zwrócić się o pomoc do profesora Stasiaka, który takiej pomocy nie odmówił. W dniu 11 marca 1960 roku Stefan Stasiak odpisał:

⁷ Informacje o życiu i działalności Arnolda Kunsta w: Seyfort Ruegg 1983: 3–5; Mejor 2003: 5–6, 12; Karttunen *Persons of Indian Studies* (<https://whowaswho-indology.info/3634/kunst-arnold/>).

⁸ Machalski 1963: 24.

⁹ Mejor 2004–2005: 503–504.



Fot. 1. Karta pocztowa od Stefana Stasiaka datowana na 11 III 1960, adresowana do Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego¹⁰

Był to początek, z czasem coraz bardziej zażyłej relacji, którą przerwała przedwczesna śmierć Stasiaka 9 lutego 1962 roku.

Profesor wysoko ocenił przedstawione mu tłumaczenia fragmentów *Pañćatantry*, pisząc na karcie pocztowej z 30 marca 1960 roku: „Zabrakło nam było czasu na dwa choćby słowa Pańskiego przekładu, więc tu jedno: znakomity”¹¹.

Już po śmierci Stasiaka, Eugeniusz Nowosielski napisał w szkicu życiorysu:

W 1960 roku poznałem Ś.P. prof. S. Stasiaka, który udzielał mi swych bezcennych wskazówek w nauce Sanskrytu. Gdym mu przedstawił kilka moich parafraz z *Pañćatantry*, zachęcił mnie najdobrotliwiej do tłumaczenia tego dzieła.

Prof. Stasiak tłumaczenia pochwalił, ale niewątpliwie dostrzegął potrzebę dalszych studiów i instrukcji dotyczących gramatyki sanskryckiej. Świadczy

¹⁰ Materiały ze spuścizny Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego, Archiwum PAN i PAU, Kraków.

¹¹ Wszystkie dokumenty, na które się powołuję, przekazane mi przez dr. Józefa Nowosielskiego, po ich wykorzystaniu na potrzeby niniejszego artykułu, przekazałam do Archiwum Nauki PAN i PAU w Krakowie. Cytując wybrane fragmenty, zachowuję pisownię oryginalną (np. wyraz „Sanskryt”, zapewne pod wpływem j. angielskiego, pisany dużą literą), ale uzupełniam znaki diakrytyczne, co autorzy korespondencji pisanej maszynowo robili odręcznie, czasem jednak pomijając korektę niektórych wyrazów (np. *postscriptum* w liście Szajana).

o tym choćby kolejna karta pocztowa (fot. 2), wysłana przez niego w maju 1960 roku. Profesor nie szczędził własnego czasu swojemu nowemu uczniowi. Gdy Nowosielski zachorował, w liściku datowanym na 17 lipca¹² 1960 (fot. 3) wyraził swoją troskę, ale też od razu uzgodnił terminy kolejnych spotkań. W liście z 5 listopada 1960 roku (fot. 4) napominał, aby nie porzucać systematycznej pracy „ku czemu ćwiczenia czy przekłady wymieniane pocztą najzupełniej nam wystarczą”. Wspominał wyraźnie, że „w braku chodnika gramatyki musimy tu i tam rzucić jakąś kładkę”. Później dopiero przyszedł czas na *Pañćatantrę*, której przekład był marzeniem Nowosielskiego. Wspominał również w tym samym liście przeoczony spektakl *Pañćatantry* w wykonaniu „łątek bombajskich” (najprawdopodobniej chodzi o indyjski teatr lalkowy), który według jego sekretarki będzie można zobaczyć w następnym roku. Funkcję sekretarki prof. Stasiaka pełniła Janina Domańska. Ona również przypominała Nowosielskiemu o odsyłaniu ćwiczeń¹³.

Jednak Eugeniusz Nowosielski mógł rozwijać nie tylko znajomość sanskrytu dzięki kontaktom ze Stefanem Stasiakiem. W mieszkaniu profesora odbywały się wykłady, seminaria, pogadanki. O takim wydarzeniu informuje list Włodzimierza Szajana z 1961 roku¹⁴ (fot. 5). Włodzimierz (Wołodymyr, Włodzimir) Szajan (1908–1974) należał do grona uczniów Stefana Stasiaka na Uniwersytecie Lwowskim. Przed wojną wydał własnym sumptem tłumaczenia z *Rigwedy* dedykowane Stefanowi Stasiakowi¹⁵. Od 1944 roku przebywał na emigracji, a po wojnie pracował w bibliotece im. Tarasa Szewczenki przy Związku Ukraińców w Wielkiej Brytanii¹⁶. Pisał poezję i prozę zarówno w języku polskim, jak i ukraińskim. Był orędownikiem rodzimowierstwa słowiańskiego. Na emigracji nie porzucił swoich indologicznych zainteresowań, uczestnicząc w spotkaniach w mieszkaniu swojego mistrza, prof. Stefana Stasiaka. Zapewne właśnie tam poznał Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego i to właśnie on, o czym wzmianka w Przedmowie do tłumaczenia *Pañćatantry*, zasugerował Nowosielskiemu, aby wśród różnych recenzji i adaptacji dzieła jako podstawę tłumaczenia wybrał tę znaną jako *Pañcākhyānaka*, dzieło żyjącego

¹² Treść listu wskazywałaby, że nastąpiła pomyłka w dacie. Najprawdopodobniej był to 17 VI 1960.

¹³ W zachowanej notce, na kartce wyciętej z urzędowego formularza (bez daty, na odwrocie napis: *Name in Block Capitals*) podpisanej inicjałami J.D. czytamy: „Prosimy Drogiego Pana o 1) przysłanie ćwiczeń (stronica 7^{ma} i nn. do poprawienia i zwrotu (...))”.

¹⁴ Brak dokładnej daty.

¹⁵ „Czcigodnemu Mistrzowi Stefanowi Stasiakowi Profesorowi Filologii Indyjskiej Uniwersytetu Jana Kazimierza — w dowód najgłębszej wdzięczności i szacunku. Autor”. *Szajan 1937*. Pierwsza część ukazała się rok wcześniej: *Hymny Rygwedy: (wiązka pierwsza)*, Lwów: Nakładem Autora, 1936.

¹⁶ Ivakhiv 2005: 11–12 <<http://www.uvm.edu/~aivakhiv/Insearch.pdf>> [dostęp: 5.07.2020].

w XII wieku Purnabhadry (sanskryt. *pūrṇabhadra*). Johannes Hertel opracował wydanie krytyczne tego tekstu i opublikował w Harvard Oriental Series (t. XI–XIII) w latach 1908 i 1912. Do tego nawiązuje *postscriptum* listu Szajana, przekazującego zaproszenie na „pogadankę na temat porównawczo-filozoficzny”: „Z wielką przyjemnością słyszałem o Pańskich tłumaczeniach *Panczatantry*. Była to zatem jedna z «dobrze» sprzedanych książek u Foylea”¹⁷.

Bardzo pozytywnie wyraziła się o tłumaczeniach Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego Jadwiga Makowiecka (1886–1988), polska indolog, która po wojnie osiadła w Londynie¹⁸. Makowiecka, po czterech latach studiów w Warszawie u Eugeniusza Słuszkiewicza (współpracownik Stefana Stasiaka we Lwowie), wyjechała do Londynu w 1957 roku i tu już pozostała do końca życia, kontynuując studia w SOAS oraz prowadząc badania¹⁹.

Na prośbę Zofii Nowosielskiej, podejmującej po śmierci męża działania mające na celu wydanie tłumaczenia *Pañcātantry*, Jadwiga Makowiecka w liście relacjonowała swoje pierwsze spotkanie z Eugeniuszem Nowosielskim w mieszkaniu Stasiaka, przytoczyła opinie wyrażane przez Stasiaka o jego tłumaczeniach, wspomniała, że przekazał jej te tłumaczenia i planowane było spotkanie u profesora, poświęcone porównaniu oryginału i tłumaczenia²⁰. Do długo planowanego spotkania jednak nigdy nie doszło. Stefan Stasiak zginął w wypadku samochodowym 9 lutego 1962 roku, o czym niezwłocznie zawiadomiła państwa Nowosielskich Janina Domańska, podając na karcie pocztowej datę pogrzebu (fot. 6), później skorygowaną w liście.

Eugeniusz Nowosielski nie porzucił tłumaczenia dzieła po śmierci Stasiaka. Jak pisał w skróconym życiorysie: „Zgodnie z Jego [Stasiaka — L.S.] wolą skończyłem tłumaczenie *Pañcātantry* w maju 1966 roku. Od tej pory po dziś dzień tłumaczę poemat *Śri-Somadevy — Kathā Sarit Sāgara*”.

Słowa te napisał już po przeprowadzeniu się wraz z rodziną do Ameryki Północnej. Podjął wówczas działania zmierzające do wydania przekładu i przygotowywał się do zaprezentowania go na Second Congress of Polish-American Scholars & Scientists w kwietniu 1971 roku. Streszczenie jego wystąpienia ukazało się w materiałach konferencyjnych, ale jego autor,

¹⁷ Tę „dobrze” sprzedaną w znanej londyńskiej księgarni książkę, za moim pośrednictwem przekazał dr Józef Nowosielski do biblioteki Instytutu Orientalistyki UJ. Oprócz podpisu Nowosielskiego na karcie tytułowej, na niektórych stronach znajdziemy notatki tłumacza.

¹⁸ Przez jakiś czas w Londynie przebywał też jeszcze jeden z uczniów Stefana Stasiaka, a w latach 1936–1939 jego asystent, Mikołaj Ałtuchow. Eugeniusz Nowosielski nie mógł go jednak poznać u Stasiaka, ponieważ w 1951 roku Ałtuchow wyjechał do Urugwaju i do emerytury wykładał sanskryt w Montevideo.

¹⁹ Zob. wspomnienia jej syna oraz notę biograficzną Jerzego Narbutta <<http://www.indika.pl/2016/03/23/jadwiga-ineza-makowiecka-z-paszkowiczow/>> [dostęp: 1.07.2020].

²⁰ Sudyka 2008: 129.

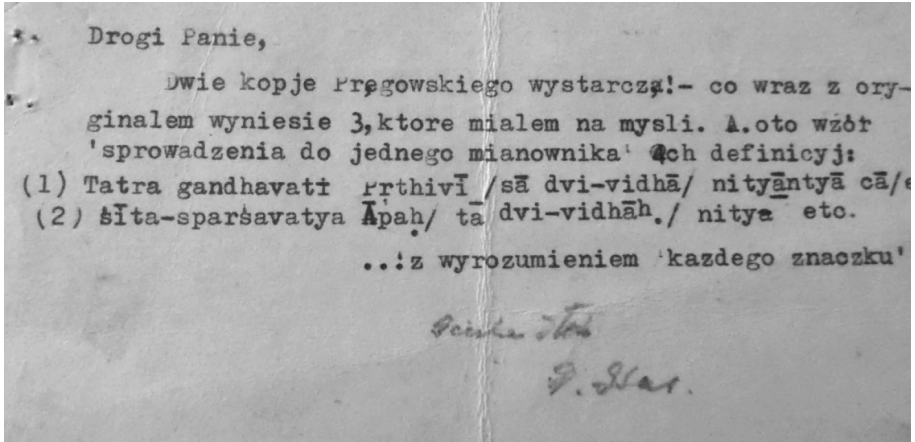
Eugeniusz Nowosielski, zmarł w grudniu 1970 roku. Mimo zaangażowania wielu osób usiłujących doprowadzić do wydania przekładu: rodziny Nowosielskich, Jadwigi Makowieckiej, cenionego dziennikarza i pisarza Aleksandra Janty-Pończyńskiego, dr. Jana Misia²¹, a także piszącej te słowa, dzieło Nowosielskiego²² do tej pory nie zostało opublikowane. I do dzisiaj brak wydania przekładu *Pañćatantry*, który byłby dokonany bezpośrednio z sanskrytu na język polski²³, choć tłumaczenie takie istnieje; tłumaczenie tekstu, który zainteresował Nowosielskiego tak bardzo, że dla niego rozpoczął naukę sanskrytu, spotykając na swojej drodze Mistrza, którego pasją był nie tylko ten język i literatura, która w nim powstała, ale także jego nauczanie.

²¹ Jan Miś był autorem przedmowy do zbioru tłumaczeń z języka japońskiego autorstwa Aleksandra Janty pt. *Godzina dzikiej kaczki: Mała antologia poezji japońskiej*, Southend-on-Sea 1966.

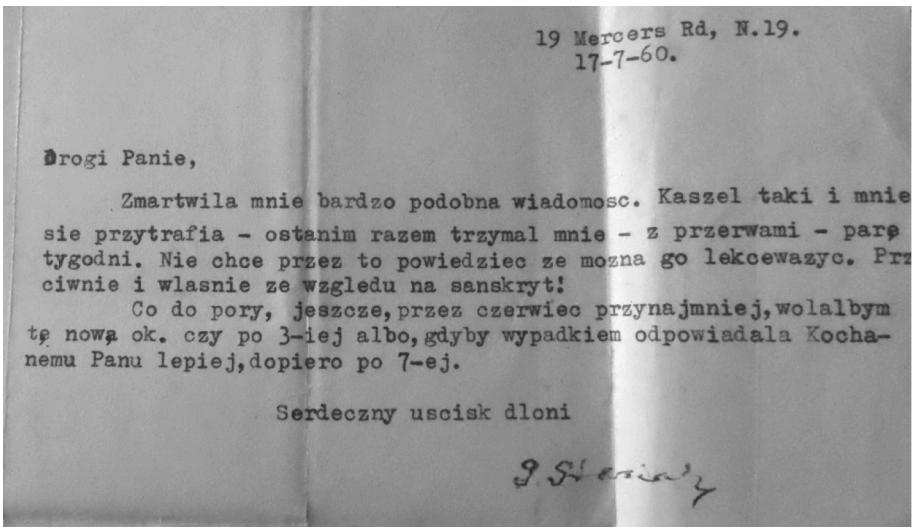
²² Tłumaczenie to (ok. 500 stron maszynopisu) zostało opatrzone przedmową, objaśnieniami, skorowidzami i słowniczkiem.

²³ Z sanskrytu tłumaczone były jedynie pojedyncze opowieści, choć nie z wersji Purnabhadry. Zob. Mejor 2007: 559–596; Gibała (tłum.) 1920. W *Kurjerze Polskim* z 6 IX 1920 roku młodopolski poeta i tłumacz, Antoni Lange, opublikował tłumaczenia kilku bajek zawartych w zbiorze *Hitopadeśa*.

**Fotografie z materiałów pochodzących ze spuścizny
Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego, Archiwum PAN i PAU, Kraków**



Fot. 2. Karta pocztowa od Stefana Stasiaka datowana na 1(?) V 1960, adresowana do Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego



Fot. 3. Liścik Stefana Stasiaka do Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego datowany na 17 VII 1960

19 Mercers Rd, N.19
5 listopada 1960.

Drogi Panie,

Przeciąganie "wakacji" groziłoby obsunięciem się gruntu – proces w naszym wypadku nieodwracalny. Radzę nie przerywać. Przebywszy pomysłnie najpierwsze trudności, możemy się zadowolić normalnym postępem, ku czemu ćwiczenia czy przekłady wymieniane pocztą najzupełniej nam wystarczą.

O Panskiej słabości do Pańczatantry, Kochany Panie Eugenjuszu, dobrze pamiętam bo sam ją podzielałam i w związku z Panem dużo właśnie na niej buduję, ale w braku chodnika gramatyki musimy tu i tam rzucić jakąś kładkę. Sądziłem zresztą, że Pana próba przekładania Rgwedy pociągnie. Wybrałem hymn 129 z ks. X, naj słynniejszy ze wszystkich, a jednocześnie – poza jednym czy dwoma miejscami – najdostępniejszy bez komentarza, który da się po niekąd zastąpić zestawieniem istniejących, np. angielskich, przekładów. Można ^{by} zaproponować pasjonującą współpracę nawet nie sanskryściecie. z czasem znajdzie się i Michalskiego, który się istotnie zapodział, oraz 2-3 poprzednie

Pręgowskiemu się nie powiodło i został na x-rok. Trudno. Szkoda również żeśmy przeoczyli Pańczatantrę graną przez Łątki Bombajskie. Optymistyczna moja Sekretarka (która zaczyna dzisiaj N. rok na Uniw-tecie) twierdzi z dobrego źródła iż wrocą na przyszły i wierzy że tymczasem skończy Pan I-ą jej księgę.

Stef. Stasiak

9. 11.

Fot. 4. List Stefana Stasiaka do Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego datowany na 5 XI 1960

Prof. Włodzimierz Szajjan
78, Kensington Park Road
London, W.11.

Wielce Szanowny Panie !

Profesor Stasiak prosi za moim pośrednictwem
o łaskawe przybycie na pogadankę na temat porównawczo-
filozoficzny p.t.:

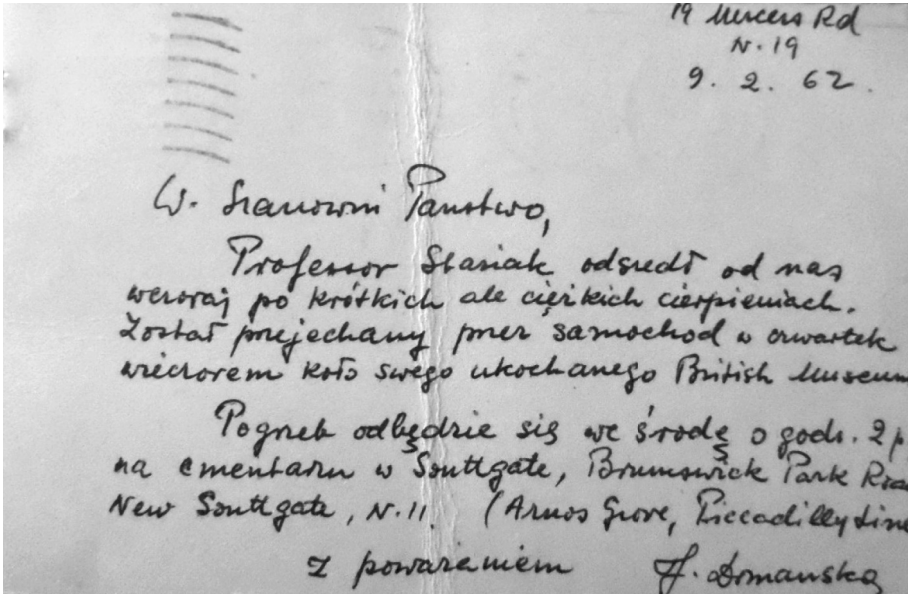
Kategorie Nyaya, Aristotelesa i Kanta
Pogadanka z okazji zakończenia roku akademickiego.
Będzie tam kilka osób z naszego małego grona.
Język angielski, ze względu na obecność niektórych
osób, które nie rozumieją języka polskiego.
Prosimy więc o łaskawe przybycie.
Data: Niedziela, 1-go lipca, 1961, o god., 3,30.
U Profesora t.j. 19, Mercer's Road, N.19.

Z wyrazami głębokiego szacunku

Prof W. Szajjan
W. Szajjan

P.S. Z wielką przyjemnością słyszałem o Panskich tłumaczeniach Pancztantry. Była to zatem jena z "dobrze" sprzedanych książek u Foylesa.

Fot. 5. List Włodzimierza Szajjana do Eugeniusza Nowosielskiego z czerwca 1961 roku



Fot. 6. Karta pocztowa od Janiny Domańskiej do państwa Nowosielskich z datą 9 II 1962

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SOME POLISH-RUSSIAN INDOLOGICAL PARALLELS AND CONNECTIONS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY¹

Abstract: The paper deals with some parallels and connections between Polish and Russian Indologists in the 20th century. Both Polish and Russian Indological schools have their roots in the great European Indological tradition. They experienced a significant influence of German and, to a lesser extent, of English and French Indological schools. Fyodor Stcherbatsky was the most eminent Russian Indologist. He published his articles in the *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* and was in correspondence with Professor S. Schayer, who contributed to their dialogue by publishing a review of Stcherbatsky's main work on the conception of the Buddhist Dharma. A Polish textbook on Sanskrit by Professor Gawroński and a Stcherbatsky-edited Russian translation of Bühler's textbook were published almost simultaneously. After the Second World War, Indological contacts between Poland and Russia intensified. Polish Indologists participated in the Oriental forums in Moscow, and Russian Indologists visited Poland. In general, this time was a period of fruitful relationships and exchange though it was partly spoiled by the dominance of the vulgar Soviet version of Marxism, which impacted writings on history and philosophy. Nevertheless, Indological research continued and developed in both countries. A book on the history of Ancient India, which was presented by Professor G. M. Bongard-Levin to Professor Ludwik Skurzak, is kept in the library of the Department of Indology of the University of Wrocław as a testament to these robust Polish-Russian contacts.

Keywords: Poland, Russia, Indology, Stanisław Schayer, Fyodor Stcherbatsky, Ludwik Skurzak, Grigory Maksimovich Bongard-Levin

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Introduction

The paper is dedicated to some parallels and connections between Polish and Russian Indologists in the 20th century. Both Polish and Russian Indological schools have their roots in the great European Indological tradition. They experienced a significant influence of German and, to a lesser extent, of English and French Indological schools. Fyodor Stcherbatsky (sometimes referred to as Fyodor Ippolitovich Shcherbatskoy or Scherbatsky, 1866–1942) was the most eminent Russian Indologist. He published his article in the *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* and was in correspondence with Professor S. Schayer, who contributed to their dialogue by publishing a review of the Stcherbatsky's main work on the conception of the Buddhist Dharma. A Polish textbook on Sanskrit by Professor A. Gawroński and a Stcherbatsky-edited Russian translation of Bühler's textbook were published almost at the same time.

The Polish-Russian Indological contacts still await deep and unbiased research. Some names and dates are scattered across a series of publications titled *Szkice z dziejów polskiej orientalistyki (Essays on the History of Oriental Studies in Poland)*.² *Oriental Studies in the sixty years of independent Poland* is a volume that offers important information on the development and international links of Polish Indology.³ It includes a paper on “Oriental Studies in Wrocław (1945–1978)” by Professor H. Wałkowska. Helpful information on the subject is also given by A. Trynkowska in her article *Sanskrit Studies in Poland*.⁴ Two articles by Kotin (2013, 2015) represent only a small contribution to this research. However, a relevant, albeit smaller contribution, is provided by the Ukrainian scholar Kozitskiy, who includes some references to Polish Indology in his paper on early 20th-century Oriental Studies in Lvov.⁵ For his part, the Russian Indologist S. Serebryaniy attempted to locate Russian Indology in an international context in an interesting article which regrettably does not mention Polish Indology at all, despite being framed as a joint Russian-Polish project.⁶ Articles by J. Szumsky (2010), L. M. Marney (2010) and B. Nosov (2011) contribute to the research on Russian and Polish academic contacts but fail to trace Indological connections between the two countries. K. Kunst and M. Mejer, biographers of Polish scholars, mention their contacts with their Russian colleagues. The Russian scholars who have studied the life and works of Academicians Stcherbatsky⁷ and S. F. Oldenburg cannot

² Reychman 1957; Strelcyn 1966; Strelcyn 1969; Majda 2007; see also Woźniak 2011:120–122.

³ Tyloch 1983.

⁴ Trynkowska 2012.

⁵ Kozitskiy 2010.

⁶ Serebryaniy 2010.

⁷ Vassilkov 1989, Vigasin 2008.

neglect their Polish connections, though references to these connections are very brief. Recently, two articles devoted to Professor Schayer addressing his work in Lvov have been published.⁸ It is clear that full-fledged research on Polish-Russian Indological contacts has yet to be undertaken, and this article represents a tentative attempt to work in this direction.

Some parallels in the development of Polish and Russian Indological schools and contacts between Polish and Russian Indologists in the first half of the 20th century.

Both Polish and Russian Indological schools have had their own scholars who visited India and produced early accounts of the country. They also acknowledged the Western European influence on them coming from German, English and French Indology. One of the first books on India in Polish was authored by T. K. Podlecki and released in Vilnius in 1776.⁹ An even earlier Polish vision of India was depicted in the letters of Krzysztof Pawłowski, who reported on his travels to India in 1596. In 1815, Gerasim Lebedev (Lebedeff) published his account of the religion and philosophy of East Indian Brahmans in St. Petersburg.¹⁰ The book was based on his own research in India during his twelve-year-long stay in Madras and Calcutta at the end of the 18th century. Earlier, he had published a grammar of East Indian dialects of Hindustani.¹¹ But neither Podlecki nor Lebedev founded Indology schools in their home countries. In fact, we regard German professors and academics as the teachers of our first Indologists. St. Petersburg and its Imperial Academy of Sciences invited the famous German scholar Otto von Böhtlingk (30 May 1815–1 April 1904; he was born in St. Petersburg but studied at German universities) to complete and publish his opus magnum — a great Sanskrit-German dictionary — in Russia.¹² With the assistance of his two friends, Rudolf Roth (d. 1895) and Albrecht Weber (b. 1825), Böhtlingk completed his work over a period of twenty-three years. Russian Indology properly began with Ivan Pavlovich Minayev (also referred to as Minayeff, 1840–1890). Notably, Minayev's diary of his travels to India in 1880, 1885–1886, published in Russian in 1955, is kept at the Indology Department of the University of Wrocław and bears

⁸ Shokhin 2006, Zavgorodniy 2013.

⁹ Podlecki 1776. The history of Indology in Vilnius, now the capital of Lithuania, deserves a special attention of its own. Among the books on India published there was the seminal *Dzieje starożytnych Indii* (*History of Ancient India*) written by Joachim Lelewel in 1820.

¹⁰ Lebedev studied the Sanskrit and Hindu tradition in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata).

¹¹ Lebedeff 1801.

¹² 7 vols, Saint Petersburg, 1853–1875; shortened version (without citations) 7 vols, Saint Petersburg, 1879–1889.

the “ex libris” sign of Professor Ludwik Skurzak. This bears out that Ludwik Skurzak was aware of Ivan Pavlovich Minayev’s contribution to Indology. In present-day Russia, Professor Ivan Pavlovich Minayev is considered to be the founding father of the St. Petersburg School of Indology, a pioneer of Russian ethnographic Indology or Indological ethnography and the mentor of Academicians Stcherbatsky and Oldenburg.

Fyodor Stcherbatsky, Minayev’s illustrious student, was born in Keltse (Kielce, Кѣльцы) the very same year that the city was named the seat of the provincial government (Keltse Governorate) in the Kingdom of Poland (in union with Russia and part of the Russian Empire then). He first studied in the famous Tsarskoye Selo Lyceum (graduating in 1884), and later he graduated from the Historical and Philological Faculty of Saint Petersburg University (1889). Stcherbatsky continued his education in Europe, where he studied Indian poetry with Georg Bühler in Vienna and Buddhist philosophy with Hermann Jacobi in Bonn. In 1897, Stcherbatsky and Oldenburg founded the Bibliotheca Buddhica, a series of rare Buddhist texts with translations and comments. Despite his years of study at German-speaking universities, Stcherbatsky published his major works in English. He became well-known due to his publications in English in London and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg): *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word ‘Dharma’* (London, 1923), *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana* (Leningrad, 1927) and *Buddhist Logic* (2 vols. Leningrad, 1930, 1932). Stcherbatsky published his articles in German and English in the Polish Oriental Studies journal *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*¹³ and was in correspondence with Professor S. Schayer,¹⁴ who contributed to their dialogue by publishing a review of Stcherbatsky’s main work on the conception of the Buddhist Dharma. Schayer mentions Stcherbatsky as a leading expert on Indian philosophy in his seminal book *Contributions to the Problem of Time in Indian Philosophy*, which has been recently reedited by M. Mejer.¹⁵ The Polish colleague recognised Stcherbatsky’s work, and the scholars clearly respected each other.

A Polish textbook on Sanskrit by Professor A. Gawroński and a Sanskrit textbook in Russian (a Stcherbatsky-edited Russian translation of Bühler’s textbook) were published almost at the same time. Academician Stcherbatsky supervised the edition of a Russian translation of Bühler’s textbook

¹³ Stcherbatsky 1934, 1934a.

¹⁴ Two letters and four postcards in Russian and German from Professor Schayer, sent between 1927 and 1932, have been preserved in the Academician Stcherbatsky’s archive, now at the St. Petersburg branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg (File 725, Folder 003, Document 238.).

¹⁵ Schayer 2012: 1.

in Stockholm.¹⁶ In 1932, a Sanskrit textbook in Polish appeared in Kraków. It was authored by Andrzej Gawroński as early as in 1915 but only published posthumously.¹⁷ It displays some similarities with Bühler's textbook. Apparently, the Russian and Polish students of Sanskrit started learning this ancient language using more or less the same resources. As recalled by Vladimir Kalianov, a Russian Indologist and a student of Academician Stcherbatsky, Stcherbatsky's students continued their study of Sanskrit by reading the *Daśakumāracarita* of Daṇḍin.¹⁸ Gawroński did research on Daṇḍin's work and on another favourite of Russian Sanskrit scholars, the *Mṛcchakaṭika* by Śūdraka.¹⁹ In 1915, Gawroński started publishing *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* (*Yearbook of Oriental Studies*) in Kraków. The oldest Polish journal in the field of Oriental Studies, the yearbook, which was later published in Lvov (Lwów, Lviv), became the chief annual collection of Orientalist works authored mostly by Polish scholars, but also by their European colleagues.²⁰ The founding team included eminent Polish Orientalists: Andrzej Gawroński, Jan Grzegorzewski, Władysław Kotwicz, Jan M. Rozwadowski and Tadeusz Kowalski. The first volume was published in 1914–1915. The seat of the editorial board was Cracow (1914–1915 and 1950–1953), Lvov (from 1923 till 1939) and Warsaw (from 1953 on).²¹ Władysław Kotwicz (Kotvich, Vladislav Liudvigovich, 1872–1944), one of the editors of and contributors to the journal, was a well-known Polish Orientalist, a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1923), a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences and President of the Polish Oriental Society (1922–36). Kotwicz graduated from the University of St. Petersburg in 1895, where he subsequently taught Mongolian (1900–1903), Kalmyk and Manchu (1903–1923). Kotwicz was a long-time friend of Scherbatsky's, his colleague and the first director of the Petrograd Institute of Living Oriental Languages (1920–1922). From 1923 to 1940, he was a professor at the subdepartment of Oriental languages at the University of Lvov. From 1927 on, he edited the journal *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*. *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* published papers in Polish, English, French and German, which made it an international journal. As already mentioned, Academician Stcherbatsky published two of his articles in this yearbook.

¹⁶ Bühler 1923.

¹⁷ Gawroński 1932.

¹⁸ Kalianov 1972: 16.

¹⁹ In 1907, he produced a PhD dissertation on *Sprachliche Untersuchungen über das Mṛcchakaṭika und das Daśakumāracarita*, and his habilitation work was *Am Rande des Mṛcchakaṭika*.

²⁰ Another Polish Oriental-Studies journal, the quarterly *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* (*Orientalist Survey*) was founded in 1949.

²¹ Dziekan 2014: 5.

Stcherbatsky's interest in Buddhism was well known. Andrzej Gawroński carried out research on and translated passages of *Buddhacarita*, Aśvaghoṣa's biography of Buddha. Gawroński works speak his interest in and knowledge of Sanskrit Buddhist sources.²² A considerable interest in Buddhist texts, especially in philosophical and non-literary writings, was exhibited by Professor S. Schayer, whose main work was devoted to the conception of time in Indian philosophy. Born in Kielce like Stcherbatsky, Schayer studied with the prominent Indologist Professor Lucian Scherman (1858–1946) in München in 1921. Scherman, who was a university professor and director of the local Museum of Ethnology (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde München), may have told Schayer about his Russian colleagues Alexander and Ludmila Meerwarth (Mervart), who used the donation of the Lodz textile tycoon Karl Scheibler Jr. to go to Ceylon and India and collect ethnographic objects for the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the (then Imperial) Russian Academy of Sciences from 1914 to 1918. After studying in Germany, Schayer came back to Poland and, after having lived in Lvov for some time, he moved to Warsaw, where he founded the Oriental Institute in 1932.

The outbreak of the Second World War interrupted Sanskrit studies in both countries. S. Schayer left Warsaw and died at a small sanatorium at Otwock 1st December 1941. Academician Stcherbatsky died in 1942. His correspondence with Professor Schayer is preserved at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and his papers are kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts (formerly the Institute of Oriental Studies) in St. Petersburg. Both Stcherbatsky and Schayer enjoyed international recognition as prominent researchers of India and Buddhism. Both wrote in German and English, besides their native languages, and contributed to the *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, an internationally recognised Polish Orientalist yearbook.

Indologist and Academician Sergey Fyodorovich Oldenburg (also referred to as Sergey F. Oldenburg), another student of Minayev, graduated from the First Warsaw Gymnasium (Lyceum) in 1881. Polish connections are thus early and immediate in his case. In Russia, Sergey Oldenburg (1863–1934) was known as a close friend and associate of Lenin's brother Alexander Ulyanov. This acquaintance helped Oldenburg save the Imperial Academy of Sciences and Oriental Studies at the Asian Museum after the October Revolution of 1917. Later on, he became known as a co-founder of the Russian School for the Study of Indian Culture, Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences (1904–1929) and the Minister of Education of the Provisional Government (1917).

After graduating from the Warsaw classical school, Sergey Oldenburg enrolled at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of St. Petersburg University. Having

²² Gawroński 2012.

obtained his *kandidat* degree (an equivalent of PhD) for his thesis *Essay on phonetics and morphology of Prakrit dialect Māgadhi*, he was sent to the libraries of Paris, London and Cambridge to study Buddhist manuscripts and prepare for teaching at the university. In 1889, he returned to St. Petersburg and began to lecture at St. Petersburg University. During Professor Minayev's illness, Dr Oldenburg was Fyodor Stcherbatsky's teacher of Sanskrit. Folklore, art and Buddhism were the three main fields of Sergey Oldenburg's research. Following the publication of *The Buddhist Legend. Part I*, his doctoral dissertation of 1894, Oldenburg continued his academic career with considerable success, but in 1899 he left the university in protest against its conservative management style. In 1900, Sergey Oldenburg was elected academician and, for a long period of 1904–1929, served as the Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences, the second highest position in the Academy's hierarchy.

In 1909–1910 and again in 1914–1915, Oldenburg led archaeological expeditions to Chinese Turkestan. Both expeditions proved very productive as numerous monuments of ancient Buddhist culture were found and described. Oldenburg was in close contact with his German colleagues, particularly with Professor Albert Grünwedel and Professor Lucien Scherman, who was one of the teachers of S. Shayer. As Chairman of the Ethnographic Department of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Oldenburg contributed a lot to the collection and the development of impressive resources, both Russian and brought from abroad. In 1916, Oldenburg took over as the director of the Asian Museum. In 1930, the Asian Museum, the Institute of Buddhist Culture, the College of Oriental and the Türkological Office were all merged into a single Institute of Oriental Studies, with Oldenburg at the helm of the institution. At the time, the Institute's staff included outstanding scholars, such as V. V. Bartold, B. Ya. Vladimirtsov, N. Ya. Marr, F. I. Stcherbatskoy, P. K. Kokovtsev, I. Yu. Krachkovsky, V. M. Alekseev, A. N. Samoilovich, A. A. Freiman, N. I. Conrad and others.

When working at St. Petersburg University and the Asian Museum, Oldenburg founded a publication series called the *Bibliotheca Buddhica*, a collection of original and translated Buddhist texts. This series, on which Oldenburg continued working throughout his life, included scholarly texts related to so-called northern Buddhism popular in Tibet, Mongolia, China and Xinjiang. The first volume of the series was released in 1897. During Oldenburg's lifetime, twenty-six volumes of the *Bibliotheca Buddhica* were published. In 1929, a conflict between the Academy of Sciences (of the Soviet Union, formerly Imperial) and the chief Soviet bureaucrats, who wanted to control the Academy, saw Oldenburg losing his position as the Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences. Oldenburg received multiple distinctions, becoming a corresponding member of the Prussian Academy and the Göttingen

Scientific Society, an honorary member of the Asiatic Society of Paris, the Royal Society of London and the Indian Archaeological Committee, Honorary President of the Institute for the Study of Buddhism in Heidelberg and Honorary Doctor of the University of Aberdeen. Sergei Fedorovich Oldenburg died in Leningrad (present-day St. Petersburg) on 28th February 1934. In 1936, his *Bibliotheca Buddhica* series was interrupted, but it was resumed in 1960 upon the initiative of Yu. N. Roerich

With Oldenburg's death, the positions of Oriental Studies and the humanities in general at the Academy of Sciences weakened. From 1937 to 1939, political terror in the Soviet Union caused huge losses among intellectuals, including members of the Academy. Most disciples of Academician Scherbatsky were assassinated or died in political prisons (concentration camps). In 1939, the Second World War started in Europe, and soon the Soviet army occupied the eastern regions of Poland, including Lvov. This contemptible act led to the demise of Lvov as the centre of Polish and international Indology. Later on, attempts were launched to revive Indology in the Soviet Ukraine, particularly in Lvov. In 1960, Bühler's manual of Sanskrit edited by Stcherbatsky was reprinted in Lvov. For political reasons which are discussed below, the revival of Lvov Indology was hindered. In general, post-war Indology in the Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent in Poland, focused on political history and history in general, rather than on philology.

Polish-Russian Indological contacts between 1945 and 1991

In May 1945, Poland obtained new territories and new borders, partly as a compensation of the loss of its eastern territories to Soviet Ukraine, Lithuania and Belorussia (Belarus). The loss of Lvov in 1939, confirmed by new treaties with the Soviet Union, meant the end of Polish Indology there. But, in western Poland, Wrocław became a leading educational and science hub with many professors from Vilnius and Lvov joining Breslau's former university staff. For example, S. Stasiak and Ludwik Skurzak joined the Indology unit at the University of Wrocław. Professor Stasiak left for London in 1947, but Dr Skurzak did not emigrate and did his best to introduce Sanskrit and Indology to Polish students in Wrocław. Dr Skurzak was in correspondence with Professor G. M. Bongard-Levin and received numerous books from him, which are now kept at the Indology Department of the University of Wrocław.

After the Second World War, Indological contacts between Poland and Russia intensified. Polish Indologists participated in the Oriental forums in Moscow, and Russian Indologists visited Poland. In general, this period was a time of good relations though it was partly spoiled by the dominance of the vulgar Soviet version of Marxism, which impacted writings on history and philosophy. Nevertheless, Indological research continued in both countries.

Unfortunately, the Department of Indian Studies at the Jagiellonian University was closed from 1948 to 1973; it, was re-opened in 1973.²³ The Indological section at the University of Wrocław also suffered a prolonged closing in this period. Despite institutional challenges, Indology in both countries continued to develop, and relations between Polish and Russian academics went on. A book on the history of ancient India which was gifted to Professor Ludwik Skurzak by Professor G. M. Bongard-Levin and is in possession of the library of the Department of Indology at the University of Wrocław is an important artefact and a testimony to productive Polish-Russian connections.

Tatiana Rutkowskla (Nee Girillovich) from Leningrad University after post-graduate studies in Leningrad moved to Warsaw and started teaching Hindi there in 1950s. Some years later, in 1960, Moscow hosted the World Orientalist Congress. It afforded Polish and Russian Indologists a good opportunity of collaboration and discussion on many subjects of interest to both sides. The Congress showed a shift in the focus of Soviet and, to a lesser degree, of Polish Indologists toward the — particularly ancient — history of India. Inter-academic and inter-university contacts were established at the Congress. Russian Indologists visited Poland while their Polish colleagues visited Moscow and Leningrad (former and present-day St. Petersburg). Such visits encouraged and facilitated further contacts. Nonetheless, Polish colleagues tended to find their Russian friends overly influenced by the Marxist ideology and too biased against the themes of religion. In 1960, Soviet Academician Evgeniy Chelishev visited Warsaw University, where he delivered a lecture on Indian literature, warning young Polish students at the end not to become Buddhists as the result of their Buddhist Sanskrit studies. Such an admonition from a person coming from the country famous for its Buddhist Studies sounded strange, indeed. It had its roots, however, in the modern history of Soviet Indology and Buddhology.

In 1960, Moscow witnessed a revival of Buddhology, which was associated with the arrival of Yuri Rourich from India. The son off the famous artist Nikolay Rourich, who spent many years in India, Rourich was a Tibetologist and a Buddhologist. Under his influence, the Soviet publisher Nauka published the key Pali Buddhist text of the *Dhammapada* in a Russian translation by V. N. Toporov prior to the announcement of the Orientalist Congress. The Soviet security services and vigilant groups in academic institutions regarded this publication as propagating Buddhism, a religion of many peoples of Russia, especially the Kalmiks and the Buryats, and implicated in stirring their nationalist sentiments. As a result, the *Dhammapada* translation was banned from selling in Moscow. Political trials of Buryat dissidents, notably of the prominent scholar Dandaron, followed. They were based on false

²³ Czerniak-Drożdżowicz 2011: 131.

accusations of involvement in Buddhist propagandists activities. In this context, Academician Chelishev's warning comes across as a cautionary gesture.

Meanwhile, connections with religion, particularly with Roman Catholicism, was strong in Poland. Interest in Sanskrit resulted from its status as one of the classical languages of ancient literature and philosophy. Latin was part of the curriculum of many classical gymnasia in Poland, as it was in pre-revolutionary Russia. Sanskrit as the third classical language, besides ancient Greek and Latin, retained its prestigious position. Even under communism, Polish academics considered their Soviet colleagues to be excessively ideologically-motivated or too cautious about religion and culture. Nevertheless, contacts between Professor Skurzak and Professor Bongard-Levin bear out that personal ties and shared interest in ancient India could be stronger than ideology or cultural differences.

In 1974, five Russian scholars, a Ukrainian scholar and a Latin-American scholar of Russian descent contributed to the commemorative volume devoted to Professor Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz (1901–1981) published by Warsaw University. Originally conceived as a jubilee book, it showed extensive cooperation between Polish and Soviet colleagues. As a tribute to the famous researcher, the work included papers by a host of scholars, including Russian Indologists G. M. Bongard-Levin, T. Elizarenkova, P. A. Grintzer, V. A. Kochergina, V. A. Novikova, A. Ya. Syrkin and V. N. Toporov.

Professor Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz had Lvov connections, as many other Indologists in Poland. He studied Indology at Lvov under Gawroński in 1922–1924, and obtained his PhD there (1924). In 1922–1925, he was Assistant Professor at Lvov. In the 1950s and 60s, university enthusiasts tried to reintroduce Oriental Studies in Lvov, but their efforts largely failed. Nonetheless, Ukrainian Ya. R. Dashkevich of Lvov University devoted his paper in the Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz commemoration volume to Armenology.

Professor Bongard-Levin was a well-established Moscow Professor, and his research focused on ancient India, particularly on India under the Mauryan dynasty. He contributed an article entitled *Some Basic Problems of Mauryan India* to the Polish book commemorating Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz.²⁴ Bongard-Levin major book was *Ancient Indian Civilisation*. A likewise titled book in Russian was signed by Bongard-Levin and presented to Professor Ludwik Skurzak.

P. A. Grintzer (1928–2009), a Moscow-based professor and an expert on the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* also contributed a paper to the Eugeniusz Słuszkiewicz commemorative book. In this paper, he discussed one of the main episodes of the Indian epics in which Draupadī is insulted by the Kauravas.²⁵ The Sanskrit scholar and lexicographer Vera Kochergina (1924–2018)

²⁴ Bongard-Levin 1974: 41–47.

²⁵ Grintzer 1974: 89–95.

contributed an article on Sanskrit syntax.²⁶ Vera Novikova (1918–1972), who was the Head of the Indian Philology Department at Leningrad University and edited a Russian translation of Rabindranath Tagore's *Collected Works* for publication, also contributed a paper on Bengali literature. Regrettably, she did not live to see the book published as she died in a train accident in 1972.²⁷

Alexander Syrkin is well-known in Russia as the translator of the *Kāmasūtra*. In his article commemorating Eugeniusz Śluszkiewicz, Syrkin discussed the āśramas in the Upaniṣads.²⁸ This piece was his last to be published in Russian for decades. Shortly afterwards, he emigrated to Israel, and his contacts with the scholars of the Socialist Bloc were abruptly severed. He is still active as a researcher, and though he lives in Jerusalem, he is often able to visit his native Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Academician V. N. Toporov (1928–2005), the translator of the *Dhammapada* into Russian, addressed the Vedic Rad-root in his paper. His wife T. Ya. Elizarenkova (1929–2007) is known as the translator of the Vedas into Russian. Her article in the volume focused on Hindi and Urdu, which, though untypical of her research and teaching interests, was understandable. As she was in close contact with many Buddhist scholars, the focus on Hindi and Urdu was designed to keep her politically correct: by keeping clear of Sanskrit and religious issues, she was less of a target for the secret service (which had been watching her since 1960).

In 1980, Jan Kieniewicz's *Historia Indii* — a seminal book on the history of India — was published in Poland. Known for his monograph on the Portuguese in India (1976), Kieniewicz, who was Poland's Ambassador to Spain in the 1990, produced a book of great importance for Indian Studies. The bibliography of the book attests to his knowledge of the Russian literature on the subject, including nine books by the major Russian historians of India, such as K. A. Antonova, G. M. Bongard-Levin and K. Ashrafyan. Overall, the book comes across as a soft Marxist version of the stronger Soviet stuff on the political, cultural and economic history of India. It shows that Polish histories of India were influenced by the Soviet Marxist school though they did not necessarily follow it in every respect. The second edition of the book was published in 2003, in the new, post-Cold-War Poland.

Russian Indological contacts in the last decade of the 20th century

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in difficulties for Indologists in Russia, as well as for all the scientists and scholars in the immediate post-Soviet era. At the same time, this meant the end of political control, eased restrictions

²⁶ Kochergina 1974: 105–113.

²⁷ Novikova 1974: 171–176.

²⁸ Syrkin 1974: 229–233.

on the entry of Russian researchers into Poland and facilitated Polish scholars' travelling to Russia. Many Russian academics, including T. Ya. Elisarenkova, Ya. V. Vassilkov and N. V. Gurov, seized the opportunity to visit Poland, meet their Polish colleagues and submit their contributions to Polish Orientalist journals and books. In general, by the end of the 20th century, these contacts became largely free of ideology and bias on both sides.

Conclusion

The 20th century was rife with political and military tensions and conflicts between Poland and Russia, which had a considerable effect on transnational relations among Indologists. Great part of Poland entered the 1900s as part of the Russian Empire, but as it stepped into the 21st century, it was part of NATO, a western European and North American military alliance. However, as a testament to the strength of the discipline of Indology, these political difficulties and shifts did not put an end to close and fruitful relations between Polish and Russian experts. Scholars tried to avoid or minimise political entanglements, and their successes were displayed in the numerous joint publications outlined above and in the many personal friendships established and sustained under difficult circumstances.

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KĀMAMAYA PURUṢA: **THE DISCOURSE ON DESIRE IN THE UPANIṢADS**

Abstract: The focus of this paper is on the notion of desire (*kāma*) as introduced in some of the principal Vedic Upaniṣads. My analysis starts from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.5), in which the sage Yājñavalkya defines man as “consisting of desires” (*kāmamaya puruṣa*). I seek to prove that the Upaniṣadic thinkers were probably the first in Indian intellectual tradition to introduce the notion of two levels of desiring — a desire for an object meant as something separate from and located outside of the desiring subject; and a desire without any object, transcending the subject-object duality. Briefly exploring the ambivalent attitude towards desiring in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and in some other major Upaniṣadic texts, I attempt to answer the following questions: What is the basic difference between these two levels of desiring; how were they conceptualised in the Upaniṣads; and, finally, what are the main grounds for and contexts of such an understanding of desire?

Keywords: desire, *kāma*, *kāmamaya puruṣa*, *kāmayamāna*, *akāmayamāna*, Upaniṣads, the Self (*ātman*), desire for an object, desiring without any object

The focus of this paper is on the notion of desire (*kāma*) as introduced in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and in some other principal Vedic Upaniṣads. Desire has attracted the attention of generations of poets, ritual experts, theologians and philosophers in India since the time of the *Ṛgveda* (RV). But it was the Upaniṣadic reflection on the complex phenomenon of desiring that proved crucial in the development of an in-depth discourse on desire in Indian culture, paving the way for later innovative teachings in which desire was approached from the perspective of sometimes radically different conceptual and ideological systems in the post-Vedic intellectual history of India, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. While the Upaniṣadic composers and spiritual preceptors did not

deny the creative power of desiring, which was consistently highlighted in Vedic cosmogonic myths, they began to recognise it as an obstacle to the spiritual progress and self-realisation of the individual and as an enemy to be overpowered. This ambivalent attitude to desiring raises the question whether the Upaniṣadic thinkers were the first to articulate the notion of two basically different levels of desiring, meant as opposing principles underlying two modes of understanding and approaching reality. And if so, how were they conceptualised in the Upaniṣads; what was the most significant difference between them; and what were the main grounds for and contexts of understanding desire in these ways.

Grasping the Upaniṣadic approach to desire accurately is premised on recognising that the theme of desire is mainly addressed in the Upaniṣads in the context of the new discourse on the Self (*ātmán*) and in the context of the emergent ideas about karma and rebirth. These are metaphysical and spiritual contexts, characterised by highly salvific overtones.

My reflection on this issue takes a challenging idea introduced in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (BU) as the point of departure. BU, one of the oldest and greatest texts among the principal Upaniṣads, attempts to identify the essence of the cosmos, the human being and life.¹ In BU 4.4.5, the sage Yājñavalkya states that karma, the universal law of reciprocity, as a consequence of one's desires, shapes his/her present and next lives. Explaining what happens after the death of a human being who has desires, the sage says:

yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati | sādhu-kārī sādhu bhavati | pāpakārī pāpo bhavati | puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmaṇā pāpaḥ pāpena | atho khalv āhuḥ | kāmamaya evāyaṃ puruṣa iti | sa yathākāmo bhavati tatkratur bhavati | yatkratur bhavati tat karma kurute | yat karma kurute tad abhisampadyate ||

What a man turns out to be depends on how he acts and on how he conducts himself. If his actions are good, he will turn into something good. If his actions are bad, he will turn into something bad. A man turns into something good by good action and into something bad by bad action. And so people say: "A person here consists simply of desire." A man resolves in accordance with his desire, acts in accordance with his resolve, and turns out to be in accordance with his action. (Olivelle 1998: 121)

Concluding his reflections on this subject Yājñavalkya says:

tad eṣa śloko bhavati — tad eva saktaḥ saha karmaṇaiti liṅgaṃ mano yatra niṣaktam asya | prāpyāntaṃ karmaṇas tasya yat kiñcheha karoty ayam | tasmāl lokāt punar aity asmai lokāya karmaṇe | iti nu kāmamayānaḥ | athākāmamayāno

¹ For a general introduction to the early Upaniṣads, see Hume 1921, Radhakrishnan 1953, Olivelle 1998.

yo 'kāmo niṣkāma āptakāma ātmakāmo na tasya prāṇā utkrāmanti | brahmaiva san brahmāpyeti || (BU 4,4.6)

On this point there is the following verse: A man who's attached goes with his action, to that very place to which his mind and character cling. Reaching the end of his action, of whatever he has done in this world — From that world he returns back to this world, back to action. That is the course of a man who desires.

Now, a man who does not desire — who is without desires, who is freed from desires, whose desires are fulfilled, whose only desire is his Self — his vital functions (*prāṇa*) do not depart. Brahman he is, and to brahman he goes. (Olivelle 1998: 121)

The basic dichotomy here is *kāmayamānaḥ* vs. *akāmayamānaḥ*. According to the passage a man who desires becomes reborn, but the one who does not desire is equal to *brāhman* (the Absolute), i.e. immortal, and entirely terminates the mechanism of karmic reciprocity. Thus, BU (4.4.6) suggests that there are two levels of desiring — a **desire for an object that the subject of the act of desiring feels as lacking and eagerly strives to achieve**² and a **desire without any object**.

Kāmayamānaḥ: Desire for an object

The powerful potential of desire to shape the entire behaviour of a human being is highlighted through the associative chain of *kāma*³ — *kratu*⁴ — *karma*.⁵ Desire is portrayed as a complex mental state which represents the main source of one's motivation to act in a certain way. *Kāma* is described in an integrative manner, as a basic mental disposition; therefore, it is claimed that *puruṣa*⁶ is *kāmamaya* ("consisting of desire").

² "*kāma* or desire is, at root, a felt need for something, a wanting of something which is not yet in existence or not yet a part of oneself; it is the urge to remedy the sense of one's own incompleteness; it involves, therefore, by definition, an internal separation, a sense of duality between the subject and the object for which desire is felt" (Macy 1975: 146).

³ "Wish," "desire for," "longing after," "love," "sexual desire," "pleasure," "object of pleasure and love" and "affection."

⁴ "Plan," "design," "intention," "resolution," "determination," "desire," "will," but also "intelligence," "(good) understanding," "inspiration," "enlightenment," "sacrifice" and "worship."

⁵ *karman* (n.) — "act," "action," "performance," "business," "special duty," "occupation," "obligation," "religious act or rite," "work," "labour" and "activity."

⁶ "A man," "a male," "a human being," "a person" but also "the personal and animating principle in men and other beings, the soul," "a spirit," "the Supreme Being" or "Soul of the universe," "the primeval man as the soul and original source of the universe" (RV 10, 90).

The *Nāsadīya sūkta* is probably the most emblematic and most discussed Vedic text devoted to the generic relation between desire and mind/thought. It famously explains that:

kāmaḥ tad agre sam āvartatādhi manāso retāḥ prathamam yad āsīt |
sato bandhum asatī nir āvandan hr̥di pratīṣyā kavayo manīṣā || (RV 10.129.4)⁷

Kāma is rendered in different translations of the hymn either as “love” or as “desire.”⁸ Importantly, the term “desire” denotes varied mental phenomena, such as needs, wishes, intentions, cravings, hopes, preferences, motivations, affection etc. Desire also necessarily involves the hedonistic aspect of taking pleasure in something, of liking and loving something/somebody. In my view, all these connotations of the word *kāma* are encoded in its usage in this stanza. However, as the verse primarily focuses on how desire arises and operates, the stanza is deliberately constructed so as to leave it uncertain whether “desire comes from thought or thought from desire.”⁹ Nevertheless, whichever is the case, the key idea is that *manas* and *kāma* are profoundly interconnected and that this connection possesses a powerful creative potential.¹⁰

The same line is repeated at the beginning of a very provocative and richly ambivalent hymn in the *Atharvaveda* — *Kāmasūkta*,¹¹ which says:

⁷ There are multiple English translations of the hymn. The two of them I cite here propose slightly different interpretations of the this stanza: “In the beginning Love arose, which was the primal germ cell of the mind. The Seers, searching in their hearts with wisdom, discovered the connection of Being in Nonbeing” (Panikkar 1977: 50). “Then, in the beginning, from thought there developed desire, which existed as the primal semen. Searching in their hearts through inspired thinking, poets found the connection of the existent in the non-existent” (Jamison & Brereton 2014: 1609).

⁸ Max Mueller (1862) and Panikkar (1977) have translated it as “love.” Especially noteworthy in the context of my article is the interpretation of Byrski, who argues that *kāma* in the *Nāsadīya sūkta* should be understood as “love.” The point of departure for his explanation is provided by the notion of *kāmamaya puruṣa* in BU. He has translated it as a “man made of love” (Marlewicz 2010: 9–10). For their part, Macdonell (1922), O’Flaherty (1981), Brereton (1999) and many others have rendered the term as “desire.”

⁹ The form *manasaḥ* derived from the noun *manas* could be interpreted both as a genitive or as an ablative combined with *adhi*. For a detailed analysis of this casus, see Brereton 1999.

¹⁰ This connection is so close that in some contexts *manas* is used as a synonym of *kāma*. Commenting on the phrase *mano ruhānāḥ* in RV 1.32, Bloomfield (1919: 280–281) pointed out that there “exists a Hindu notion that the mind is the vehicle of desire. You mount your mind or wish-car and reach your destination, that is to say, the object of your desire. From this arises a part equation between *manas* and *kāma*, so that either of them indifferently may be mounted and ridden to the goal.”

¹¹ (AVŚ 19.52 = AVP 1.30). The *Atharvaveda* includes a hymn (9.2) praising desire as personified in the mighty god *Kāmadeva* (Whitney 1905: 521–525). In 9.2.19,

kāmena mā kāma āgan hṛdayād hṛdayaṃ pari |
yad amīṣām ado manas tad aitūpa mām iha ||4||

By desire hath desire come to me, out of heart to heart;
the mind that is theirs yonder, let that come unto me here. (Whitney 1905: 987)¹²

Many of the creation myths in Brāhmaṇical literature recount that the Demiurge Prajāpati,¹³ who desires expansion, begins to multiply himself, to produce a variety of living beings from himself and, in this way, to create the world. As the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (1.68) points out:

prajāpatir vā vedam agra āsīt/ mano ha vai prajāpatir devatā/ so akāmayata
bahuḥ syāṃ prajāyeya bhūmānaṃ gaccheyamiti/

Prajāpati (and nothing else) existed here in the beginning. Now Prajāpati was the (vital) powerful mind. He desired: “May I become manifold. May I procreate. May I become abundant.” (Bodewitz 1973: 211)

In BU (1.2), desire is recognised as the driving force behind the intentional acts of Death, who strives in this way to overcome his sense of incompleteness and lack. Fulfilling his desires, Death creates the phenomenal world:

naiveha kiṃ canāgra āsīt | mṛtyunaivedam āvṛtam āsīd aśanāyayā | aśanāyā hi
mṛtyuḥ tan mano ‘kurutātmanvī syām iti |... (1.2.1)

In the beginning there was nothing here at all. Death alone covered this completely, as did hunger; for what is hunger¹⁴ But death? Then death made up his mind: “Let me equip myself with a body (*ātman*)...” (Olivelle 1998: 37)

so ‘kāmayata — dvitīyo ma ātmā jāyete | sa manasā vācaṃ mithunaṃ sam-
abhavad aśanāyā mṛtyuḥ | ... (1.2.4)

it is proclaimed: “Kāma was first born; not the gods, the Fathers, nor mortals attained (*āp*) him; to them art thou superior (*jyāyāns*), always great; to thee as such, O Kāma, do I pay homage” (Whitney 1905: 524).

¹² For a detailed analysis of the text, see Kulikov 2012.

¹³ For general study of Prajāpati, see Gonda 1986 and Smith 1998.

¹⁴ In this respect, Davis offers provocative insights into what he calls “appetitive desire”: “In its second sense, ‘desire’ has the near synonyms appetite, hungering, craving, yearning, longing, and urge, and appears as a noun in contexts like: (3) S has a desire to VP; and (4) S has a desire for NP. I refer to desire in this sense as appetitive desire...So ‘desire’ and ‘appetite’ are near but not exact synonyms. ‘Hunger’ and ‘thirst,’ in their generalized sense, mean any strong appetitive desire” (Davis 1984: 182).

Then death had this desire: “Would that a second body (*ātman*) were born for me!” So, by means of his mind, he copulated with speech, death copulated with hunger... (Olivelle 1998: 39)

In Brāhmaṇical mythology, *kāma* features as a spontaneous inner impulse¹⁵ of multiplication and extension harboured by the subject (Prajāpati, Death, the Waters, etc.) of the cosmogonic act, as this subjects’ intense mental activity which makes the Universe come into being. Commenting on Prajāpati’s cosmogonic role, Chapple claims that...” powers of Prajāpati are universal human abilities manifested through desire and the fulfilment of desire through intentional acts” (Chapple 1986: 14).

In many hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, desire is described as thing to be fulfilled: mortal men turn with their desires for something to the immortal gods, who are expected to respond to their wanting. In other words, desires define the human being as a subject who wants something (an object, a result) and who, in order to obtain it, practises the prescribed Vedic rituals. Thus, behind every single ritual there is a desire which makes it possible and meaningful. For example, ṚV 1.16.9, which is addressed to Indra, pleads:

semaṃ naḥ kāmamā pṛṇa gobhiraśvaiḥ śatakrato
stavāma tvā svādhyah |

Fulfil this desire of ours with cows and horses, o you of a hundred resolves.
Very attentive, we will praise you. (Jamison & Brereton 2014: 109)

At the same time, some texts of the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas already suggested that desire, being a mighty force, should be regulated. Thus, the complicated Vedic ritual paradigm was developed with a view not only to fulfilling one’s desires, but also to controlling them, for otherwise they threatened to turn into a destructive power.

Akāmayamānaḥ: Desire without any object

To return to the passages of BU (4.4.5/4.4.6) at the beginning of this study, they notably recognised the creative potential of desire as well and depicted it as the main force shaping human behaviour and personal experience.

¹⁵ “... *kāma* is not only part of human experience but a constituent of the cosmos. It is a product of the mind, but the mind itself is a cosmic concept, existing prior to the individual. In the Vedic cosmogonies, the question of what caused the primordial desire does not arise; like the big bang of modern cosmology, the primal impulse is beyond time and causation, so it makes no sense to ask what preceded it or caused it.” (Killingley 2004: 284)

However karmic teachings emphasise that desiring leads to death and re-birth, which means that it is destructive. Therefore, the human being is envisaged as capable of not desiring at all (*akāmayamaṇaḥ*). Paradoxically enough, depictions of those that do not desire picture them as being both *akāma* (“without desires”) and *niṣkāma* (“freed from desires”), as well as *āptakāma* (“whose desires are fulfilled”) and *ātmakāma* (“whose only desire is his self”).

In my view, the four characteristics of the one who does not desire, listed in BU 4.4.6 — *akāma*, *niṣkāma*, *āptakāma* and finally *ātmakāma* — are interpretable as four stages in the transformative meditative process resulting in the achievement of a radically different state of consciousness, in which the subject-object duality and causality are transcended. At this level, desire is cut off not only from the object but also from the subject, and in this way its capacity to attach and to control somebody is also “cut off.”

Commenting on this passage, Ādi Śaṅkarācārya elucidates:

yo ‘kāmo bhavatyasāvākāmayamānaḥ kathamakāmatetyucyate--yo niṣṭakāmo
yasmānirgatāḥ kāmāḥ so ‘yaṃ niṣkāmaḥ /
kathaṃ kāmā nirgacchanti /
ya āptakāmo bhavatyāptāḥ kāmā yena sa āptakāmaḥ /
kathamāpyante kāmā ātmakāmatvena yasyā’maiva nānyaḥ kāmāyitavyo vast-
vantarabhūtaḥ padārtho bhavati /
ātmaivānantaro ‘bāhyaḥ kṛtsnaḥ prajñānaghana ekaraso nordhva na tiryānādha
ātmano ‘nyatkāmāyitavyaṃ vastvantaram /
yasya sarvamātmaivābhūttatkena kaṃ paśyecchṛṇuyānmanvīta vijānīyād-
vaivaṃ vijānankaṃ kāmāyeta /
jñāyamāno hyanyatvena padārthaḥ kāmāyitavyo bhavati /

He who is without desires is the man who does not desire. How is this absence of desire attained? This is being explained: Who is free from desires, i.e. whom desires have left. How do they leave? The objects of whose desires have been attained. Because he is one to whom all objects of desires are but the Self — who has only the Self, and nothing else separate from It that can be desired; to whom alone the Self exists — the Pure Intelligence without interior or exterior, entire and homogeneous; and neither above nor below nor in the middle is there anything else but the Self to be desired. What should a person desire who has realised: When everything has become the Self to one, what should one see, hear, think or know, and through what? For a thing that is known as other than the oneself may become an object of desire...(Swāmi Mādhavānanda 1950: 718–719)

Transcending the ego-consciousness and achieving the state of “Pure Intelligence,” the human being realises that there is no “I” that desires anything and that there is nothing to be meant as “my desire” to be fulfilled. In this

sense, in the state of the true self, all desires are felt as attained or having become real, the way it is envisioned in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*:

... etat satyaṃ brahmapuram asmin kāmāḥ samāhitāḥ | eṣa ātmāpahatapāpmā
vijaro vimṛtyur viśoko vijighatso ‘pipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasamkalpaḥ | ...
(8.1.5)

That is the self, free from evils — free from old age and death, free from sorrow, free from hunger and thirst; the self whose desires and intentions become real. (Olivelle 1998: 275)

Notably, because their only desire is the Self (*ātmakāma*), the human beings who have achieved this highest condition are depicted as *āptakāma*, *satyakāma* and *satyasamkalpa*, which is equated with *akāma* and *niṣkāma*. Actually, this equation is a mental operation, a meditative act by means of which one constructs one’s immortal and complete self by converting the worldly wants and cravings for different objects into a desire for the *ātmán* or the impure mind (*manas*) into the pure one (*śuddham*). As the *Maitri Upaniṣad* (6.34.6) insists, the mind (*manas*) is twofold (*dvividham*) — pure (*śuddham*) and impure (*aśuddham*), where the latter is based on the union with desire (*kāma-samparkāt*), while the former on the freedom from desire (*kāma-vivarjitam*).

According to KaU (4.2), only “fools” (*bālāḥ*) “pursue outward desires” (*parācaḥ kāmān anuyanti*), while the “wise” and the “insightful” (*dhīrāḥ*) “know what constitutes the immortal, and in unstable things here do not seek the stable” (*amṛtatvaṃ veditvā dhruvam adhrueṣv iha na prārthayante*).

It is these “outward desires” that one should shrug off if one strives to reach the absolute reality (*bráhma*). The Lord of Death, Yama, addresses Naciketas with *dhīra* because his only desire is to obtain the knowledge of *ātmán* and in this way to become free of all other desires for everyday objects and pleasures. Only in way does a mortal become immortal (*yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye’sya hṛdi śritāḥ /atha martyo ‘mṛto bhavaty atra brahma samaśnute* [KaU 6.14]. Naciketas actually realises how and why desires arise within him, and this insight enables him to master them.

Conclusion

The Upaniṣadic thinkers were probably the first in Indian intellectual tradition to introduce the notion of two levels of desiring: a desire for an object meant as something separate from and outside of the desiring subject; and a desire without an object, transcending the subject-object duality.

Desire for any object/result began to be understood as a defining feature of the ignorant human beings who considered himself/herself the subject/agent of various actions, which made him/her into an individual. But this type

of desiring came to be evaluated as temporary, illusory and binding and, consequently, as hindering one's spiritual self-realisation. Thus, new reflections on *ātmán* and *bráhmaṇ* were associated with a sceptical appraisal of a desire for something.

In a stark contrast, desire for *ātmán/bráhmaṇ*, i.e. without any object/result, began to be understood as a distinguishing feature of the insightful, wise human being who did not regard him/herself the subject/agent of any action which would mark him/her off as an individual. This type of desiring was proposed as a path to absolute liberation. Therefore, the Upaniṣadic sages developed new strategies of transforming the process of desiring itself. In this sense, they did not argue that desiring should be entirely abandoned or suppressed, for they were fully aware that "here on earth there is no such thing as no desire" (na ca eva iha asti akāmatā) as it is said later in the *Manusmṛti* (2.2). Rather, they insisted that desire should be entirely redirected to the Self.

Paradoxically enough, they suggested that one should desire to free oneself of any (ordinary) desire, except the desire for *ātmán*, which was construed as tantamount to the final liberation.

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THE COMPOSITION OF THE *SANATSUJĀTĪYA-PARVAN*

Abstract: The *Sanatsujātīya* (*Mahābhārata* 5,42–45) is a didactic philosophical text that forms a part of the *Udyogaparvan*. The *Sanatsujātīya* has not attracted a great deal of attention in the Indological literature, as opposed to better-known epic philosophical treatises. This philosophically noteworthy text contains a number of textual parallels with Vedic literature, especially the Upaniṣads, *Ṛk-*, *Atharva-* and *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā*. At the same time, it displays significant parallels with the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the *Mānavadharmā-Śāstra*. This paper examines metric patterns and verbal and non-verbal (mainly doctrinal) parallels in order to establish the chronological relationship of the *Sanatsujātīya* to the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The study of parallels with the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, in the context of its layered structure (according to the scheme of its historical development proposed by M. Ježić) suggests that the *Sanatsujātīya* might be earlier than the final redaction of BhG, but later than the Yoga, Sāṃkhya, and Upaniṣad layers. Furthermore, the *Sanatsujātīya* is conceptually affiliated with the Upaniṣadic (Vedāntic) philosophical tradition rather than with the Yogic and ascetic thought traditions; also, Bhakti is not represented in the text.

Keywords: text history, *Sanatsujātīya*, *Udyogaparvan*, *Mahābhārata*, text parallels, *triṣṭubh*, *śloka*, relative chronology

Introduction

The *Sanatsujātīya-parvan* (= SanS) is a didactic philosophical treatise¹ contained in the *Udyogaparvan* “Preparation for War,” the fifth book of the *Mahābhārata* (= MBh). In the Critical Edition (= CE), the *Sanatsujātīya*

¹ Brockington (1998: 31) calls it an “expansion” of the *Udyogaparvan* and “a substantial philosophical digression.”

covers chapters (*adhyāya*) 42–45 of the 197 chapters of the *Udyogaparvan*. Unlike better-known epic philosophical narratives, such as the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (= BhG), the *Anu-Gītā* (= AnG) and the *Mokṣadharmaparvan* (= MoksDh), the *Sanatsujātīya* has not received appropriate attention in the Indological literature. K.T. Telang offered the first philological study of the text in his introduction to its translation published in volume eight of the *Sacred Books of the East* in 1882. Telang used Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras printed editions of MBh together with three MSS. Significant to the study of SanS was the publication of a critical edition (= CE) of the *Udyogaparvan* in 1937 (as fascicule 9) and again in 1940 (as volume 6 of the critical edition).

The critically constituted text, prepared by S.K. De and his collaborators, comprises 121 verses arranged into four chapters as MBh 5,42–45. The Bombay edition, based on Nīlakaṇṭha Vulgate, contains 191 verses. According to the CE editor, the critical text was constituted on the basis of agreement between the Northern redaction *śāradā* MS Ś₁K and the Mālāyaḷam version of the Southern redaction, supported by the Bengali version. As the editor reports, the Southern redaction is sharply divided between the Mālāyaḷam version (which is in agreement with Ś₁K and the Bengali version) and the Telugu/Grantha version. The Telugu/Grantha version is the source of the commented text that is attributed to Śāṅkara in colophons. The Telugu/Grantha tradition with all its additions was a source of numerous additions and repetitions in Nīlakaṇṭha's Vulgate text, which appears in the Northern Devanāgarī MSS.

It was not until 40 years after CE was published that Bedekar (1977–1978) presented the content of SanS together with some basic philological notes regarding the dating of the text and its position within in MBh.² Rahrkar (1986–1987) also summarised its content and provisionally identified the second century BCE as its *terminus ad quem* because of its archaic and irregular expressions (Rahrkar 1986–1987: 285). The first published translation of the *Sanatsujātīya* into a European language was Hippolyte Fauche's French translation of the entire *Udyogaparvan* in 1866. The first English translation of the *Sanatsujātīya*, prepared by K. T. Telang, appeared in 1882. Ganguli's translation of the entire *Udyogaparvan* followed in 1886. In 1895, the *Udyogaparvan* was again translated into English by Manmatha Nath Dutt. Van Buitenen used S.K. De's critically constituted text for his English translation of 1978 (van Buitenen 1978: 285–294). *Sanatsujātīya* was translated into English once again in 1988 by Swami Amritananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, who used a text edition with a commentary attributed to Śāṅkara. Kathleen Garbutt again relied on the Vulgate in her translation of the entire *Udyogaparvan* for the Clay Sanskrit Library in 2008, while Bibek Debroy used the CE in his complete translation of the MBh. In 1906, Deussen translated *Sanatsujātīya* into German, using the Bombay and Calcutta printed

² Bedekar (1977–8: 476) considered SanS older than BhG.

editions.³ In 1977, B.L. Smirnov translated the text into Russian (Smirnov 1977), while V.I. Kalyanov prepared another Russian translation as part of the entire *Udyogaparvan* (Kalyanov 1978: 102–112).

A number of commentaries on the *Sanatsujātīya* were composed. According to De (1940: XIII), the oldest of them is Devabodha's commentary, which runs the length of the *Udyogaparvan*, as do Arjunamiśra's and Sarvajñānārāyaṇa's commentaries, which were derived from Devabodha's. The text of the MBh that Devabodha comments upon shows affinities with the *śāradā*/Bengali/Mālāyaḷam MSS, which were used to constitute the CE. As already mentioned, there is also a commentary on the *Sanatsujātīya* which colophons attribute to the great philosopher Śāṅkara.

Text structure and metric patterns

Van Buitenen (1978: 182) briefly addresses the structure of the text and observes that the *triṣṭubh* verses interspersed between the *ślokas* serve as the textual core, to which the *ślokas* are attached as commentary and addition. In order to assess van Buitenen's observation, this study will carefully examine how the *triṣṭubhs* are distributed and how they fit into the surrounding *ślokas*. In the second part of the paper, text parallels with Vedic literature, the *Mānavadharmasāstra* and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* will be investigated in order to shed some light on the possible historical development of the text.

A peculiar feature of the SanS is its high percentage of the *triṣṭubh* verses. Van Buitenen's insight that the *triṣṭubhs* make up the core of the text is particularly noteworthy in the light of Ježić's (1986 and 2009) discovery of a Bhāgavata (or proto-Bhāgavata) *triṣṭubh* hymn distributed among the *ślokas* of the BhG. The question thus arises as to whether a similar arrangement appears in SanS as well.

Indeed, if the *triṣṭubhs* are extrapolated from chapter 5,42, they add up to a coherent whole. The second (*triṣṭubh*), third (*śloka*) and fourth (*triṣṭubh*) verses from the first chapter are presented below in order to exemplify the relationship of the *ślokas* and the *triṣṭubhs* in the first chapter:

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
sanatsujāta yadidaṃ śṛṇomi
mṛtyur hi nāstīti tavopadeśam |
devāsūrā hy ācaran brahmacaryam

amṛtyave tat kataran nu satyam || 2 ||

Dhrtarāṣṭra said:
Sanatsujāta, I hear that you teach
That indeed there is no death at all,
Yet Gods and Asuras studied
the brahman
To achieve immortality — so which
is the truth?

³ Alongside AnG, BhG, and Moksdh.

sanatsujāta uvāca
amṛtyuḥ karmaṇā kecin

mṛtyur nāstīti cāpare |

śṛṇu me bruvato rājan
yathaitan mā viśaṅkithāḥ || 3 ||
(*sanatsujāta uvāca)
ubhe satye kṣatriyādyapraṇṛtte;
moho mṛtyuḥ saṁmato yaḥ kavīnām |
pramādaṁ vai mṛtyum ahaṁ bravīmi
sadāpramādam amṛtatvaṁ bravīmi || 4 ||

Sanatsujāta said:

Some hold immortality comes about
by rite,

While others maintain that there is no
death.

Now listen to me, king, while I explain,
So that you may cherish no doubts about it.

Baron, both these truths are primordial!
The death that the seers believe
in is folly.

I say to you distraction is death:

To be never distraught is to live forever.⁴

The first chapter begins with Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s doubt in Sanatsujāta’s teaching that there is no death. If this is true, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks, why did the gods and Asuras undertake *brahmacarya* in order to achieve immortality? Sanatsujāta’s answer immediately follows in a *śloka* verse according to which “some” hold that immortality is achieved by rite, while “others” maintain that there is no death at all. However, this *śloka* is not quite in line with the question in the *triṣṭubh*. First, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks why Sanatsujāta teaches that there is no death, to which Sanatsujāta replies that others teach that there is no death (possibly implying that he does not). Furthermore, this *śloka* claims that, according to some, rites bring immortality; this is not consistent with *triṣṭubhs*, in which rites are not discussed at all, as the question is specifically about the *brahmacarya* practised by the gods and Asuras, with no mention of rites. Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s question from *triṣṭubh* 5,42.2 is actually answered by the next *triṣṭubh* (5,42.4), which can immediately follow *triṣṭubh* 5,42.2 if *śloka* 5,42.3 is left out. If this *śloka* is an interpolation that van Buitenen regards as a commentary, it reinterprets *brahmacarya* as a rite (*karman*), contrary to the other *triṣṭubhs*.

In the next *triṣṭubh*, Sanatsujāta discusses the claim that there is no death at all, but in this case, in line with Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s initial *triṣṭubh* question, this is interpreted as the teaching of Sanatsujāta himself, rather than of “others,” as stated in *śloka* 5,42.3. The *triṣṭubhs* from chapter 5,42 discuss death, which is characterised as a distraction (*pramāda*) that causes one to forget one’s true nature. In this context, immortality means never being distracted (*apramāda*) in this way. All the *ślokas* are directly dependent on the *triṣṭubhs*; they appear as an extension in the form of commentary.

Triṣṭubhs 5,42.6–8 describe the deaths of an ignorant man (6–7) and a sage (8).

⁴ Trans. van Buitenen (1978: 285–286) with minor changes. Van Buitenen translates *apare* as “some.” In order to emphasise the difference from the previous *triṣṭubh*, van Buitenen’s “some” has been changed to “others.”

āsyād eṣa niḥsarate narāṇām	It is from his mouth that there issue for men
krodhaḥ pramādo moharūpaś ca mṛtyuḥ te mohitās tadvaśe vartamānā	Wrath, Distraction, and Death as Folly; The ones that are fooled and under his sway
itaḥ pretās tatra punaḥ patanti 7 tatas taṃ devā anu viplavante ato mṛtyur maraṇākhyām upaiti	Depart from here and fall back again (7) It is after him that the Gods collapse And hence that Death has acquired his name;
karmodaye karmaphalānurāgās	They who covet the fruits of their acts follow after
tatrānu yānti na taranti mṛtyum 8	The <i>karman</i> resulting, and do not cross Death. (8)
yo 'bhidhyāyann utpaṭiṣṇūn nihanyād	He who thinks and destroys those fruits as they try
anādareṇāpratibudhyamānaḥ sa vai mṛtyur mṛtyur ivātti bhūtvā	To arise, not hostile by disrespect, He is Death, for like Death, he eats them aborning.
evaṃ vidvān yo vinihanti <u>kāmān</u> 9	So he who knows thus forsakes his desires. (9) ⁵

The two *ślokas* that follow are directly devoted to explaining the word *kāmān* (desires), which may have triggered the insertion (if it is indeed an insertion).

kāmānusārī puruṣaḥ <u>kāmān</u> anu vinaśyati kāmān vyudasya dhunute yat kiṃ cit puruṣo rajaḥ 10 tamo 'prakāśo bhūtānām narako 'yaṃ pradṛśyate grhyanta iva dhāvanti gacchantāḥ śvabhram unmukhāḥ 11	The man who runs after his desires perishes with his desires; if he can lay aside his desires, he can shake off any passion. This lustreless darkness is for all creatures hell; as though possessed they eagerly rush to it and fall into the pit. ⁶
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The *triṣṭubhs* continue from 5,42.12 on, but these are more in line with the earlier *triṣṭubhs*, as they continue explaining the fate of the deceased. It is important to note that there is no connection between this *triṣṭubh* and the two *ślokas*; they are rather a direct continuation of the preceding set of *triṣṭubhs*.

⁵ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

⁶ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

abhidhyā vai prathamam hanti cainam	The notion of I first kills him off,
<u>kāmakrodhau</u> grhya cainam tu paścāt	Love and hatred possess him and kill him again;
ete bālān mṛtyave prāpayanti;	They steer the befuddled ones to their death,
dhīrās tu dhairyēṇa taranti mṛtyum 12	But the firm cross death with their fortitude. ⁷

If the *triṣṭubhs* are removed from chapter 5,42, they form a coherent whole with a continuous flow of narration until *triṣṭubh* 5,42.14. At the same time, the *ślokas* that surround the *triṣṭubhs* are directly derived from them; however, the *triṣṭubhs* are never derived in any way from the *ślokas*, nor do they display any continuance or development of their ideas. It is thus possible that these are indeed remnants of an older, small Upaniṣad-like text written in *triṣṭubhs* with interpolated *ślokas* as additions and commentary. The theme of this Upaniṣad-like *triṣṭubh* text is death and Sanatsujāta's elaboration of the claim that there is no Death. Death is actually *pramāda*, and this *pramāda* is a key feature of the *triṣṭubh* exposition.

The last three *triṣṭubhs* address an entirely different theme, specifically law (*dharma*). It is thus quite possible that the *triṣṭubh* core ends with 5,42.14. The *triṣṭubh* ur-text would then consist of MBh 5,42.1–2; 4–9; 12–14. *Triṣṭubhs* 15–17 and all the following *ślokas* might not belong to the core text, along with the last *upajāti* verse, which is derived from the preceding *śloka*.

The subsequent chapter (5,43) contains nine scattered *triṣṭubhs*. However, the arrangement in 5,43 appears to be completely different from that in 5,42, as it is not possible to extract the *triṣṭubhs*, which are closely integrated with the text of 5,43. Furthermore, they exhibit a clear continuation from the preceding *ślokas*. For instance, the first *śloka* contains Dhṛtarāṣṭra's question whether a Brahmin who possesses the knowledge of the three Vedas is tainted by a sin he commits. The answer comes in a *śloka* verse, explaining that *ṛc*, *sāman*, and *yajus* do not save him from evil *karman*. This is immediately followed by a *triṣṭubh* verse that claims that *chandās* "sacred hymns" abandon such sinners just as young birds fly from their nests. In this example, the *triṣṭubh* verse naturally stems from the preceding *ślokas*.

A slight oddity emerges in 5,43.6, which includes a *śloka* containing the question of how austerity can be fruitful (*ṛddha* and *samṛddha*). The answer comes in *triṣṭubhs*, but these *triṣṭubhs* do not respond to the question directly. Rather, they are involved in a discussion of sins and virtues, a theme that was introduced in *upajāti* verse 5,42.32. Eventually, 5,43.22, explains how this enumeration of sins and virtues is connected to the *śloka* question

⁷ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

(5,43.6) when Sanasujāta exclaims that austerity devoid of sins and endowed with virtues is fruitful.

An even clearer example of *triṣṭubhs* that are well integrated with their surroundings appears in the third chapter (5,44). This chapter again begins with a question about Brahman in a *triṣṭubh* verse. This question is attached to the last *śloka* of the previous chapter (5,43.37), which claims that a truthful *Brāhmaṇa* sees *Brahman*. This triggers a question in the *triṣṭubh* form asking what this Brahman is (at the beginning of the chapter 5,44.1).⁸ Sanatsujāta answers that *Brahman* is the knowledge of the unmanifest (*avyaktavidyā*), which is achieved through *brahmacarya*. *Brahmacarya* is described as a birth or as entering the teacher's womb and becoming an embryo while observing *brahmacarya*. *Brahmacarins* become practitioners of the *śāstras* here, on earth, and when they discard their bodies, they attain the highest Yoga. A discussion on *brahmacarya* follows, with the first quarter of *brahmacarya* (*prathamō brahmacaryasya pādahaḥ*) described as a set of moral rules. However, the second and third quarters of *brahmacarya* are outlined in *ślokas*, while the fourth is related again in a *triṣṭubh*. It is clear that the *triṣṭubhs* are here an integral part of the compositional scheme.

The last chapter (MBh 5,45) has altogether twenty-eight stanzas in CE, with a total of eight and a half *triṣṭubhs*. Twenty of the first twenty-one stanzas (except for the 11th) contain a one-line *śloka* refrain: *yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti bhagavantam sanātanam*, which was mechanically attached to both the *ślokas* and the *triṣṭubhs* at a later stage in the text's development. This claim is mainly corroborated by *triṣṭubh* 5,45.6, which most likely comes from *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad* 6,9 (\approx *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad* 3,13) with a *śloka* refrain added to it. Curiously, stanza 11 contains no refrain, while the refrain appears after the second line in stanza 12.

The distribution of the *ślokas* and the *triṣṭubhs* suggests that the core of the first chapter is a short *triṣṭubh* composition focused on the teaching that death is in reality a distraction (*pramāda*) that makes one forgetful of one's true nature. The *ślokas* were probably added to this core as commentary and enlargement. Other chapters contain a mixture of interdependent *triṣṭubhs* and *ślokas*, without any clear indication that certain types of verses were used either as the core text or as an enlargement.

Parallel passages

In this paper, I distinguish two types of parallel passages in SanS and other Brahmanical literature. One of them encompasses references to other texts which may come across as basically loose, nonliteral parallels. The other

⁸ Chapter 5,44 has eighteen *triṣṭubhs* and only six *ślokas*.

comprises literal repetitions of entire stanzas or *pādas* with minor variant readings. If the source of these repetitions is identified, it is possible to construct a relative chronology of the text, or of a certain part of the text. When the source is impossible to trace, common affinities can at least be established between texts.

References and nonliteral parallels

References to other texts are scattered throughout all chapters. Loose references include comparable teachings, philosophical/theological concepts, and technical terms. Among them, there are references to the Upaniṣads which ascertain the Upaniṣads as the source of SanS, as well as concepts and notions that SanS shares with the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, but for which it is impossible to determine which text was the source.

Devas, asuras and brahmacarya

SanS (MBh) 5,42.2 refers to Chāndogya-Upaniṣad (= ChU) 8,7.2–3 (and 8,8.4–5). Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks why the Devas and the Asuras wanted to attain immortality (*amṛtyu*) through *brahmacarya* if there is no death, as Sanatsujāta asserts. Dhṛtarāṣṭra's query obviously refers to ChU, in which Maghavan and Virocana live as *brahmacarins* with Prajāpati in order to discover the Self (*ātman*), which is depicted as free from death (*vimṛtyu* in ChU and *amṛtyu* in SanS).

The notion of *brahmacarya* also appears in BhG 6,14, but it means something else. In BhG, *brahmacarya* is a vow of purity necessary for yogic practice, while in SanS (and ChU), *brahmacarya* refers exclusively to the life of a celibate student of the Veda (see also BĀU 5,2). SanS (MBh) 5,42.5 states that the Asuras were vanquished (*parābhavan*)⁹ because they were distracted. This is another reference to the passage in ChU (8,8.4) in which the Asuras are said to be bound to be defeated.¹⁰ Later, in MBh 5,44.2ff, the concept of *brahmacarya* is further developed, described, and eulogised as the ideal life of a Vedic student. In this case, SanS is conceptually closer to the older ChU and BĀU than to BhG, in which *brahmacarya* signifies a vow of celibacy. The passage containing a reference to *brahmacarya* in BhG 6,14 belongs to the group of Upaniṣadic layers (Ježić 2009: 34).

⁹ *Parābhavan* is the present participle of the verb *parā\bhū*; in ChU, and *parābhaviṣyanti* is the future tense of the same verb.

¹⁰ On the Devas and the Asuras practising *brahmacarya* with Prajāpati, see also MaitU 7,10. However, this is not a reference to MaitU, in which the Asuras are not destroyed. In MaitU, they only receive different teachings than the Devas.

Pūrṇāt ... evāvaśiṣyate

MBh 5,45.10	BĀU(K) 5,1.1	AS(Ś) 10,8.29
pūrṇāt pūrṇāny uddharanti pūrṇāt pūrṇāni cakrire haranti pūrṇāt pūrṇāni pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate 10	pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṃ pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate 1	pūrṇāt pūrṇām úd acati pūrṇām pūrṇéna sicycate utó tát adyá vidyāma yátas tát pariṣicyáte 29
From the full they pull the full, from the full they make the full, from the full they take the full, yet the full is always left full. ¹¹	The world there is full; The world here is full; Fullness from fullness proceeds. After taking fully from the full, It still remains completely full. ¹²	Forth from the full he lifts the full, the full he sprinkles with the full. Now also may we know the source from which the stream is sprinkled round. ¹³

An adaptation of this famous floating verse appears in SanS, where the first half-verse is closer to AS(Ś), while the rest is closer to BĀU.

Tadvaśe... punaḥ patanti / punar vaśam āpadyate

SanS (MBh) 5,42.7 resembles KaU 2,6, but can also be compared to BhG 3,37–39:

MBh 5,42.7	KaU 2,6 (cf. BhG 9,24)
āsyād eṣa niḥsarate narāṇām <u>krodhaḥ pramādo moharūpaś</u> ca mrtyuḥ te mohitās tadvaśe vartamānā itah pretās tatra <u>punaḥ patanti</u> 7	na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālaṃ <u>pramādyantaṃ vittamohena</u> mūḍham ayaṃ loko nāsti para iti mānī <u>punaḥ punar vaśam āpadyate</u> me 6

It is from his (Yama's) mouth that
there issue for men Wrath, Distraction,
and Death as Folly;
The ones that are fooled and under his
sway
Depart from here and fall back again.¹⁴

This transit lies hidden from the careless
fool, who is deluded by the delusion
of wealth
Thinking "This is the world, there is no
other," he falls into my power again
and again.¹⁵

¹¹ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 292.

¹² Trans. Olivelle 1998: 133.

¹³ Trans. Griffith 1896: 39.

¹⁴ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

¹⁵ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 383.

BhG 3,37–39

kāma eṣa krodha eṣa rajoguṇasamudbhavaḥ

...

kāmarūpeṇa

It is desire, it is anger, which springs from the force of *rajas*

...

by ... desire.¹⁶

The parallel passage shared by SanS and BhG is not shared by KaU, and parallels from SanS and KaU do not appear in BhG. This may suggest that KaU and BhG served as a model for SanS, i.e. that SanS took something from each. In BhG, knowledge *jñāna* is covered (*āvṛtta*) by *kāma* and *krodha* (3,37), while *kāma* and *krodha* are *kāmarūpa* and change their form at will. In SanS, *kāma* and *pramāda* simply have the form of *moha* (*moharūpa*). Arguably, this verse in SanS is secondary or, alternately, the verse was composed based on KaU and BhG. This conclusion is substantiated by the compound *kāmarūpa*, which means that *kāma* and *krodha* change their form at will, while the compound in SanS lost its subtle meaning through the replacement of its first part with *moha*. If this is correct, the oldest *triṣṭubh* layer of SanS is later than BhG 3,37–39, which is a part of the first Yoga layer (Ježić 2009: 34).

Importantly, SanS does not display the Sāṃkhya reference which is found in BhG and in which desire and anger arose from the *guṇa* of the *rajas*. In SanS, *krodha* and *pramāda* are issued from the mouth of the God of death, Yama.

Relinquishing desires/evil

SanS (MBh) 5,42.10 may be an echo of ChU 8,13:

MBh 5,42.10

kāmānusārī puruṣaḥ
kāmān anu vinaśyati |
kāmān vyudasya dhunute
yat kiṃ cit puruṣo rajaḥ || 10 ||
The man who runs after his desires
perishes with his desires; if he can lay
aside his desires, he can shake off any
passion. This lusterless darkness is for all
creatures hell; as though possessed they
eagerly rush to it and fall into the pit.¹¹

ChU 8,13.1

aśva iva romāṇi vidhūya pāpaṃ can-
dra iva rāhor mukhāt pramucya dhūtvā
śarīram akṛtaṃ kṛtāt mā brahmalokam
abhisambhavāmīty abhisambhavāmīti
Shaking off evil, like a horse its hair,
and freeing myself, like the moon
from Rahu's jaws, I, the perfected self
(*atman*), cast off the body, the imperfect,
and attain the world of brahman.¹²

¹⁶ Trans. van Buitenen 1981: 85.

¹⁷ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

¹⁸ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 287.

While in ChU 8,13.1, one discards (*vidhūya; dhūtvā*) evil (*pāpa*), in SanS one discards (*dhunute*) wishes (*kāma*).

Childishness (*bālya*)

Similarly, MBh 5,44.16c may refer to BĀU 3,5.

MBh 5,44.16c	BĀU 3,5
etenāsau <u>bālyam</u> atyeti vidvān	<u>bālyam</u> ca pañḍityaṃ ca nirvidyātha muniḥ
thereby transcends childishness and becomes wise ... ¹⁹	When he has stopped living like a child or a pandit, he becomes a sage. ²⁰

Bāla vs. *dhīra*

An interesting parallel is found between SanS (MBh) 5,42.12cd and KaU 4,2, in which *bāla* (a befuddled one, a fool) is contrasted with *dhīra* (wise, balanced).²¹

MBh 5,42.12	KaU 4,2
ete <u>bālān</u> mṛtyave prāpayanti <u>dhīrās</u> tu dhairyēṇa taranti mṛtyum 12	parācaḥ kāmān anuyanti <u>bālās</u> te mṛtyor yanti vitatasya pāśam atha <u>dhīrā</u> amṛtatvaṃ viditvā dhruvam adhrueṣv iha na prārthayante 2
They steer the befuddled ones to their death, But the firm cross death with their fortitude. ²²	Fools pursue outward desires, and enter the trap of death spread wide. But the wise know what constitutes the immortal, and in unstable things here do not seek the stable. ²³

¹⁹ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 291.

²⁰ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 83.

²¹ Cf. KaU 2,6 na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālaṃ pramādyantaṃ vittamohena mūḍham “This transit lies hidden from a careless fool, who is deluded by the delusion of wealth” (trans. Olivelle 1998: 383).

²² Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 286.

²³ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 391.

Papa/karma ... na lipyate

SanS (MBh) 5,43,1 appears to be an adaptation of a well-known floating verse contained in TaittBr 3,12.9.7–8, ĪU 1, ChU 4,14.4, BĀU(K) 4,4.23, BhG 5,10 and KaU 5,11.²⁴ Notably, the BhG reference, which belongs to the Upaniṣadic group of layers, appears to be quite different from SanS. This suggests that BhG may not have been the source in this case.

MBh 5,43,1	pāpāni kurvan pāpena lipyate na sa lipyate kurvánn evéhá kármāṇi
ĪU 1	... ná kárma lipyate náre
ChU 4,14.4	evamvidi pāpaṃ karma na lipyate
BĀU(K) 4,4.23	na lipyate karmaṇā pāpakena
KaU 5,11	sarvabhūtāntarātmā na lipyate lokaduḥkhena
TaittBr 3,12.9.8	ná kármaṇā lipyate pāpakena
BhG 5,10	yaḥ lipyate na sa pāpena

Muñja grass

There is a close parallel between MBh 5,44.4cd and the closing part of KaU (6,17cd).

MBh 5,44.4cd	KaU 6,17cd
ta ātmānaṃ nirharantīha dehān <u>muñjād iṣīkām</u> iva sattvasamsthāḥ 4 ...pull the self out of the body, as a stalk out of <i>muñja</i> grass, for they are firm in sattva. ²⁵	taṃ svāc charīrāt pravṛthen <u>muñjād iveṣīkām</u> dhairyena One should draw him out of the body with determination, like a reed from the grass sheath. ²⁶

Pramāda — “distraction, carelessness”

Pramāda is the central concept in the *triṣṭubh* core of SanS (MBh 5,42). According to Sanatsujāta, *pramāda* is in fact death, while being without *pramāda* (*apramāda*) is immortality. The Asuras were vanquished because of *pramāda*. The same verbal root appears in KaU 2,6 (*pramādyati*), where the distracted one falls under the sway of Yama (the god of Death). TaittU 1,11.1–2 recounts the teacher’s injunctions to a pupil who is told not to neglect (*mā pramadaḥ*)

²⁴ Cf. Horsch 1966: 172–173.

²⁵ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 290.

²⁶ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 403.

his Vedic recitation, truth, law, health, and the rites due to the Gods and his ancestors. TaittU 2,5.1 contains an injunction stating that one should not neglect (*pramādayati*) the fact that Brahman is perception (*viññāna*).

In SanS, the concept of *pramāda* is closely related to the interpretation of the same concept in KaU, because of its association with death. It also bears a resemblance to the concept in TaittU, because of the importance of not neglecting the aforementioned duties. In BhG 11,41, *pramāda* is one of the two reasons why Arjuna did not recognise Kṛṣṇa as the highest Lord. In BhG 14,8–8, 13, 17, and 18,39, *pramāda* is just one of the characteristics of *tamo-guṇa*. With its close connection between *pramāda* and the Sāmkhya notion of the *guṇa* of *tamas*, BhG is further removed from SanS than it is from KaU, which may have been the source of or an inspiration for this teaching.²⁷

***Mahat* — “great one”**

The term *mahat*, i.e. a “great one,” appears in SanS (MBh) 5,43.25.²⁸ *Mahat* comes forth in BĀU 2,4.10; 12 (= 4,5.11 *mahato bhūtasya; mahadbhūta*); 4,4.20 *ātmā mahān*; 4,4.22 *mahānāja ātmā*; and 4,5.24; 25. In KaU 2,22, *mahat* is the highest principle, while in KaU 3,10, *mahān ātmā* is higher than *buddhi* (intellect), but lower than *avyakta* (the unevolved), which is lower than *puruṣa* (person). In KaU 3,15, one is freed from death when one perceives that which lies beyond *mahat*.²⁹ In ŚvU 3,8, *puruṣam mahāntam* is again the highest principle (see 3,12; 19). In SanS 5,43.25, *mahat* is most probably the highest principle, and in this sense, SanS stands closer to BĀU (and ŚvU) than to KaU, where *avyakta*, i.e. “the unevolved,” is superior to *mahat*.

***Avyakta* — “the unevolved”**

Another important Upaniṣadic term in SanS is *avyakta*. In SanS (MBh) 5,44.3, Dhṛtarāṣṭra claims that the eternal knowledge of the unevolved (*avyakta*) is achieved through *brahmacarya* (studying with a Vedic teacher). KaU 3,11 and 6,7–8, feature the triad of *mahat*>*avyakta*>*puruṣa*, each having evolved from the previous one. ŚvU 1,8, dwells on the opposites

²⁷ *Pramāda* appears in MuU 3,2.4 as the reason why the Self cannot be grasped; in MaitU 3,5, like in BhG, it is again one of the many features of the *guṇa* of *tamas*.

²⁸ ekasya vedasyājñānād vedās te bahavo ’bhavan. |
satyasyaikasya rājendra satye kaś cid avasthitah |.
evam vedam anutsādyā prajñāṃ mahati kurvate || 25 ||.

Because of ignorance of the One Veda there are many Vedas of the one truth. Any one of them is based on the truth, Indra of kings. Thus without abolishing the Veda they aim their insight at the Great One. (tr. van Buitenen 1978: 289).

²⁹ In KaU 6,7, *avyakta* is higher than *mahat*.

of *kṣara-akṣara* and *vyakta-avyakta*. However, *dehin*, which is actually the highest Self, is *avyakta* in BhG 2,25, a verse that belongs to the first Sāṃhkyā layer (Ježić 2009: 34). In this sense, SanS is in accordance with BhG, but not with KaU, as far as the meaning of *avyakta* is concerned. In BhG 8,18 and 20–21 (Upaniṣadic layers), *avyakta* is again an attribute, but this time of the highest lord, while in 8,20 *avyakta* is said to be eternal (*sanātana*), just as in SanS.³⁰

To sum up the findings about nonliteral references, SanS draws on the Upaniṣads (ChU and KaU) in (a) and (i), and on KaU and BhG in (c) (the first Yoga layer); examples (b), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h) may be adaptations of floating verses. Regarding doctrinal correspondences, example (k) in SanS is consistent with BhG (the first Sāṃhkyā layer and Upaniṣadic layers) and example (j) in SanS overlaps with BĀU (but not with KaU).

Literal repetitions

The first literal repetition in SanS appears in 5,44.5, which draws upon Mānavadharmā-Śāstra (= Manu) 2,147–148.

5,44.5

śarīram etau kurutaḥ pitā mātā ca bhārata |
 ācāryaśāstā yā jātiḥ sā satyā sājarāmarā
 || 5 ||

Father and mother make one's body, Bharata,
 but the birth that is instructed
 by the teacher is the true birth that
 knows of no aging and dying.³¹

2,147–148

kāmān mātā pitā cainam yad utpādayato
 mithaḥ
 saṃbhūtiṃ tasya tāṃ vidyād yad yonāv
 abhijāyate || 2.147 ||
 ācāryas tv asya yāṃ jātiṃ vidhivad
 vedapāragah |
 utpādayati sāvitryā sā satyā sājarāmarā
 || 2.148 ||

When, through lust for each other, his father and mother engender him and he is conceived in the womb, he should consider that as his, there coming to existence.
 But the birth that a teacher who has fathomed the Veda brings about according to rule by means of the Sāvitrī verse — that is his true birth, that is not subject to old age and death.³²

³⁰ In BhG 13,5, like in KaU and ŚvU, *avyakta* appears with *mahābhūtas*, *ahaṃkāra*, *buddhi*, organs and their respective spheres.

³¹ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 290.

³² Trans. Olivelle 2006: 102.

SanS (MBh) 5,44.7 is a paraphrase of Manu 2,144a:

MBh 5,44.7 =	Manu 2,144
<u>ya āvṛṇoty avitathena karṇā</u>	<u>ya āvṛṇoty avitatham</u>
vṛtaṃ kurvann amṛtaṃ saṃprayacchan	brahmaṇā śravaṇāv ubhau
taṃ manyeta pitaraṃ mātaraṃ ca	sa mātā sa pitā jñeyas
tasmai na druhyet kṛtam asya jānan 7	taṃ na druhyet kadā cana 2,144
One should regard as father and mother	He should consider the man who fills
the teacher who fills the ears with truth,	both his ears faithfully with the Veda as
while practising the truth and bestowing	his father and mother and never show
Immortality; knowing his deeds, one	hostility towards him. ³⁴
should not harm him. ³³	

SanS (MBh) 5,44.17d is almost identical with VS 31,18d. This verse is one of the six stanzas in VS that were added to the famous *Puruṣa-sūkta* from RS 10,90. The entire verse is duplicated in ŚvU 3,8, while the last two *pādas* also appear as ŚvU 6,15. As SanS contains a slight variation in reading, and VS and ŚvU have the same wording, it is not clear whether SanS took it from ŚvU or directly from VS.

MBh 5,44.17	VS 31,18
antavantaḥ kṣatriya te jayanti	védāhām etam pūruṣam mahāntam
lokāñ janāñ karmaṇā nirmiteṇa	ādityāvarṇam tāmasaḥ parastāt
brahmaiva vidvāṃs tena abhyeti sarvaṃ	tām evā viditvāti mṛtyúm eti
<u>nānyaḥ panthā ayanāya vidyate</u> 17	<u>nānyaḥ pānthā vidyaté yanāya</u> 18
Finite are the worlds that people conquer	I know that great/mighty Puruṣa, whose
by the acts they have performed, baron,	colour is like the Sun beyond the dark-
but the sage attains to the whole brah-	ness. Only after knowing him one
man — there is no other way to go. ³⁵	transcends death. There is no other path
	to follow. ³⁶

³³ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 291.

³⁴ Trans. Olivelle 2006: 102.

³⁵ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 291.

³⁶ Trans. Ježić 2016: 172.

ŚvU 3,8

vedāham etaṃ puruṣaṃ mahāntam
 ādityavarṇaṃ tamaśaḥ parastāt |
 tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti
 nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya || 8 ||
 I know that immense Person, having
 the colour of the sun and beyond dark-
 ness. Only when a man knows him does
 he pass beyond death; there is no other
 path for getting there.³⁷

ŚvU 6,15

eko haṃso bhuvanasyāśya madhye
 sa evāgniḥ salile saṃniviṣṭaḥ |
 tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti
 nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya || 15 ||
 He is the one goose in the middle of this
 universe. He himself resides as fire
 within the ocean. Only when a man
 knows him does he pass beyond death;
 there is
 no other path for getting there.³⁸

All other literal repetitions appear in the last chapter of the SanS. SanS (MBh) 5,45.3c thus duplicates RS 1,164.31c (VS 37,17), which belongs to the famous “riddle hymn” and adds the refrain *yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti bhagavantam sanātanam*.

MBh 5,45.3

āpo 'tha adbhyaḥ salilasya madhye
 ubhau devau śisriyāte 'ntarikṣe |
 sa sadhrīcīḥ sa viśūcīr vāsānā
 ubhe bibharti pṛthivīm divaṃ ca |
 yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti
 bhagavantam sanātanam || 3 ||
 Water from water amidst the ocean,
 The two Gods lie upon the sky;
 The centripetal and centrifugal,
 They both bear up the earth and the sky
 the *yogins* behold the sempiternal bless-
 ed Lord.³⁹

RS 1,164.31

āpaśyaṃ gopām ānipadyamānam
 ā ca pārā ca pathibhīś cārantam |
 sā sadhrīcīḥ sā viśūcīr vāsāna
 ā varīvartti bhūvaneṣv antāḥ || 31 ||
 I saw the herdsman who never settles
 down,
 roaming here and afar along his paths.
 Clothing himself in those that converge
 and diverge, he moves back and forth
 among living beings.⁴⁰

³⁷ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 421.

³⁸ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 433.

³⁹ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 292.

⁴⁰ Trans. Jamison & Brereton 2014: 357.

SanS (MBh) 5,45.6 = KaU 6,9 = ŚvU (3,13) 4,20.

MBh 5,45.6	KaU 6,9	ŚvU 4,20
na sādṛśye tiṣṭhati rūpam asya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaś cid enam mañīṣayātho manasā hṛdā ca ya evaṃ vidur amṛtās te bhavanti yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti bhagavantam sanātanam	na samdṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpam asya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaśca- nainam hṛdā mañīṣā manasābhikṣpto ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti	na samdṛśe tiṣṭhati rūpam asya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaśca- nainam hṛdā hṛdisthaṃ manasā ya enam evaṃ vidur amṛtās te bhavanti
Compareless is that form of his, No one beholds him with his eye, But they who with wis- dom, mind and heart Gain knowledge of him have become immortal. ⁴¹	His appearance is beyond the range of sight; no one can see him with his sight; With the heart, with insight, with thought, has he been contemplated — Those who know this become immortal. ⁴²	His appearance is beyond the range of sight; no one can see him with his sight. Those who know him thus with their hearts — him, who abides in their hearts — and with insight become immortal. ⁴³

Pāda d also appears in ŚvU 3,1d, 3,10d, and 3,13d. SanS 5,45.6 is most likely a borrowing from KaU; it is closer to the version in SanS, as *mañīṣā* does not appear in ŚvU, and *ya(h)* appears at the beginning of *pāda* d in SanS and KaU. A *śloka* refrain has been added to this *triṣṭubh* verse, which suggests that the verse was borrowed from another source (most likely KaU).

⁴¹ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 292.

⁴² Trans. Olivelle 1998: 401.

⁴³ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 427.

MBh 5,45.14 (with refrain added) = AS(Ś) 11,4.21

MBh 5,45.14

ekaṃ pādaṃ notkṣipati
salilād dhaṃsa uccaran |
taṃ cet satatam ṛtvijaṃ
na mṛtyur nāmṛtaṃ bhavet |
yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti
bhagavantaṃ sanātanam || 14 ||
The swan as it ascends does not lift one
foot; if it did, there would be neither
death nor immortality.⁴⁴

AS(Ś) 11,4.21

ékaṃ pādaṃ nótkhidati
salilād dhaṃsá uccáran |
yád aṅgá sá tám utkhidén
naívádyá ná śváḥ syāt |
ná rátrī náhaḥ syān ná
vy ūchet kadā caná || 21 ||
Haṃsa, what time he rises up, leaves
in the flood one foot unmoved. If he
withdrew it there would be no more
tomorrow or to-day, Never would there
be night, no more would daylight shine
or morning flush.⁴⁵

MBh 5,45.23 = BhG 2,46

MBh 5,45.23

yathodapāne mahati
sarvataḥ samplutodake |
evaṃ sarveṣu vedeṣu
brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ || 23 ||
As much use as there is in a large well
where there is a flood of water,
so much use is there in all the Vedas
for the brahmin who knows.⁴⁶

BhG 2,46

yāvān artha udapāne
sarvataḥ samplutodake |
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu
brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ || 46 ||
As much use as there is in a well when
water
overflows on all sides,
so much use is there in all Vedas for the
enlightened brahmin.⁴⁷

This verse is indeed better integrated in BhG, as it forms an integral part of the narration, whereas the same *śloka* in SanS is completely unrelated to its surrounding verses. According to Ježić (2009: 34), this *śloka* (in BhG) belongs to the first Yoga layer. Therefore, as BhG 2,46 was the source of the borrowing, the BhG's first Yoga layer must be older than the last chapter of SanS and its final recension.

The last literal parallel appears in MBh 5,45.24 (= KaU 6,17 = ŚvU 3,13) and is closely related to example (e). All these verses may be adaptations of floating verses.

⁴⁴ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 293.

⁴⁵ Trans. Griffith 1896: 67.

⁴⁶ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 294.

⁴⁷ Trans. van Buitenen 1981: 79.

MBh 5,45.24	KaU 6,17	ŚvU 3,13
aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo mahātmā na dṛśyate 'sau hṛdaye niviṣṭaḥ ajaś caro divārātram atan- dritaś ca sa taṃ matvā kavir āste prasannaḥ	aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo 'ntarātmā sadā janānāṃ hṛdaye saṃniviṣṭaḥ taṃ svāc chaṛīrāt pravṛthen muñjād iveṣīkām dhairyeṇa taṃ vidyāc chukram amṛtaṃ taṃ vidyāc chukram amṛtam iti	aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo 'ntarātmā sadā janānāṃ hṛdaye saṃniviṣṭaḥ hṛdā manīṣā manasābhikṣipto ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti
The great-spirited soul with the size of a thumb Cannot be seen where it lies in the heart; Unborn it tirelessly roams day and night, The sage sits serenely knowing it. ⁴⁸	A person the size of a thumb in the body (<i>ātman</i>), always resides within the hearts of men; One should draw him out of the body with determi- nation, like a reed from the grass sheath; One should know him as immortal and bright. One should know him as immortal and bright. ⁴⁹	The Person the size of a thumb abiding within the body (<i>ātman</i>) always resides within the hearts of people. With the heart, with insight, with thought has he been contemplat- ed. Those who know this become immortal. ⁵⁰

It is clear that most of the literal repetitions in SanS are incorporated in its last chapter. The refrain *yoginas taṃ prapaśyanti bhagavantam sanātanam* has been added to most of the repeated verses (except 5,45.23 and 24). This refrain is in the *śloka* meter, and it is attached to both the *triṣṭubhs* and the *ślokas*, including verses taken from other texts. The last chapter differs from all the other chapters in that it contains no reference either to the sage Sanatsujāta or to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, although all the other chapters are structured as dialogues between them. For these reasons, the last chapter can be considered a loose assemblage of various sources combined and added to the text at some later stage. In the Vulgate text, an entire chapter excluded from the CE was added between chapter 44 and chapter 45 (46 in the Vulgate). This chapter, which is clearly a late insertion according to manuscript evidence,⁵¹ consists mostly of *ślokas* from the preceding SanS text and other sources. It is quite possible that a similar process took place in the case of chapter 45 of the CE, although this addition preceded the creation of the version used as the basis of the critically constituted text.

⁴⁸ Trans. van Buitenen 1978: 294.

⁴⁹ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 403. See also note 17 in Olivelle 1998: 611.

⁵⁰ Trans. Olivelle 1998: 423.

⁵¹ The chapter does not exist in the *śāradā* MS Ś,K, Mālāyaḷam and Bengali MSS.

Conclusion

The argument above may corroborate van Buitenen's suggestion that the *triṣṭubhs* in the first chapter form the oldest core of SanS. Indeed, when extrapolated from the surrounding *ślokas*, these *triṣṭubhs* make up a more coherent whole than they do together with the *ślokas*. If this is indeed the case, they were an old Upaniṣad-like text composed in *triṣṭubhs*. The main idea of this text is that death, as mortal men see it, does not exist; the real death is *pramāda*, the negligence of one's true nature. Initially an old, Upaniṣad-like passage composed in *triṣṭubhs*, the text was then augmented with comments and additions in *śloka* verses (MBh 5,42.3; 5,42.10–11; 18–32). The entire composition was subsequently rounded off by having a closing *upājatī* verse attached at the end of the chapter. This last verse clearly depends on the previous *ślokas*.

Additional chapters were added to chapter 5,42 at the next stage of its composition. These chapters contain both *ślokas* and *triṣṭubhs*. The content of the text is only loosely connected to the *triṣṭubh* ur-text, sometimes expounding and elaborating upon ideas such as *brahmacarya*, which is mentioned in the core text. The last chapter may have been added last, as it appears to be a loose compilation of verses from older sources, with a refrain appended to most verses. This last chapter is not in the form of a dialogue between Sanatsujāta and Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Wherever it is possible to establish which text is the source text, all references to the Upaniṣads expectedly suggest that they were the source. However, the same is true about BhG, which most likely predates SanS. However, with the layered structure of BhG, all references are to the older Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and Upaniṣad layers, without any trace of references to the Bhakti layers. The Bhakti concept actually does not surface in SanS. Also, SanS is not a Sāṃkhya text, as it contains no reference to the *tattva* list or Sāṃkhya evolution schemes. Additionally, *pramāda* in SanS is not connected to the Sāṃkhyaic notion of *tamogūṇa* as it appears in BhG. The terms *mahat* and *avyakta* correspond to the older Upaniṣads, and not to the Sāṃkhya system, in which *mahat* and *avyakta* represent categories lower than *puruṣa*.

Given all this, SanS may be older than the final recension of BhG, but younger than the Yoga, Sāṃkhya and Upaniṣad layers. A more cautious conclusion may be that SanS is conceptually, if not temporally, removed from the Bhakti layer, because its author(s) and redactor(s) may presumably have ignored Bhakti concepts on purpose. Therefore, SanS conceptually belongs more to the Upaniṣadic (Vedāntic) line of thought than to Yogic or ascetic thought.

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Abbreviations

AnG	— Anu-Gītā
AS(Ś)	— Atharva-Saṃhitā (Śaunakīya)
BĀU	— Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad
BhG	— Bhagavad-Gītā
CE	— Critical Edition of the Mahābhārata
ChU	— Chāndogya-Upaniṣad
KaU	— Kaṭha-Upaniṣad
MaitU	— Maitrāyaṇīya-Upaniṣad
Manu	— Mānavadharmasāstra
MBh	— Mahābhārata
Moksdh	— Mokṣadharmaparvan
RS	— Ṛk-Saṃhitā
SanS	— Sanatsujātīya
ŚvU	— Śverāśvatara-Upaniṣad
VS	— Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā

Appendix: reconstruction of the *Triṣṭubh* ur-text

vaiśampāyana uvāca

tato rājā dhṛtarāṣṭro manīṣī saṃpūjya vākyaṃ vidureritaṃ tat |

sanatsujātaṃ rahite mahātmā papraccha buddhiṃ paramāṃ bubhūṣan || 1 || (5,42.1)

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca

sanatsujāta yadīdaṃ śṛṇomi mṛtyur hi nāstīti tavopadeśam |

devāsuraḥ hy ācaran brahmacaryam amṛtyave tat kataran nu satyam || 2 || (5,42.2)

*sanatsujāta uvāca

ubhe satye kṣatriyādyapavrṛtte moho mṛtyuḥ saṃmato yaḥ kavīnām |

pramādaṃ vai mṛtyum ahaṃ bravīmi sadāpramādam amṛtatvaṃ bravīmi || *3 || (5,42.4)

pramādād vai asurāḥ parābhavann apramādād brahmabhūtā bhavanti |

na vai mṛtyur vyāghra ivānti jantūn na hy asya rūpam upalabhyate ha || *4 || (5,42.5)

yamaṃ tv eke mṛtyum ato 'nyam āhur ātmāvasannam amṛtaṃ brahmacaryam |

pitṛloke rājyam anuśāsti devaḥ śivaḥ śivānām aśivo 'śivānām || *5 || (5,42.6)

āsyād eṣa niḥsarate narāṇām krodhaḥ pramādo moharūpaś ca mṛtyuḥ |

te mohitās tadvaśe vartamānā itaḥ pretās tatra punaḥ patanti || *6 || (5,42.7)

tatas taṃ devā anu vīplavante ato mṛtyur maraṇākhyām upaiti |

karmodaye karmaphalānurāgās tatrānu yānti na taranti mṛtyum || *7 || (5,42.8)

yo 'bhidyāyann utpatiṣṇūn nihanyād anādareṇāpratibudhyamānaḥ |

sa vai mṛtyur mṛtyur ivātti bhūtvā evaṃ vidvān yo vinihanti kāmān || *8 || (5,42.9)

abhidhyā vai prathamam hanti cainaṃ kāmakrodhau gr̥hya cainaṃ tu paścāt |

ete bālān mṛtyave prāpayanti dhīrās tu dhairyena taranti mṛtyum || *9 || (5,42.12)

amanyamānaḥ kṣatriya kiṃ cid anyan nādhīyate tārṇa ivāsya vyāghraḥ |

krodhāl lobhān mohamayāntarātmā sa vai mṛtyus tvac charīre ya eṣaḥ || *10 || (5,42.13)

evaṃ mṛtyum jāyamānaṃ viditvā jñāne tiṣṭhan na bibhetīha mṛtyoḥ |

vinaśyate viśaye tasya mṛtyur mṛtyor yathā viśayaṃ prāpya martyaḥ || *11 || (5,42.14)

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rites based on astronomical observations as given in the Dharmasūtras

Abstract: Among their many passages describing the details of rituals and sacrifices, the Dharmasūtras contain sections which make the time of the performance of ritual activities dependent on observable phenomena in the sky, such as lunar phases, eclipses or the journey of the Sun along its ecliptics (*rta*). These connections appear in some verses on ancestral offerings, purification rites and penances, rules for Vedic recitation and its suspension or Vedic studies in general. The knowledge of Vedāṅgas, as expressed in Dharmasūtras, is said to have purificatory qualities, which is especially important when eating food in the company of an impure or sinful person (*Gautama Dharmasūtra* 15.28, *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 2:14.2, *Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 3.19). What actually enables a sacrificer to understand the sacrifice itself is the knowledge and comprehension of *jyotiṣa* (*Ṛgvedajyotiṣavedāṅga* 3, *Yajurvedajyotiṣavedāṅga* 36), i.e. the science of heavenly bodies and their movements, sometimes equated with astronomy. This astronomical knowledge (*gaṇita*) has been preserved in two treatises of the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* (V-III BC), specifically in the *Ṛgveda* recension and the *Yajurveda* recension. The aim of this paper is to examine selected passages of astronomical nature given in Dharmasūtras regarding relation to the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* treatises and their prescriptive character.

Keywords: Dharmasūtras, Indian rites, *jyotiṣa*, astronomical observations, *nakṣatra*

Introduction

The *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* is an overall term referring to India's earliest codified Sanskrit text of astronomical nature preserved in two recensions: of the *Ṛgveda* (*Ṛgvedajyotiṣavedāṅga*, *ṚJV*) and of the *Yajurveda* (*Yajurvedajyotiṣavedāṅga*,

YJV), of which *ṚJV* is considered to be earlier.¹ The authorship of these texts is attributed to Lagadha or his pupil Śuci, who might have written down the teachings of his master. *ṚJV* consists of thirty-six stanzas whereas *YJV* of forty-three (or forty-five)² stanzas. They are largely similar as they share twenty-nine stanzas, which may differ in words or meter but convey alike meanings.³ The treatises are composed mostly in the *anuṣṭubh* meter. Due to its language and the stamp of the *sūtra* style, resembling that of Pāṇini, the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* is dated between the 5th and 3rd centuries BC by many scholars (e.g. Pingree, Weber, Muller, Filliozat and Sen), although some researchers (e.g. Dixit, Shastry and Achari) argue that the core content of the work describes the night sky and stellar events which occurred in the 14th or even the 18th century BC.⁴ These short texts represent the *gaṇita* branch of *jyotiṣa*, understood as actual — measurable and computable — astronomy different from divination or the reading of omens. Given this, *ṚJV* and *YJV* used to be essential works for pre-siddhantic astronomical considerations when the knowledge of *jyotiṣa* was limited — the tools were quiet crude, as were the observations hardly went beyond the study of the motions of the Moon and the Sun and their positions in the sky in relation to the fixed stars.

The *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* is a lecture on *yuga*, a five-year lunisolar cycle, and its division into seasons, months and days. It also characterises the sky, stars and asterisms. Based on the calendar, the sky topography and observations of the Sun and the Moon, some stanzas comprise detailed rules that allow specific calculations, such as estimating the length of the day between the solstices or calculating the number of full moons until a specific time of *yuga*

¹ See Pingree 1973: 3.

² See Weber 1862: 2.

³ Below, the parts of stanzas that have the same meaning in both recensions but differ in words are bolded. The differences are presumably caused by scribal errors in rewriting the original text (or transcribing recited verses), e.g. the *designata* of *nakṣatras* Śatabhiṣak (*ṣa*) and Bharāṇī (*ṇyah*) given in *ṚJV* 14 were written down as *ṣaṇ* and *yaḥ* respectively in *YJV* 18. Similarly, there is *māni* in *YJV* 39 and *bhāni* in *ṚJV* 18, while the verse is about asterism (*bha* means ‘star, planet, asterism, lunar asterism or mansion’).

⁴ The dating of the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* has been the subject of many polemics among scholars. European and Indian researchers disagree about the absolute chronology of the work. Sen claims that *ṚJV* recension is not earlier than 700 or 600 BC, while Filliozat places it in the period between 400 BC and 200 AD. Pingree dates the treatise to 500–400 BC (Sen 1971: 78). On the other hand Narahari Achar (2000: 173) dates it back to 1800 BC, while Sarma (1985: 13) to ca. 1350 BC. Another scholar who opts for dating the work earlier is Dixit who claims that *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* was composed ca. 1400 BC and states that ‘some European scholars, on philological grounds, believe it to be *not so old*,’ and also claims that ‘they attempt to bring the times of our ancient works as later as possible.’ He quotes Müller’s (ca. 300 BC) and Weber’s (5th century BC) dating for comparison. Cf. Dixit (1969: 87).

and the distance the Sun covers during one season. It also explains how the day of the equinox or the time of the day when the Sun is at its zenith may be determined.

In this paper, I analyse selected stanzas of the Dharmasūtras which make the ritual dependent on these phenomena in respect of contemporaneous astronomical knowledge and due to their references⁵ to some insights conveyed in the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga*, especially such as stars and asterisms, months, and the journey of the Sun and the Moon in the sky.

Primary astronomical knowledge

There are a few astronomical verses in the Dharmasūtras, and they are mainly limited to references to *nakṣatras*, months or lunar phases, which are briefly characterised in this work, with regard to the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga*.

Ancient Indians' interest in stars and constellations largely centred around those that located along or near the ecliptic (*rta*). These provided the so-called *nakṣatra*⁶ system, a stellar frame of reference against which it was possible to follow planetary motions or to mark the path of the Sun and the Moon across the sky. Both *RJV* and *YJV* enumerate twenty-seven *nakṣatras*, in which the Moon and the Sun reside during their journeys across the sky.

RJV 14:

jau drā ghaḥ khe śve 'hī ro ṣā cin mū ṣa ṇyaḥ sū mā dhā ṇaḥ /
re mṛ **ghrāḥ** svā 'po 'jaḥ kṛ ṣyo ha jye ṣṭhā **itṛkṣā** līṅgaiḥ //

YJV 18:

jau drā ghaḥ khe śve 'hī ro ṣā cin mū ṣa ṇ yaḥ sū mā dhā ṇaḥ /
re mṛ **ghā** svā 'po 'jaḥ kṛ ṣyo ha jye ṣṭhā **itṛkṣā** līṅgaiḥ //

Aśvinī, Ārdrā, Pūrvaphalgunī, Viśākhā, Uttarāṣāḍhā, Uttarabhādrapadā, Rohiṇī, Aśleṣā, Citrā, Mūla, Śatabhiṣak, Bharanī, Punarvasu, Uttaraphalgunī, Anurādhā, Śravaṇa, Revatī, Mṛgaśīras, Maghā, Svāti, Pūrvāṣāḍhā, Pūrvabhādrapadā, Kṛttikā, Puṣya, Hasta, Jyeṣṭhā, Śraviṣṭhā are parts of the ecliptics...⁷

⁵ It is highly probable that the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* of Lagadha was an essential astronomical work upon which the codifiers of the *Dharmasūtras* drew. With the exception of Mahāvīra's *Sūryaprajñapti* and *Candraprajñapti* (5th century BC), it remains the only text composed before the Common Era. See Subbarayappa, Sarma 1985: 312.

⁶ A *nakṣatra* is a single star, asterism or one of the 27 equal parts of the ecliptic (i.e. a space determined by the arc measure of 13°20'). It is further divided into 124 parts (*aṁśa*), which allows for a very accurate determination of the position of both the Sun and the Moon. Each *nakṣatra* is resided by a deity or a different class of beings (see Sen 1971: 574, cf. Subbarayappa, Sarma 1985: 104). In the article, the term *nakṣatra* is not translated, mostly because this concept is not identical either with the Zodiac or with contemporary asterisms and functions as a conventional reference system.

⁷ Unless otherwise stated, all translations of the source texts were made by the author.

As the enumeration does not follow any order and only refers to the *nakṣatras* by their *designata*, only some would have been able to comprehend it, which is understandable in the light of the fact that the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* is one of the auxiliary sciences to Vedas. The *nakṣatras* were mainly associated with the Moon, not only because its journey across them marks sidereal⁸ months, but also because it reaches fullness while residing in some of the asterisms and hence measures synodic⁹ months named by the successive *nakṣatras* in which the full moon takes place. The latter (synodic months) were further divided into 30 lunar days (*tithis*), with the first fifteen of them belonging to the bright fortnight (*śukla pakṣa*), i.e. the time when the Moon waxes, and another fifteen to the dark fortnight (*kṛṣṇa pakṣa*), i.e. the time when the Moon wanes.¹⁰ *Tithis* within each fortnight were named by Sanskrit ordinals.¹¹ According to Sen (1971: 73), *tithi* had hardly any astronomical significance; it was rather used as a calendrical device for establishing an artificial, yet conventional division of the lunation.

Despite their evident connections with the Moon, the *nakṣatras* served also as a reference point for the position of the Sun, which wanders along the ecliptic and across them during its diurnal journey through the sky. The amount of time needed for the Sun to pass one *nakṣatra* is given in both recensions of the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga*.

RJV 18a-c:

(sasaptakaṃ) bhayuk (somaḥ) (sūryo dyūni) trayodaśa /
navabhāni ca pañcāhnaḥ (...) //

YJV 39a-c:

sasaptakaṃ bhayuk somaḥ sūryo dyūni trayodaśa /
(navamāni) ca pañcāhnaḥ (...) //

The Moon [during *yuga*] resides in asterisms for seven more times [than the sixty synodic months], the Sun stays in each asterism for 13 and 5/9 days...

⁸ A sidereal month (*nākṣatra*) is the time of the Moon's one complete revolution around the Earth, measured between two successive conjunctions with a distant star; in other words, it is the time needed for the Moon to travel across all the *nakṣatras*. See Waniakowa 2003: 120, cf. Tilak 1925: 17.

⁹ A synodic month (*candramāsa*) is a lunation period of time (also called a lunar month) which the Moon takes to make one complete revolution around the Earth, measured between two successive new moons. See Waniakowa 2003: 116, cf. Tilak 1925: 17.

¹⁰ See Plunket 1903: 176, cf. Pingree 1981: 9, cf. Subbarayappa, Sarma 1985: xxi.

¹¹ See Sen 1971: 73.

As these stanzas explain, the Sun resides in each *nakṣatra* for about thirteen and a half days.¹² The codifiers of *Āpastamba (ĀDhS)* and *Gautama Dharmasūtra (GDhS)* reference the *nakṣatras* on a few occasions, when specifying conditions for the performance of (some) rituals.¹³ These stanzas are studied in more detail in the further part of this article.

This dual function of the *nakṣatras* as a reference frame and their relation to the Sun and the Moon are also noticeable in the binomial month system. While both the solar and the lunar nomenclatures were indeed in use, the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga* and the Dharmasūtras tend to rely on the latter, that is, lunar naming.¹⁴ In this system, the names of the months are metonymics distinctively derived from the *nakṣatras* in which the Moon reaches its fullness.¹⁵ This is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The lunar month-naming system

Season	spring	summer	rainy season	autumn	cool season	winter
Months	Caitra	Jyaiṣṭha	Śrāvaṇa	Āśvina	Mārgaśiras	Māgha
	Vaiśākha	Āṣāḍha	Bhādrapada	Kārttika	Pauṣa	Phālguna

Although *Tiṣya* is another name for *Pauṣa*, and it appears in *ĀDhS* when conditions essential for the performance of rites are given, it occurs not in the context of the month but of the asterism after which it is named.¹⁶ Clearly, the names of the months do not refer to all the *nakṣatras*, which is due to the difference in the numbers of the lunar synodic months (12) and the *nakṣatras* (27). Given this incompatibility, the full moon of a specific month cannot be assumed to occur under the corresponding *nakṣatra*. Consequently, even though the lunar system is applied, it is more accurate to associate the name of the month with the position of both the Sun and the Moon, as at the time of a full moon they simultaneously reside in the particular *nakṣatra* after which the current month is named. Such a relationship for the Sun between the months and the *nakṣatras* is implied in the ninth stanza of both *ṚJV* and *YJV*.

¹² This refers to *sāvāna* days (i.e. calendar days) determined by two successive sunrises. There are 1830 *sāvāna* days within a five-year *yuga*, which gives 366 *sāvāna* days per year. See Tilak 1925: 19, cf. Weber 1862: 43–44.

¹³ *ĀDhS* 1:9.2, 2:19.20, 2:20.3–4; *GDhS* 16.1.

¹⁴ *ĀDhS* 1:9.1–2, 1:27.1; *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra (BDhS)* 1:12.16; *GDhS* 16.1; *Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra (VDhS)* 13.1, 28.18.

¹⁵ See Sen 1971: 574, cf. Chakrabarti 1998: 45.

¹⁶ *ĀDhS* 2:18.19, 2:20.3–4.

RJV 9d:

(...) **cārthapañcamabhas** tv ṛtuḥ //

YJV 9d:

(...) **syurardhapañcamabhas**tvṛtuḥ //

(...) and season [equals] 4 and a half parts of asterisms.

According to this *pada*, the Sun wanders across four and a half parts of a *nakṣatra* within a season (*ṛtu*); hence, it takes the Sun one month to travel across two and a quarter of the consecutive *nakṣatras*.

The path along which the Sun moves in its annual cycle, i.e. the ecliptic (*ṛta*), is divided into two parts, depending on the direction of the movement, which are: the northward (*uttarāyana*) and the southward (*dakṣiṇāyana*) path. This journey is closely linked to the beginning and the end of the *yuga*.

RJV 5–6, *YJV* 6–7:

svar ākramete somārkau yadā sākaṃ savāsavau /
syāt tadādi yugaṃ māghastapaḥ śuklo ‘yanaṃ hy udak //
prapadyete śraviṣṭhādaḥ sūryācandramasāvudak /
sārpārdhe dakṣiṇārkastu māghasrāvaṇayoḥ sadā //

When the Sun and the Moon come towards [the same place] in the sky together with Śraviṣṭhā, *yuga*, [the synodic month of] Māgha, [the solar month] Tapas and the northward course of the Sun begin. |5| Both the Sun and the Moon move northward [when situated] at the beginning of Śraviṣṭhā [and] southward [when situated] in the middle of Āśleṣā. [In the case of the] Sun, [this happens] always in Māgha and Śrāvaṇa, [respectively]. |6|

These stanzas record observable phenomena that accompany the commencement of a calendar year as determined by the course of the Sun. According to *RJV* 5 (*YJV* 6), the month of Māgha and the *uttarāyana*, the northern path of the Sun, begin at this time. Moreover, both the Sun and the Moon reside at the very beginning of the Śraviṣṭhā *nakṣatra*. The *dakṣiṇāyana*, the southern path, on the other hand, begins in the middle of the Āśleṣā *nakṣatra*. It lasts for six months, starting in Śrāvaṇa and ending in Māgha, that is, correspondingly, from the turn of July and August (rainy season) to the turn of January and February (wintertime).

Rites dependent on the calendar

Although the Dharmasūtras contain multiple descriptions of rituals, a few of them refer to the observations of the sky and make performance of the ritual dependent on heavenly phenomena. Such rites depend largely on the consideration of the Moon in the sky. Among them are *upanayana* and *samāvar-tana*, ancestral offering, rites for prosperity and purification, penances and the *kūṣmāṇḍa* rite.

The course of study

Some passages in the Dharmasūtras determine at what age members of each *varṇa* should be initiated.¹⁷ However, they do not directly mention the exact time of this ritual. Instead, a few *sūtras* determine the time of the year recommended for commencing the study of Vedas, as well as for completing education. Since *upanayana* initiates the *brahmacarya āśrama*, it may be presumed that the date settled as the commencement of study coincides with the time of initiation.

The first chapters of *ĀDhS* and *BDhS* feature stanzas dealing with the course of study.

ĀDhS 1:9.1–2:

śrāvanyām paurṇamāsyām adhyāyam upakṛtya (...) |1|
taiśyām paurṇamāsyām rohiṇyām vā viramet |2|

Having undertaken reading [=studying] on the day of the full moon in Śrāvāṇa (...). |1|

He should finish [it] on the day of the full moon in Taiṣa or under Rohiṇī. |2|

According to *ĀDhS*, Śrāvāṇa is the month in which one should begin study, whereas in Taiṣa month one should complete one's education. The end of the studies may also fall on the day of the full moon under the Rohiṇī *nakṣatra*. On its part, *BDhS* gives an alternative to the months mentioned by *ĀDhS* by advising one to embark on one's studies in Āṣāḍha and conclude them in Māgha.

BDhS 1:12.16:

śrāvanyām paurṇamāsyām āśāḍhyām
vopākṛtya taiśyām māghyām utsrjeyuḥ

Having undertaken [the annual course of study] on the day of the full moon in Śrāvāṇa or in Āṣāḍha, they should suspend [it] on the the day of full moon in Taiṣa or in Māgha.

As Prasad (1997: 118) explains in his study on *upanayana*, 'the *brāhmaṇas* could perform the ceremony in spring, the *kṣatriya* in summer, the *vaiśya* in autumn and a *rathakāra* in the rainy season.'¹⁸ Comparing recommendations

¹⁷ *ĀDhS* 1:1.19–27; *GDhS* 1.5–7, 1.11–14; *GDhS* 3.7–12; *VDhS* 11.49–51, 11.71–73.

¹⁸ Cf. *ĀDhS* 1:1.19: vasante brāhmaṇam upanayīta grīṣme rājanyaṁ śarādī vaiśyaṁ ('*brāhmaṇa* should be initiated in the spring, *kṣatriya* in the summer and *vaiśya* in the autumn'); *BDhS* 1:3.10: vasanto grīṣmaḥ śarādityrtavo varṇānupūrvyeṇa ('spring, summer and autumn are the seasons [for initiation] according to the order of *varṇas*').

of the aforementioned stanzas from *ĀDhS* and *BDhS* with Prasad's explanation, it may be presumed that these verses refer to the *upanayana* of the *kṣatriya* or the *rathakāra*,¹⁹ as Śrāvaṇa, a month in the rainy season, corresponds to the turn of July and August and is suitable for the *rathakāra*'s initiation, whereas Āṣāḍha falls at the turn of June and July in summer and is appropriate for the *kṣatriya*'s initiation. For its part, *samāvartana* should take place either in the month of Taiṣa (in the cold season), corresponding to the turn of December and January or, as *BDhS* insists, in the month of Māgha, (in winter), at the turn of January and February.

Like *ĀDhS* and *BDhS*, two other Dharmasūtras, *GDhS* and *VDhS*, also refer to the month of Śrāvaṇa as the one in which the education of a *dvija* should begin.

GDhS 16.1–2:

śravaṇādi vārṣikam proṣṭhapadīm vopakṛtyādhīyīta cchandāmsi |1|
ardhapañcamānmāsānpañca dakṣiṇāyanam vā |2|

Having undertaken [the] annual [course of study] at the beginning of Śrāvaṇa or on the day of the full moon of Bhādrapada he should study Vedic hymns. |1| [Studies should last] for 4.5 or 5 months or [when the Sun is on its] southern course. |2|

VDhS 13.1,5–6:

athātaḥ svādhyāyopākarma śrāvanyām paurṇamāsyām prauṣṭhapadyām vā |1|
(...)
ardhapañcamānmāsānardhaṣaṣṭhānvā |5| ata ūrdhvaṁ śuklapakṣeṣvadhīyīta |6|

Next, the commencement of reading [= studies] on the day of the full moon in Śrāvaṇa or in Bhādrapada (...) |1| [The study should last] for 4.5 or 5.5 months. |5| Hence forward he should study during the bright fortnights. |6|

In addition to Śrāvaṇa (and Āṣāḍha), the two texts also mention Bhādrapada (corresponding to the turn of August and September), the second month of the rainy season, as appropriate for the commencement of one's studies. What is more, they establish a connection between the annual study period and the Sun's journey through the sky (along the *dakṣiṇāyana*, its southern path) or lunar phases (i.e. the waxing of the moon).

¹⁹ The *rathakāras* belong to *śūdras* and unlike other groups within this *varṇa*, they were permitted to study some useful Vedic *mantras*. See Prasad 1997: 8.

Ancestral offering

Ancestral offering is another rite which is bound up with the observation of celestial phenomena. In the second chapter of *ĀDhS*, it is strongly advised that the ritual should be performed monthly, in the latter half of the month, when the Moon wanes.

ĀDhS 2:16.4–7:

māsi māsi karyam |4| aparapakṣasyāparāhṇaḥ śreyān |5| tathāparapakṣasya jaghanyānyahāni |6| sarveṣvāparapakṣasyāhassu kriyamāṇe pitṛṇprīṇāti. (...) |7|

It is to be done every month. |4| Afternoon of the latter half of the month is preferable. |5| Also the last days of the latter half of the month. |6| It pleases the ancestors if it is offered on any day of the latter half of the month. (...) |7|

Seemingly, the composer of this *sūtra* is not all too conservative in his recommendations, as he allows the offering to be performed in the evening, on any day of the *kṛṣṇa pakṣa*, the dark half of the month. However, he further insists that ancestral offering should be performed under Maghā *nakṣatras* (*ĀDhS* 2:19.20: *maghāsu*...). This drastically reduces the number of days advisable for the offering, as the Moon resides in each *nakṣatra* for a little longer than one day.²⁰ This raises the question whether it was preferred to perform this rite under the Moon's specific position rather than its phase. Unfortunately, the Dharmasūtras neither answer this question nor offer any further discussion on this matter.

One *sūtra* in *VDhS* agrees to some extent with *ĀDhS*, even though it slightly limits the number of days allowed for the performance of ancestral offering given by *ĀDhS* 2:16.4–7.

VDhS 11.16:

aparakṣa ūrdhvaṁ caturthyāḥ pitṛbhyo dadyāt

He should offer [an oblation] to the ancestors from the fourth lunar day of the latter half of the month on.

According to stanza 11 from chapter 16, ancestral offering can be performed starting on the fourth day of the *kṛṣṇa pakṣa*, which leaves the sacrificer merely ten days in a month appropriate for this ritual.

Still, if *ĀDhS* 2:19.20 is more binding than *ĀDhS* 2:16.4–7, *VDhS* 11.16 affords more opportunity for the offering. A similar passage is found in *GDhS*.

²⁰ See Sen 1971: 73.

GDhS 15.2–4:

amāvāsyāyām pitṛbhyo dadyāt |2| pañcamīprabhṛti
vāparapakṣasya |3| yathāśraddhaṁ sarvasminvā |4|

On the day of the new moon he should offer [śraddha] to the ancestors. |2| Or beginning with the fifth lunar day of the latter half of the month. |3| Or on any [day of the latter half] according to [one’s] faith. |4|

VDhS limits the number of offering days to the period starting with the fifth of the dark fortnight, which is one fewer than given by Vasiṣṭha. On the other hand, Gautama is the only codifier who allows offering *śrāddha* to ancestors on the day of the new moon, which actually begins the *śukla pakṣa*, when the Moon waxes. This gives nine days of the *kṛṣṇa pakṣa* and one of the *śukla pakṣa* for the offering, i.e. ten days in total.

Purificatory rites

In *BDhS* and *VDhS*, there are passages on purificatory rites that should be performed as part of proper conduct and in the case of committing sinful actions. Two stanzas from *BDhS* describe the consecutive steps that should be taken to purify oneself.

BDhS 3:1.25:

parvaṇi parvaṇi keśaśmaśrulomanakhavāpanaṁ śaucavidhiśca

On each day of the moon’s change, the hair on the head, the beard and the body [are to be] shaven, the nails [are to be] clipped, it is a rule of purification.

According to the first stanza in the third chapter of *BDhS*, one should shave one’s body and clip one’s nails on each *parvan*,²¹ which yields a total of six days a month when a person should take care of their appearance. In this case, the purificatory meaning of these activities is both literal (physical) and spiritual, implying that internal (spiritual) purity is impossible without external (physical) cleanliness. Another *BDhS* passage on purification conveys slightly different instructions and states that:

BDhS 4:5.26:

amāvāsyām nirāhāraḥ paurnamāsyām tilāśanaḥ |
śuklakṛṣṇakṛtātpānucyate’bdasya parvabhiḥ ||

²¹ A *parvan* is any day of the moon’s change — new moon, full moon and the 8th and 14th day of each *pakṣa*, i.e. fortnight. It may also denote a unit of time, which is fortnight. See Kak 2000: 526, cf. Subbarayappa, Sarma 1985: 327.

[When a man] fasts on new-moon days and eats [only] sesame seeds on full-moon days, with the days of the moon's change within the year, he is absolved from sins committed during the bright and dark fortnights.

After committing a sin on any day during the bright or dark fortnight, one may wash one's sins off by fasting on new-moon days and eating sesame seeds on full-moon days. This stanza does not mention any body preparations; instead, it is a specific foodstuff — sesame — that is said to have the power to cleanse the body and thus the spirit. Again, spiritual purification is dependent upon and affected by activities that involve body care. This is advised by Baudhāyana.

For its part, *VDhS* advances instructions on the performance of a purification ritual which enables the sacrificer to purge himself of all the sins committed in life.

VDhS 28.18–19:

vaiśākhyāṁ paurṇamāsyāṁ tu brāhmaṇānsapta pañca vā |
 tilāṅkṣaudreṇa saṁyuktāṅkṛṣṇānvā yadi vetarān ||18||
 prīyatāṁ dharmarājeti yadvā manasi vartate |
 yāvajjīvakṛtaṁ pāpaṁ tatkṣaṇādeva naśyati ||19||

On the full moon of Vaiśākha, [if someone gives] to seven or five Brahmans white or black sesame seeds mixed with honey, [18] saying 'May Yama be pleased' or with any thought in his mind, every sin committed in his life vanishes this very moment. [19]²²

This rite involves observation of the Moon and the Sun as well, because it can be performed only in the full moon of Vaiśākha, which corresponds to the turn of April and May. To succeed and be purified, the sacrificer should offer Brahmans a mixture of sesame seeds and honey while chanting, or simply, having a thought in one's mind; however, it is not specified what this thought should be about. Again, an important, almost magical, role is attributed to sesame seeds.²³

Ritual for prosperity

Those who desire prosperity should also observe the sky and keep a close eye on the Sun and its occurrence in Tīṣya. There are only two stanzas in the Dharmasūtras (specifically, in *ADhS*) that set down the rules for the rite of affluence,

²² Cf. Bühler 1882: 135.

²³ For the detailed role of sesame and its importance in Indian customs and rituals, see: Simoons 1998: 174–180.

and both of them mention *Tiṣya* as the right lunar mansion for this practice. Hence, it can be concluded that *Tiṣya* is a very — perhaps the most — auspicious *nakṣatra* of all.²⁴

ĀDhS 2:18.19–2:19.1:

tiṣyeṇa puṣṭikāmaḥ |19| gaurasarsapāṇām cūrṇāni kārayitvā taiḥ pāṇipādaṁ prakṣālya mukhaṁ kaṇṇau prāśya ca yadvāto nātivāti tadāsano ‘jinaṁ bastasya prathamāḥ kalpo vāgyato dakṣiṇāmukho bhuñjīta |1|

Desirous of prosperity [should do the following] with [the Moon in] *Tiṣya*: having made powder flour of white mustard, cleansing with that his hands, feet, face and ears, that is to be eaten. If there is no wind, then sitting on a seat of a goat’s skin — [it is first] practice, he should eat [it] in silence with his face towards the south.

When the time is right to perform this ritual, which is under *Tiṣya*, one should take the following steps: prepare white mustard flour, clean one’s body with that and eat it. On a windless day, such flour is to be eaten while sitting wordlessly on a goat’s skin and facing the south. As a result, a person may be blessed with well-being. The ritual can be performed on a monthly basis throughout the year.

A somewhat more detailed description of the ritual of well-being is provided in a further passage in *ĀDhS*. Another difference between these two excerpts is that *ĀDhS* 2:20.3–9 shortens the time slot to only a half of the year.

ĀDhS 2:20.3–9:

udagayana āpūryamāṇapakṣasyaikaikarātramavarārdhyamupoṣya tiṣyeṇa puṣṭikāmaḥ sthālīpākāṁ śrapayitvā mahārājamiṣṭvā tena sarpiṣmatā brāhmaṇaṁ bhojayitvā puṣṭyarthena siddhiṁ vācayīta |3| evamaharaharā parasmāt tiṣyāt |4|
dvau dviṭīye |5| trimṣṭṛīye |6| evaṁ saṁvatsaramabhyccayena |7| mahāntaṁ poṣaṁ puṣyati |8| ādita evopavasāḥ |9|

[When the Sun moves along] the northward path, one desirous of prosperity should, with *Tiṣya*, fast at least one night of the increasing fortnight, having boiled an oblation of milk and barley and having made with this an offering to a great king, having fed a Brahman with this together with clarified butter, he should declare purity for the sake of prosperity. |3| Every day [he should repeat it] until the next *Tiṣya*. |4| On the second [*Tiṣya* he should feed] two [Brahmans]. |5| On the third, three. |6| And so on, throughout the year increasing

²⁴ On the grounds of astrological considerations *Tiṣya* is believed to be the most propitious *nakṣatra*. It neutralises almost all inauspicious outcomes and, due to its benign nature, is capable of overcoming negative powers. See Harness 2000: 116.

[number by one]. |7| He will receive a great prosperity. |8| The fast takes place only at the beginning. |9|

According to the passage, prosperity can be achieved by performing a fairly detailed ritual when the Sun moves northward, along the *uttarāyana*, which apportions six months in a year for this rite, starting from the turn of January and February until the turn of July and August. This ritual requires fasting for at least one day of the bright fortnight when the Moon resides in the *Tiṣya nakṣatra*, as well as a declaration of prosperity. The latter is preceded by feeding the brahmins with an offering of clarified butter, barley and milk each day until the next *Tiṣya nakṣatra*, only to feed one more brahmin every successive *Tiṣya*. Of the two depictions, the latter is much more complex and demanding, not only because of the greater number of minor rituals, but also because it settles a narrower timeframe.

Penitential rites

Penitential rites are another variety of ritual related to the study of the heavenly phenomena. *ĀDhS* offers procedure which should be applied if one has violated the rules of study.

ĀDhS 1:26.10, 14:

mithyādhītaprāyaścittam |1| (...) parvaṇi vā tilabhakṣa upoṣya vā śvobhūta
udakamupaspr̥śya sāvitṛīm prāṇāyāmaśaḥ sahasrakṛtvā āvartayedaprāṇāyāmaśo
vā |14|

Expiation for studying contrarily [to rules]. |1| (...) On the day of the moon's change [he should] eat sesame or fast, on the following day, having bathed, he should recite *Sāvitṛī* a thousand times, controlling his breath or without controlling his breath. |14|

Those guilty of such an offence are advised to eat sesame seeds or fast on one of the days of the Moon's change (*parvan*) and, on the following day, to bathe and recite *Sāvitṛī* one thousand times, practising *prāṇāyama*. Another passage limits the time suitable for the rite performance to the day of the full moon in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*.

ĀDhS 1:27.1–2:

śrāvāṇyāṁ paurṇamāsyāṁ tilabhakṣa vā śvobhūte mahānadamudakamupaspr̥śya
sāvitṛyā samitsahasramādadhyañjapedvā |1| iṣṭiyajñakratūnvā pavitrārthānāharet |2|

On the day of the full moon in *Śrāvaṇa* [he should] eat sesame or on the following day, having bathed in a great river, he should give [as a sacrifice]

a thousand kindling sticks while invoking Sāvitrī in low voice. |1| Or he should offer purifying *iṣṭi* or *yajñakratu*. |2|

According to both excerpts, the performance of this ritual involves fasting or eating sesame, bathing, invoking Sāvitrī and, additionally, offering *iṣṭi* or *yajñakratu* (*ĀDhS* 1:27.1–2). A special case of penitential rites is lunar penance, which is described in detail by all the Dharmasūtras except *Āpastamba*.²⁵ Lunar penance has a strong purificatory effect and, through performing it, the sinner may wash away all the sins he has committed in life.²⁶

Vasiṣṭha includes two passages depicting lunar penance, of which the following is probably a simplified version of the ritual.

VDhS 27.21:
ekaikaṁ vardhayetpiṇḍaṁ śukle kṛṣṇo ca hrāsayet |
amāvāsyāṁ na bhūñjīta evaṁ cāndrāyaṇo vidhiḥ ||
evaṁ cāndrāyaṇo vidhiriti ||

One should increase the amount of *piṇḍa* by one within the bright fortnight and reduce it in the dark fortnight. He shouldn't eat on the day of new the moon. In such a manner, the lunar rite [is performed].

In accordance with the Moon's waxing and waning, the penitent shall eat respectively, more and more and then less and less *piṇḍas* as the month passes, except the day of the new moon when he should restrain from eating altogether. A similar depiction is given in *VDhS* 23.44–46 and *BDhS* 4:5.17.²⁷ *GDhS* 27.1–18 and *BDhS* 3:8.1–30 provide very detailed descriptions of lunar

²⁵ *GDhS* 27.1–18; *BDhS* 3:8.1–30, 4:5.17–21; *VDhS* 23.44–46, 27.21.

²⁶ Cf. *GDhS* 19.20: kṛcchrātikṛcchrāu cāndrāyaṇamiti sarvaprāyaścittaṁ sarvaprāyaścittam ('arduous penance, very arduous penance and lunar penance are expiations [for all the sins]'), *BDhS* 3:10.18: kṛcchrātikṛcchrāu cāndrāyaṇamiti sarvaprāyaścittiḥ | sarvaprāyaścittiḥ ('arduous penance, very arduous penance and lunar penance are expiations [for all the sins]'), *VDhS* 22.16: kṛcchrātikṛcchrāu cāndrāyaṇamiti sarvaprāyaścittiḥ sarvaprāyaścittiriti ('arduous penance, very arduous penance and lunar penance are expiations [for all the sins]'), *VDhS* 27.20: duritānām duriṣṭānām pāpānām mahatām tathā | kṛcchrām cāndrāyaṇam caiva sarvapāpaprāṇāśanam ('arduous penance and lunar penance remove all the sins [committed hitherto, even if they result from] wicked actions, wrong sacrifices or grave crimes').

²⁷ In addition, *VDhS* 23.45–46 specifies the number of mouthfuls that the penitent should begin with each fortnight. On the first day of the *śukla pakṣa*, it is one mouthful, and it is fourteen on the first day of the *kṛṣṇa pakṣa*. It also recommends reciting *sāmans* (metrical verses for chanting) or *vyāhrtis* (utterances with which a *brāhman* begins his daily prayers) during this penance. *BDhS* 4:5.17 do not mention fasting on full-moon days as part of the ritual and do not specify the type of the food to be eaten. However, a further passage in the fourth chapter ascribes slightly different activities to lunar penance. The new

penance, which consists of an array of minor rituals, such as fasting on the day before the full moon (*GDhS* 27.4, *BDhS* 3:8.2), shaving one's hair and clipping one's nails (*GDhS* 27.3, *BDhS* 3: 8.1–30), offering an oblation (*GDhS* 27.5–7, 11 and *BDhS* 3:8.7–12, 24–25) and worshipping the Sun and the Moon (*BDhS* 3:8.14–18).

The *Kūṣmāṇḍa* rite

The last of the rituals bound up with observing the sky is the *kūṣmāṇḍa* rite explained in detail in *BDhS* 3:7.4–18. This ritual is performed when a man ejaculates in an inappropriate way, which means outside of a sexual intercourse with a woman or in his sleep:

BDhS 3:7.4–5:

ayonau retaḥ siktvānyatra svapnādarepā vā pavitrakāmaḥ |4|
amāvāsyāyām paurṇamāsyām vā keśāśmaśrulomanakhāni (...) |5|

[He who] ejaculated in any other place than the vagina except for being asleep or he who, though spotless, desires to purify himself [after], having his hair on the head, the beard and the body shaven, and his nails clipped on the day of the new moon or the full moon...

The performance of this ritual starts on the day of the new moon or the full moon with a simple purificatory rite, in which a man should shave his hair and clip his nails in order to purify himself. A chastity vow should be observed for a specified amount of time, which might be one month, a year, three days, twelve days or twenty-four days (*BDhS* 3:7.6). Very strict rules apply to food, sex, sitting above the floor and telling falsehoods (*BDhS* 3:7.7–9). The penitent is only allowed to ingest milk, eating meat is forbidden, and in case of consuming barley, one has to perform arduous penance for twelve days. Moreover, an oblation should be given to the fire, while reciting *kūṣmāṇḍa* verses (*BDhS* 3:7.10–16). Judging by the complexity of this ritual, one guilty of this trespass was considered gravely culpable. Indeed, this conclusion is in line with the comparison of such a man to a thief or a murderer by Baudhāyana (*BDhS* 3: 7.2).

moon is the right time for fasting while the full moon is a feasting time (it is allowed to eat only sesame seeds). Cf. *BDhS* 4:5.26.

Conclusion

The Dharmasūtras comprise some passages describing rituals which depend on observations of phenomena previously addressed in treatises of astronomical nature, i.e. the *Jyotiṣavedāṅga*. The relationship with lunar phases, the position of the Sun or the arrangement of stars in the sky is emphasised for some rites. Most of the passages cited in this paper underline the relationship between the ritual and the study of the Moon. This is true about the ancestral offering, purificatory rites, the *kūṣmāṇḍa* rite and lunar penance, as Table 2 concisely shows.

Table 2. Rites dependent on the observation of the Moon

Rite	ancestral offering	purificatory rites	lunar penance	<i>kūṣmāṇḍa</i> rite
fortnight	<i>kṛṣṇa pakṣa</i> , <i>śukla pakṣa</i>	<i>kṛṣṇa pakṣa</i> , <i>śukla pakṣa</i>	<i>kṛṣṇa pakṣa</i> , <i>śukla pakṣa</i>	
nakṣatra	Maghā			
lunar phase	<i>amāvāsyā</i>	<i>parvan</i> , <i>amāvāsyā</i> , <i>paurṇamāsī</i>	<i>amāvāsyā</i> , <i>paurṇamāsī</i>	<i>amāvāsyā</i> , <i>paurṇamāsī</i>
<i>Dharmasūtra</i>	<i>ĀDhS</i> , <i>BDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i> , <i>GDhS</i>	<i>BDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i>	<i>BDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i>	<i>BDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i>

Most of those designate the bright half of the month as suitable for performing rituals (ancestral offering, penitential rites, lunar penance), but they are all dependent on the lunar phases. The *kūṣmāṇḍa* should be performed on any *parvan*, while ancestral offering, purificatory rites and lunar penance exclusively on the full moon and/or the new moon. Furthermore, ancestors may be given offerings under Maghās.

A handful of rituals are dependent on the observation of both the Sun and the Moon (see Table. 3). Among them are rites performed in order to achieve affluence, which combine the study of the Moon's position in the sky (as they should be performed specifically under *Tiṣya nakṣatra*) and the Sun's path — *uttarāyaṇa*. Similarly, a sinner who wants to atone for his trespasses should observe both celestial bodies, as his guilt can be expiated on the days that the moon changes its phase (lunar dependency) or during the *Śrāvaṇa* month (solar dependency).

Table 3. The rites dependent on the observation of the Moon and the Sun

rite	penitential rites	rites for prosperity
month	Śrāvaṇa	
ayana		uttarāyana
nakṣatra		Tiṣya
lunar phase	amāvāsyā, parvan	
Dharmasūtra	ĀDhS	ĀDhS

Two rites crucial for *brahmacārin* — *upanayana* and *samāvartana*, determining the course of annual studies of every *dvija* — were celebrated to mark the commencement and the conclusion of the study. The former is described by all the codifiers while the latter only by Āpastamba and Baudhāyana. They are closely linked to the journey of the Sun along its ecliptic, that is, to the months depending on it. The months recommended for *upanayana* are Āṣāḍha (summer), Śrāvaṇa and Bhādrapada (both in the rainy season). Taiṣa (the cool season) and Māgha (winter) are said to be proper for *samāvartana*. According to *GDhS* 16.1–2, the studies should last for 4.5 or 5 months or when the Sun is moving along the *dakṣiṇāyana*, which yields a total of six months for education. Table 4 lists the months advised for these rituals by particular codifiers. The corresponding seasons of the Indian calendar are given for clarity.

Table 4. The rites dependent on the observation of the Sun

rite	<i>Upanayana</i>			<i>samāvartana</i>	
	Āṣāḍha	Śrāvaṇa	Bhādrapada	Taiṣa	Māgha
month	June–July	July–August	August–September	December–January	January–February
season	summer	rainy season	rainy season	cool season	winter
Dharmasūtra	<i>BDhS</i>	<i>ĀDhS</i> , <i>BDhS</i> , <i>GDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i>	<i>GDhS</i> , <i>VDhS</i>	<i>ĀDhS</i> , <i>BDhS</i>	<i>BDhS</i>

As suggested in IIIa, Āṣāḍha is associated with the *upanayana* of the *kṣatriya* while Śrāvaṇa and Bhādrapada with that of the *rathakāra*. Given the duration of the studies (six months), the *kṣatriya* presumably concluded his

education in Taiṣa and the *rathakāra* in Māgha. As the Dharmasūtras do not mention directly the exact time of these rites, I propose equating the time advised in *sūtras* for *upanayana* and *samāvartana* with the commencement and completion of the course of the *brahmacārin*'s education. Within this framework, *upanayana* was performed in summer or during the rainy season and *samāvartana* in winter or during the cool season, and the performance of both rites depended upon the Sun's journey through the sky.

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A PATH TO BE FOLLOWED AND ABANDONED: A STUDY OF YAŚODHARĀ IN THE *MAHĀVASTU*

Abstract: The primary aim of the paper is to present Yaśodharā as depicted in the *Mahāvastu*, a voluminous work belonging to the Lokottoravādins. Even though the main goal of the authors or compilers of the *Mahāvastu* was to present the biography of Gautama Buddha, the number of references to Yaśodharā's last and previous existences suggests that they were also considerably interested in her character and her role in the overall biography of her husband. In the *Mahāvastu*, she is presented as a vivid character encompassing diverse conceptions of (an ideal) woman and womanhood. The multidimensionality of Yaśodharā's character is interpretable as stemming from her contradictory roles in the biography of Gautama Buddha.

Keywords: Yaśodharā, *Mahāvastu*, Buddhist literature, biography

Introduction

In his paper titled 'A Family Quest: The Buddha, Yaśodharā, and Rāhula in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*,' John Strong points out the similarities of motifs in the story of the Bodhisattva's Great Departure and passages in the biographies of Yaśodharā and Rāhula. He argues that the story provides a 'parallelism and balance between at least two Buddhist paths, both of which lead to enlightenment: a *śramanic* one involving ordination and a stay-at-home one for householders' (Strong 1997: 122–123). Sarah Shaw, who depicts Yaśodharā's previous existences as found in the Pāli collection of jātakas, claims that she 'embodies, rather than describes, the Buddhist path' (Shaw 2018: 275), and Jonathan Walters, in his paper on wives of the saints in the Pāli *Apadāna*, observes that 'her *apadāna* asserts that through her

own merit-making, service, and final/present life religious practice she became a fully liberated *arahant* in her own right' (Walters 2014: 182–183). Inspired mostly by these researches, this paper offers a short study of Yaśodharā as depicted in the *Mahāvastu* (Mv).¹ The first section recounts the details of Yaśodharā's life in her last existence, and the second section gives an overview of the *Mahāvastu* stories of the past in which she plays a part. The third section outlines the portrayal of Yaśodharā as a character whose various personality traits and personal actions, both in her last and in her previous existences, not only fostered or justified, as some authors have already shown, the interrelatedness of and parallelisms between her and Bodhisattva's paths but also made her epitomise a major obstacle on the path of those seeking the Buddhist kind of liberation.

Details of Yaśodharā's last existence as recounted in the *Mahāvastu*

Contrary to the Pāli sources, in which Yaśodharā, called Bhaddakaccanā, is the daughter of Suppabuddha and Amitā, and sister of Devadatta,² the *Mahāvastu* says that she is the daughter of a Śākyan named Mahānāma,³ while Devadatta, listed as the son of Śuklodana,⁴ is not her brother. She is said to have been born on the same day as Gautama, together with four hundred and ninety-nine other Śākyan girls.⁵ Her first meeting with Gautama took place shortly after he had been found meditating under a tree. Since the shadow of the tree did not move, Śuddhodana, afraid that seer Asita's prophecy concerning Gautama would come true, ordered all young women of Kapilavastu to come to the royal park to be chosen for Gautama's harem. Among the girls to whom Gautama was to distribute jewels was Yaśodharā, who caressed him.⁶ Since she came last, Gautama gave her the necklace he was wearing, but she

¹ The work belongs to the Lokottaravāda subsect of the Mahāsaṅghika and was probably composed between the 1st and 5th/6th century (Tournier 2017: 609). Eventhough it is said in the work's colphone that it is part of the Vinayaṭṭakā of the Lokottaravādins, the *Mahāvastu* is basically a life story of Gautama Buddha and does not focus on precepts or rules regarding the Buddhist *saṅgha*. Similarly to the Pāli *Nidānakathā*, it is divided into three parts and preserved in a language sometimes labelled as Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. A critical edition, prepared by Ēmile Senart, was published in three volumes between 1882 and 1897. The translation of the *Mahāvastu* by J. J. Jones was published between 1949 and 1956.

² Mhv 2. 21.

³ Mv 2. 48; 2. 73: mahānāmasya śākyaśya yaśodharā nāma dhītā.

⁴ Mv 2. 176. In Mv 1. 352, Śuklodana is Śuddhodana's brother.

⁵ Mv 2. 25.

⁶ Mv 2. 48. This incident is explained in the *Mahāvastu*'s *Mañjarī jāta*. The Pāli *Nidānakathā* lacks this episode.

asked dissatisfied: ‘Is this all I am worth?’ In return, Gautama gave her his ring.⁷ Seeing that Yaśodharā caught the attention of his son, Śuddhodana sent a message to Mahānāma asking him for his daughter’s hand in marriage to Gautama.⁸ Mahānāma initially considered Gautama not suitable for Yaśodharā and refused the request, but Gautama proved himself worthy of her by exhibiting his strength and intelligence.⁹ According to the *Mahāvastu*, her marriage with Gautama was sexless, so their son Rāhula was not conceived through sexual intercourse.¹⁰ The *Mahāvastu* reports that Rāhula simply descended into her womb from Tuṣita heaven on the night of Gautama’s flight from the palace.¹¹ According to the *Mahāvastu*, she foresaw his departure in a dream.¹² She was left by Gautama, who decided not to say goodbye and later did not forward any message to her, even though he sent his regards and greetings to Śuddhodana, Mahāprajāpatī and his other relatives.¹³ Her being abandoned without a word is explained as a result of her own bad karma.¹⁴ Yaśodharā was pregnant for six years.¹⁵ Throughout that time, she remained faithful to Gautama although she received marriage proposals from Devadatta and Sundarananda.¹⁶ Moreover, upon hearing that Gautama was practising severe austerities, she gave up the royal food and royal clothes and took to sleeping in a straw bed.¹⁷ When Gautama with his followers visited Kapilavastu after his enlightenment, Yaśodharā went to greet him. She was accompanied by Mahāprajāpatī, who became blind out of sorrow after Gautama had left his family home. Yaśodharā

⁷ Mv. 2. 72–73. The reason for her dissatisfaction is explained in *Godhā jātaka*, while the fact that she also received a necklace in a previous existence is highlighted in the *Jātaka of the Gift of a Necklace to Yaśodharā*. See below.

⁸ Mv 2. 73.

⁹ Mv 2. 75–76.

¹⁰ Mv 1. 153.

¹¹ Mv 2. 159. See also Mv. 2. 153. According to the Pāli *Nidānakathā*, Rāhula was not conceived but born on the day of Great Departure (Jāt 1. 60). In the *Sanḅhabhedavastu*, Rāhula is conceived on the night of Gautama’s departure but through sexual intercourse; see Strong 1997: 114–115.

¹² Mv 2. 135–136. Yaśodharā dreams of a cloud shedding clear, pure and cool rain. It is interpreted as a sign of Gautama’s upcoming enlightenment and his bringing relief to those scorched by the fire of passion. For the eight dreams of Yaśodharā in the *Sanḅhabhedavastu*, see Strong 1997: 115–116.

¹³ Mv 2. 166.

¹⁴ The circumstances are described in *Śyāmā jātaka*, see below.

¹⁵ The *Mahāvastu* specifies that the reason lies in Rāhula’s karma gained in previous existence. The circumstances are explained in *pūrvayoga* of Rāhula (Mv 3. 172 ff.). In *Sanḅhabhedavastu*, Rāhula’s prolonged stay in womb is explained both as a result of his and Yaśodharā’s karma, see Strong 1997: 116–117.

¹⁶ Mv 2. 69.

¹⁷ Mv 2. 233. Her devotion to Gautama is explained in *Śiriprabha jātaka*.

washed Mahāprajāpati's eyes with the water pouring from Gautama's body when he was performing the miracle of the double appearance, and Mahāprajāpati's sight was restored.¹⁸ On that occasion, Yaśodharā tried to tempt Gautama to stay at home by putting on luxurious clothes, preparing a delicious meal and sending Rāhula to him.¹⁹ Needless to say, her attempt was futile. Even though it is not explicitly stated anywhere, she was presumably exposed to the doubts and hostility of her husband's relatives after Gautama's departure. Such an assumption is corroborated by the story of the past in which Yaśodharā, though innocent, is put on trial and expelled from the court by Śuddhodana in his past existences.²⁰ Since the *Mahāvastu* repeatedly shows that events from the past have their parallels in the present, the assumption is perhaps justified. Such a treatment could be prompted by Yaśodharā's prolonged pregnancy and her in-laws' fear that Rāhula may not be the Buddha's legitimate son. This is further suggested by the passage in which Śuddhodana, the women of his court and relatives are relieved and glad when, during his visit to Kapilavastu, Gautama recognises Rāhula as his son.²¹

Yaśodharā in the *Mahāvastu*'s stories of the past

Yaśodharā appears as a protagonist in the *Mahāvastu*'s eighteen stories of the past (nineteen, in fact, as *Kuśa Jātaka* is told twice), which makes her the most frequently represented character in the *Mahāvastu*'s stories of the past after the Bodhisattva.²² Out of these stories, there is only one jātika (*Mañjarī jātika*) in which she is not related to the Bodhisattva, and in the *Parikalpa of Yaśodharā*, she is the Bodhisattva's daughter. In the rest of the stories she is either Bodhisattva's wife or his lover.²³

¹⁸ Mv 3. 116.

¹⁹ Mv 3. 142–143.

²⁰ The circumstances are described in the *Parikalpa of Padumāvātī*.

²¹ Mv 3. 142–143. Doubts about Rāhula's paternity are also mentioned in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*. See Strong 1997: 119.

²² "Story of the past" is used here as a more general term since not all stories of the past are, strictly speaking, jātakas. The complete list of the *Mahāvastu*'s stories of the past in which Yaśodharā plays a part is provided, in Appendix 2.

²³ The interrelatedness of the Bodhisattva's and Yaśodharā's path was also discussed by Walters in his paper 'Communal Karma and Karmic Community in Theravāda Buddhist History' (Walters 2003). Walter explains that the continuous relationship of the Bodhisattva and the members of his family can be seen as conditioned or produced by a 'karmic confluence' or, in other words, 'extremely similar karmic tracks' and/or by the fact that the extended series of shared time and place reinforce the social dimension of karma, which 'produces what could awkwardly be called "resociety"' (Walters 2003: 21). 'Sociokarmic aspiration' (Walters 2003: 23) can also be paradigmatic of the Bodhisattva

Yaśodharā's and the Buddha's paths have the same beginning. On the same occasion in his previous existence as ascetic Megha when he vowed in the presence of Dīpaṅkara to become a buddha, she, born as a girl named Prakṛitī, vowed to become his wife in all their subsequent births.²⁴ She gave him five lotuses so that he could honour Dīpaṅkara, kept two for herself and said: 'With this enchanting bouquet of lotuses you honour the Buddha, the driver of tameable men. It will be the means of your salvation. And I shall everywhere be your wife.'²⁵ The story of the very beginning of her path firmly establishes a dominant trait of her personality, namely her resolution to follow the Bodhisattva as his wife in all their subsequent births.

Her loyalty to the Bodhisattva is borne out in the *Jātaka of the Tigress*, which explains why she refused Devadatta's and Sunadarananda's marriage offers. Born as a tigress, she proved herself to be the fastest among animals. Since the animals thought that a female could not rule them, she was implored to find a husband. She chose a lion (the Bodhisattva) over a bull (Sundarananda) and an elephant (Devadatta). The jātika highlights her physical strength and endurance as well. Her strength and worthiness of the *kṣatriya* status are also attested to by the story of the past found in the first book of the *Mahāvastu* and encapsulated in the description of the events on the seventh *bhūmi*. Here, she is born as King Kuśa's (the Bodhisattva's) wife Apratimā. King Jaṭhara (Devadatta), who falls in love with her, threatens to destroy the kingdom of Kuśa and to take her by force. She, however, is not concerned:

My lord [says Yaśodharā as her previous self to King Kuśa], I am adept whether the need is for stabbing or thrusting with the sword, and so expert that not even you surpass me in the use of arms. [...] Woman though I am, I'll shoot an arrow that will pierce Jaṭhara's body, nay, go through it and pierce the ground where it lies the food for dogs.²⁶

After defeating Jaṭhara, she says to him:

and Yaśodharā's continuous relationship since Yaśodharā in her previous birth voiced an explicit aspiration or a vow of repeatedly becoming the Bodhisattva's wife.

²⁴ Mv 1. 233.

²⁵ Mv 1. 234. Jones 2007a: 190. In this story of the past, Yaśodharā is not explicitly identified with Prakṛitī, but the Pāli *Apadāna*, containing an account which strongly resembles the one in the *Mahāvastu*, additionally confirms her identity. Here, the girl with lotuses, who was Yaśodharā in her previous existence, is named Sumittā. She gives five lotuses to Sumedha and honours Dīpaṅkara with the remaining three. In return, Dīpaṅkara prophesises that she will be the Bodhisattva's wife. See Ap 3. 28, 44.

²⁶ Mv 1. 129 (Jones 2007a: 102).

You have set your heart on winning this graceful woman of faultless body, who, when she lies at night like the necklace of pearls in the arms of an honoured king, trembles with joy. You are like a man who, standing on earth, would fain win the moon.²⁷

Her victory over Jaṭhara also ensures that the kingdom of Kuśa remains protected.

Three jātakas portray Yaśodharā as the Bodhisattva's saviour. In *Śiriprabha jāataka*, she is born as a wife of the deer Śiriprabha. Caught up in a hunter's nest, the deer is unable to free himself. Seeing the approaching hunter and realising that her husband will be killed, Yaśodharā decides to stay by his side, thus risking her own life. When the deer implores her to run away, she answers: 'With you indeed I shall enjoy the pleasant glades and hills and woods, but in another life.'²⁸ Reaffirming her vow in this way, she willingly offers her life to the hunter, who spares them both, impressed with her bravery and devotion.

In *Campaka jāataka*, Yaśodharā, born as the chief queen of Campaka, the king of Nāgas, undertakes a journey to the royal palace of King Ugrasena and persuades him to find and release Campaka, who has been captured by a snake-charmer. After the jāataka, the Buddha affirms that he was indeed saved by Yaśodharā.²⁹

In *Śyamā jāataka*, born as a rich courtesan named Śyamā, she manages to save the Bodhisattva from being executed by the king's soldiers. The trickery she employs and, one could say, the cruelty of her plan for saving the Bodhisattva could raise some eyebrows since it includes taking the life of an innocent man. However, her love for the Bodhisattva is beyond any doubt. At the very moment she sees him on his way to the execution ground, she falls in love with him. The *Mahāvastu* explains:

By living together in the past and by kindness in the present, love is born as surely as a lotus in the water. By living together, by look, or by a smile, thus is love born in men and beast. When it enters the mind and the heart becomes glad, even the intelligent man always succumbs to it, for it means there has been acquaintance in the past.³⁰

By the end of the jāataka, the Bodhisattva will have realised what she has done to save him. He will attempt to kill her and then will leave her without a word. His departure will serve as an explanation for leaving Yaśodharā in his last existence.

²⁷ Mv 1. 131 (Jones 2007a: 103).

²⁸ Mv 2. 235 (Jones 2006: 223).

²⁹ Mv 2. 188 (Jones 2006: 181).

³⁰ Mv 2. 168–169 (Jones 2006: 163–164). The verses are also found in Jāt 2. 235.

The initial sentence of the passage quoted above is also used in *Kinnarī jātaka*, in which Yaśodharā is born as a beautiful *kinnarī*, Manoharā. She is caught to be sacrificed along with many other beings but is saved by prince Sudhanu (the Bodhisattva), who fell in love with her the moment he saw her. Sudhanu marries her and brings her to his palace. Seeing that Sudhanu, bemused by Manoharā, neglects all his duties, his worried father commands her to leave the palace and return to her home in the Himalayas. She agrees and leaves the palace. On her way home, she is approached by two hunters who try to convince her that Sudhanu will soon forget her but she replies, full of confidence: ‘I can draw Sudhanu with a glance and a smile. Though one be grown as big as an elephant I still have the power to hold him.’³¹ Sudhanu will eventually set after her, and the two of them will be reunited.

Her power to hold or seduce men is also vividly depicted in the *Jātaka of Nalinī*. Born as princess Nalinī, Yaśodharā meets the inexperienced hermit Ekaśṛṅga (the Bodhisattva) and openly seduces him by means of sweets, refined clothes, jewellery and sensuous behaviour. Ekaśṛṅga’s father tries to dissuade him from marrying Nalinī, but he eventually admits that two of them are bound to each other. Nalinī and Ekaśṛṅga get married and have thirty-two sons. It is said that, having ruled for many years and anointed his eldest son as an heir to the throne, Ekaśṛṅga once again embarks on a life of a religious seer. He masters four meditations and five super-knowledges and is later re-born in heavens.

Yaśodharā’s sensuality and openly exhibited sexuality are also highlighted in the *Jātaka of the Gift of a Necklace to Yaśodharā*. In the story, the Bodhisattva gives her a necklace and wonders why he is attracted to her. She answers: ‘Gesture, wanton behaviour, the excitement of sensuous attraction — by these three, O king, are fickle men stirred.’³² The *jātaka* is told as an explanation for the gift Gautama gives Yaśodharā on their first meeting, while her subsequent dissatisfaction is explained by *Godhā jātaka*. Born as the wife of an exiled prince, she was saddened when the prince did not share a meal with her. Later on, when the young prince became king, he endeavoured to please her with gifts, but she, remembering the prince’s previous behaviour, could not be happy and satisfied.

Yaśodharā is not satisfied with the Bodhisattva in *Kuśa jātaka* either. Born as a beautiful princess, Sudarśana, she is married to a noble but ugly King Kuśa (the Bodhisattva). Her vanity and disgust for Kuśa gradually disappear as a result of his numerous deeds and persistent efforts, as she comes to appreciate his qualities and devotion. Commenting upon this *jātaka*, Shaw writes:

³¹ Mv 2. 102 (Jones 2006: 99).

³² Mv 2. 68 (Jones 2006: 66).

It is perhaps one of the few *jātakas* where marriage and sexuality are explored extensively, symbolic of the need to separate “appearance” and “reality,” “beauty” and ugliness.” The trajectory of their marriage is seen through a passionate, if initially darkly troubled, meeting of minds, as well as a physical union based on her part, like a Jacobean tragic figure, on deep disgust, then completely transformed. (Shaw 2018: 265)

She is shown worthy of the Bodhisattva’s effort in two more *jātakas*. In *Śiri jātaka*, he is ready to dry up the entire sea to gain her hand in marriage, and in *Amarā jātaka*, the Bodhisattva, impressed by her intelligence and beauty, persistently answers her clever riddles and proves himself deserving of her hand by making an exquisite needle.

Yaśodharā is pictured not only as an intelligent and witty character but also as an embodiment of honour, nobility and the purity of the heart. In *Mañjarī jātaka*,³³ the only *jātaka* in which she is not the Bodhisattva’s wife or lover, Yaśodharā is born as Honour (Hirī), one of Śakra’s daughters. The Bodhisattva, born at that time as seer Kauśika, chooses her over Glory (Śirī), Faith (Śraddhā) and Hope (Āśā): ‘Honour is best among men, O Mātali. She is desirable to the young and to the old. She turns the foeman’s rage into love. She checks the inmost thought of the heart.’³⁴ By this choice, Kauśika earns merits and is reborn in heaven.

There is also one more story of the past in which Yaśodharā is not the Bodhisattva’s wife or lover in a previous existence. The *Parikalpa of Padumāvātī* is told by the Buddha to explain why Yaśodharā was sent away by Śuddhodana to be punished, without being tried. In this story, she is the daughter of seer Māṇḍavya (the Bodhisattva), conceived when a doe drank the water containing his semen. Since lotuses sprang out of her footsteps, she was named Padumāvātī. She was seen by king Brahmadata (Śuddhodana in his previous existence), who was impressed by her beauty and took her for his wife. The women of the king’s harem became jealous, so when Padumāvātī gave birth to twins, they took the children away and deceived her into believing that her children had been stillborn. They told the king that she was an ogress in disguise who had devoured her newborns. On hearing that, the king ordered her to be exiled and killed without giving her any chance to speak for herself. Brahmadata’s wise ministers saved her and then explained to the king what had happened. The story of Padumāvātī offers testimony to her compassion and generosity, stemming from the knowledge of the karma-mechanism. Asked by the remorseful king

³³ This *jātaka* is not found in the Pāli collection.

³⁴ Mv 2. 63 (Jones 2006: 60).

what punishment the harem women should receive for falsely accusing her of killing her children, she answers:

Your majesty, do not deal harshly with these queens. They are senior to me. Increase the substance provided to them, do not decrease it. Let things be as they were. Men reap the fruits of the karmas they have contracted when the proper time has come, just as the flowers and fruits of trees appear.³⁵

Padumāvātī leaves the king, takes up a religious life and soon gains powers that give her the ability to reduce one to ashes in an instant. Wandering about, she is spotted by King Kṛiki, who tries to force himself upon her, but she threatens him with her powers. In the same story, her chastity and determination to live in celibacy are also highlighted. When King Kṛiki expresses his desire to make her his lover, she answers: ‘Your majesty, you are wishing to enter the fire when you wish to make love to one who has taken up a religious life and is established in dharma. Your majesty, I have no desire for sensual pleasures.’³⁶ Kṛiki desists and later escorts her to King Brahmadata, who wishes to be reunited with Padumāvātī. It is said that the lotuses ceased to spring out of her footsteps when she was sent away by Brahmadata but that later, upon her return to his kingdom, they started to spring once again. The *Pūrvayoga of Padumāvātī* explains that lotuses disappeared and re-appeared as a result of her deeds in an earlier existence. She once met a Pratyekabuddha and gave him a lotus. Captivated with the beauty of his hand holding the lotus, she asked to have the lotus back, but realising her mistake she returned it again.

In the *Jātaka of the Crow*, Yaśodharā has a marginal role. She is the queen to the King of the Crows and wishes to eat royal food. The King of Crows (the Bodhisattva) seeks to please her by commanding his minister to find a way of providing the queen with the food she craves.

Yaśodharā as a path and an obstacle

The number of references to Yaśodharā in her last and previous existences included in the *Mahāvastu* testifies to her importance to Buddhists. She is presented as ‘integral to the Buddha’s eventual Buddhahood,’ as Walters puts it (Walters 2014: 182), as well as ‘an embodiment of the various possibilities of the female lay and ascetic life’ (Shaw 2018: 262).

The Buddha’s greatest achievement — i.e. the perfect and complete awakening— is a result, among his other accomplishments, of the merits he has earned and the insights he has gained through his long-standing relationship

³⁵ Mv 3. 167–168 (Jones 2007b: 162).

³⁶ Mv 3. 169 (Jones 2007b: 163).

with Yaśodharā. Their shared existences described in jātakas indicate that ‘marriage can even be a positive soteriological force’ (Walters 2014: 191). For example, the *Mahāvastu* reports that the Buddha had to practice his skill (*śilpa*),³⁷ energy (*vīrya*),³⁸ fatigue (*kheda*) and exertion (*śrama*) to win Yaśodharā.³⁹ While the Bodhisattva stays married to Yaśodharā in the majority of jātakas,⁴⁰ in his last existence, he cuts the strong ties that bind him to Yaśodharā and leaves her never to return, thus accomplishing his great victory over sexuality and attachment. Similarly, Yaśodharā earns merits through her interaction with the Bodhisattva. From one birth to another, she practices love, devotion, faithfulness, self-sacrifice, courage and occasionally austerity.⁴¹ Eventually, as her *apadāna* recounts, she attains liberation in her last life. She is shown as a ‘true spouse’ of the Bodhisattva/ Buddha. The beauty of her body is unsurpassed. Born as *kinnarī* Manoharā, she is said to be superior for her beauty and voice.⁴² As Padumāvātī, she is described as ‘beautiful, of distinguished mien, and possessing perfect beauty of complexion, yellowish like a slab of fresh butter.’⁴³ Even as a *nāga* maiden, she is said to ‘gleam like a lightning, like a star reflected in a pool, or like a twig of *tāmra* tree blossoming in the wood.’⁴⁴ Her radiance and comeliness are also celebrated in *Mañjarī jātaka*, in which she is described as endowed with ‘flaming hair,’ a ‘complexion like the *uśira*,’ golden colour, fair limbs and a slender waist.⁴⁵ In *Kuśa jātaka*, she is unmatched in beauty and loveliness in the whole of Jambudvīpa.⁴⁶ She matches the Bodhisattva in intelligence and eloquence, as *Amarā jātaka* reports. She is physically strong, as asserted by the *Jātaka of the Tigress*, and by all means worthy of the *kṣatriya* status, as demonstrated in the story of her previous encounter with Devadatta who, at that time, was born as the king Jaṭhara. She is brave, not afraid to die (*Śiriprabha jātaka*) and ready to save the Bodhisattva at any cost (*Śyāmā*

³⁷ Mv 2. 83.

³⁸ Mv 2. 89.

³⁹ Mv 2. 94.

⁴⁰ See also Shaw 2018: 264.

⁴¹ The *Parikalpa of Padumavati* is the only story in the *Mahāvastu* in which she embraces religious life, the only reason for which is that her husband banishes her from his kingdom. She acquires special powers, but when she is asked by her husband to return to him, she accepts and abandons the life of a wanderer. In Pāli jātakas, she is also shown taking up a religious life only after her husband decides to leave a domestic life. According to Shaw, there is only one jātaka in which she becomes an ascetic before him, but the motivation behind this decision is by no means of spiritual nature (Shaw 2018: 264, n. 2).

⁴² Mv 2. 97.

⁴³ Mv 3. 154 (Jones 2007b: 149).

⁴⁴ Mv 2. 181 (Jones 2006: 175).

⁴⁵ Mv 2. 59–60 (Jones 2006: 57).

⁴⁶ M 2. 441 (Jones 2006: 393).

and *Campaka jātaka*). Yaśodharā's character exhibits compassion stemming from wisdom (*Parikalpa of Padumāvati*) and embodies the nobility and purity of the heart (*Mañjarī jātaka*). The idealisation of Yaśodharā was certainly prompted by the fact that she was the Buddha's chosen wife. Furnishing her with virtues and qualities which made her deserving of the Buddha/Bodhisattva and which were to lead her to realise the truths preached by her husband was but an expected consequence of the authors' task to portray a perfect woman for a perfect man, a woman whose physical, intellectual and spiritual capacities for attaining liberation would match his and who will also serve as a role model for those assisting someone else on their path to liberation.

Nevertheless, the role of being the Buddha's or the Bodhisattva's wife also paved the way for Buddhist authors to make her character a vehicle of diverse conceptions about women and womanhood. Attraction to women and the sexual drive are among the greatest impediments to renunciation and 'the holy life that is utterly bright, blameless, pure and clean.'⁴⁷ The Buddha, as a perfect example, learned this lesson with the help of Yaśodharā, who was made to represent the sexuality that arouses and captivates men. For example, in the *Jātaka of Nalinī*, the Bodhisattva is mesmerised by her beauty and seduced by her openly shown sexuality. The disastrous effects of her beauty and sexual confidence on the Bodhisattva — the young seer Ekaśṛiṅga, at that time — are vividly pictured:

As for Ekaśṛiṅga, the young seer, he returned to his hermitage, where he sat thinking of the ravishing features of Nalinī from her head to her feet. No longer did he fetch roots and fruits, nor water and wood. He did not sweep out the hermitage nor tend the sacred fire.⁴⁸

Noticing the young seer's distraction, his father warns him about the dangers that women pose to seers.

They are women who seduce seers and keep them from their austerities. Seers should keep them at a distance, for they are a stumbling block to those who would live chastely. Have nothing to do with them. They are like snakes, like poisonous leaves, like charcoal pits.⁴⁹

She is an embodiment of threat not only to celibate seers but also to those involved in worldly matters. This is illustrated by a passage in *Kinnarī jātaka*. The Bodhisattva, born as prince Sudhanu, is so engrossed by *kinnarī*

⁴⁷ Mv. 2. 140.

⁴⁸ Mv 3. 148 (Jones 2007b: 144).

⁴⁹ Mv 3. 149 (Jones 2007b: 144).

Manoharā that he neglects all his royal duties. As a consequence, his kingdom suffers, his households' fortune is lost, and all its luck vanishes.⁵⁰ In both jātakas, the Bodhisattva eventually reunites with his wife, ignoring the hazards of being driven by desire, lust and attachment. In the *Jātaka of the Gift of a Necklace to Yaśodharā*, the queen (Yaśodharā) says to her husband (the Bodhisattva) that women possess charm and sensuality by which men can be stirred and distracted. The king is not in the least disturbed by his queen's words and once again stays with her, as he does in most jātakas. But, as Appleton explains, one of the purposes of jātakas is to 'point out the contrast in value between Bodhisattva and Buddha' (Appleton 2010: 51), so if the Bodhisattva was not wise, determined or strong enough to leave his wife in previous existences, he was certainly capable of doing so in his last.

Besides being an embodiment of sensuality and sexuality, Yaśodharā is also a symbol of a profound love that binds individuals and puts karma-mechanism fully in operation, producing new shared births in which the originally established pattern is constantly being rehearsed. Love as a force that can cause a new rebirth must be abandoned if one seeks liberation from the constant cycle of rebirths. In his last life, Gautama ultimately learns this lesson and leaves Yaśodharā without any regrets. For her part, she insists on being his wife despite his irrevocable departure. When he visits Kapilavastu years after his enlightenment, she is still hopeful and, dressed in her finest clothes, tries to seduce him and make him stay at home. However, he is not the Bodhisattva anymore, and her attempt has no impact on him. Even when she resourcefully sends Rāhula to him to remind him of his household duties and tempt him to leave the *saṅgha* and return to their family home, he is steadfast. She is thus a temptress who beguiles not only through her bodily charms but also by the promise of an easier, more comfortable domestic lifestyle. In the *Jātaka of Nalinī*, she uses refined foods, sweets and beautiful garments to lure a young seer accustomed to raw and bitter forest fruits and rough clothes. The Bodhisattva is presented as a young man who knows nothing of women and way of the world. He is not even able to distinguish between a male and a female, and when telling his father that he spent time with Nalinī, he thinks Nalinī was, in fact, a man. Nalinī even organises a wedding ceremony in which he takes part not knowing the meaning and purpose of the ritual. Since the 'damage is done,' the inexperienced young seer is, as it were, tricked into marriage and household life. The nuances of domestic life are detailed in *Godhā jātaka*, in which Yaśodharā is shown as an unsatisfied wife whose husband spends his time worrying and trying to please her. Her dissatisfaction is also depicted in her last life, specifically in the episode of the distribution of jewels to the maidens of Kapilavastu.

⁵⁰ Mv 2. 101 (Jones 2006: 98).

Yaśodharā's character is quite often used to warn men that women can be cunning and artful. The excellent case in point is *Śyāmā jāataka*, in which she designs a cruel plan of killing an innocent man in order to obtain the man she wants and later tells a bald-faced lie to the dead man's weeping parents. The *Mahāvastu* admonishes: 'Nobles have a hundred arts, brahmans two hundred, kings a thousand, but a woman's arts are countless.'⁵¹

Conclusion

Since Buddhist texts started to be available and studied in the West, much has been said and written about the Buddhist attitudes towards women and their position in society and *saṅgha*. Disparate approaches have been followed, different texts examined and various questions and views advanced, but the discussions on the treatment of women in Buddhist texts have tended to be informed by androcentrism and (occasional) misogyny.⁵² At the same time, some authors have highlighted pieces of textual evidence speaking to women's equality with men or their equal intellectual/spiritual capacities for grasping the Buddha's⁵³ teachings and for attaining the ultimate Buddhist goal. Buddhist texts have indeed been shown to contain narratives about female characters who attained the goal and were described as praise-worthy and fully capable of following and fulfilling the Buddha's path and teachings. Yaśodharā, if we were to trust her *apadāna*, was certainly one of such women. To present Yaśodharā as the Bodhisattva's or Buddha's perfect counterpart who travelled through numerous reincarnations, acquired merits, renounced the world and eventually attained the goal, the Buddhist authors endowed her with an array of virtues, such as beauty, wisdom, compassion, strength, bravery, austerity, faithfulness, devotion, supportiveness, etc. She became not only an ideal woman for an ideal man, but also, as other authors have shown, a role model for all women — those who wish to renounce the world and those who decide to follow a stay-at-home Buddhist path, which nevertheless leads to the same, final destination. Yaśodharā was also framed as epitomising womanhood as such, regarded as the source of attachment, temptation and distraction. In other words, she was viewed as an embodiment of the obstacle on the Buddhist path, one that should be removed or surmounted, just as described in the story of the Buddha's Great Departure.

⁵¹ Mv 2. 169 (Jones 2006: 164).

⁵² A useful and concise overview of relevant studies from C. Foley onwards can be found in Walters 1994 and Collet 2009.

⁵³ For example, in his paper on Gotamī in the Pāli Apadāna, Walters stresses Gotamī's attainment of *parinirvāṇa* and refers to her as to 'the female counterpart of the Buddha' (Walters 1995: 117).

Moulded out of contradictory intentions, Yaśodharā's character is flickering, lively and compelling. Her diverse characteristics make her simultaneously the ideal *Buddhist* woman and a major obstacle on the *Buddhist* path. But, concluding this paper, I wish to suggest that, in some respects, Yaśodharā can be also seen as an *anti-Buddhist* ideal. In other words, I wish to suggest (without any further elaboration at this moment) that she can be seen as a universal role-model for all women (and men) who, faced with old age, sickness and death, choose the path of firm attachment, love, devotion, and the courageous acceptance and embracement of this-worldly suffering.

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Appendix 1:

The biographical passages of Yaśodharā’s last existence

Daughter of a Śākyan named Mahānāma — Mv 2. 48; 2. 73

Yaśodharā’s birth — Mv 2. 25

Yaśodharā’s first meeting with Gautama — Mv 2. 48

Immaculate conception of Rāhula — Mv 1. 153

Six years of pregnancy — Mv 3. 172

Yaśodharā’s dreams — Mv 2. 135–136

Yaśodharā declines Devadatta’s and Sundarananda’s marriage offer — Mv 2. 69

Yaśodharā’s austerities — Mv 2. 233

Yaśodharā restores Mahāprajāpatī’s eyesight — Mv 3. 116

Yaśodharā tempts Gautama to return to their family home — Mv 3. 142–143

Appendix 2: Yaśodharā's past existences

	Story of the past	Yaśodharā's role and name if given	The main features of Yaśodharā's character
1	Mv 1. 128–132 (story included in the description of the events on the seventh <i>bhūmi</i>)	Apratimā, wife of king Kuśa	Physical strength, bravery, skilful in handling the weapons
2	Mv 1. 132–133 (story included in the description of the events on the seventh <i>bhūmi</i>)	Unnamed wife of the Bodhisattva	Caught in sin and sentenced to death. The Bodhisattva spares her life
3	The story of Megha and Meghadatta Mv 1. 231–248	Prakṛti. The girl who gives lotuses to the Bodhisattva so that he can honour buddha Dīpaṅkara	Vows to be the Bodhisattva's wife. 'Gracious, comely, sedate, modest and coy'
4	Mañjarī jātaḥ, Mv. 2. 48–64	Hirī, the daughter of Śakra	Honour, nobility, and purity of the heart. Chosen by the Bodhisattva over Glory, Hope, and Faith
5	Godhā jātaḥ, Mv 2. 64–67	Wife of the exiled prince Sutejas	Unsatisfied with the Bodhisattva's presents
6	The Jātaka of the Gift of a Necklace to Yaśodharā, Mv 2. 67–68	Wife of the king of Kāśī	Seduces her husband with 'gesture, wanton behaviour and the excitement of sensuous attraction'
7	The Jātaka of Yaśodharā as a Tigress, Mv 2. 68–72	Tigress who wins the race to the top of the Himalayas	The fastest and strongest among animals. Chooses a lion (the Bodhisattva) over a bull (Sundarananda) and an elephant Devadatta)
8	Amarā jātaḥ, Mv 2. 83–89	Amarā, a smith's daughter and later wife of the wise Mahauśadha	Intelligent, quick-witted, comely
9	The Jātaka of Śiri, Mv 2. 89–94	Śiri, the daughter of a brāhman. The Bodhisattva is ready to dry the sea up to win her hand	'Amiable, beautiful and endowed with a? perfect and pleasant beauty of complexion'

	Story of the past	Yaśodharā's role and name if given	The main features of Yaśodharā's character
10	Kinnarī jātaḥa, Mv 2. 94–115	<i>Kinnarī</i> Manoharā, wife of prince Sudhanu	Outstanding for beauty and voice. Exiled by Sudhanu's father. Confident in Sudhanu's love for her
11	Śyamā jātaḥa, Mv 2. 166–177	The rich courtesan Śyamā	Causes a murder of an innocent man to have the Bodhisattva as her lover
12	Campaka jātaḥa, Mv 2. 177–188	Wife of Campaka, the king of Nāgas	Beautiful and radiant. Saves the Bodhisattva when he is caught by a snake-charmer
13	Śiriprabha jātaḥa, Mv 2. 231–237	Doe, wife of the deer Śiriprabha	Brave and royal. Ready to stay by her husband at the price of death. Saves the Bodhisattva from a hunter
14, 15	First Kuśa jātaḥa, Mv 2. 419–496. Second Kuśa jātaḥa, Mv 3. 1–27	Sudarśanā, wife of king Kuśa	Unsurpassed in beauty. At first, disgusted by her husband's appearance but later recognises his virtues.
16	The? Jātaḥa of the Crow, Mv 3. 125–129	Crow Supārśva, wife of Supātra, the king of crows	Yearns for the royal food
17	The Jātaḥa of Nalinī, Mv 3. 141–152	Nalinī, king's daughter who seduces young seer Ekaśringa	Self-confident, openly sexual and seductive. Tricks the Bodhisattva into marriage
18	Parikalpa of Padumāvatī, Mv 3. 153–170	Padumāvatī, the daughter of seer Māṇḍavya (the Bodhisattva). Married to king Brahmaḍatta (Śuddhodana)	Beautiful, lotuses springing from her footsteps. Exiled from the kingdom of Brahmaḍatta on the grounds of false accusation. Renunciates and achieves super-powers
19	Pūrvayoga of Padumāvatī, Mv 3. 170–172	Unnamed servant of a householder	Offering lotuses to Pratyekabuddha

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WHY THE BRĀHMAṆA WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOL: AN INTERPRETATION OF MORAL PROHIBITIONS IN THE LIGHT OF MĪMĀMSĀ

Abstract: In 1957, a very short article by Ludwik Skurzak titled ‘From the Sources of the Indian Law’ was published in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* XXII 1/2. In the paper, Skurzak identified two different types of penances and punishments for manslaughter, prescribed by ancient dharmasūtras and dharmasāstras. The prohibition against killing people in general and against killing Brāhmaṇas in particular became the subject of analyses and interpretations within Mīmāṃsā, a Vedic exegetical school parallel and related to the dharmasāstric tradition. Around the 6th–7th century, Kumārila-bhaṭṭa, one of Mīmāṃsā scholars, paid considerable attention to the prohibition of manslaughter and murder in his commentary *Tantra-vārttika ad Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* I.3.5–7. He examined it in a broader context of the correct interpretation of generally binding moral injunctions formulated as apparently narrower, specifically addressed prohibitions. Whereas his discussion starts with a prohibition of minor importance, specifically, the injunction against alcohol consumption by Brāhmaṇas, its focus is in fact on the prohibition against killing and the definition of its object and scope. In this paper, I will present the overall structure of Kumārila’s argumentation in the light of Mīmāṃsā hermeneutical principles and, in conclusion, answer my title question — why the Brāhmaṇa women should not drink alcohol either.

Keywords: dharma, drinking of liquor, Kumārila, manslaughter, masculine gender, Mīmāṃsā, singular number

I

In 1957, a short article by Ludwik Skurzak titled ‘From the Sources of the Indian Law’ was published in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* XXII 1/2. In his paper, Skurzak identified two different types of penances

and punishments for manslaughter, prescribed by ancient dharmasūtras and dharmasāstras: one of them was ‘death or ransom,’ and the other was ‘isolation from society’ and ‘living in sexual chastity.’¹ Both variants were included in the relevant texts, for example in the *Āpastamba-dharmasūtra* (ĀDhS) and the *Baudhāyana-dharmasūtra* (BDhS). The presumed perpetrator was of masculine gender.

II

The prohibition against killing people in general and against killing Brāhmaṇas in particular became the subject of analyses and interpretations within Mīmāṃsā, a Vedic exegetical school, parallel and related to the dharmasāstric tradition. Precisely speaking, around the 6th–7th century, Kumārila-bhaṭṭa, one of Mīmāṃsā scholars, paid considerable attention to the prohibition of manslaughter and murder in his commentary *Tantra-vārttika* (henceforth TV) ad *Mīmāṃsā-sūtra* (henceforth MS) I.3.5–7.

The entire discussion was embedded in ponderings on the valid sources of the knowledge of *dharma*, initiated in the literary genre of dharmasāstra and related to the thorough, Brahmanically-underpinned theoretical systematisation, categorisation and detailed analysis of law and morality of Aryan society.² Such epistemological reflections were intended to identify the roots (*mūlas*) of learning about and recognising *dharma* (or *adharmas*).³

The earliest known texts that mention the *dharma-mūlas*, state that either the Veda or the socially approved norms and practices form the main set of moral and legal instructions, and that any other *dharma* sources are subordinate to the primary one. The *Gautama-dharmasūtra* (GDhS, the mid-3rd century BC)⁴ defines the Veda as the main epistemic root of *dharma* and adds that the tradition (*smṛti*) and habits (*śīla*) of ‘those who know the Veda’ (*tad-vid*) are important as well.⁵ On the other hand, the *Āpastamba-dharmasūtra* (ĀDhS, the early 3rd century BC)⁶ declares the ‘agreed-upon normative practices’ as *dharmas* (in plural), ‘whose authority (*pramāṇa*) depends on the collective opinion of those knowledgeable about *dharma* (*dharma-jña*), and on

¹ Skurzak 1957: 69, 71.

² See Olivelle 2018: 50; also Davis 2010: 25–33.

³ These few explanatory paragraphs summarise and draw from a longer description of the *Tantra-vārttika* discussion given in Nowakowska 2020.

⁴ See Olivelle 2000: 9.

⁵ See Olivelle 2000: 120–121: ‘The source of Law is the Veda, as well as the tradition and practice of those who know the Veda’ (*vedo dharmas-mūlam /1/ tad-vidāṃ ca smṛti-śīle /2/*).

⁶ Olivelle 2000: 10.

the Vedas (*vedāśca*).⁷ The subject is continued by the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra* (henceforth MDhŚ), i.e. the *Manu-smṛti*, which addresses the epistemology of *dharma* at the beginning of its second chapter. By way of a short introduction, the text enjoins the hearers to ‘[l]earn the Law [*dharmas*] always adhered to [*sevitaḥ*] by people who are erudite [*vidvadbhiḥ*], virtuous [*sadbhir*] and free from love and hate [*adveṣarāgibhiḥ*], the Law assented to [*abhyanujñāto*] by the heart [*hṛdayena*].’⁸ This injunction is followed after a couple of verses by ‘the classical formula of the four sources of the knowledge of *dharma*’: ‘The root [*mūlam*] of the Law [*dharma*] is the entire Veda [*vedo ’khilo*]; the tradition and practice [*smṛti-śīle*] of those who know the Veda [*tad-vidām*]; the conduct [*ācāraś*] of good people [*sādhūnām*]; and what is pleasing [*tuṣṭir*] to oneself [*ātmanas*].’⁹

Dharma was also the main subject of inquiry for Mīmāṃsā, although the school understood and interpreted *dharma* first of all in a ritualistic light, as a ritual duty and sacrificial practices¹⁰ which one was enjoined to exercise and which transported one to the upper realm and into the afterlife.¹¹ The *dharma* instruction was provided by the Veda, or strictly speaking by one category of Vedic speech–ritual injunctions (*codanā*). Therefore, Mīmāṃsā investigated the Vedic corpus, identifying its various components and their functions. It also broached the important topic of the sources of *dharma* and their authoritativeness, both independent (as in the case of *śruti*, that is, the Veda) and relative to, i.e. dependent on, *śruti* (as in the case of *smṛti*, *ācāras*, etc.). In this discussion, the so-called *Śabara-bhāṣya* (ca. 5th century), the earliest completely preserved commentary on the MS, Mīmāṃsā’s foundational text, focused on *smṛti* (i.e. ‘[traditions transmitted by] memory’). However, in an extensive portion of the TV ad MS 1.3.7, Kumārila-bhaṭṭa’s analysis returns to the *dharma-mūlas* of the MDhŚ and earlier *dharmasūtras*.

In his view, the primary issue to be established was whether the so-called *sad-ācāras* were reliable or not. The compound was understood in the TV as *satām ācārās*, that is, the practices and customs of good and moral people,

⁷ *Āpastamba-dharmaśūtra* 1.1.1–3. Olivelle 2000: 24–25: ‘And now we shall explain the accepted customary Laws, the authority of which rests on their acceptance by those who know the Law and on the Vedas.’ (*athātaḥ sāmāyācārikān dharmān vyākhyāsyāmaḥ /1/ dharmajñāsamāyāḥ pramāṇam /2/ vedāś ca /3/*).

⁸ Olivelle 2006: 94, 403–405. MDhŚ 2.1: *vidvadbhiḥ sevitaḥ sadbhir nityam adveṣarāgibhiḥ / hṛdayenābhyanujñāto yo dharmas taṁ nibodhata*. Sanskrit terms in square brackets in quotations were added by myself.

⁹ Olivelle 2006: 94 (p. 404); MDhŚ 2.6: *vedo ’khilo dharmamūlam smṛti-śīle ca tad-vidām / ācāraś caiva sādhūnām ātmanas tuṣṭir eva ca*. See also Wezler 2004.

¹⁰ On *dharma* in the MS, see Clooney 1990: 149–161.

¹¹ On various problems related to the changing interpretation of the term *dharma*, see Wezler 2004 and Yoshimizu 2012.

who were regarded as *śiṣṭas*, i.e. the educated members of *āryāvarta-nivāsins*, the inhabitants of *āryāvarta*.¹² Reliance on *sad-ācāras* as the source of *dharma* was judged precarious,

because one can see (cases of) the violation of *dharma* in practices of good men, as well as (excesses of) recklessness of the great [personages], beginning with Prajāpati, Indra, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana, Bhīṣma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Vāsudeva and Arjuna, as well as of many [men] of today.¹³

In this passage, Kumārila refers to the earlier *dharma* masters, as the ĀDhS II.13.7–9 already states that

7. Transgression [*vyatikramah*] of the Law [*dharma*] and violence [*sāhasam*] are seen among people of ancient times. 8. They incurred no sin on account of their extraordinary power [*tejo-viśeṣeṇa*]. 9. A man of later times who, observing what they did, does the same, perishes.¹⁴

Similarly, the GDhS I.3 teaches: ‘Transgression of the Law and violence are seen in great men. They do not constitute precedents, however, on account of the weakness of the men of later times.’¹⁵ Kumārila’s *pūrva-pakṣa* speaker takes the phrases ‘great’ (*mahat* of the GDhS) and ‘of ancient times’ (*pūrva* of the ADhS) literally, coming up with an extended list of timeless and illustrious figures who acted, apparently at least, in an adharmic way, on one or another occasion. Examples of such unrighteous conduct include

the marriages of Vāsudeva and Arjuna with their (maternal) uncles’ daughters (which was prohibited), Rukmiṇī and Subhadrā (respectively). Both [men also are said to] have drunk alcohol to the point of vomiting, as it is said: ‘I have seen both of them, Keśava and Arjuna, vomiting wine.’¹⁶

¹² See TV ad MS 1.3.10 (p. 224ff.).

¹³ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 203): *sad-ācāreṣu hi dṛṣṭo dharmavyatikramah, sāhasam ca mahatām prajāpatīndra-vasiṣṭha-viśvāmitra-yudhiṣṭhira-kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana-bhīṣma-dhṛtarāṣṭra-vāsudevārjuna-prabhṛtīnām bahūnām adyatānām ca*. Unless indicated otherwise, the translations in this paper are mine.

¹⁴ Olivelle 2000: 92, 93 (*dṛṣṭo dharmavyatikramah sāhasam ca pūrvesām /7/ teṣām tejo-viśeṣeṇa pratyavāyo na vidyate /8/ tad-anvikṣya prayuñjānaḥ sīdaty avaraḥ /9/*).

¹⁵ Olivelle 2000: 120–121 (*dṛṣṭo dharmavyatikramah sāhasam ca mahatām na tu dṛṣṭārthe 'vara-daurbalyāt /3/*).

¹⁶ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 204): *vāsudevārjunayoḥ pratiśiddha-mātula-duhitṛ-rukmiṇī-subhadrā-pariṇayanam, ubhau 'madhv-āsava-kṣībav' iti surā-pānācāraṇam*. Cf. MBh 5.058.5: *ubhau madhv-āsava-kṣībāv ubhau candana-rūṣitau / ekaparyanaka-śayanau dṛṣṭau me keśavārjunau*.

In this way, the warnings of the old dharmasūtra authors against any blind imitation of great men are tested and used by Kumārila in his examination of the role of narrative, non-injunctional portions of the Veda and *smṛtis*. This does not mean that Kumārila limits his investigations of *sad-ācāras* merely to *śruti* and *smṛti* examples. Still in the *pūrva-pakṣa*, under the same MS 1.3.7, he immediately goes on to discuss various contemporaneous practices and ways of living, thus focusing on the second component of the compound *sad-ācāra*. Among shocking practices and customs, such as eating while sitting in a chair, he mentions the women of Ahicchatra or Mathurā who drink liquor.¹⁷ The argument thus strengthens the *pūrva-pakṣa* position that customary practices may be deceptive and misleading.

However, in his *siddhānta*, Kumārila addresses both the cases of liquor-drinking by distinguished epic figures, all of them male, and the contemporaneous drinking practices of women of some regions. First, he deals with the *sant*, i.e. presumably exemplary personages of the *smṛti* literature:

While the [example] brought forward [of activities] contrary to the *smṛti* [regulations, such as] drinking wine and marrying daughters of their (respective) maternal uncles by Vāsudeva and Arjuna, here the prohibition for the members of three (higher) *varṇas* only concerns (alcohol known as) *surā* [which is produced] by transformation of food.¹⁸

Liquor is clearly the filth of various grains; sin is also called filth. Therefore, Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas must not drink liquor.¹⁹

But *madhu* and *sīdhu* are not prohibited for Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, because the subject (of the prohibition) is a *Brāhmaṇa* only, as it is said: “intoxication (drinks) are always (prohibited) to a *Brāhmaṇa*./.”²⁰

¹⁷ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 204): *adyatve 'py ahicchatra-mathurānīvāsi-brāhmaṇīnām surā-pānam*.

¹⁸ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 209): *yat tu vāsudevārjunayor madya-pāna-mātula-duhitṛ-pariṇayanam smṛti-viruddham upanyastam tatrāna-vikāra-surā-mātrasya trai-varṇikānām pratiśedhaḥ*.

¹⁹ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 209), MDhŚ 11.94–95: *surā vai malam annānām pāpmā ca malam ucyate / tasmād brāhmaṇa-rājanyau vaiśyaś ca na surām pibet [gauḍī paiṣī ca mādhvī ca vijñeyā trividhā surā / yathāivāikā tathā sarvā na pātavyā dvijōttamaiḥ]*. Olivelle 2006: 219 (11.94–95): ‘(94) Liquor is clearly the filth of various grains; sin is also called filth. Therefore, Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, and Vaiśyas must not drink liquor. [(95) It should be understood that there are three kinds of liquor: one made of molasses, another from ground grain, and a third from honey. Just as drinking one of them is forbidden to Brahmins, so are all.]’

²⁰ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 209): *madhu-sīdhvos tu kṣatriya-vaiśyayor naiva pratiśedhaḥ kevala-brāhmaṇa-viṣayavāt / 'madyam nityam brāhmaṇasya' iti vacanāt (madyam nityam brāhmaṇaḥ // GDhS 2.26 //)*.

Following the MDhŚ, Kumārila makes a distinction among various types of alcoholic beverages and, in this way, exonerates Krishna and Arjuna: as they are not *brāhmaṇas*, they do not sin by drinking *madhu* and *sīdhu*. The contemporaneous regional *ācāras* occasion a more detailed analysis.

III

Kumārila evokes liquor-drinking by the women of Ahicchatra and Mathurā as an instance in the discussion of questionable customs. He also reaffirms that *sad-ācāras* are only valid if they do not pervert the rulings of the Veda and of *smṛtis*. The authority of *ācāras* is not equal to that of *smṛtis*.²¹ Having reviewed customs and regional practices in some detail, Kumārila resumes the theme of female Brahmins' alcohol consumption; the question is which text exactly prohibits the drinking of liquor to Brāhmaṇa women?²² Bhaṭṭa answers this query by establishing that the relevant authority is, for example, one of the *smṛtis*, the MDhŚ itself (11.93).²³ However, as the prohibition is expressed in the masculine gender, one may wonder why it should concern females.²⁴ The rejoinder advanced by Kumārila reproduces, as will be seen below, a famous grammarian's reasoning, as Kumārila voices the *pūrva-pakṣin*'s argument ad absurdum:

Also in the case of the prohibition to kill [a Brāhmaṇa], the killing of the male alone might be intended; similarly, as in the case of the male gender, the intentionality of the singular number [in “a Brāhmaṇa”] might also be assumed: and thence, a man having only once desisted from killing one Brāhmaṇa would have [the prohibition] obeyed [and could go on killing other Brāhmaṇas at will].²⁵

²¹ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 210): *yat tv adyatanānām āhicchatraka-māthura-brāhmaṇīnām surā-pānādi dākṣiṇātyānām mātula-duhitṛ-vivāhādi smṛti-viruddham upanyastam | tatra kecit tāvad āhuḥ smṛty-ācārayor itarētara-nirapekṣa-veda-mūlatvena tuḷya-balatvād vihitapratīṣiddha-ikalpānuṣṭhānāsrayanād adoṣa iti | tat tu vakṣyamāna-balābala-vibhāgād ayuktam |*

²² TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 211): *āha kena vā brāhmaṇīnām surā-pānaṃ pratiṣiddham?*

²³ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 211): *ucyate — tasmād brāhmaṇa-rājanyau vaiśyaś ca na surām pibet | [MDhŚ 11.93] | ity anena.*

²⁴ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 211): *nanu puṃ-liṅga-nirdeśāt strīṇām na pratiṣidhyate | surā-pānam ato nātra smṛty-ācāra-viruddhatā ||*

²⁵ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 211): *ucyate — hanana-pratiṣedhe 'pi bhavet puṃstvaṃ vivakṣitam | tathā puṃstva-vad ekatva-vivakṣāpi prasajyate || ahatvā kaṃcid evaikaṃ tataś ca syāt kṛtārthatā |* Cf. Jhā 1998: 195.

This begs some questions. One of them is why these two grievous acts are mentioned side by side in this passage. Dharmasūtras and dharmasāstras also relate other immoral activities. The GDhS 21.1 cites a long catalogue of ‘Sins Causing Loss of Caste,’ in which, indeed, murdering Brahmins and drinking alcohol are listed at the very beginning.²⁶ A similar inventory is provided in the MDhŚ 9.235.²⁷ Why are exactly, or only, these two trespasses, i.e. the killing of Brāhmaṇas and the drinking of liquor, evoked by Kumāriḷa? Is it just because they are placed at the beginning of such enumerations? Conceivably, there is another, more latent reason behind his choice to discuss solely these two injunctions (not to drink and not to kill), because his words are in fact an almost verbatim quotation from Patañjali’s *Vyākaraṇa-mahābhāṣya* (VMBh). These two prohibitions are cited by Patañjali in his comments on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 6.1.84.²⁸ as instances of normative rules which are not of Vedic origin (*vaidika*) but ‘worldly’ (*laukika*), i.e. rooted in the dharmasāstra and, as such, authoritative. Patañjali’s mention of the two prohibitions is immediately followed by an argument *ad absurdum* on the singular number, which we have seen reused by Kumāriḷa.²⁹

Thus, the reasoning in the TV is inspired by the previous tradition, which is recontextualised to tie in with the discussion of the difference between the Vedas as *dharmamūla* and other sources, especially authoritative ones. As usual, Kumāriḷa knows his Patañjali very well.³⁰ In the *pūrvapakṣa*, he goes on to state that, similarly, the prohibition of drinking is grammatically phrased in the singular number, so it might be enough if one Brāhmaṇa stopped drinking. But thereto Kumāriḷa reminds his opponent that the singular

²⁶ GDhS 21.1: *brahmaha-surāpa-gurutalpagamāṭṛ-pitṛyonisaṃbandhāgastena-nāstika-nindita-karmābhyāsipatitātyāgya-patitatyāginah patitāḥ*.

See the English translation: ‘Grievous Sins: 1. People who murder a Brahmin; drink liquor; have sex with the wife of an elder (A 1.6.32 n.) or with a woman who is related through his mother or father, or through marriage; steal gold; become infidels; habitually commit forbidden acts; refuse to disown someone fallen from his caste; or disown someone who has not fallen from his caste — these have fallen from their caste, 2. as also those who instigate sins causing loss of caste, 3. and those who associate with out-castes for a year.’ (Olivelle 2000: 172–173).

²⁷ Olivelle 2006: 202, 790: *brahmahā ca surāpaśca taskaro gurutulpagaḥ | ete sarve pṛthag vedyā mahā-pātakino narāḥ || 235 ||*; ‘Grievous Sins Causing Loss of Caste: 235 ‘A murderer of a Brahmin, a man who drinks liquor, a thief, and a man who has sex with an elder’s wife — all these men should be considered individually as guilty of a grievous sin causing loss of caste (11.55 n.).’

²⁸ See also Olivelle 2018: 53.

²⁹ VMBh: *loke tāvat: brāhmaṇah na hantavyah. surā na peyā iti. yadi ca avayavena śāstrārthasampratyayah syāt ekam ca brāhmaṇam ahatvā ekām ca surām apītvā anyatra kāmacārah syāt*.

³⁰ See Nowakowska 2018.

would not be a problem because, according to Mīmāṃsā, the meaning of any noun is *jāti*, thus universal rather than individual and denoting a class of objects as a whole.³¹

Most importantly, grammatical singularity in these sentences is not, to use Mīmāṃsā terms, intended as prescribed, because if it were, it would cause a split of the sentence. A sentence must have its one main purport (cf. MS 2.1.46). What is urged by each of the two prohibitions — the new information — is not-drinking and not-killing respectively. Consequently the other elements of the two sentences (for example the single number) cannot be enjoined; at most, they can be a repetition (*anuvāda*) of an earlier piece of information.³²

But there is a difference between these two prohibitions, claims the *pūrva-pakṣin*, because in the injunction *brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ* (literally: ‘a Brahmin should not be killed’), a Brāhmaṇa is the object (*karman*) of the action (as he is *uddīśya*, or the topic, what is being talked about), while in *surāṃ na pibet* (literally ‘[a Brahmin] should not drink alcohol’), a Brāhmaṇa, as the *kartr* (the logical subject), is ‘included’ (*upādīyamāna*) as part of what is said about the topic (i.e. the drinking of alcohol), i.e. what is being predicated in the injunction, the grammatical gender of which would be pertinent.³³ Moreover, according to Kumārila’s opponent, if the prohibition ‘a Brāhmaṇa should not be killed’ enjoined both not-killing and the maleness of a Brāhmaṇa, it would exemplify a *vākya-bheda*, the splitting of a sentence.³⁴ Furthermore, if the negation in this injunction is important, and it is prescribed, the Brāhmaṇa class provides just a qualification of the enjoined act of not-killing, as no prohibition of mere killing would be possible. Be it as it may, the Kumārila’s opponent

³¹ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 211):

ekena ca surā-pāne ’varjite pūrvavad bhavet ||

āha yat tāvad ekatva-vivakṣāgatam ucyate |

pratyeka-vyakti-saṃbandhāj jāter vā tan na duṣyati ||.

³² TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 212): *ekaikasyā eva hi brāhmaṇa-vyakter yathā-prasakta-vadha-pānayoḥ pratiśedhāt | vivakṣyamānam api tāvad anūdyamānatvād anna-kriyāviśeṣaṇam vā sambhavati, kim uta yadā jāti-gatāikatvānūvāda evāyaṃ vijñāyate.*

³³ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 212): *āha | hanana-pratiśedhe karma-bhūtasya brāhmaṇasyōddīśyamānatvāt, surā-pāne ca kartrtvenōpādīyamānatvāt svarga-kāmaūdumbarī-saṃmānārtha-yaJamānavat-tulya-vivakṣāvivakṣayor aprasaṅgād udāharaṇa-vaiśamyam.*

³⁴ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 212):

tathā hi — yo brāhmaṇa iti hy ukte hanana-pratiśedhataḥ |

brāhmaṇe pratiśedhe vā liṅgam nānyad vidhīyate ||

pratiśedha-vidhi-para hi vidhāyakaḥ śuddha-vadha-pratiśedhāsambhavād brāhmaṇa-jāti-mātra-viśiṣṭa-vadha-pratiśedham vidhāya nivṛtta-vyāpāro yadi liṅgam aparaṃ brāhmaṇe vadhe pratiśedham vā vidadhyāt, tataḥ pratyayāvṛtti-lakṣaṇa-vākya-bheda-prasaṅgaḥ.

concludes, when a Brāhmaṇa is the topic, (neither) its gender (nor number) is significant.³⁵

On the other hand, in the case of not-drinking, the element of ‘a Brāhmaṇa’ does not belong to any of the five possible types of *anupādeya* (that which is already known or presupposed, and cannot be ‘included’ by what is said about the topic)³⁶: occasion (*nimitta*), place (*deśa*), time (*kāla*), result (*phala*) and objects of purification (*saṃskārya*). Consequently, ‘a Brāhmaṇa’ is ‘included’ as part of the comment on the topic (alcohol). What’s more, in the formula *brāhmaṇaḥ surāṃ na pibet*, the singular number is conveyed by the verbal suffix (*ekatrākhyāta-pratyaya*) and secondarily predicated (*guṇī-bhūtopādīyamāna*), while in the rephrased formula *na peyā brahma-vādibhir* (‘it should not be drunk by the exponents of *brahman*, i.e. brahmins’), the Instrumental ending (*trīyā-vibhakti*) points to the sentential intention (*vivakṣita*) of encoding *liṅga* — the grammatical gender.³⁷ In any manner, according to the *pūrva-pakṣa*, there is no prohibition of drinking liquor for Brāhmaṇa women in such a sentence, and, as a result, the injunction only concerns males.

In the *siddhānta* portion, Kumārila presents his own position. In brief, he dismisses any such distinction between the two prohibitions, however formulated. Only if there were a positive injunction in the manner of ‘a Brāhmaṇa should drink liquor,’ logically preceding the prohibitive formula, could ‘Brāhmaṇa’ be interpreted as a subordinate element (*guṇa*) of the injunction or what is ‘to be included’ (*upādeya*), i.e. part of the comment on the topic. Then and only then could the word ‘Brāhmaṇa’ also encode singularity and masculinity, rather than a general class. However, there is no such positive injunction, and, what is more — at this point, Kumārila turns to perceivable reality, and his reasoning suddenly resorts to an argument from experience — one knows from life that Brahmins solely drink out of desire (*rāga*) or delusion

³⁵ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 212): *yeṣāṃ tu vidhi-pratiśedhau nāmātyanta-bhinnau veda-vākyārthau, teṣāṃ pratyaya-sambandhānugrhitā-śaktir abhāva-mātrābhidhānād abhyadhika-labdha-vyāpāro nañ-vidhy-artham api dveṣādy-ārtha-prāptam pūrvōkta-nyāya-vivakṣita-brāhmaṇa-viśiṣṭa-hanañviśiṣṭam cānūditam pratiśidhya caritārtho na liṅgam aparaṃ brāhmaṇa-vadha-vidhiṣu śaknoṭy anāvartamānaḥ pratiśeddhum iti, śrūyamāṇam api liṅga-pratiśedham pratyānupayujyamānatvād avivakṣitam bhavati.*

³⁶ Cf. Yoshimizu 2006: 34.

³⁷ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 212): *brāhmaṇaḥ surāṃ na pibet, na peyā brahma-vādibhir iti nimitta-deśa-kāla-phala-saṃskāryānupādeya-pañcaka-vyatirekād ekatrākhyāta-pratyayōpātta-guṇī-bhūtopādīyamāna-saṃkhyā-paricchedyatva-yogya-sādhanañśa-viśeṣanatvenōpādānāt, itaratra ca trīyā-vibhakti-śruti-vacanam vivakṣita-liṅgasyaiva pratiśedhakam iti darśayitavyam |
ataś cāpratiśiddhatvān naiva strīṇāṃ virudhyate |
surā-pānam ahi-cchatra-brāhmanyas tena kurvate ||.*

(*moha*); this precludes a positive injunction for Brāhmaṇas to drink alcohol.³⁸ The actual prohibition does not stipulate a male, singular Brāhmaṇa, and the purport of the injunction is not-drinking by any Brāhmaṇa person.

Another reference to the tangible social context follows. In real life, Kumāri-la reminds his opponents, one can see both sexes drinking, so one might all the more expect the prohibition to pertain to them both.³⁹ Neither can there be a *vākya-bheda*, as there is no intention (*vivakṣā*) in the sentence to express *liṅga*. In both the prohibitions — of killing and of drinking — gender and number are not stipulated.⁴⁰ The *pūrva-pakṣin* responds by advancing a social fact of his own: the killing of a Brāhmaṇa woman entails a lighter punishment than that of a Brāhmaṇa man.⁴¹ Kumāri-la dismisses this observation and rhetorically asks who would deny the monstrosity of either type of killing. Different penances, expiation practices and rites are indeed exercised in the respective cases of killing a female and a male, but that exactly depends on their genders. The sin, however, is invariably a sin, even if the procedure differs for different genders.⁴²

In the liquor case, no such gender-based distinction in penances is even made. Ultimately, Kumāri-la reminds his discussants, *smṛti* is more important than *ācāras*; thus, one should not abide by the customs unsupported by *śruti* and/or *smṛti*.⁴³

³⁸ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213): *yadi hi brāhmaṇaḥ surāṃ pibed ity ayam avāntara-vākyaṛthaḥ prak-pratiśedha-sambandhād vidhi-buddhim avasthāpayet tato guṇat-vōpādeyatva-vidhi-samavāyān na brāhmaṇa-pade kiṃcid avivakṣitaṃ nāma syāt |*

*yatas tu rāga-mohādeḥ surā-pānaṃ prasajyate |
brāhmaṇāder atas tasmin na kaścid vidhi-sambhavaḥ ||*

³⁹ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213):

*loke caītat yathā-prāptaṃ pānaṃ strī-puṃsa-kartṛkam |
pratiśedha-pare vākye tad avastham anūdyate ||*

⁴⁰ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213): *na ca yo brāhmaṇaḥ pibed ity anūditam | sa ca pumān iti vidhi-vyāpārād vinā liṅga-vivakṣāvakalpate |*

*na cāsya liṅga-sambandhaḥ kevalaḥ san vidhīyate |
na pāna-pratiśedhād dhi vidhir anyatra gacchati ||
tataś cōbhayatrāpy avivakṣita-liṅga-saṃkhyatvaṃ siddham |*

⁴¹ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213): *nanv evaṃ sati brāhmaṇa-strī-vadhe 'pi puṃ-brāhmaṇa-vadha-vad brahma-hatyāstīti, yad ātreyyāṃ eva kevalāyāṃ bhrūṇa-hatyāprāyaś-citta-vidhānaṃ tan nōpapadyate.*

⁴² TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213): *ucyate — brāhmaṇa-strī-vadhe ko vā brahma-hatyāṃ niśedhati |
prāyaś-cittāntare tasyā strīva-mātra-nibandhanam ||*

na ca prāyaś-cittālpātvena nimittasya brahma-hatyātvam apanīyate, puṃ-vadhe 'pi laghutara-prāyaś-citta-vidhi-darśanena brahma-hatyādoṣābhāva-prasaṅgāt, tasmān na vācanika-prāyaś-cittālpātvena brāhmaṇi-vadha-pratiśedha eva nāstīty-āśaṅkitavyam.

⁴³ TV ad MS 1.3.7 (p. 213): *surā-pāne punaḥ prāyaś-citta-viśeṣo 'pi na kaścid āmnāta iti, dūrād apākṛtatvād asty evāsya smṛtyā saha virodhaḥ | yāpi cāpastamba-smṛti-vacanāt tulya-balatvāśaṅkā bhavet sāpi | 'tasmād brāhmaṇaḥ surāṃ na pibati' ity etena pratyakṣa-śruti-vidhinā nirākṛteti naīvaṃ-vidhācāra-prāmāṇyam āśaṅkitavyam |*

IV

The discussion in the TV had its connotations and implications. First of all, the overall structure of the problem, already thematised by Patañjali, and some of the main arguments employed in it refer readers to another portion of the TV, ad MS III.1.13–14, i.e. the two *Mīmāṃsā-sūtras* that advise on how to treat the grammatical singularity of the ‘topic’ part of the injunction, the portion in relation to which something is enjoined, therefore not enjoined as a particular single object but supplying information required by the enjoining verb. The instance discussed in the TV III.1.13–14 is *daśāpavitreṇa graham sammārṣṭi* (‘[he] wipes a goblet with a filtering cloth’) in the context of the *jyotiṣṭoma* ritual, and the question is whether the wiping is a one-off action involving one goblet (*graha*) or regular action performed on all the goblets.⁴⁴ The actual ritualistic and interpretative problem served to clarify why the grammatical singular number did not always matter and when it was not really enjoined. Because of this discussion, the interpretative rule applied in it was referred to as *grahaikatva-nyāya* in the later literature.

However, Kumārila himself did not link his analysis under the MS 1.3.7 directly to the *grahaikatva* portion. One of his reasons for not making that connection may have been a different perspective of the discussion. As has been shown, the not-killing and not-drinking analysis was inspired by Patañjali and his reference in the discussion of *dharmaśāstras* as *dharma-mūlas*, that is sources of Aryan knowledge of dharma, which Patañjali termed *laukika*, in contrast with the Vedas, i.e. *śruti* teaching, which he called *vaidika*. For their part, the two prohibitions — of drinking and of killing — are addressed by Medhātithi (9th–10th century) in his *Manubhāṣya* ad MDhŚ V. 89–90, which focus exactly on the problem of women drinking liquor. Although Medhātithi mentions the MS on *grahaikatva* only indirectly, he extensively uses the term ‘singularity’ (*ekatva*) and draws in his discussion on both portions of the TV. Hence, it is not surprising that at least some secondary literature on Indian law (Keith 1921: 105) illustrates the *grahaikatva-nyāya* — one of the *Mīmāṃsā* rules, also used in legal interpretative practice — by referencing the prohibitions of drinking liquor and killing as discussed for example by Medhātithi, and earlier by Kumārila.

V

Evidently, the matter addressed in the title of this paper is not a trivial or frivolous question. On the contrary, it had its very serious and sometimes grave applications. Firstly, it is a rather common human inquiry in various languages

⁴⁴ Cf. Yoshimizu 2006.

with a certain system of grammar to ask what is actually meant when some referential terms are used and, in particular, what is meant by words in the masculine grammatical gender and singular number. Often, ‘masculine linguistic items operate as indexes of “humanness” and “plural number.” They presuppose more than one referent in context and produce the inference of human/universal via the metonymic link between male sex and the norm.’⁴⁵ This brings to mind the current heated public debates on whether feminine suffixes in names of occupations are needed or not and why masculine words may or may not be enough. Such disputes are vibrant in a number of countries, including Poland.

In the Mīmāṃsā discussion, however, there is an additional subtlety to be considered in approaching and interpreting Vedic ritual injunctions. Specifically, upon the Mīmāṃsā tenet, they were authorless, which makes inquiring into their meaning and attributing any intention of them somewhat disputable. Mīmāṃsā practitioners believed that one should and, on the practical level of textual interpretation, indeed could do so, and they worked out hermeneutical criteria for identifying such intention, distinguishing various functions of sentence parts and arranging them in hierarchical dependencies, according to their syntactic and semantic function in the sentence. In basic terms, Mīmāṃsā analysed the connection of the enjoining verb to the object of the injunction, or rather the topic (*uddeśya*) in relation to which something other is enjoined (*vidheya*) and predicated to be performed by ‘including’ (*upādeya*) of something else.⁴⁶ In this way, Mīmāṃsā (and to some degree also later *dharmaśāstras*) could convincingly discuss intentions of sentences or larger portions of text by primarily operating on and subsequently referring to ready-made instances of the Vedic injunctions.

Secondly, it was extremely important in the context of ritual injunctions and indispensable for ritual functionaries to know what it exactly meant when a command enjoined them to use a certain material, a ritual substance or some other means: whether it was to be used only once or twice or many times; whether one item was to be used, two, three or more; how much of it was to be used; and how detailed other information carried by the injunction or prohibition was. The same necessity governed juridical and legal analyses and pronouncements. According and thanks also to comprehensive and precise Mīmāṃsā rules, it was possible to interpret laws and ordinances correctly, as has been shown by legal practice and legal commentators in India.

Thirdly, to return to the title question: Can (or could) the Brāhmaṇa women of Ahicchatra or Mathurā drink liquor? The arguments dissecting the prohibition to a Brāhmaṇa not to drink alcohol and pointing out that the command

⁴⁵ Alvanoudi 2015: 128.

⁴⁶ Cf. McCrea 2008: 55–98; Yoshimizu 2006.

does not imply maleness or singularity, but concerns the entire class of Brahmins, suggest that the answer is they should not. Even if such practices were accepted by local customs, *ācāras* are subservient to *smṛtis* in the hierarchy of *dharma-mūlas*. This means that dharmasūtras and dharmasūtras prohibit Brāhmanas in general (male and female alike) from drinking *surā* and condemn such practices.

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RĀVAṆA’S LAMENT IN BHAṬṬI’S POEM (*BHAṬṬIKĀVYA*)

Abstract: The paper presents an analysis of stanzas 2–34 from canto 16 of the *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, a passage which contains Rāvaṇa’s lament after the death of his brother Kumbhakarna, his sons and warriors. This lament is part of Rāvaṇa’s angry speech leading up to Indrajit’s entry into the battle (BhK. 16.1–17.19), which, as J.L. Brockington has shown, is a considerably expanded version of the episode in *Rāmāyaṇa* 6.67. Moreover, as I posit in this paper, the lament itself is a version of Rām. 6.56 and 6.60.2–3. Rāvaṇa begins with expressing his concern about the future of his kingdom and ends with asserting his belief that Indra and other gods will be defeated. Evidently, the fact that one of the poet’s aims in composing canto 16 was to illustrate the use of the Simple Future Tense contributed to the character of Rāvaṇa’s lament; while other lamentation passages dwell on the contrast between the miserable present and the happy past, here the contrast is between the miserable present and the happy future.

However, Rāvaṇa’s lament also contains elements which are typical of the ‘traditional’ form of lamentation passages: the expression of grief and bereavement, the contrast between the past of the dead and their present condition, the praise of the dead, the expression of anger directed against those responsible for the deaths and a desire to take vengeance on them and the expression of a desire to end one’s own life. Some elements introduced by Bhaṭṭi are not new, but have been used earlier in different contexts (e.g., the motif of “seeing/not seeing”).

Keywords: *mahākāvya*, *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, literary lament, Rāvaṇa

Bhaṭṭi’s poem (*Bhaṭṭikāvya*), composed between the beginning of the sixth and the middle of the seventh century,¹ is, to quote Oliver Fallon’s opinion from the introduction to his translation of this work, “one of the boldest experiments

¹ Lienhard 1984: 180 (about the beginning of the 7th century); Warder (1994: 118 f.) gives the 7th century as the date of composition; as does Sudyka 2004 a: 271; cf. also

in classical literature.”² From the formal point of view, the poem is classified as *mahākāvya*, or a great poem, defined as “a long metrical narrative work with a plot based on stories from the epic tradition of India (*Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *purāṇa*, Buddhist and Jain legends) or on historical events relating to the life of the author’s literary patron.³ *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, which is also known as *Rāvaṇavadha* or *The Killing of Rāvaṇa*,⁴ is ranked among the six most accomplished specimens of the *mahākāvya* genre.⁵ However, the exceptional quality of the work rests not only on the fact that it refers to one of the two canonical epic poems of ancient India, namely to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and that it tells, in highly elegant Sanskrit, the most important events from the story of Rāma,⁶ but also

Sudyka 2004 b: 15–32. Renou and Filliozat (1953: 218) give the 6th or 7th century as the date of Bhaṭṭi’s work; cf. also Winternitz 1985: 77–79, Mylius 2004: 149.

² Fallon 2009: XIX.

³ Trynkowska 2004: 9; cf. also 10–38 for her perceptive discussion of the various types of *mahākāvya*. For a detailed treatment of *mahākāvya*, see Lienhard 1984: 159–273 (chapters IV, V and VI), Sudyka (2004 b: 42–67), and Smith 1985: 14–32.

⁴ *Bhaṭṭikāvya* is also known under the titles *Rāmacarita* (*Deeds of Rāma*) and *Rāmakāvya* (*A Poem on Rāma*); see Sudyka b: 15. As regards the title *Rāvaṇavadha*, Fallon (2009: XXXVI) thinks it rather implausible that this is the original title, since Rāvaṇa’s death is but a short episode in the poem as a whole. Perhaps this title was given to distinguish Bhaṭṭi’s poem from other compositions relating to the deeds of Rāma. There is a 5th century *mahākāvya* poem by Pravarasena, composed in Māhārāṣṭrī Prakṛt, which, besides the title *Setubandha* (*The Building of the Bridge*), is also known as *Rāvaṇavaha* (*The Slaying of Rāvaṇa*) and *Dasamuhavaha* (*The Slaying of the Ten-Face Daemon*); see Warder 1990: 155.

⁵ Apart from Bhaṭṭi’s poem, other examples of the *mahākāvya* genre include *Kumārasambhava* and *Raghuvamśa* by Kālidāsa, *Kirātārjunīya* by Bhāravi, *Śisupālavadha* by Māgha and *Naiṣadhacarita* by Śrīharṣa; see Lienhard 1984: 171. Because *mahākāvya* metrical poems consist of *sargas*, they are also known as *sargabandha* or the combination of *sargas*; see Lienhard 1984: 159; cf. also Renou, Filliozat 1953: 210 f.; Winternitz 1985: 57 f.; Smith 1985: 14–32; Sudyka 2004 b: 38–49; Trynkowska 2004: 11.

⁶ ‘Bhaṭṭi’s epic *Rāvaṇavadha* retells the story of *Rāmāyaṇa* up to Rāma’s victory and return to Ayodhyā, beginning with the incarnation of Viṣṇu as Rāma,’ Warder 1994: 118; cf. also Lienhard 1984: 181 f.

Brockington (1985: 244 f.) examines the episodes of the *Rāmāyaṇa* which are absent from Bhaṭṭi’s work, as well as those which are treated by Bhaṭṭi in much more detail than in Vālmiki’s epic; both groups are diligently listed in his book. As he observes, “Bhaṭṭi’s *Rāvaṇavadha*, or *Bhaṭṭikāvya*, could be regarded as a fairly full summary of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, on which it is clearly directly based, for it is almost exactly one tenth of the length of the original (1625 stanzas against 16,380 of the Bāla to Yuddha kāṇḍas), but in fact its treatment is decidedly uneven, with the greatest attention paid to certain erotic scenes added to the Sundarakāṇḍa and especially to the battle scenes of the Yuddhakāṇḍa, which occupies over half the total length of the poem. Like Kumāradāsa, Bhaṭṭi was acquainted with a text of the *Rāmāyaṇa* intermediate between the present Northeast and Southern recensions; one notable feature is that it has nothing

because the poem as a whole is a remarkable example of the practical adaptation of the grammatical rules set down in the oldest extant work on Sanskrit grammar, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* by Pāṇini (5th or 4th centuries BC).⁷ Moreover, it is a valuable source for students of Indian poetics (*alaṃkāraśāstra*).⁸ As stressed by Lidia Sudyka, the combination of learning relating to grammar and poetics should not come as a surprise, because the study of grammar or, more generally, linguistics always influenced Indian poetics.⁹ From this point of view, Bhaṭṭi's poem as a whole, consisting of 22 cantos, may be divided into several sections (*kāṇḍa*): cantos 1–9 present Pāṇini's various rules; cantos 10–12 demonstrate how the most important poetical figures may be applied; canto 13 gives examples of paronomasia in both Sanskrit and Prakṛt; and cantos 14–22 contain material exemplifying the use of grammatical tenses and moods (e.g. the aorist and descriptive future, tenses only rarely used in Sanskrit). Besides the richness of its grammatical material, the poem also displays metrical variety: cantos 4–9 and 14–22 is composed in the Śloka; cantos 1, 2, 11 and 12 in the Upajāti;

at all corresponding to the Uttarakāṇḍa and that it omits virtually all the mythological material from the Bālakāṇḍa (1.31–47 and 50–64) as well as the birth of the Vānaras (1.16) [...]. Other passages omitted in the Bhaṭṭikāvya are those on Sītā's resolve to go to the forest (Rām. 2.24–7), the evils of a kingless state (Rām. 2.61), Bharata's consoling of Kausalyā (Rām. 2.69), Jābāli's and Vasiṣṭha's speeches urging Rāma to return (Rām. 2.100–2), Sītā's homily and the meetings with Agastya and Jaṭāyus (Rām. 3.8–15), Sītā's diatribe against Rāvaṇa (Rām. 3.45.28–45), the Saptajana hermitage (Rām. 4.13), Tārā's advice to Vālin, Hanumān's consolation of her after his death and her subsequent intervention on Sugrīva's behalf (Rām. 4.15, 21 and 34), the return of the unsuccessful search parties (4.46), the Niśākara episode (Rām. 4.59–61), Sītā's despair and thoughts of suicide (Rām. 5.23–4), Hanumān's offer to rescue Sītā immediately (Rām. 5.35) and his defeat of Jambumālin and the sons of Rāvaṇa's ministers (Rām. 5.42–4), the first encounter between Rāma and Rāvaṇa (Rām. 6.47), Mahodara's speech (Rām. 6.52), and, during the return to Ayodhyā, the meeting with Bharadvāja and Hanumān's narration of events to Bharata (Rām. 6.112 and 114). [...]. The Bhaṭṭikāvya also simplifies certain passages [...]. On the other hand it greatly expands others, notably the combat between Hanumān and Indrajit (BhK. 9.46–95, Rām. 5.46), the building of the causeway (BhK. 13.8–30, Rām. 6.15) and Rāvaṇa's angry speech leading up to Indrajit's entry into the battle (BhK. 16.1–17.19, Rām. 6.67); it also gives, at some length, Vibhīṣaṇa's lament for Rāvaṇa, which is found in the fourth stage of the Rāmāyaṇa (BhK. 18.1–36, Rām. 6. App. I.67.27–94). It also adds certain entirely new passages: a meeting with several ascetics immediately after the killing of Tātakā (BhK. 2.24–31), Rāvaṇa's boastings after receiving Śūrpaṅkhā's complaint (BhK. 5.23–9), Hanumān's bravado between his encounters with Akṣa and Indrajit (BhK. 9.39–45), and especially the description of the love-play of the Rākṣasas (BhK. 11.3–33). [...] It is clear that Bhaṭṭi is following the Rāmāyaṇa quite closely as it had developed to include much of the Bālakāṇḍa, though not the Uttarakāṇḍa.”

⁷ See e.g. Wielińska 1994: 133–143.

⁸ Lienhard 1984: 182.

⁹ Sudyka 2004 b: 70.

canto 13 in the Āryā; and the majority of canto 9 in the Puṣpitāgrā. Other metres appear occasionally, some of them only once.¹⁰

Bhaṭṭikāvya may also be classified as *śāstrakāvya*, where the emphasis is characteristically put on the beauty of the work as a whole while its scholarly dimension is limited only to didactic functions.¹¹ Bhoja and Kṣemendra classify Bhaṭṭi's poem as a *kāvyaśāstra* (a science presented in a *kāvya*).¹²

This paper, however, will concentrate on the lament spoken by Rāvaṇa (the ruler of the Rakṣasas and one of the most important and most interesting figures of the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*) after the deaths of his brother Kumbhakarna, his sons and his commanders. The lament itself is a version of Rām. 6.56 and 6.60.2–3.

This is not the only lamentation passage in Bhaṭṭi's poem. Rāvaṇa's younger brother, Vibhīṣaṇa, also delivers a long speech of mourning when Rāvaṇa, in turn, has died; his speech is marked by both sorrow and rebuke.

The lament of the ruler of the Rakṣasas is found in canto 16 (stanzas 2–34), which contains material illustrating the use of the Simple Future tense. This grammatical choice indubitably has an impact on the character of this passage, in which Rāvaṇa focuses on his situation and the world's appearance after the deaths of his relatives and friends. In spite of the illustrative function of the passage, the structure of this speech exhibits multiply elements characteristic of (not only Sanskrit and not only ancient) lamentations, including:

- the expression of grief and bereavement,
- the contrast between the past of the dead and their present condition,¹³
- the praise of the dead,
- the expression of anger directed against the dead for abandoning the speaker in his or her grief,
- the expression of anger directed against those responsible for the deaths and a desire to take vengeance on them,

¹⁰ Lienhard 1984: 182; cf. also Sudyka 2004 b: 64 f. Warder 1994: 120.

¹¹ Sudyka 2004 b: 66. Lienhard (1984: 225): “[...] *śāstrakāvya*, poetry that also has a scientific content. [...] Whereas a *kāvyaśāstra* generally does no more than approximate to *kāvya* and only parts of it have aesthetic value, a *śāstrakāvya* does not deal with scientific subjects at all but with the usual poetic material, which may be pure fiction, based on real life or taken from the epics and Purāṇas. However, it is didactic insofar as it also expounds rules and gives examples from various fields of science: grammar, the theory of poetry and lexicography par preference. [...] The first poem to present scientific matter throughout the entire work, not merely in parts of it, is of course, Bhaṭṭi's Rāma poem.”

¹² Warder 1994: 120.

¹³ Peterson (2003: 59) observes that “the great battle passages in the two old epics offer many examples of laments, in which, like Draupadī, the speakers mourn the death or downfall of beloved people, using the formulaic language and the conventional imagery of the contrast between past splendour and present degradation.”

- the expression of a desire to end one's own life,
- the description of funeral rites for the dead.¹⁴

From among these *topoi*, the last one — the description of funeral ceremonies — is missing in Rāvaṇa's lament in the *Bhaṭṭikāvya*. This is also the case in other Sanskrit texts; such accounts are usually given by the narrator, not the speaker within the narrative, and they may be treated as separate segments in a given literary text. Moreover, the ruler of the Rakṣasas does not express anger towards his relatives in the *Bhaṭṭikāvya*. Also, the contrast of the past and present of those who have died (or, in Bhaṭṭi's case, more precisely the past and the future) is somewhat different in character from other lamentation passages.

Rāvaṇa's lament has a subtle structure: it begins with the puzzlement of the speaker who, having learnt about the deaths of his sons and commanders, is at a loss as to what will happen now with his kingdom and with Sītā (whose role in the development of the poem's plot is crucial). Then he mentions, one after another, the Rakṣasas who perished in the battle. First, he says that one of his sons, the brave Atikāya was killed (*Atikāye hate vīre*, BhK. 16.2) and confesses that now he himself will not have the strength to live on (*protsahiṣye na jīvitum*, BhK. 16.2; cf. Rām. 6.56.14). Thus, the past is juxtaposed with the future, with the latter overshadowed by Atikāya's death, which may bring about the death of Rāvaṇa as well. The following sections of the lament provide more details about both Atikāya and the king's other sons, as well as his brother Kumbhakarna, all of whom were killed in the battle with the Vānaras, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. All these miseries have a powerful and unabating grip on the audience, because Rāvaṇa once again (in stanza 13) avows that, faced with such a calamity, he will not live on (*na jīviṣyāmi duḥkhitāḥ*, BhK. 16.13). However, he is uncertain as to whether he should simply die or whether he should fight and defeat his enemies himself (*maṛiṣyāmi vijeṣye vā*, BhK. 16.13; cf. Rām. 6.56.15), now that his sons are dead. From this point on, the lament leads unavoidably to Rāvaṇa's announcement of his decision to take part in the fighting.¹⁵ Thus, there is a sharp contrast between

¹⁴ Alexiou 1974: 133 ff.

¹⁵ A similar development is observable in Arjuna, who, while going through an inner crisis, does not want to join in the fight, and it is only after a talk with Kṛṣṇa that he gradually matures and decides to engage in combat. However, the difference between Rāvaṇa and Arjuna is important for a number of reasons, such as the way in which their roles in both works are perceived and the meanings attributed to the respective battles in *Rāvaṇavadha* and *Bhagavadgītā*.

As J. Sachse argues, "The Kurukṣetra War, which is preceded by the famous talk, can be viewed as a metaphor for an important stage in a man's life during which he battles the adversities which he encounters on the path of liberation from the shackles of saṃsāra. Only in this specific context is it understood that the godly Kṛṣṇa encourages the man to take part in this fight": Sachse 2019: 104.

the lament's beginning and its end: while at the beginning the mood is that of sorrow, despair and uncertainty about the future, towards the end the text conjures up an imaginary picture of a world freed from Rāvaṇa's enemies, a world in which, thanks to his victorious fighting, not only will his subjects live peacefully and without fear, but even Indra, the ruler of so many gods, will be defeated. It is in fact Indra who, as this lament (as well as some earlier passages) suggests, is Rāvaṇa's main enemy: he is mentioned almost at the outset of the speech, then twice somewhat later on and finally, at its close.¹⁶ Also, whereas at the beginning of his lament Rāvaṇa, overwhelmed by perplexity, asks troublesome questions about the future of his kingdom, he is, at its end, already able to answer them in an encouraging way. Rāvaṇa's lament and some of its important features are examined in more detail below.

In his lament, Rāvaṇa devotes most of his attention to Atikāya (alongside Kumbhakarna), whom he mentions first, although he joined the battle with the Vānaras together with his other brothers, as recounted in canto 15 (where he is named immediately after Devāntaka, before Triśiras and Narāntaka: *Devāntako 'tikāyaś ca Triśirāḥ sa Narāntakaḥ*, BhK. 15.74). Atikāya, not unlike his brothers, is strong (*balin*, BhK. 15.74), skilled in battle and brave. He feels no fear; on the contrary, he instils fear in his enemies, the Vānaras (BhK. 15.87–89). These features are also evoked in Rāvaṇa's lament, because the ruler of the Rakṣasas calls Atikāya a hero (*vīra*) and worries about who, now that Atikāya is dead, will be able to humiliate the enemy (*hrepaiṣyati* [...] *śatrūn*, BhK. 16.2), defeat Yama (*jāyisyate*, BhK. 16.2) and cut the noose of Varuṇa (*pāśam ko vā chetsyati Vāruṇam*, BhK. 16.3). Atikāya posed a serious threat to the gods; after his death, Indra will no longer be afraid to move freely from one place to another (*vicariṣyati*, BhK. 16.5), to raise his thunder, to enjoy sacrifices offered to him and to take pride in being called a hero (*śūramānaṃ ca vakṣyati*, BhK. 16.5). However, Rāvaṇa not only emphasises Atikāya's military prowess and strength, but also depicts him as a noble and admirable figure (*unnataḥ*, BhK. 16.4), as someone who was able to lead his people to victory (*unnatim*), who did not neglect to honour his ancestors and, moreover, despite his great achievements, was not blinded by pride (*kṛtvā katthiṣyate na kaḥ*, BhK. 16.4). Although in this part of his lament Rāvaṇa asks himself anxiously about who, after Atikāya's death, will be able to act like him and match his accomplishments, these words may be construed as a laudatory, albeit indirectly formulated, characterisation of the slain Rakṣasa. Notably, Rāvaṇa stresses his son's lack of pride. This praise is particularly significant as it comes from

¹⁶ Earlier, in canto 5.11–14, Śūrpaṅkhā, in an attempt to induce Rāvaṇa to take vengeance on Rāma, who has cut her nose, mentions Indra in order to humiliate her brother: Indra, undefeated, enjoys the part of the offering which is his due, whereas the Rakṣasas, out of fear of Rāma, eat only *diśaḥ*, that is to say emptiness.

the character who was by no means modest; Rāvaṇa has frequently boasted of his strength, compared himself favourably to Indra (BhK. 5.28) and affirmed that his greatness (*mahas*) made him superior to Rāma (BhK. 5.29).¹⁷ Even his mother, when asking Vibhīṣaṇa to curb his older brother, the oppressor of three worlds, observes that Rāvaṇa is filled with excessive pride (*atimadoddhata*, BhK. 12.2). It is *mada* which causes Rāvaṇa's misfortunes, and Kumbhakarna, on an earlier occasion, warned him of the dangers of pride (BhK. 15.15).¹⁸

The ruler of the Rakṣasas also regrets that after Atikāya's death there will be nobody to extol him, and he speaks about this twice in this part of the lament (*maṃsyate, ślāghisyē*, BhK. 16.3, 16.4). These words may be interpreted as an expression of the close bond between the father and the son and the latter's care for the former's well-being. On the other hand, the father's preoccupation, in the face of his son's death, with his own glory may seem objectionable, but the fact is that, in the world of Indian epics, one's own glory is the most important value for a warrior,¹⁹ that life devoid of glory is fruitless (1.195.10), that man stays in heaven as long as his renown lasts (3.191,1–20), and that ill fame leads to hell (3.191. 22).²⁰ Towards the end of his lament, Rāvaṇa is quite explicit about the glory he will receive (*ākarkṣyāmi yaśaḥ*, BhK. 16.30) when he has defeated his enemies and overcome Rāma, thus bringing Sītā to grief.

In many lamentations spoken by men, and especially by women, references to nature play an important role. Nature serves as a background to the events bewailed by the speaker; it may also be represented as expressing sympathy for the mourner (when attention is drawn to its altered condition, which can be interpreted as a response to the tragedy)²¹ or, on the contrary, as showing indifference to his or her miseries (when an emphasis is put on its immutability or cyclic repetition of certain phenomena, irrespective of what is happening in the world of human or divine beings).²² References to nature are also important in Rāvaṇa's lament. Natural imagery features prominently when Rāvaṇa deplores the death of Atikāya and speaks with bitterness about the heroic Indra:

¹⁷ Rāvaṇa is similarly depicted in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Rām. 3.30). See Wurm 1976: 242–243; Pigoñiowa 2019: 43 f.

¹⁸ *mūrkhās tvām avavañcanta ye viḡraham acīkaran,*
abhāñīn mālyavān yuktam akṣaṃsthās tvam na tan madāt, BhK. 15.15.
Fools who would have you make war have gulled you,
Malyavat spoke rightly but through pride you did not suffer that.

¹⁹ In the *Mahābhārata* the importance of glory is frequently stressed, and glory is said to be tantamount to life itself, *kīrtir āyur narasya*, 3.284.33. On the other hand Rāvaṇa is also concerned about what the sages (*muni*) and the gods think about him (BhK.16.14).

²⁰ McGrath 2009: 76.

²¹ For instance, Ragh. 14.69; Kum. 4.4; *Harṣacarita* 5.159–160. In the Rāvaṇa's lament in Rām. 6.56.6–18 nature is not mentioned.

²² Cf. MBh. 11.1.5 ff.; Kum. 4.15.

ravis tapsyati niḥśāṅkaṃ, vāsyaty aniyataṃ marut,
nirvartsyaty ṛtusamghātaḥ, sv'ecchay'endur udeśyati,

tīvraṃ syandiśyate meghair, ugraṃ vartiśyate Yamaḥ,
Atikāyasya maraṇe, kiṃ kariśyanti n'ānyathā, BhK. 16.6–7.

Without doubt the sun will shine, the wind will always
blow, the cycle of seasons will roll on, the moon will rise of its own will.

The clouds will rain heavily, Yama will proceed fiercely, now
Atikaya is dead, what will they not do differently?²³

This regularity of various natural phenomena manifesting itself before the eyes of Rāvaṇa as he is seized with grief does not bring him any consolation; on the contrary, it sets him even more apart from the rest of the world. There has been a change within Rāvaṇa himself because he has lost his son, but nature around him is unchanged, and its phenomena still unfold as before, unaware of the tragedy.

In another passage, nature is evoked to serve a different purpose. When Rāvaṇa mentions his brother Kumbhakarṇa, a giant of enormous strength, and finds it almost impossible to believe that Rāma conquered him in battle (literally, “who could have thought,” *kena sambhāvitam [...] Kumbhakarnasya Rāghavaḥ/ raṇe kartsyati gātrāṇi*, BhK. 16.15; cf. Rām. 6.56.8), he makes a reference to the world of nature in order to illustrate the event which seemed almost beyond imagination. According to him, this world’s most unusual phenomena and disasters would be as unbelievable as Kumbhakarṇa’s death at the hands of Rāma. Rāvaṇa says:

kena sambhāvitam [...]

patiśyati kṣitau bhānuḥ, pṛthivī tolayiśyate,
nabhasvān bhaṅkṣyate, vyoma muṣṭibhis tādayiśyate.

indoḥ syandiśyate vahniḥ, samuccokṣyati sāgaraḥ,
jalaṃ dhakṣyati, tigmāṃsoḥ syantyanti tamasāṃ cayāḥ, BhK. 16.15–17.

Who could imagine [...]

The sun might as well fall to earth, the earth be weighed,
the wind be cut, the air be squeezed in fistfuls,

²³ Throughout this paper, the Sanskrit text of the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* comes from the edition *Bhaṭṭi's Poem: The Death of Rāvaṇa by Bhaṭṭi*. Translated by O. Fallon, New York 2009. All translations from the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* are by Fallon 2009.

Fire might as well stream from the moon, the ocean be dried
up, water burn, or masses of darkness stream from the sun.

To plunge himself into misery, Rāvaṇa asserts that he will not desire happiness, or even life itself, and that spending time pleurably in the empty palace with his relatives gone is out of the question (BhK. 16.23; cf. Rām. 6.56.12–14). He is aware of the fact that good fortune (*sampad*) which comes too late, when the people close to him are no longer alive (*suhṛtsu vipanneṣu*), may turn into misery (*vipatti*), because joy usually prompted by success will be overshadowed by the grief (*manyu*, “anger, fury; sorrow, despair”) caused by their deaths (BhK. 16.25). The obvious consequence of the death of Kumbhakarṇa will be for Rāvaṇa not only the defeat of the Rakṣasas and the capture of Lanka by the Vānaras, but also the impossibility of enjoying life's pleasures and common happiness.²⁴ He complains:

modiṣye kasya sukhye ‘ham? ko me modiṣyate sukhe?
ādeyāḥ kiṃkṛte bhohāḥ Kumbhakarṇa, tvayā vinā?, BhK. 16.24.

Whose happiness shall I delight in? Who will delight in my
pleasure? How can pleasures be enjoyed without you,
o Kumbhakarṇa?

Rāvaṇa addresses Kumbhakarṇa directly.²⁵ Such a direct address to the dead is a very characteristic and frequently attested feature of lamentations in Sanskrit and in other languages and cultures.²⁶ Examples abound in the *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṃśa* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, as well as in *kāvya* literature (*Kumārasambhava*, *Raghuvamśa* and *Kādambarī*). Lamentations containing apostrophes to the dead may be viewed as a proto-theatrical form incorporated into an epic poem. Addressing the dead, bewailing and praising them and, finally, lamenting one's own (the speaker's) lot are recurring elements of lamentations, and some of them are also visible in Rāvaṇa's lament.

Rāvaṇa mourns the death of his brother without even mentioning his abrasive criticism, which is reported in Book 15, and which roused the king

²⁴ In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāvaṇa confesses that “without Kumbhakarṇa there is no pleasure in life for me” (kumbhakarṇavihīnasya jīvite nāsti me ratiḥ, Rām. 6.56.12).

²⁵ But in BhK. 16. 15 Rāvaṇa does not approach Kumbhakarṇa directly, because the word *tāta* (according to Mallinātha meaning “child,” but translated by Fallon as “father”) is probably addressed to Indrajit who approaches his father when his lament is over and reminds him of his previous victories and eventually joins the battle outrightly. I believe that Mallinātha's translation is correct and *tāta* refers to Indrajit, who is present there.

²⁶ Cf. Alexiou 1974: 161 f.

of Rakṣasas to anger. When Rāvaṇa learned about the death of Prahasta and his other warriors, he called upon Kumbhakarna for help, and the latter made a point of reminding him that the situation in which Rāvaṇa had found himself was the result of his disregard for Kumbhakarna's wise counsel,²⁷ wrong conduct and loss of his warriors and his wealth (BhK. 15.13–18).²⁸ But now, after the death of Kumbhakarna, Rāvaṇa does not refer directly to this conversation, though he admittedly hints at it by confessing (slightly different in Rām. 6.56.15–16):

smeṣyante munayo devāḥ kathayisyanti c'āniśam
Daśagrīvasya durnīter vinaṣṭaṃ rakṣasāṃ kulam, BhK. 16.14.

The sages will smile, and the gods will always tell the story
of how the tribe of demons was destroyed by ten-necked
Ravaṇa's ill-advised counsel.

Besides Atikāya and Kumbhakarna, the ruler of the Rakṣasas also mentions other figures, namely Narāntaka, Triśiras, Matta, Yudhonmatta, Nikumbha and Devāntaka. They are, however, given far less attention. The three stanzas, in which Rāvaṇa's sons, Narāntaka and Triśiras, and his warriors, Matta and Yudhonmatta, appear (the warriors were sent to protect the sons, but

²⁷ Similarly, Mandodarī reproaches the slain Rāvaṇa for not listening to her advice about making peace with Rāma (Rām. 6.99.13). Likewise, Tārā, reproaches Vālin for the same (Rām. 4.23.30), and Saṃjaya says that Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not follow his friends' advice, MBh. 11.1–27.

²⁸ In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Kumbhakarna's response surely is far from pleasing to Rāvaṇa, because the speaker first bursts out laughing and then reminds his elder brother of his previous blindness and failure to pay heed to those who wished him well (Rām. 6.51.1–3). He also recalls Rāvaṇa's arrogance and not taking the consequences of one's own actions into account (Rām. 6.51.4; *anubandhaḥ*). Further, he instructs his brother about what is the proper conduct of a good ruler who listens to the advice of his ministers and acts in accordance 'with the texts on polity' (Rām. 6.51.8; *yathāgamam*: in accordance with the āgamas, scientific texts). Thus, Kumbhakarna insists that the king should have a knowledge of *nīṭśāstras* and be able to act *rājāmarga*. Only then is he truly prosperous and 'never comes to grief in this world' (Rām. 6.51.11–12). However, when his actions contradict this ideal, when he pays heed to the counsel of evil ministers and underestimates his enemies, misfortune befalls the king (Rām. 6.51.20). Rāvaṇa does not fail to remind Kumbhakarna what the essence of true friendship and kinship is: 'A true friend is one who stands by a poor wretch who has lost everything. A true kinsman is one who renders assistance to those who have gone astray' (Rām. 6.51.26). As a result, Kumbhakarna gives up his patronising attitude to Rāvaṇa and reassuringly protests his brotherly affection: it is on account of this very affection that he wanted to give him his beneficial advice (Rām. 6.51.30–31). He also promises, as a loving kinsman, to kill Rāvaṇa's enemies.

they also perished), revolves around the familiar motif of “seeing/not seeing.” Firstly, Rāvaṇa says that he will open his eyes in vain, because he will not see Narāntaka, who obediently fulfilled his orders; similarly, Trīśiras will not see his father (16.8–9). While this motif (the dead cannot be seen alive any more by the speaker, or vice versa) is conventional and surfaces in other lamentations, here it is supplemented (and contrasted) with another idea: on the one hand, Rāvaṇa will not see his son alive and will not be seen himself by his son, but, on the other, he will be easily seen in battle (*drakṣye 'ham saṃyuge sukham*, BhK.16.10):

unmīṣyati cakṣur me vṛthā yad vinay'āgatam
ājñālābhonmukhaṃ namraṃ na drakṣyati Narāntakam.

dhiṃ māṃ Trīśirasā n'āhaṃ saṃdarśiṣye 'dya yat punaḥ,
ghāniṣyante dviṣaḥ kena tasmin pañcatvam āgate?

śatrubhir nihate Matte, drakṣye 'haṃ saṃyuge sukham,
Yuddhonmattād vinā śatrūn samāskantsyati ko raṇe. BhK. 16.8–10

In vain will my eye open, for it will not see Narantaka
coming obediently with face upraised to receive my orders
submissively.

A curse on me that I will never now again be seen by Trishiras.
Who will kill my enemies now he is dead?

Now that Matta has been killed by the enemy, I shall be
easily visible in the fray. Who will attack the enemy in battle
without Yuddhonmatta?

In the first part of the lament, Rāvaṇa's constant worry, repeatedly expressed and recurrent like a refrain, is the question of who will kill his enemies. He asks this question having learnt that Atikāya, Trīśiras, Matta and Yuddhonmatta are dead. In the second part of the lament the question does not appear, because Rāvaṇa has by now resolved to confront his enemies himself.

As already mentioned, the characteristic elements of lamentations include the expression of anger directed against those responsible for what happened and the desire to avenge the dead. This is the also case in Rāvaṇa's lament. He tuns his anger against many people, but first and foremost against Sītā. It is Sītā who has to be killed and eaten by the Rakṣasas (*mārayiṣyāmi Vaidehīm khādayiṣyāmi rākṣasaiḥ*, BhK. 16.22); she is the cause of the tragedy (*vidhvaṃsasyāsya kāraṇam*, BhK. 16.22); she will suffer (*śoka*, BhK. 16.30) after the death of her husband. The rage against Maithilī is spurred by Rāvaṇa's barely tolerable thoughts about Rāma's love for Sītā, and and is only exacerbated

by his belief that Rāma, having lost his kingdom, is incapable of giving happiness to Sītā.

amarṣo me paraḥ, Sītāṃ Rāghavaḥ kāmayaṣyate.
cyutarājyāt sukhaṃ tasmāt kiṃ kil'āsāv avāpsyati, BhK. 16.21.

I absolutely cannot bear the fact that Rama will make love
to Sita: what happiness can she get from him when he has lost his kingdom?

The motif of love, which comes to the fore here, is another frequent component of Sanskrit lamentations, although in this case its context is entirely different. Erotic themes are not absent from Sanskrit lamentations. They typically appear in laments spoken by women, e.g. by Tārā, Rati or Mandodarī,²⁹ but they are as a rule introduced when the speaker refers to the past and recalls the happiness of her amorous relations with the dead.

Rāvaṇa refers to Rāma as someone moving on his feet (*manuṣo nāma patkāṣī*, literally “with abraded feet,” moving with pain, BhK. 16.28; earlier at BhK. 9.127 as *pums*) who has to fight against the king of the Rakṣasas, whose extraordinary weapons and chariot make him very difficult to defeat. Rāma is not a serious threat to him, and Rāvaṇa has already questioned his greatness on prior occasions. For instance, he accused Rāma of killing an enemy engaged in a fight with someone else, which was against the rules of combat (BhK. 9.126) and a deed unworthy of a righteous warrior (as both *Manusmṛti* and *Rāmāyaṇa* confirm). Another example is when Rāvaṇa asked Hanumān whether someone who had killed a cripple, a child and a woman (as Rāma had done with Kabandha, Khara and Tāṭakā, BhK. 9.120) might be regarded as a venerable ascetic (*tapasvī*). Therefore, Rāma is in a way diminished in the eyes of Rāvaṇa. At the same time, however, Rāvaṇa is astounded by the fact that Rāma, who he describes as *pums*, was capable of killing Kumbhakarṇa (cf. Rām. 6.56.8–9).

Sītā and Rāma are not the only enemies of Rāvaṇa's. He also directs his anger against Indra, a dangerous adversary of whom he is afraid (BhK. 16.11), but whom he is determined to defeat. Towards the end of his speech, he not only gives full vent to his anger, but he also utters threats and predicts that the Rakṣasas, meat-eaters, will now have it in abundance (as though it were a response to Śūrpaṇakhā's earlier accusations); that the earth will drink the blood of his enemies; that the Rakṣasas will walk without fear (as Indra is said to have done); that they will sleep happily and the Rakṣasas will not cry any more (*vikroṣyanti*, BhK. 16.31–32). His lament ends with a vision of his future victory over Indra and return to Lanka:

²⁹ Rām. 4.24.38; Kum. 4.17; Rām. 6.19–20; cf. also MBh. 11.81.10–26.

prān muhūrtāt prabhāte'haṃ bhaviṣyāmi dhruvaṃ sukhī,
 āgāmini, tataḥ kāle yo dvitīyaḥ kṣaṇo'paraḥ,
 tatra jetuṃ gamiṣyāmi tridaś'Endraṃ saḥ'āmaram,
 tataḥ pareṇa bhūyo 'pi Laṅkāmeṣyāmy amatsaraḥ, BhK. 16.33–34.

In the morning before an hour is up, I will certainly be
 happy, then in the ensuing time during the second hour,
 I shall go to conquer Indra lord of the thirty gods, and the
 other gods, and after that I will come once more to Lanka
 without rivals.

It is highly probable that, while delivering his lament, Rāvaṇa is far away from the corpses of his sons and warriors (as is also the case in the *Rāmāyaṇa*), and so he does not make any gestures, does not look at the dead, faint or cry (*na koṣye sattvahīnavat*, “I will not cry out like some lesser being,” BhK.16.29). His lament contains multiple characteristic features of this kind of speech, such as the statement of one's desire to die, the praise of the dead and an articulation of one's anger and wish to take revenge on those responsible for the tragedy. There is also an echo of erotic themes which appear in other Sanskrit lamentations. However, the main stress is laid not on bewailing Rāvaṇa's dead sons of and other Rakṣasas, but, rather, on deploring the king's, and his kingdom's, present situation. Symptomatically, the movement in this lament, which differs from the dynamic in many other such texts, is not from the present to the past, showing the contrast between the miserable Now and the happy Then, but from the present to the future. The present is overshadowed by death, but the future will be illuminated by victory. However, the reader knows from the Rāvaṇa story in the *Rāmāyaṇa* that he will not have his victory, and Bhaṭṭi himself also suggests this when he says that Rāvaṇa, while imagining his success, was *mūḍha* (BhK. 16.35) — bewildered, dumbfounded or even stupid.

Conclusion

The picture of Rāvaṇa which is implied in his lamentation is does not fundamentally depart from that in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The king of Rakṣasas is, first and foremost, seized by a desire to defeat his enemies, namely Rāma and Indra, and to take vengeance on them. Confronted with the death of his faithful warriors, he feels desolate and even comes to realise that the words of reproach uttered previously by Vibhīṣaṇa and Prahasta were justified. As aptly observed by J. L. Brockington, Rāvaṇa's angry speech leading up to Indrajit's entry into the battle (BhK. 16.1–17.19), is a considerably expanded version of the episode in *Rāmāyaṇa* 6.67. However, the lament itself in the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* is primarily based on *Rāmāyaṇa* 6.56 and 6.60.1–2. It contains several elements

which are characteristic features of lamentation passages in literary texts of the Sanskrit and other traditions, including the expression of grief and bereavement, the praise of the dead and the expression of anger directed against those responsible for those deaths and a desire to take vengeance on them. While bewailing the deaths of his sons, his brother and his warriors, Rāvaṇa not only comes to want to join the battle himself, but also stirs a powerful desire to fight in his surviving son, Indrajit. At the same time, the king of Rakṣasas is immensely anxious about his own future and that of his kingdom. Bhaṭṭi's use of verbs in the future tense in this section of his poem remarkably contributes to bringing his character's anxieties into sharp relief.

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Abbreviations

- BhK. — Bhaṭṭikāvya
 Kum. — Kumārasambhava
 MBh. — Mahābhārata
 Rām. — Rāmāyaṇa

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MYTHICAL STORIES ABOUT THE BEGINNINGS OF SOME GRAMMATICAL SCHOOLS IN INDIA

Abstract: Despite the immense role the science of grammar played in India, we know surprisingly little about even such celebrated personages as e.g. Pāṇini. In later literary or grammatical texts we come across stories about the beginnings of some grammatical schools or about their prominent authors, but the schematic nature of these accounts and the mythical elements which they contain render them unreliable and of negligible historical value. Nevertheless, it might be rewarding to study these narratives thoroughly for some other reasons. The present paper shows the variety of these ‘stories of origin’ and deals in detail first of all with the narratives describing the beginnings of the Kātantra (ca. 4th c.) and Sārasvata (ca. 12th–14th c.) schools and to a lesser degree with the stories about the Cāndra (5th c.), Jainendra (5th c.) and Jaumara (12th–14th c.) systems, the mythical Aindra grammar and the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The analysis is primarily based on the accounts found in grammatical treatises and in literary or historical works, as well as on information reported in introductions to text editions or in articles. Special attention is paid to the legends in which a semi-divine or divine being is said to be an author or a co-author of a grammatical text or a system, particularly to the stories containing the motif of asking a deity for help in composing the new grammar. The focus of the study lies mainly in tiny details and differences between various versions of the same motif. Further, some propositions are made to explain why, when and where these modifications might have been introduced into the main story and what they tell us about the thought patterns prevailing in certain circles of Indian society.

Keywords: Pāṇini, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, Kātantra, Sārasvata, Jaumara, ‘bath story’

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1. It is a well-known and disturbing fact that Indian authors generally do not give any information about themselves. Occasionally, scribes or commentators fill these gaps and present us with bits of basic information. However, in most cases what we get are a multitude of traditional stories concerning some distinguished personalities. These stories are doubtlessly interesting — and they will be studied below — but their usefulness for establishing historical facts is on the whole negligible.

The purpose of such stories seems to be quite obvious. They should confer an aura of perfection and authority on the text in question. Perhaps they should also convince students to devote their time to certain disciplines. This might be particularly true of grammar if one remembers the fact that the study of Sanskrit grammar in the Pāṇinian tradition is supposed to take twelve years.² Surely, it would be good to know that these twelve years are spent on a subject having special, or perhaps even divine, authority.³

If we have a closer look at the stories describing the beginnings of various grammatical schools in India, we quickly notice that almost all of them associate fairly exceptional qualities with the person of a founder. A few of them are more or less realistic, but most of them comprise fantastic or mythical elements.⁴

2. The sources of such stories are manifold. Some of them are found in grammatical treatises, especially in commentaries, others are told in literary or historical works. Still others seem to be hearsay circulating among the people. Now and then we find them outlined in introductions to text editions or in articles.

Almost all of them have one thing in common: it is extremely difficult to date or to locate them geographically. This is even the fate of very popular stories, as can be seen below in § 18–20.

3. Let us begin with what I would call for the sake of convenience ‘realistic stories’ about some eminent grammarians. And who could be the best

² For example, the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (KSS VI 144) and the *Pañcatantra* (PT 1.18) mention twelve years as the period of time needed to master Sanskrit grammar. This is partly confirmed in Adam’s reports (19th century) although the picture found there is much more complicated. In the second report he mentions that the instruction in schools of general literature took between eleven and twenty-two years, but in these schools grammar was only one of the subjects taught there (DiBona 1983: 81–82). In the third report, in which the duration of grammar studies is given, the period of time devoted to *vyākaraṇa* varied from district to district and lay between seven and thirteen years (DiBona 1983: 226, 234, 237, 239).

³ Naturally, not all stories are of this kind. Quite a few explain certain unusual features (title, double authorship) of the texts or systems they refer to. Others have a moral function; the aim of some of them is not so easy to establish. See fn. 4.

⁴ Needless to say, this is not anything unique to grammar.

personage to start with if not the great Pāṇini, the most famous of all Indian grammarians?

The way the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was composed, e.g. whether it was written or not, puzzles Indologists even nowadays. Here is the picture of this process as given in the *Mahābhāṣya*.

pramāṇabhūta ācāryo darbhapavitrapāṇiḥ śucāv avakāśe prānmukha upaviśya mahatā yatnena sūtram praṇayati sma tatrāśakyam varṇenāpy anarthakena bhavitum kiṃ punar iyatā sūtreṇa. (Mbh I 39.10–12)

The Teacher, who became the authority himself, holding in his hand the grass *darbha*, sat down in the clean place, facing the east, and with great effort pronounced the *sūtras*. It is not possible that there is even one meaningless sound there, not to speak of a whole *sūtra*.

The likely reason for this kind of description is to show the uniqueness of Pāṇini's *sūtras*, their revelation-like character, and to silence critics trying to find faults in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

4. Extraordinary attributes are associated not only with Pāṇini but also with other grammarians, Pāṇinian and non-Pāṇinian. One of them is the above-mentioned Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, a founder of a new approach within the Pāṇinian school. Apart from underlining the outstanding qualities of Bhaṭṭoji, this story has one more aim: to explain why his first work, the commentary on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* entitled *Śabdakaustubha*, is incomplete.

According to the hearsay related by Bali 1976: 6, the jealous opponents of Bhaṭṭoji, who envied his knowledge and fame, destroyed the only manuscript of the *Śabdakaustubha*. However, due to his exceptional memory, Bhaṭṭoji was able to write down some parts of the text once again.⁵

5. The motif of jealousy is quite frequent in these stories. It comes again, e.g. in the story about the origin of the Jaumara, one of non-Pāṇinian schools of grammar. The Jaumara school is associated with two grammarians: its founder, Kramadīśvara, and its most prominent author, Jumaranandin.

Nothing is known about Kramadīśvara, and the stories describing his life are contradictory. According to one of them, he lost his parents very early and was roaming about with a group of shepherds. One day, he chanced upon a scholar who was looking for a safe place to cross the river. Surprised

⁵ Bali 1976: 6 also reports another, quite peculiar story concerning Bhaṭṭoji and his life after death. Thus, it is told that during his lifetime Bhaṭṭoji did not succeed in finding any student to whom he could teach his works. Much disappointed and in pain due to this fact, he became a *brahmarākṣasa* after his death and was then living alone in a haunted house. He was only released from his spell after he had found a diligent student who was able and willing to study his treatises.

by the intelligence of the young boy, the scholar took him to his home and started to teach him Sanskrit grammar. Kramadīśvara quickly mastered the subject and even decided to write a new book on Sanskrit grammar, which he called *Samkṣiptasāra*. This displeased other pupils, who were jealous of Kramadīśvara's knowledge and the attention given him by the teacher. One day, they attacked Kramadīśvara, but he managed to flee. On the run he tossed his still incomplete work into his teacher's room. Unfortunately, this helped the book, but not Kramadīśvara, who was then killed at night.⁶

Another story about the Jaumara school concentrates less on the remarkable intelligence of Kramadīśvara, rather it explains why the *Samkṣiptasāra* has in fact two authors. When the story begins, Kramadīśvara had already written his grammar, but nobody seemed to appreciate it. Being much disappointed by the cold reception of his work, he threw the manuscript into the pond near to the palace of the king Jumarānandin.⁷ The king noticed the book floating on the water, made his servants fetch it and started to read it. Immediately he recognised its mastery. Regrettably, parts of the text were illegible, with the chapter on the *taddhita* suffixes suffering the most damage. Jumarānandin asked Kramadīśvara to write the missing portion of the *Samkṣiptasāra* once again, but Kramadīśvara, who still suffered from the rejection his grammar had previously encountered, could not agree to do that. Thus, the king Jumarānandin decided to accomplish this task by himself.⁸

6. The disguise of realism disappears in legends in which a semi-divine or divine being is said to be an author or a co-author of a grammatical text or a system.

This is the case with the *Mahābhāṣya*, which is Patañjali's commentary on Pāṇini's *sūtras* and on Kātyāyana's *vārttikas*. However, according to the 14th century Tibetan historian Bu ston, it is the king of Nāgas who alone wrote the *Mahābhāṣya*.⁹

⁶ As told by Saini 2007: 208, who based his story on the one reported in the introduction to the edition of the *Samkṣiptasāra* by Paṇḍita Gurunātha Vidyānīthi. This edition was, however, not available to me. The story as found in Saini seems to end quite abruptly and leaves many questions open. For example, we do not know by whom and why Kramadīśvara was killed and what happened to his treatise after his death.

⁷ The motif of an author being disappointed with his work or with the response it got and, consequently, throwing it into the water is not unique to the Jaumara school. A similar story, but with regard to Candragomin, is told by Bu ston and Tāranātha. According to them, Candragomin threw the manuscript of his own grammatical treatise into the well after he had read Candrakīrti's work, which he thought to be much more superior to his own book. See BCh 836.4–837.1 (Obermiller 1932: 133–134) and TCh 119.22–120.8 (Schieffner 1869: 155).

⁸ See Saini 2007: 208.

⁹ See BCh 863.6, translated by Obermiller 1932: 167.

Almost two hundred years later, another Tibetan scholar, Tāranātha, presented a more elaborate version of this story and ascribed the *Mahābhāṣya* to Śeṣa, the king of Nāgas, and to Vararuci, being another name for Kātyāyana. Śeṣa, i.e. Patañjali, and Vararuci are here not separated by time and space; on the contrary, they were working together. In fact, Vararuci is depicted as merely writing down what Śeṣa was dictating to him. With a curtain hanging between them, they could not see each other. However, after some time Vararuci became curious to know what the person expounding the Pāṇinian treatise to him looked like. He lifted the curtain and saw no human, but a snake. Immediately, Śeṣa, who was much ashamed of his appearance and who did not want to be seen, crept away, and Vararuci had to finish the commentary by himself.¹⁰

This idea of associating Patañjali with a snake is not exclusively Buddhist; neither is it confined to Tibet. Patañjali, traditionally regarded as the author of the *Mahābhāṣya* and of the *Yogasūtra*, is identified with Śeṣa, the very same snake on which Viṣṇu lies.¹¹ However, in Kashmir and in southern India, Patañjali, represented as half human and half snake, is connected rather with the Śiva cult, especially with that of Śiva Naṭarāja.¹²

7. Not only commentaries have been treated as the work of a (semi-) divine being; even one grammatical system is believed to have been established by a god. Named after its divine creator, the system is referred to as the Aindra grammar or — to use the title common in the Tibetan sources — Indravayākaraṇa. According to Bu ston, Indra taught this grammar to Bṛhaspati, who in turn explained it to Man.¹³ This reminds us of a similar story found in the *Mahābhāṣya*. Indra and Bṛhaspati are also the main figures here, but in the *Mahābhāṣya* (Mbh I 5.23–27) it is Bṛhaspati who teaches ‘correct words’ to Indra.

Admittedly, no text of the Aindra grammar is extant, and many scholars even doubt whether it has ever existed.¹⁴

8. A large number of stories about grammatical schools share a common pattern of asking a deity for help in composing a grammar and thus making the deity in a way a co-author of the text and at the same time securing its perfection and popularity. This is also the type of story I focus on below.

This divine help was needed even in the case of Pāṇini. The most detailed version of this legend is found in the fourth *tarāṅga* of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*

¹⁰ See TCh 59.17–60.6, translated by Schiefner 1869: 75.

¹¹ Kaiyaṭa, in the commentary on Pāṇ 4.2.92, refers to Patañjali as *nāganātha*. Cf. Keith 1920: 427.

¹² See Staal 1972: xvi and Deshpande 1997: 453.

¹³ See BCh 862.4–863.2 and Obermiller 1932: 166.

¹⁴ On the Aindra grammar, see Cardona 1980: 150–151.

(KSSIV 20–25, 87–88). It is told by Vararuci, alias Kātyāyana, who must have lived sometime after Pāṇini, but is treated as his contemporary in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.

As Vararuci relates, he became a student of Varṣa, under whose guidance he achieved proficiency in all the sciences. Then he continues:

Now in course of time Varsha got a great number of pupils, and among them there was one rather stupid pupil of the name of Pāṇini; he, being wearied out with service, was sent away by the preceptor's wife, and being disgusted at it, and longing for learning, he went to the Himālaya to perform austerities: then he obtained from the god who wears the moon as a crest, propitiated by his severe austerities, a new grammar, the source of all learning. Thereupon he came and challenged me to a disputation, and seven days passed away in the course of our disputation; on the eighth day he had been fairly conquered by me, but immediately afterwards a terrible menacing sound was uttered by Śiva in the firmament; owing to that our Aindra grammar was exploded in the world, and all of us, being conquered by Pāṇini became accounted fools.

(Tawney 1968: 31–32)

Defeated and ashamed, Vararuci did exactly what his rival had done before. He went to the Himalayas, performed austerities and prayed to Śiva. And Śiva again revealed to Vararuci the very same treatise he had taught to Pāṇini and on top of that enabled Vararuci to complete it.

The pivotal role of Śiva in this narrative is emphasised by several means. First, Pāṇini is depicted as a very foolish person, so his contribution to the creation of a new grammatical treatise is minimised. Second, even after gaining the perfect grammar, Pāṇini still needs the assistance of Śiva in defending this new system against Vararuci's Aindra grammar. Third, a 'simple' act of composing a new text acquires slightly divine dimensions. What we can see here is not only the picture of a scholarly dispute, but in a way the symbolic victory of Śiva over Indra.

9. Basically the same narrative is repeated in Kṣemendra's *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* (BKM I 2.71–73) and in Jayadratha's *Haracaritacintāmaṇi* (HCC 27.72–84). Although Kṣemendra is, as usual, much more concise than Somadeva, he adds an interesting detail to the main story. He explains the way Śiva destroyed the Aindra grammar: namely, by removing the memory of this text (*jahāra no haraḥ kopād aindravyākaraṇasmṛtim*).

The appearance of this motif in the *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* would suggest that it was already contained in the now lost *Bṛhatkathā* of Guṇāḍhya or, most probably, in its Kashmiri recension. In either case it would mean that this story might be much older than the 11th century.¹⁵

¹⁵ For the difficulties in dating this motif, see § 18–21.

According to the Śaivite tradition, it is not the whole treatise which was revealed to Pāṇini, but only the alphabet comprising fourteen *sūtras*, later named *Śivasūtra* or *Maheśvarasūtra* after their real author.¹⁶ However, as the Pāṇinian grammar is based on those fourteen *sūtras*, the boon of them is seen as being equivalent to the boon of the complete text of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

10. Very similar narratives are found in the Tibetan sources,¹⁷ although some elements are different here or even completely new.¹⁸ For example, the Tibetan authors do not characterise Pāṇini as a dull student. On the contrary, he is said to have been well educated, but still unsatisfied with his own knowledge.

In addition, there is a new motif of Pāṇini going to a palmist to find out whether he would be able to become proficient in grammar. The palmist's answer was devastating: the lines on Pāṇini's hand were not those of a great grammarian. But obviously, Pāṇini was not a person to be easily discouraged. He took a knife and drew, or rather cut, the missing line on his hand and set out on the search for a suitable teacher. Having failed to find one, he decided to propitiate Mahādeva or Īśvara, who then recited to him the first *sūtra* of the alphabet, thus revealing the whole grammar to him. Interestingly, both Bu ston and Tāranātha mention that according to Buddhists Pāṇini prayed to Avalokiteśvara (*spyan ras gzigs*).

11. Another narrative with a familiar theme of asking a deity for help is the one associated with the origin of the Kātantra system. It is the well-known and amusing 'bath story,' which appears in Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara* (KSS VI 108–VII 14), Kṣemendra's *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* (BKM I 3.35–48), Jayadratha's *Haracaritacintāmaṇi* (HCC 27.122–139), *Nepālamāhātmya* (NM 27.55–28.22) as well as in the Tibetan works: *Chos 'byung* of Bu ston (BCh 863.6–864.5¹⁹) and *Chos 'byung* of Tāranātha (TCh 58.16–59.3, 60.7–17²⁰).

The most exhaustive version of this legend is told in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and goes like this: once upon a time king Sātavāhana, together with his wives, was taking a bath in a pond. He was playing with the queens and splashing them with water until one of them became tired and did not want to play anymore. So she said to the king: *modakair deva paritāḍaya mām*. Having heard this, Sātavāhana ordered his servants to bring sweetmeats, *modaka*, for the queen. If he had expected gratitude from her, he must have been deeply

¹⁶ See Deshpande 1997: 451–453 for details.

¹⁷ The story of Pāṇini being inspired by Maheśvara was known also to Chinese Buddhists. See e.g. Yi Jing's report on his journey to India (Takakusu 1896: 172).

¹⁸ See BCh 863.2–4, tr. in Obermiller 1932: 167 and TCh 42.21–43.6, tr. in Schiefner 1869: 53.

¹⁹ Obermiller 1932: 167–168.

²⁰ Schiefner 1869: 73–76.

disappointed, as she started to laugh at him and complained about having such a stupid husband. Sātavāhana clearly did not recognise that *modakaiḥ* does not only mean ‘with sweetmeats’ but it can be equally understood as two words: *mā* and *udakaiḥ*, thus changing the meaning of the sentence from ‘oh King, pelt me with sweetmeats,’ i.e. ‘give me sweetmeats’ into ‘oh King, do not pelt me with water,’ i.e. ‘do not splash me with water,’ which is certainly a much better interpretation in the given context.

The king was very much ashamed of himself. The only thing he wanted after this experience was to acquire knowledge. Taking into account his mistake and the fact that grammar was regarded as a gate to all sciences, he decided that he should learn grammar first. He asked his ministers how long it would take. They answered him that usually twelve years were needed to master the grammar of Pāṇini. One of his ministers, Guṇādhya, offered to teach him grammar in six years, and another one, Śarvavarman, volunteered to do it even in six months. Understandably, the king wanted to have Śarvavarman as his teacher. Having come home, Śarvavarman realised how unrealistic his promise had actually been. Being close to despair, he told his wife what had happened, and it was she who suggested to him to pray to Skanda. Śarvavarman did it for the whole night. On the next day Skanda revealed all the sciences to him, and afterwards Śarvavarman presented all the sciences to king Sātavāhana. Then he told the king how Skanda had helped him. He described how, after all the austerities he had undergone, Skanda had appeared before him and recited the first *sūtra* ‘this is the beginning of the alphabet’ (*siddho varṇasamāmnāyaḥ*). Śarvavarman, now inspired by Sarasvatī, who had entered his mouth, could not wait any longer and recited the next *sūtra*. This displeased Skanda, and because of this interruption and Śarvavarman’s boldness, his treatise, which had been meant to surpass the Pāṇinian grammar, remained brief. Therefore, it is known under the name *Kātantra*.²¹

12. There are certain interesting elements in this elaborate version of the story. Obviously, not only austerities and penances are important if one wants to get a favour from a deity. It is also necessary to observe the rules of conduct. Arrogance, such as interrupting an authoritative person, especially a divine one, does not remain without any consequences.

Additionally, I would like to point out three other features of this story. First, it is evident that the queen is better educated than the king, at least as far as Sanskrit grammar is concerned. Second, the king’s reaction is, in my opinion, noteworthy. Despite being humiliated by the queen in front of the other queens and his suite Sātavāhana does not take revenge, but he wants to acquire knowledge instead. Third, in a way it is a woman who made Sātavāhana seek

²¹ The term *kātantra* in the meaning of ‘small treatise’ is built in accordance with Pāṇ 6.3.105 *īṣadarthe ca*, which corresponds to Kāt 2.5.25 *kā tv īṣadarthe* ‘kṣe.

knowledge, and it is also a woman who showed Śarvavarman how he can after all keep his word.

13. The versions contained in the *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī*, *Haracaritacintāmaṇi*, *Nepālamāhātmya* and in the Tibetan sources are on the whole very similar to that of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, yet — with the exception of the *Nepālamāhātmya* — they are much more concise. They all differ in some tiny details such as the names of the main figures²² or the exact wording of the central sentence (see fn. 23). The motif of interrupting the deity is lacking in the *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* and in the *Nepālamāhātmya*, but it is present in the Tibetan texts, the only difference being the exact moment at which Śarvavarman interrupts Skanda.²³ Śarvavarman's wife is absent in all other works, so it might be Somadeva's invention.

The most substantial changes appear in the *Nepālamāhātmya*, according to which, for example, the study of the Kātantra takes two years instead of six months given in all the other texts. Furthermore, Kumāra does not recite a part of this treatise but gives to Sarvavarman the book (*pustaka*) containing the entire Kātantra. Interestingly, the character of the queen has been slightly altered here as well. As in all other versions — she initially laughs at the king, but immediately she feels sorry and is ashamed of her behaviour.

14. Even more radical modification of the character of the queen — although rather to the negative — can be observed in another version of the 'bath story,' the one found in the *Kitāb al-Hind* of the great polymath Al-Bīrūnī. Interestingly, Al-Bīrūnī does not associate this legend with the Kātantra school but with the origin of grammar in general.

Since Al-Bīrūnī wrote his book for the Muslim public, it is not surprising that his version of the 'bath story' differs from the one known from the Kashmiri texts. The main innovation concerns not only the person of the queen but also that of the king. In Al-Bīrūnī's compendium (Sachau 1888: 136) it is namely king Sātavāhana who said the pivotal sentence, and it is the queen who brought sweets to the king. Even worse, reprimanded by the king,

²² Some of these names are clearly phonetic variants, brought about by the difficulty in distinguishing *s* and *ś*. Besides those, there are three versions of the king's name: Sātavāhana (KSS, HCC) /Śātavāhana (BKM), Udayana (BCh, TCh) and Madana (NM). The name of the grammarian is given as Śarvavarman (KSS, BKM, HCC)/Sarvavarman (NM, BCh), but Tāranātha discusses the variants Īśvaravarman, Sarvavarman and Saptavarman and concludes that only the latter is correct. The name of the queen is seldom mentioned. In the KSS she is said to be the daughter of Viṣṇuśakti, and in the NM she is called Līlavatī.

²³ According to BCh 864.3, Kārttikeya recited the new grammar up to chapter 15. See Obermiller 1932: 168. In TCh 60.7–12 the interruption took place, like in the KSS, after the first *sūtra*, but Tāranātha observes that in older versions of this story circulating in Tibet, Kumāra taught the first four chapters of the *Kalāpa*. See Schiefner 1869: 75–76.

the queen neither apologised nor even thought of learning grammar. Instead, she answered him in an angry manner. Sātavāhana, being much offended, retreated from public life and abstained from food. The king's reaction does not differ from that described in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. To console Sātavāhana the sage, whose name remains unknown, came to him and promised him to teach grammar to people. Similar to the version in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, he could keep his word only due to divine intervention. As might be expected, he did not need any woman to tell him what to do.

The sage prayed to Mahādeva, who, pleased with him, recited a few grammatical rules and declared himself ready to assist the sage in his efforts to develop the science of grammar. Then the sage returned to the king and, interestingly, taught the grammar to him, although one might think that it was not the king who actually required the instruction. This appears to be a clumsy attempt to reconcile the well-known legend with a framework of beliefs that the Muslim public might have had.²⁴

15. A similar pattern — that of asking a deity for help in composing a new grammar — is also seen in the narrative which explains how the Sārasvata grammar was created. Anubhūti, who is traditionally, albeit rather wrongly, regarded to be the author of the Sārasvata grammar,²⁵ prays to Sarasvatī to support him in the difficult task of writing a new grammar. In his case it is not

²⁴ There is one more detail of the 'bath story' which is worth mentioning here. The misunderstood sentence is preserved in many different versions, such as: *modakair deva paritādaya mām* (KSS), *māmodakena rājendra tādaya* (BKM), *modakair nātha māṃ sadyaḥ prahara* (HCC), *nātha pariśrāntā modakaṃ dehi sarvathā* (NM), *māudakaṃ dehi* (Al-Bīrūnī) and *mamodakāsiṅca* (BCh, TCh). Strikingly, many of these sentences are in fact not correct. Confusion about the vowel length and the diphthongs (*au* /*o*) are due to the Tibetan and Arabic translations, as well as to the poor quality of the BKM edition, which has already been criticised by Speyer 1908: 13–14. Far more interesting are the differences in the verbs used in these sentences. These verbs are a little awkward when applied to both meanings of the sentence (*pari-tādaya*, *prahara* and, to a lesser extent, *dehi*) or even completely unsuitable for one interpretation (*siṅca/āsiṅca?*). Obviously, as this story circulated among people, only the crucial word *modaka* was remembered, and the rest of the sentence has been forgotten.

²⁵ In the story depicting the origin of the Sārasvata and explaining the name of this system, Anubhūti is made a founder of this school. However, the treatise written by Anubhūti is of *prakriyā* character (hence its title *Sārasvataprakriyā*) and as such presupposes the existence of another, basic *sūtra* text. Kṣemendra, a commentator of the *Sārasvataprakriyā*, ascribes this *mūla* text to Narendra (see Belvalkar 1915: 95). The manuscripts with the *mūla* text are preserved in the Deccan College Collection and have been recently edited by Joshi 2011. Still, it is difficult to establish whether this edition indeed gives the original text of Narendra, as the *anuvṛtti* (ellipsis), so characteristic for a *sūtra* text, is interrupted there at several places. Moreover, it is important to add that whenever the Sārasvata grammar is mentioned in Sanskrit works what is meant is the text by Anubhūti and not by Narendra.

the shortness of time which causes the biggest problem, it is rather the reason for Anubhūti's undertaking which is thorny.

According to the traditional story,²⁶ Anubhūti, because of old age and lack of teeth, happened to pronounce the word *puṅkṣu* instead of *pumsu*, which is the correct form of the locative plural of the stem *pums*. Unfortunately, it took place at the court while other *pandits* were listening to him. Their reaction was prompt and harsh: they started to laugh at him. How could he react? We could, perhaps naively, think that the easiest way for him to deal with this unpleasant situation would be to admit the mistake and excuse himself for his slip of the tongue. However, he did not do so, perhaps this idea did not even occur to him. This is entirely logical if one think of Patañjali's treatment of the relation between the correct usage of words and *dharma*.

16. At the beginning of the *Mahābhāṣya* (Mbh I 10.4–11.14), in the *Paspaśā* section, Patañjali takes up the question 'what leads to *dharma*': the usage of correct words or rather their knowledge, meaning the knowledge of grammar. And he concludes that solely the usage of correct words accompanied, or rather preceded, by the knowledge of grammar can lead to *dharma*. Nothing else could be expected of a grammarian.

Remarkably, while Patañjali discusses the possibility of speaking correct Sanskrit without knowledge of grammar, he ignores the situation in which a grammarian commits a mistake in spite of his knowledge, due to tiredness, old age or for other reasons. Notice also that all the versions of the 'bath story' lack the alternative likely explanation for the king's failure that he might have known the *sandhi* rules, but he was not thinking of them at that particular moment. The fact that on hearing the phrase *modakaiḥ* (etc.) he did not recognise the second — and in the context much more plausible — interpretation, which requires the application of *sandhi* rules, seemed automatically to mean that he did not know them. It might be the same kind of reasoning that did not allow Anubhūti to simply admit his mistake. His reputation was obviously at stake and he might have been unwilling to lose it.

17. Another path Anubhūti could have taken would have been that of the Pāṇinian commentators. In the case of any apparent inconsistency or flaws seen in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the normal reaction of any Pāṇinīya would be to look for a hint in the *sūtras* that the correct understanding of a rule in question is still possible and even compulsory. Seeing Pāṇini as a kind of yogi, as described in the *Mahābhāṣya*, or assuming the divine roots for the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* since it is supposed to have been given to Pāṇini by Śiva, means that this treatise is regarded as flawless. That leads to the belief that every word and even every syllable in it must be meaningful. And if a word or a syllable appears not

²⁶ As reported, e.g., in Saini 2007: 179 and Arya 2013: 301.

to have any immediate purpose, they serve as a *jñāpaka*, a hint for something else, some special understanding of the *sūtra*.²⁷

In the case of Anubhūti's mistake this method of finding a *jñāpaka* might not be the easiest one to follow. Thus, the only option left for him was to invent a new grammar containing the rule teaching the form *puñkṣu*.²⁸

18. As mentioned at the beginning, it is very difficult to date or locate geographically most of these stories. To illustrate this point, let us now concentrate on the most popular narrative among those presented here, i.e. on the 'bath story.' How old can it actually be?

As far as I can see, we have five groups of texts comprising this motif: a) works associated with the *Bṛhatkathā* tradition (BKM, KSS), b) *Hara-caritacintāmaṇi*, c) *Nepālamāhātmya*, d) Tibetan historiographical treatises and e) Albiruni's *Kitāb al-Hind*.²⁹

There are also two main versions of this narrative, differing in linking it with the origin of the now lost *Bṛhatkathā*. In the versions given in the Tibetan texts and in the *Kitāb al-Hind*, there is only one scholar who promises to instruct the king in Sanskrit grammar. In all other texts, Śarvavarman has an adversary in the person of Guṇādhyā, who proposes a longer period of time for teaching Sanskrit grammar and vows to stop using Sanskrit and Prakrits if Śarvavarman manages to fulfil his task in six months (or two years, as given in the NM). This is intended to explain why Guṇādhyā composed his *Bṛhatkathā* in the Paisācī language.

It is fairly easy to date the works lacking the person of Guṇādhyā. Bu ston wrote his *Chos 'byung* in 1322,³⁰ and Tāranātha finished his in 1608.³¹ Thus, they both are relatively late.

Much earlier is the *Kitāb al-Hind*. After Al-Bīrūnī was captured by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in 1017, he spent a long time travelling in India. Although still in captivity, he obviously enjoyed some kind of freedom and could devote himself to studying Indian culture. The results of his research are presented in the *Kitāb al-Hind*, which he probably wrote in 1030, shortly after Mahmud's death.³²

²⁷ The question whether some part of a *sūtra* is a *jñāpaka* or not is frequently discussed already in the *Mahābhāṣya*. Such *jñāpakas* were collected and commented upon by Puṣottamadeva in his *Jñāpakasamuccaya*, which was edited by Bhattacharya 1946.

²⁸ This is the rule Spr 1.9.68 (300) *asambhave puṃsaḥ kak sau* ("When the 'nonexistence' is to be expressed, [the *āgama*] *kak* is added to *puṃs* before *su* [i.e. the ending of the locative plural]"), see Paṇṣīkara 1895: 67. It is not surprising that this rule is not present in the *Sūtrapāṭha* edited by Joshi 2011.

²⁹ I omit here such late works as e.g. Rāmabhadradīkṣita's *Patañjalīcarita* (17th c.). See Parab & Paṇṣīkar 1934.

³⁰ See Ruegg 1966: XVII and Verhagen 1994: 178n.

³¹ See Verhagen 1994: 180n, who actually repeats the opinion of Vostrikov 1994: 158.

³² See Sachau 1888: viii–xvi.

19. Let us now examine the remaining texts. The *Haracaritacintāmaṇi*, although rather of a *māhātmya* type, follows closely the Kashmiri *Bṛhatkathā* tradition and is mostly dated to the 12th or early 13th c.³³

Complications arise when it comes to the *Nepālamāhātmya*. Its version of the ‘bath story’ differs in minor details (such as the names of the king and the queen) from the one in the KSS, but the main narrative frame remains the same. Unfortunately, the dating of the NM seems to be very uncertain. Lévi (1905: 205) even thinks that this text does not contain any detail which might make its dating possible. Nelson (1974: 45) believes the NM to be later than the Kashmiri versions. However, Uebach (1970: 13–15) points out the fact that several famous temples which were built during the period of the three kingdoms are not even alluded to in the NM; consequently, this work must be earlier than the 15th c. Moreover, on the basis of the date given in the colophon to one of the manuscripts, she ascribes the NM to the 13th c. On the whole, Acharya (1992: 3–7) follows her line of argumentation. He also pays attention to the shrines described in the NM, its language and to the above-mentioned colophon (which he emends). Nevertheless, his conclusion differs considerably, and he contends that the NM was written probably in the 9th century.

20. As the relative chronology of the NM and the Kashmiri versions seem to remain inconclusive it would be worthwhile to consider more carefully the texts of the *Bṛhatkathā* tradition. The Kashmiri works, KSS and the slightly older BKM, are dated to the 11th c.³⁴ The crucial question in establishing the age of the NM is whether the ‘bath story’ could be a Kashmiri invention, which would support the later date of the NM, or whether it was already included in the original *Bṛhatkathā* of Guṇāḍhya, which would corroborate the early dating of the NM.³⁵ To say that this is a very difficult matter to settle is surely an understatement.

Usually, five texts are treated as based on Guṇāḍhya’s *Bṛhatkathā*. Apart from the two Kashmiri adaptations, there is one Nepali Sanskrit work (Budhasvāmin’s *Bṛhatkathāślokaśaṅgraha*), the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* of Saṃghadāsaganin, written in the Old Jaina Mahārāṣṭrī, and the elaborate Tamil *Peruṅkatai* of Koṅkuvēḷir. Lacôte (1908: 147), who studied the *Bṛhatkathāślokaśaṅgraha*, dates it to the 8th

³³ See Lienhard 1984: 203 and Deshpande 1997: 453.

³⁴ Somadeva composed the KSS between 1063 and 1081, ca 30 years after Kṣemendra’s BKM. See e.g. Winternitz 1920: 319.

³⁵ The *Bṛhatkathā* is mostly dated between the 1st and the 6th c. AD. For details, see e.g. Speyer 1908: 44–48. The age of the *Bṛhatkathā* naturally depends on the age of its earliest version. Consequently, ascribing the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* to the 1st or 2nd c. AD would mean that we have to agree with Alsdorf 1938: 345–346, who assigns the *Bṛhatkathā* to the 1st or 2nd c. BC or even to a still earlier period.

or 9th c. and holds it to be closer to the original *Bṛhatkathā* than the Kashmiri counterparts (p. 202–218), and this position is shared by Nelson (1979: 669).³⁶ Mayrhofer (1975: 57) sees the close affinity between the BKŚS and the *Vasudevahiṇḍi*. In addition, the latter is the oldest of all these *Bṛhatkathā* versions. Jacobi (1932: VII-VIII) dates it to the 6th c. at the latest. Alsdorf (1936: 320–333) analyses its language and comes to the conclusion that it must be centuries older than the 6th c. Jain (1977: 27) ascribes the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* to the 1st or 2nd c. AD.³⁷

As far as I can see, the Kashmiri adaptations are the only ones containing the ‘bath story’,³⁸ but still this fact alone does not allow us to argue for the Kashmiri roots of this motif because none of the other three narratives mentioned above is complete.³⁹ Consequently, it cannot be ruled out that the ‘bath story’ might have belonged to their lost parts. It is also a matter of personal taste or belief whether one takes the appearance of Guṇādhya in the BKM and KSS as the proof that the ‘bath story’ must have been a part of the original *Bṛhatkathā*, as Speyer (1908: 44–45) does, or as proof for the opposite, that it is a later addition, as Alsdorf (1938: 348) thinks.⁴⁰

The former would mean that the *Bṛhatkathā* contained the ‘bath story,’ which at some point in the history lost the character of Guṇādhya and in this form was known to Al-Bīrūnī, Bu ston and Tāranātha. However, the contrary could also be true — and in my opinion this is a much more likely option: that the motif of the ‘bath story’ developed independently of the *Bṛhatkathā* tradition, and it was later incorporated into it, perhaps in Kashmir.

³⁶ In his inspiring study Nelson 1974: 115–117, 193–194, 236–244 mentions — partly following Lacôte — several reasons for the superiority of the BKŚS and its faithfulness to the original *Bṛhatkathā*: its ‘popular sentiment’ (p. 116) — as opposed to the aristocratic attitude of the Kashmiri versions, its unity, the absence of internal contradictions and the lack of ‘a thick Śaiva veneer’ (p. 310), to mention just a few of them. Furthermore, he tries to reconstruct the framework plot of the *Bṛhatkathā* and sees in this text above all ‘the story of how a particular human became a Vidyādhara and the Cakravartin of Vidyādhara’ (p. 320), the story which ‘glorifies individual effort’ (p. 310) and in which the divine assistance is kept rather small.

³⁷ The *Vasudevahiṇḍi* also seems to be earlier than the *Peruṅkatai*, which Nelson 1980: 234 n. 3 ascribes to the period between the 7th and the 12th c.

³⁸ For the information about the absence of this story in the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* I would like to thank dr. A. A. Esposito (Würzburg). Cf. Nelson 1974: 40–41.

³⁹ The frame story of the *Bṛhatkathā* texts describes the adventures of the main hero, focusing on how he won his many wives. The BKŚS is interrupted amidst the story of finding the sixth out of Naravāhanadatta’s twenty-six wives. The *Peruṅkatai* stops already after his first marriage, and the extant portion of the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* gives an account of how Vasudeva gained twenty-seven out of his one hundred wives. See Mayrhofer 1975: 57 and Nelson 1980: 222–224 for details.

⁴⁰ Similarly, Nelson 1974: 40–41 vehemently argues that the stories in the *Kathāpīṭha* of the KSS (therein the ‘bath story’) do not belong to the original *Bṛhatkathā*.

Since we do not have the precise dating of the ‘bath story’ and even do not know where Al-Bīrūnī heard his version of this legend, it would be risky to locate it geographically. Without doubt, it was current at least in Kashmir, Nepal and Tibet, but certainly not only there, so it would be overhasty to see in this region the place of the origin of this motif.

21. Much of what has been said about the date and the geographical location of the ‘bath story’ can be repeated in regard to the legend of Pāṇini receiving the grammar (or alphabet) from Śiva, apart from the fact that we do not find this motif in the NM and in Al-Bīrūnī’s book. Moreover, the link to the *Bṛhatkathā* is here not as strong as in the ‘bath story.’⁴¹ Nevertheless, Deshpande (1997: 453) finds this connection sufficient to argue that ‘[...] the notion of Pāṇini having been inspired by Śiva may have developed in certain Śaivite communities around the middle of the first millennium A.D.’

No matter whether we accept the Śaivite origin of both these stories or only assume that previously existing stories were adapted to the taste of Śaivite circles, it seems to be not purely coincidental that Pāṇini is supposed to receive his grammar from Śiva and the Buddhist Śarvavarman obtains the Kātantra from Skanda, Śiva’s son. This creates a certain hierarchy, with a clear preference for Pāṇini’s treatise.

22. This lengthy but rather non-conclusive excursus aptly demonstrates the difficulty we encounter trying to trace the history of even very popular tales, not to say of those which are not so well known.

This is partly due to the very nature of story-telling, which involves repetition of old themes and their modification according to the audience and their expectations, guided by the personality of the story tellers, their beliefs and their talents.

On the other hand, this is exactly what makes these stories so valuable. Even if they are unreliable as the sources for biographical data of famous grammarians, they deserve to be studied not only for what they have in common but also for what distinguishes them. These differences, tiny as they might be, reveal some interesting details about society at the time those stories were circulating, and they disclose thought patterns prevailing in certain milieus at that time.

⁴¹ Due to the curse of Parvatī, the gaṇa Puṣpadanta was re-born as Vararuci, and Mālyavānt, as Guṇāḍhya. Then Vararuci studied with the teacher Varṣa and was a propounder of the Aindra grammar, which was eventually destroyed by Śiva in the contest between Vararuci and Pāṇini, another student of Varṣa.

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THE OLDEST SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPT OF KĀLIDĀSA'S *MEGHADŪTA* FROM 1363 AD*

Abstract: Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* (*The Cloud Messenger*) [abbr. MD], a masterpiece of classical Sanskrit literature, belongs to the most popular poems in India. It has been preserved in dozens of manuscript copies, and there are also multiple printed editions of the text, beginning with the *editio princeps* of H.H. Wilson from 1813. The oldest Nepalese Sanskrit palm-leaf manuscript of MD dating from 1363 AD has been known since the beginning of the 20th century, owing to Haraprasad Śastri's description of the manuscripts kept in the Durbar Library, Kathmandu. A brief remark on that manuscript was included by A.A. Macdonell in his review of E. Hultsch's edition of MD from 1911. Strangely enough, although the manuscript has been known for more than one hundred years and since the 1970s its microfilm copy has been available owing to the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, it has not been critically studied yet. The text of MD consists of 113 stanzas and contains 11 stanzas regarded as interpolations. The colophon contains valuable information about the time and place of making the copy. The manuscripts microfilmed by the NGMPP also include an anonymous commentary entitled *Ānanda-kandalī* from 1509 AD, which is unknown to researchers.

Keywords: Sanskrit poetry, Kālidāsa, Sanskrit manuscripts

§ 1. The *editio princeps* of Kālidāsa's poem *Meghadūta*¹ was prepared by Horace Hayman Wilson (1784–1860)² and published in Calcutta in 1813. Wilson used a contemporary manuscript in the Bengali script containing six

* This is a revised version of my paper presented at the conference Indian Panorama in Wrocław. I would like to thank Dr. Patrycja Poniatowska for correcting my English.

¹ On the *Meghadūta* and related literature, see Lienhard 1984: 113ff.

² *The Mégħa Dūta, or Cloud Messenger, A Poem in the Sanscrit Language, by Cālidāsa.*

commentaries, which was lent to him by H. T. Colebrooke. Its description in the *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office* reads:³

71 foll., Bengali script, modern European paper (watermark dated: 1806 [sic]); the text of the *Meghadūta* in 116 stanzas, with six commentaries: 1. *Subodhā* (Bharatasena), 2. *Muktāvali* (Rāmanātha Tarkālaṃkāra), 3. *Mālatī* (Kalyāṇamalla), 4. *Samjīvanī* (Mallinātha), 5. *Ṭīkā* (Haragovinda Vācaspati), 6. *Tātparyadīpikā* (Sanātana Gosvāmin).

Wilson provided the Sanskrit text in 116 stanzas, printed in *devanāgarī* characters, with a versified English translation and annotations on the same page. When a year later, in 1814, the translation of the *Cloud Messenger* was published in London, Goethe was delighted with the poem. In the preface to the second edition (1843), Wilson admitted that the Calcutta edition had contained flaws typical of early Sanskrit prints, such as unseparated words and textual errors. In the new edition, these erroneous passages were corrected, the words were separated wherever the sandhi rules allowed, and a Sanskrit-English dictionary arranged by Francis Johnson was added.⁴ Wilson also confessed that his first rhymed translation had had typical features of a youthful work, including deviations from the original and even misinterpretations. Some errors were corrected, in some cases the order of the verses was changed to correspond more closely to the original, and explanatory notes were revised, especially those in which Wilson referred to parallels which he traced in European literature.

§ 2. Meanwhile, Johannes Gildemeister (1812–1890) published in Bonn (1841) a new edition of the poem based on Wilson's version and three additional manuscripts from libraries in Paris and Copenhagen, supplemented with a Sanskrit–Latin glossary. In addition, the volume also contained the Sanskrit text of *Śṛṅgāra-tilaka* (22 stanzas), a poem which was traditionally, albeit mistakenly, attributed to Kālidāsa.

§ 3. Adolf Friedrich Stenzler's (1807–1887) edition published in Breslau in 1874 marks a considerable progress in the study of the *Meghadūta*. Stenzler used the same manuscripts as his predecessors, Wilson and Gildemeister, with the addition of one from Berlin, the six commentaries, the Indian editions with Mallinātha's commentary, and eight printed editions. Following Mallinātha, Stenzler divided the poem into two parts: I. *pūrva-megha* (stanzas 1–3) and II. *uttara-megha* (stanzas 64–112). He also listed fifteen stanzas regarded as interpolated (*prakṣiptāḥ ślokāḥ*) (ed., pp. 24–27). The edition contains annotations

³ *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office*. Part VII. *Śaṃskṛit Literature*. B. *Poetical Literature*. III. *Poetic Compositions in Verse and Prose*. IV. *Dramatic Literature*, ed. by J. Eggeling, London 1904, p. 1422 (No. 3774; sign. 1584).

⁴ The new edition printed in Calcutta in 1890 and reprinted in London did not have the glossary part.

(pp. 29–39) and a Sanskrit–German glossary (pp. 40–74). Stenzler pointed out that the manuscripts with Mallinātha's commentary contained different versions of the text, which, in his view, implied that the copyists themselves had interpolated stanzas beyond those indicated by the commentator. Stenzler also used European studies and translations; he highly appreciated the literary merits of Max Müller's translation (Königsberg 1849) but considered the prose translation of Carl Schütz (Bielefeld 1859), which was underpinned by a thorough study of the poem, an even superior achievement.

§ 4. Particularly noteworthy is the 1894 edition of the *Meghadūta*, published by Kashinath Bapu Pathak (1850–1932), a Professor of Sanskrit at the Deccan College in Pune, and based on the Jain work *Pārśvābhyudaya* (*Triumph of Pārśvanātha*). The *Pārśvābhyudaya* was composed by Jinasena (second half of the 8th century), who wove all the verses of the *Meghadūta* into his work on the life of the Jaina arhat Pārśvanātha. In doing this, he would take one or two lines from Kālidāsa's poem and supplement them with his own words. In this way, the complete and unchanged text of the *Meghadūta*, as it was known in the mid-8th century, has been preserved. The *Pārśvābhyudaya* is therefore the earliest testimony, and as such it is extremely important for textual criticism. Pathak provided his edition of Kālidāsa's poem (in 120 stanzas) with Mallinātha's commentary, detailed explanations, translations and useful lists of geographical names (Appendix II), authors and works mentioned in the commentary (Appendix III).

§ 5. In the same year, another valuable edition of the *Meghadūta* with Mallinātha's commentary was published. It was prepared for use by students by Gopal Raghunath Nandargikar, a Sanskrit lecturer from Pune, who used two European editions (Wilson, Gildemeister), various Indian editions and several Sanskrit manuscripts from the collection of the Deccan College library in Pune, which he described in detail in an extensive introduction. In addition, he provided an English translation, numerous thorough explanations with references to other commentaries and editions, and a list of stanzas considered to be inauthentic.

§ 6. Most modern translations of Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta*, a masterpiece of classical Sanskrit poetry, are based on Eugen Hultzsch's 1911 edition. Since its publication, it has been recognised by scholars and translators as *the* edition of the poem.⁵ In 1998, it was republished with a preface by Albrecht Wezler.⁶ Wezler highly valued Hultzsch's edition and emphasised its numerous

⁵ The latest translation by Sir James Mallinson, published in the Clay Sanskrit Library series in 2006, is based on Hultzsch's edition, and it contains its text in an original transcriptional convention.

⁶ E. Hultzsch, *Kālidāsa's Meghadūta, edited from manuscripts with the Commentary of Vallabhadeva, and provided with a complete Sanskrit-English Vocabulary*. With a Foreword by Professor A. Wezler, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, Delhi 1998 (1st ed. 1911, London).

advantages. First of all, Hultzsich's edition is based on four manuscripts: three Kashmiri manuscripts in the śāradā script (Mss A, B, C) and one manuscript in devanāgarī (Ms D, dated samvat 1857), as well as on printed editions (Nandargikar, Stenzler, Pathak).⁷ Secondly, it contains the oldest known commentary, that is, *Vivṛti (Pañcikā)*, authored by Vallabhadeva (first half of the 10th century). Vallabhadeva commented on 111 stanzas and marked those that he considered interpolations with the word *prakṣipta* (literally: added, inserted). A list of stanzas regarded as non-authentic (with sources) was included by Hultzsich in an appendix to his edition (Appendix. Spurious verses, pp. 59–67: I–XIX). Edition of the text of the poem with commentary is preceded by a scholarly preface (Preface, pp. xiii–xxii) and a list of stanzas in various versions of the poem, while the appendix and a complete Sanskrit-English dictionary (Vocabulary, pp. 69–113) close the book. The second edition of the *Meghadūta* includes a bibliography of more recent works related to the subject (Select Bibliography, pp. 114–115). In the foreword to his edition, Hultzsich discussed earlier editions of Kālidāsa's poem.

§ 7. Arthur A. Macdonell (1854–1930), Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, wrote an extensive and very flattering review of Hultzsich's work.⁸ At the beginning, he pointed out that the value of the edition was enhanced by the fact that it contained the oldest known commentary by Vallabhadeva, which included the *Meghadūta* text in a version known in Kashmir in the early 10th century. He stressed that this was the first commentary on a classic *kāvya* work published in Europe which met the Western critical standards of text editing. Vallabhadeva's text has 111 stanzas, while the most popular version of the text known from the commentary of Mallinātha (14th century) contains 121 stanzas. Macdonell devoted ample attention to the question of the authenticity of the stanzas, to conclude (p. 177) that, despite the intensive study of Kālidāsa's poem conducted over the hundred years since Wilson's *editio princeps* (1813), three issues were still uncertain: the authenticity of many stanzas, the original order of the authentic stanzas and the authenticity of the many readings that they contained. Macdonell emphasised (p. 179)

⁷ In an extensive introduction to the second edition (1916, pp. xix–xx), Pathak critically reviewed the four manuscripts on the basis of which Hultzsich had drawn up his edition (Hultzsich 1911). He observed that Hultzsich's comparison of the manuscripts was wrong as he had failed to notice the omissions in the three śāradā manuscripts, which were present in the devanāgarī manuscript (D); specifically, Hultzsich missed the fact that Vallabhadeva commented on the nine stanzas considered to be interpolations on the basis of the text D (the manuscript contains not only these nine stanzas, but also Vallabhadeva's commentary thereon). On pages xxv–xxvii, Pathak included a synoptic table showing the order of stanzas in the editions he had consulted, and in the appendix (Appendix I) he gave a list of the nine non-authentic stanzas (p. 69, A–I).

⁸ Macdonell 1913: 176–185.

that many of the interpolated stanzas were very old. More than a century after the *Pārśvābhyudaya* was composed by the Jain author (mid-8th century), Vallabhadeva's commentary repeated as many as nine of them, five of which were also considered *prakṣipta* ("inserted") by commentator Mallinātha (14th century). Macdonell expressed the hope (p. 181) that new discoveries of manuscripts dating back to before Mallinātha would allow a critical review of the text material.

In this context, Macdonell mentioned a palm-leaf Nepalese manuscript of the *Meghadūta* from 1364 (*recte*: 1363) and cited a handful of variants from it. According to Macdonell (p. 181), the manuscript was lent to Oxford to be photographed by the Clarendon Press.⁹ Nothing more is known about what happened with the manuscript later, except that it was returned to Nepal and photographed there under the Nepal–German Manuscript Preservation Project in 1970.

§ 8. Sushil Kumar De, an eminent Indian Sanskritologist, prepared a critical edition of the *Meghadūta* which was published by the Sahitya Akademi in New Delhi in 1956. The general introduction was written by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Vice President of the Sahitya Akademi. A second, revised edition of the volume, edited by V. Raghavan, was published in 1970. In his comprehensive introduction, De (pp. 1–32) provides a detailed discussion of prior editions (by Wilson, Gildemeister, Stenzler, K.P. Parab, Nandargikar, Hultsch, etc.), adaptations of the poem by Jaina authors (*Pārśvābhyudaya*, *Nemi-dūta*, *Sīla-dūta*), a Sannaya, or word-for-word Sinhalese paraphrase, and Tibetan translation (edited and translated by Beckh). De further enumerates several commentators (Vallabhadeva, Dakṣiṇāvarta-nātha, Mallinātha, Pūrṇa-sarasvatī, Parameśvara, Sanātana Gosvāmin, Bharata-mallika and others), only some of whom were published in print. In the next paragraph, he proceeds to describe and characterise the manuscripts found in various regions of India and in the collections of European libraries (London, Paris, Berlin and Copenhagen). He estimates that the existing editions are based on a total of about forty manuscripts. In De's opinion, the compiled source material has provided a sufficiently abundant collection of variant readings, and further collation of new manuscripts of the same type will not contribute significantly to improving the text of the poem. He adds that he has himself consulted a number of Bengali and Devanagari manuscripts (from the collections of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta and the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, among others) and taken into account the readings of South Indian manuscripts consulted by Foulkes (Foulkes 1904). Then, he goes on

⁹ "One such MS., dating from 1364 A.D., which contains the text only, from the Library of the Mahārāja of Nepal, is at present at Oxford for the purpose of being photographed at the Clarendon Press."

to compare the manuscripts from the Indian collections with the manuscripts from European libraries and identifies their types and textual traditions. De mentions the existence of the Nepalese manuscript from 1364 (*recte* 1363; see Petech 1984: 130) which Macdonell evoked (see above § 7) in his review of Hultzsich's edition, but states that this manuscript was not available to him and did not arouse his interest. In conclusion, De reasserts that enough source material is available to produce a critical edition of the poem, and that collating new manuscripts will not produce any significant changes. Research confirms that the different traditions of the poem's text as evidenced by the commentaries were reflected in the groups of manuscripts from different regions. As a crucial issue, De carefully addresses the reconstruction of the poem, which he deems a challenging venture on account of the differences among its versions and the disputable status of some of its stanzas. Manuscripts differ widely on what their scribes accepted as the genuine text — stanzas considered to be interpolated in one are included as authentic elsewhere. De carefully notes the variants of the text in an extensive critical apparatus. His abundant bibliography includes detailed data concerning the manuscripts, editions, adaptations and translations of the poem, as well as a list of the relevant literature.

§ 9. The oldest known manuscript of the *Meghadūta* was first described by Hara Prasad Shastri (1853–1931) in his catalogue of manuscripts on palm leaves and paper in the collection of the Mahārāja of Nepal's¹⁰ library in Kathmandu.¹¹ On page 31, under “1076 ॐ” Shastri briefly described the manuscript as “incomplete, nos. 18 missing; Newari letters [*nevārī*], date: samvat 484; number of stanzas: 110”¹² On page 56, under “1473 ॐ,” there is a laconic description of another palm-leaf *Meghadūta* manuscript: damaged (*khaṇḍita*, “torn”), in Maithili script (*maithilākṣara-likhitam*). Under “1633 ॐ,” Shastri (p. 78) briefly mentioned the manuscript of a commentary: *Meghadūta-ṭīkā* (damaged, Newari script).

Fortunately, this oldest valuable manuscript has been preserved, and its microfilm is now kept in the National Archives in Kathmandu.¹³

¹⁰ Maharaja Bir Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana (1852–1901), the eleventh First Minister of Nepal founded the Bir Library, which became a great repository of valuable Nepalese manuscripts and, in recent times, the basis for the National Archives collection in Kathmandu.

¹¹ H. P. Shastri, *A Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper Mss. Belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal*, vol. I, Calcutta 1905. The catalogue lists titles of 457 manuscripts. Cf. *Preface* p. xxxv, 31, 56, 78.

¹² (ॐ) *Meghadūtām / 1–8 ślokā na santi / akṣara — nevārī / antavākyam / ... samvat 484 ... / ślokaśamkhyā 110*.

¹³ Surprisingly, the oldest manuscript of the *Meghadūta* known to us has not received scholarly attention, even though it has been available for many years in the microfilm form. A century after Macdonell posed his pertinent questions, we are still unable to

§ 10. Owing to the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, tens of thousands of manuscripts were photographed in Nepal between 1970 and 2001 (and later), including as many as one hundred *Meghadūta* manuscripts (whereof seventeen are dated).¹⁴ The output of the project also includes a microfilm marked A 24/14 (acc. no. NAK 1/1473), which contains photographs of Shastri's "1076 ṭa" manuscript on palm leaves. These photographs make it possible to complete and correct its description.

§ 10.1. The palm-leaf manuscript of the *Meghadūta* A 24/14 [= Shastri No. 1076 ṭa] is incomplete. Originally, the entire manuscript had sixteen folios (1–16v), and now it has fifteen folios, with the first leaf missing.¹⁵ There are 5 lines per folio; size 31.0 x 5.5 cm. The pages are numbered on the left margin on the back (*verso*). The manuscript is written in the Newari (*pracalit*) script, and the writing is sometimes not readable or obliterated; there is one string-hole nearer the left margin.

The title in the colophon reads: *meghadūta-mahākāvya-śāstra* [sic]. The stanzas are numbered, and the last number is 110. In fact, the text of the *Meghadūta* contains 113 stanzas, with the disparity resulting from the scribe's error in numbering. Interestingly, the manuscript contains as many as eleven stanzas considered to be interpolations. The colophon contains valuable information about when and where the manuscript was copied. Petech has accurately established that the manuscript (*pustaka*) was copied at the royal headquarters (*rājyasthāna*) in Palañcok (Palamchok) during the reign of king Jayārjunadeva (reigned 1361–1382), on Monday 23rd October 1363. It was produced for the first minister named Jayasiṃha Rāma Mahātha.¹⁶

The manuscript was written by one scribe. The script is, in general, quite clear, though there are exceptions. There are visible corrections (possibly by another hand), distinguished by bold letters. Corrected letters are added at places, on the upper or lower margin. On the whole, the manuscript is in good condition, but some parts of it are faded or blurred, and some *akṣaras* are

answer them definitively — despite the disclosure of many new resources, such as manuscripts of the poem and commentaries. One thing is certain: a critical re-examination of the *Meghadūta*'s text is a matter of pressing urgency.

¹⁴ See the list of 100 items on the Nepal-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project website (http://catalogue.ngmcp.uni-hamburg.de:3000/titles/list_and_revise?page=1; accessed 31.12.2017). The date range of the manuscripts is from 1363 to 1886, with most of them dating back to the 17th century. Among these manuscripts is also the anonymous commentary *Ānanda-kandalī* (*Megha-dūta-ṭikā*), dating from before 1509 (date of copying: Śaka saṃvat 1431 = 1509), which consists of 36 folios, paper, in devanāgarī (microfilm ref: A1032/14). This commentary is not mentioned in the literature and has not been studied.

¹⁵ Folio 2b is not available on the microfilm, while folio 2a is doubled.

¹⁶ Petech 1984: 130 (3).

difficult to decipher or illegible. Increasingly more errors appear towards the end, and the text is at times incomprehensible.

§ 10.2. The value of the manuscript lies primarily in its being the oldest dated and the only known manuscript of the *Meghadūta* preserved on palm leaves. The two oldest paper manuscripts are dated 1601 and 1616 (Vikram era), respectively. So, there is a hiatus of almost two hundred and fifty years between the oldest palm-leaf manuscript and the oldest paper manuscripts. The Sanskrit text of the poem contains numerous variants, many of which can be found in other manuscripts, which De noted in his critical edition. A thorough examination of the manuscript will help determine the lines of transmission of the Sanskrit text of Kālidāsa's poem.

§ 11. Below, I offer a preliminary analysis of the palm-leaf manuscript A 24/14, transcribing its beginning, end and the colophon, and specifying the distribution of the stanzas on the individual folios. I also present a comparative table of the concordance of the stanzas. Bold type marks the *akṣaras* which are distinguished as such in the manuscript.

§ 11.1. Transliteration of the beginning, the end, and the colophon¹⁷

11.1.1. Beginning

(fol. 2a1) dhūmajyotiḥ śalilamarutāṃ sannipātaḥ kva meghaḥ sandeśārthā
kva paṭukaraṇaiḥ prāṇibhiḥ prāpaṇīyāḥ / **ityosakyādaparigaṇanayan guhya-**
ka+¹⁸ y¹⁹yāce kāmārtā hi **prakṛtikṛpaṇā**-(2)**ś cetanācitanēṣu** // 5 // ²⁰

jātaṃ vane bhuvanavidite puṣkarāva²¹ka □ **nām jānāsi tvām prakṛtipu-**
ruṣaṃ kāmarūpaṃ maghonaḥ / tenārthitvaṃ tvayi vidhivasād **dūrabandhur**
gato haṃ yācñā (3) moghāvaram **adhiguṇenādrame labdakāmā** // 6 // ²²

11.1.2. End

(fol. 15b3) etasmātmān kuśa □ linamājñānadānād vidipatvā mā kaulinād
asitanayane mayyaviśvāsini bhūḥ / snehā-(4)nā kimapi virahavyāpadaste

¹⁷ My sincere thank-you goes to my friend, Dr Katarzyna Marciniak, who took the trouble of reading the paper and correcting the readings of the manuscript. Of course, the sole responsibility for any mistakes in the final version of the paper rests with me.

¹⁸ Illegible *akṣara*(s): — *stam*?

¹⁹ Read: *yayāce*.

²⁰ Ed. De 1970: 4:

*dhūmajyotiḥśalilamarutāṃ sannipātaḥ kva meghaḥ sandeśārthāḥ kva paṭukaraṇaiḥ
prāṇibhiḥ prāpaṇīyāḥ /
ityautsukyādaparigaṇanayan guhyakas taṃ yayāce kāmārtā hi prakṛtikṛpaṇāś cetanāce-
taneṣu // 5 //.*

²¹ *ṛta* superscribed on the upper margin, to be inserted; read: *puṣkarāvartta-*.

²² Ed. De 1970: 4:

*jātaṃ vaṃśe bhuvanavidite puṣkarāvartakānām jānāmi tvām prakṛtipuruṣaṃ
kāmarūpaṃ maghonaḥ /
tenārthitvaṃ tvayi vidhivasād dūrabandhur gato 'haṃ yācñā moghā varam adhiguṇe
nādrame labdhakāmā // 6 //.*

hyabhogyadvī²³ṣṭe vastutyu ☐ pacitarasāḥ premarāśrīvati yugmaṃ [sic]²⁴ // 107 //²⁵

asvāsenām prathamavirahodasokā sa-(5)khīn te śailīdāsu trinayanav-
rkhātsatikūṭānivr̥ttaḥ / sābhi²⁶jñānaprahitakusulaitad vacobhir mamāpi
bhrātakundaprasavaśithilam jīvitam dhārayeyyam //^{27/28}

(fol. 16a1) kvaccisyau²⁹mya vyavaśitam idaṃ vapukṛtyatvayā me
pratyākhyā³⁰deśāsanna khalu bhavato dhīratām kalpayāmi / niśabdo pi pradīśa-
si jalam yācitas cātakebhyaḥ / pratyuktaṃ hi praṇayiṣu satāmīpsitārtham kri-
yevasinam // ☐ // 108 //³¹

etat kṛtvā priyasamācitaprārthanāsanasomesauhāma.³²ddhāviraḥa iti vā (3)
mayyanakrośabuddhāḥ / iṣṭān deśān jaladavicara ☐ prāvṛṣāṃ sambhṛtaśrī mā
bhūd evaṃ kṣalam api ca te vidyutāḥ viprayogaḥ // 109 //³³

²³ -i- erased; ? dvi-/dr-; eds. read: *hyabhogādiṣṭe*.

²⁴ The scribe occasionally inserts the word *yugmaṃ* “a double (*śloka*)” before a stanza; here it is inserted into the stanza.

²⁵ Ed. De 1970: 36:

*etasmān mām kuśalinam abhijñānadānād viditvā mā kaulīnād asitanayane
mayyaviśvāsini bhūḥ /
snehān āhuḥ kimapi virāhe hrāsinas te hyabhogādiṣṭe vastunyupacitarasāḥ pre-
marāśībhavanti // 109 //.*

²⁶ The second syllable is difficult to interpret; it looks like *si-* with a faded upper part of *-i-*.

²⁷ End of the line fol. 15b5, stanza without number.

²⁸ Ed. De 1970: 36 (after 109, no. *14):

*āśvāsyaiṣam prathamavirahodagraśokām sakhīm te śailīdāsu trinayanavr̥ṣot-
khātakūṭān nivr̥ttaḥ /
sābhijñānaprahitakuśalais tadvacobhir mamāpi prātaḥkundaprasavaśithilam jīvitam
dhārayethāḥ // *14 //.*

²⁹ *kvacci syau-* (?) instead of *kaccit sau-*.

³⁰ *-khyā-* to be deleted — as marked with three little strokes over it.

³¹ Ed. De 1970: 37:

*kaccit saumya vyavasitam idaṃ bandhukṛtyam tvayā me pratyādeśān na khalu bhava-
to dhīratām kalpayāmi /
niśabdo pi pradīśasi jalam yācitas cātakebhyaḥ pratyuktaṃ hi praṇayiṣu
satāmīpsitārthakriyaiva // 110 //.*

³² *akṣara* difficult to identify (cf. fol. 15b2: *-dr-*; fol. 13b3: *-dha-*); the following one may be interpreted as — *ddhā-* or *-dvā-*. Eds. read: *sauhārdād vā*.

³³ Ed. De 1970: 37:

*etat kṛtvā priyamanucitaprārthanāvartmano me sauhārdād vā vidhura iti vā mayya-
nukrośabuddhyā /
iṣṭān deśān vicara jalada prāvṛṣā sambhṛtaśrīr mā bhūd evaṃ kṣanam api ca te
vidyutā viprayogaḥ // 111 //.*

(4) śrutvāvārttāñjaladakathitān tām pa³⁴neśopi śadyaḥ śā ☐ pasyānte hrdayasaṃvidhāyāstakopaḥ / saṃpūjyantau vigalitaśucau dampaṭī hr̥ṣṭacittau
 (5) bhogāniṣṭānaviratasukhaṃ bhojayāmāsa śvaśvat // 110 //³⁵

11.1.3. Colophon³⁶

(fol. 16a5) iti meghadūtamahākāvyaśāstrasamāptaḥ // ※ // śreyo'stu // samvat 484 kārṭtika-śukla (fol. 16b1) pūrṇṇimāsyān tithau // bharaṇi-nakṣatraṃ // vyātipatayoge // somavāsare // śrīrājādhirājaparamesvaraḥ śrīśrī-jayārjjunadevasya vijayarāje / śrī-palākhacau (2) rājye sthāne / jagasīhabhārokasya pustakaṃ iti // yathādṛṣṭaṃ tathālikhitam lekhako nāsti dokhakaṃ //³⁷

§ 11.2. Distribution of the stanzas in Ms A 24/14:

- [fol. 1a-b*]³⁸ — missing [*1 — 4]
- [fol. 2a] 5 — 8 — 9a
- [fol. 2b*] — missing [*9bcd — 12]
- [fol. 3a] 13 — 16 — 17
- [fol. 3b] 17 — 20 — 21
- [fol. 4a] 21 — 24 — 25a
- [fol. 4b] 25 — 28 — 29a
- [fol. 5a] 29 — 31 — 32abcd
- [fol. 5b] 32d — 35 — 36abcd
- [fol. 6a] 34*d — 37 — 38abcd
- [fol. 6b] 38d — 41 — 42abc
- [fol. 7a] 42d — 45 — 46a
- [fol. 7b] 46abcd — 48 — 49abcd
- [fol. 8a] 49d — 51 (*recte*: 52) — 53a
- [fol. 8b] 53bcd (Ms 52 !) — 56
- [fol. 9a] 57 — 59 — 60ab
- [fol. 9b] 60cd — 63 — 64a

³⁴ *dha*?.

³⁵ Ed. De 1970: 38 (no. *16):

śrutvā vārtā jaladakathitaṃ tām dhaneśo'pi sadyaḥ śāpasyāntaṃ sadayahṛdayaḥ saṃvidhāyāstakopaḥ /

*saṃyojyaitau vigalitaśucau dampaṭī hr̥ṣṭacittau bhogān iṣṭān aviratasukhaṃ bhojayāmāsa śvaśvat // *16 //.*

³⁶ Below the colophon, one (or two) lines have been erased. Perhaps it will be possible to decipher at least some words by means of a special filter.

³⁷ Petech 1984: 130 (no. 3): “Colophon: *Samvat 484 Kārṭtika-śukla-pūrṇṇimāsyām tithau Bharani-nakṣatre Vyatipāta-yoge somavāsare / śrī-R[ājādhirāja-]P[arameśvara]-śrī-śrī-Jayārjjunadevasya vijayarāje / śrī-Palañcoka-rājyasthāne Jayasiṃha Bhārokasya pustakaṃ*. Jayasiṃha Bhāro is apparently the same as Jayasiṃha Rāma Mahātha. The date verified in all its details as of Monday, 23rd October, 1363.”

³⁸ Folios “b” (*verso*) have numbers on the left margin; folios “a” (*recto*) without numbering.

[fol. 10a] 64abcd — 66 — 67abc
 [fol. 10b] 67d — 70 — 71abcd
 [fol. 11a] 71d — 74 — 75ab
 [fol. 11b] 75cd — 78 — 79a
 [fol. 12a] 79abcd — 81 — 82abcd
 [fol. 12b] 82d — 85 — 86abc
 [fol. 13a] 86d — 89 — 90ab
 [fol. 13b] 90cd — 93 — 94a
 [fol. 14a] 94abcd — 96 — 97abcd
 [fol. 14b] 97d — 100 — 101abc
 [fol. 15a] 101d — 104 — 105ab
 [fol. 15b] 105bcd — 108* (without number)
 [fol. 16a] 108 — 110
 l. 5: colophon — samvat 484
 [fol. 16b1–2] colophon
 lines 3–4–5 erased

§ 11.3. Concordance of the stanzas

Sigla:

Ms A = Ms NAK 24/14 (NS 464 = 1363 AD); H = ed. E. Hultsch; De = ed. S. K. De (1970); Ms ASK = Ms 4173 (NS 785 = 1665 AD).³⁹ Asterisks* mark the interpolated stanzas.

Ms A	H	De	Ms ASK 4173 compared with ed. De 1970
	compared with Ms A		
—	1	1	1
—	2	2	2
—	3	3	3
—	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	7	8
—	9	12	9
9ab	10	9	10
—	11	10	11

³⁹ In the Asha Archives (Asha Saphu Kuti, Kathmandu) another, so far unexamined, manuscript of the *Meghadūta* is preserved. It dates from NS 785 = 1665 AD. Paper, yellow, wooden covers; 33 folios, 4 lines, 4.6 x 16.5 cm; complete; script: Newari (*pracal-it*); scribe: Śivamunideva; title in the colophon: *Meghadūtacaritāmahākāvya*; numerous glosses (mostly in Sanskrit) in red ink.

Ms A	H	De	Ms ASK 4173 compared with ed. De 1970
	compared with Ms A		
—	12	11	12
13cd	13	13	13
14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17
18	I*	1*	1*
19	18	18	18
20	19	19	19
21	20	20	20
22	21	21	21
23	II*	2*	2*
24	22	22	22
25	23	23	23
26	24	24	24
27	25	25	25
—	26	26	26
28	27	27	27
29	28	28	28
30	29	29	29
31	30	30	30
32	31	31	31
33	III*	4*	4*
34	IV*	3*	3*
35	V*	9* [after stanza 70!]	9*
36	32	32	32
37 (35) ⁴⁰	33	33	33
38 (36)	34	34	34 ⁴¹
39 (37)	35	35	35
40 (38)	36	36	36
41 (39)	37	37	37
42 (40)	38	38	38
43 (41)	39	39	39

⁴⁰ Henceforth, the number in the parentheses indicates the changed numbering of the verses in Ms A caused by the scribe's mistake.

⁴¹ Ins. *yugmaṃ* // before the stanza; cf. H p. 20: comment. *yugalakam* //.

Ms A	H	De	Ms ASK 4173 compared with ed. De 1970
	compared with Ms A		
44 (42)	40	40	40
45 (43)	41	41	41
46 (44)	42	42	42
47 (45)	43	43	43
48 (46)	44	44	44
49 (47)	45	45	45
50 (48)	46	46	46
51 (49)	47	47	47
52 (50)	48	48	48
53 (51)	49	49	49
54 (51?)	50	50	50
55 (52)	51	51	51
56 (53)	52	52	52
57 (55!)	53	53	53
58 (56)	54	54	54 ⁴²
59 (57)	55	55	55
60 (58)	56	56	56
61 (59)	57	57	57
62 (60)	58	58	58
63 (61)	59	59	59
64 (62)	60	60	60 ⁴³
65 (63)	61	61	61
66 (64)	62	62	62
67 (65)	63	63	63
68 (66)	64	64	64
69 (67)	VII*	6*	6*
70 (68)	65	65	65
71 (69)	66	66	66
72 (70)	70	70	7*
73 (71)	68	68	69
74 (72)	67	67	70
75 (73)	71	71	68
76 (74)	72	72	67
77 (75)	73	73	8*

⁴² For 54a cf. H p. 30 n. 2; De p. 17 n. 54.

⁴³ For 60d cf. De p. 19 n. 60.

Ms A	H	De	Ms ASK 4173 compared with ed. De 1970
	compared with Ms A		
78 (76)	74	74	71
79 (77)	75	75	10*
80 (78)	76	76	72
81 (79)	77	77	5*⁴⁴
82 (80)	78	78	72
83 (81)	79	79	73
84 (82)	80	80	74
85 (83)	81	81	75
86 (84)	82	82	76
87 (85)	83	83	77
88 (86)	84	84	78
89 (87)	86	85	79
90 (88)	87 [86ab + 87cd] ⁴⁵	86	80
91 (89)	XI*	11*	81 ⁴⁶
92 (90) ⁴⁷	XII* + 93	12* [a + 93]	82
93 (91)	94	94	83
94 (92)	95	95	84
95 (93)	96	96	85
96 (94)	97	97	86
97 (95)	98	98	11*
98 (96)	99	99	12*
99 (97)	100	100	87
100 (98)	101	101	88
101 (99)	102	102	89
102 (100)	XIII*	13*	90
103 (101)	103	103	91 ⁴⁸
104 (102)	104	104	92
105 (103)	105	105	93
106 (104) ⁴⁹	106	106	94
107 (105)	107	107	95

⁴⁴ H = VI*.

⁴⁵ H p. 46 n. 2: "For the second half of verse 87 J, M, S substitute that of verse 88."

⁴⁶ Ins. *yugmaṃ* // before the stanza.

⁴⁷ Ms A: first line of v. XII*, followed by v. 93; Ms A = H = De: *gaurāś calatvam*.

⁴⁸ Ins. — *kulakam* // before the stanza.

⁴⁹ Ms A: first compound *ityātmānaṃ*; H, De: *nanvātmānaṃ*.

Ms A	H	De	Ms ASK 4173 compared with ed. De 1970
	compared with Ms A		
108 (106)	108	108	96
109 (107)	109	109	97
110 (—)	XIV*	14*	98 ⁵⁰
111 (108)	110	110	99
112 (109)	111	111	100
113 (110)	XVIII*	16*	101
Colophon (fol. 16r5–16v2) — see § 11.1. above			102
			13*
			103
			104
			105
			106 ⁵¹
			107
			108
			109
			110 ⁵²
			111
			16*
			Colophon fol. 33a4–33b4:
<p>// iti śrī-kālidāsa-kṛtau [33b] meghadūta-caritā-mahākāvyaḥ samāptaḥ // ※ // śreyāṃ(a)stu samvat 785 āśvini śuddhi 1 etad dine gopuccha-parvvate sāmhyamgu⁵³ -mahāvihārāvasthita-śākyavaṃsodbhava-śrī-śivamunidevena svārtham idaṃ meghadūtacaritā-mahākāvyaḥ lekhitaṃ sampūrṇam iti // ※ // śubham astu sarvavadā // ※ // śubha //</p>			

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⁵⁰ For 98a cf. H p. 51 n. 1.

⁵¹ 106a: *ityātmānam*.

⁵² Ins. *yugmam* // before the stanza.

⁵³ See Locke 1985: 397–398 (photo p. 398): Syāngu Bāhī — Sāmhyeṅgu Mahāvihāra — Svayambhū Mahācaitya.

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THE MONSOON OF CHANGE IN HINDI DRAMA AND THEATRE: MOHAN RAKESH'S WORKS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE FOLLOWING GENERATIONS OF PLAYWRIGHTS AND THEATRE MAKERS

Abstract: The paper aims to examine the profound role of Mohan Rakesh in shaping modern Indian drama and theatre in the second half of the 20th century. The author also seeks to document the unfading influence of Rakesh's work on contemporary Indian playwrights and to account for its recent renaissance. In the 21st century, more than four decades after Rakesh's death, his plays still enjoy considerable success in the world of Indian theatre. The first part of the paper focuses on the innovations the writer brought to the development of Hindi drama and theatre in the 20th century. The second part discusses Asghar Wajahat (Asḡar Wajāhat, born 1946) and his works as an example of Rakesh's influence on younger playwrights. The main aim is to examine the possible impact of Rakesh's innovations on the style and theme of Wajahat's latest drama *Mahābalī*.

Keywords: Mohan Rākeś, Asḡar Wajāhat, Hindi drama, Hindi theatre, Hindi literature

Mohan Rakesh (Mohan Rākeś, 1925–1972) died almost half a century ago, but his plays are still among the most performed works on the Hindi stage.¹ The writer himself has had a seminal influence on the younger generation of Hindi dramatists and on mainstream theatre. His dramas have been staged all over India and recently also abroad. Although Rakesh died prematurely at the age of 47, his literary output is nothing short of impressive. He wrote five collections of short stories, four novels, three full-length dramas (one

¹ For a discussion of Rakesh's plays in performance, see Dharwadker 2015: 38–46.

unfinished),² collections of one-act plays, travelogues, short biographies, memoirs and numerous critical essays. He also worked as a translator, producing Hindi translations of Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭikā* and Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* (from Sanskrit), Graham Green's *The End of the Affair* (from English) and Edita Morris's *Die Blumen von Hiroshima* (from German).

In his plays and other writings, Rakesh questions predominant social norms and codes, mostly examining the complicated relations between men and women, and also reflecting on the position of Hindi writers in society and their relation with the state. In his dramas³ *Āṣārḥ kā ek din* (*One Day of the Month of Asharha*, 1958), *Lahrō ke rājhamṣ* (*The Swans of the Waves*, 1968) and *Ādhe-adhūre* (*The Uncomplete Ones*,⁴ 1968), he is primarily concerned with the individuals' search for freedom in their relations with society, religion and the family. In her analysis of Rakesh's portrayal of female protagonists, Renu Juneja claims that the writer mainly deserves praise for 'the modern temper that suffuses his handling of theme, situation, and character.'⁵

Rakesh as a modernist and his realistic approach

Vasudha Dalmia aptly argues that three concepts are central to Rakesh's vision of drama and the stage; these are reality, struggle and conflict.⁶ According to her, his realism is the 'one of urban interiors, domestic and professional,' and there is no place for a 'universalizing depiction of reality or conflict' in his works.⁷ Dalmia observes that, before Rakesh, idealising conventions dominated in Hindi drama:

Bharatendu Harishchandra had demanded the creation of character and of suspense in drama and rejected mythical themes. In practice he had achieved these aims only preliminarily. Prasad developed the romantic subjectivity of the character, but conceptually he remained bound to Indian aesthetics and did not allow the individuality of his characters to gain the upper hand. (Dalmia 2010: 133–134)

Contrary to his great predecessors in Hindi drama, Bharatendu Hariścandr (Bhāratendu Hariścandr, 1850–1885) and Jayashankar Prasad (Jayaśaṅkar

² Kamleshwar (Kamleśvar, 1932–2007), a writer and Rakesh's friend, completed and published his last play *Pair tale kī zamīn* (*The Ground beneath One's Feet*) in 1975.

³ Complete editions of Rakesh's dramas appeared in 1993 and 2011. Cf. Rākeś 2011 and Rākeś 1993.

⁴ The title of the play *Ādhe-adhūre* has also been translated into English as *Halfway House*. See Dalmia 2010.

⁵ Juneja 1984.

⁶ Dalmia 2010: 124.

⁷ Dalmia 2010: 125.

Prasād, 1889–1937), Rakesh always contemporises the historical or semi-historical background of his plays, as he does when he turns to the literary past. His views on realism are presented in his theoretical essays, such as “Pariveś” (“Frames of Reference”) and “Hindī kathā kā sāhitya: navīn pravṛttiyā” (“Hindi Narrative Literature: New Tendencies”),⁸ in his discussions with Carlo Coppola⁹ and in the preface to his collection of one-act plays, *Satya aur kalpnā: chaḥ ekāṅkī* (*The Truth and Imagination: Six One-Act Plays*).¹⁰ Rakesh insists that, in a literary work, a writer should provide ‘a perspective of seeing man within his social reality and of accepting this reality as reality, while at the same time taking account of the struggle which could take man beyond the reality of today towards the reality of tomorrow.’¹¹ Moreover, he demands that the literary work reflect ‘the accurate pulsation’ of the conflict of the forces which influence life, because otherwise it fails to capture reality.¹² In his view, conflict has an enormous significance and is pivotal to full-length plays and one-act plays alike, as it ‘lends power and movement to drama.’¹³ Dalmia stresses that Prasad rejected ‘conflict’ as incompatible with Indian values and something imported from the West.¹⁴ In Rakesh’s plays, conflict is omnipresent; it unfolds between protagonists, within one person, and between hostile situations and ideas.

Aparna Dharwadker, who analyses Rakesh’s stance as modernist, observes that he ‘rejects a shallow dependence on the West as well as the appeals to intrinsic tradition and essential Indianness. What he does formulate is a powerful argument for an indigenized (not vernacular) modernism that can deal with sprawling chaos of contemporary Indian life without restoring either to derivativeness or dogmatic revivalism.’¹⁵ She asserts that Rakesh’s modernism is seen in ‘a rupture from the “modern” practices of the previous century, a re-valuation of the playwright as artist, a focus on the word as the defining element in drama, and an unsentimental approach to the nation’s past and present.’¹⁶ The playwright distanced himself from the colonial commercial urban Parsi theatre and the unstageable literary dramas of Bhartendu and Prasad, as

⁸ Published in 1975. See Rākeś 1975. Both essays were published in a collection entitled *Sāhityik aur saṃskṛitik dṛṣṭi* (*The Literary and Cultural View*) and can be accessed online at: <http://www.hindisamay.com/writer/मोहन-राकेश>.

⁹ See Rakesh, [Coppola], Singh, Wajahat 1973. See also the interview and discussion available online at: <http://www.hindisamay.com/writer/मोहन-राकेश>.

¹⁰ First published in 1949. See Rākeś 1985.

¹¹ Dalmia 2010: 124. See also Rākeś 1967: 204.

¹² Dalmia 2010: 124. See also Rākeś 1975: 35.

¹³ Dalmia 2010: 125.

¹⁴ See Dalmia 2010: 124.

¹⁵ Dharwadker 2008: 150.

¹⁶ Dharwadker 2008: 150.

well as from the politically oriented stage championed by the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA).¹⁷ He insisted that the dramatist and the stage director should collaborate closely, in his opinion the playwright-artist should be at the centre of both: drama and theatre.¹⁸ Rakesh was intimately familiar with the distinctive demands of dramatic language, because he had written radio plays in preparation for writing full-length dramas.¹⁹ He contributed to a new awareness of and parameters for dramatic speech. For him, every word and sound had a dramatic notion, which he called 'the dramatic word.'²⁰ He knew that in theatre a great deal must be left unsaid, and therefore he was pre-occupied with images, sounds, pauses, suggestiveness, incomplete sentences and other dimensions of 'the dramatic word.'

Rakesh's approach to the great national symbols is explicitly expressed in the themes of his plays, which will be discussed below. He believed that the writer should not reduce reality to the few areas of human conflict and was obligated to constantly 'widen his field of experience.'²¹ Although his first play was set in the 5th century AD and revolved around the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa (Kālidāsa) and his works,²² it nevertheless relied on Rakesh's experiences in his private and public life. The most important issue explored in the play is the dilemma of the writer's freedom and his ability to make choices in life.

Rakesh's life and works

Mohan Rakesh was born in Amritsar in 1925.²³ His father, a lawyer, was known as a social worker and held offices in various literary and cultural organisations. Rakesh inherited a taste for music and literature from his father, and after his death in 1941 he also inherited his father's debts and the responsibility for the rest of the family. He graduated from the Punjab University in Lahore with a bachelor's degree in English literature and a master's degree in Sanskrit literature. After the partition of India in 1947, he was appointed

¹⁷ IPTA was established in 1943 to promote patriotic themes and to awaken national consciousness in the Indian people.

¹⁸ Dharwadker 2008: 152. See also Dharwadker 2015: 32.

¹⁹ Rakesh's experience with film scripts and radio plays increased his awareness of the use of the light and composition. See Dalmia 2010: 145.

²⁰ Rakesh was working on the "The Dramatic Word" project as part of his two-years Nehru Fellowship. See Dharwadker 2015: 34.

²¹ Dalmia 2010: 12. See also Rākeś 1975: 35–36.

²² This issue has been analysed by many scholars for decades, cf. Thakur (1978), Messig (2003 [1994]), Dmitrova (2004), Sawhney (2009), Dharwadker (2015). In my Polish paper on *Āṣāṛh kā ek din*, I analyse the role of Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* in Rakesh's play and his theoretical approach to realism and idealism in Hindi drama. Cf. Miązek 2018.

²³ His real name was Madan Mohan Guglānī.

as Hindi lecturer at Bombay's Elphinstone College, a position he was forced to quit due to myopia. In 1949, he moved to Jalandhar and later to Shimla, where he worked as a Hindi teacher. His first one-act plays and first collection of short stories were published at that time.²⁴ He married his first wife in 1950.²⁵ In 1952, Rakesh obtained a master's degree in Hindi literature from the Punjab University in Jalandhar and became the Head of the Hindi Department at the D.A.V. College in this city. He lived there for eight years before moving to Delhi, where he took up the position of Hindi lecturer at Delhi University and settled with his second wife.²⁶ In this period, he published three collections of short stories,²⁷ a travelogue,²⁸ a theoretical essay on the composition of a literary work and his first full-length drama.²⁹ Together with Rajendra Yadav (Rājendr Yādav, 1929–2013) and Kamleshwar, he paved the way for a new movement in Hindi literature which came to be known as *Nayī Kahānī* (New Short Story) and influenced the further development of this genre for decades. In 1961, his fourth collection of short stories³⁰ and first novel³¹ were published. He resigned from teaching in 1962 and worked briefly as the editor of the Hindi literary magazine *Sarikā* in Bombay, where he married Anita Alauk in 1963. After two unsuccessful marriages, he spent the last nine years of his life with her.³² Anita Rakesh admits in her memoirs that writing was the most important thing for her husband, his friends were in the second place, and she was third.³³ At that time, Rakesh moved amongst illustrious literary circles; his friends included Kamleshwar, Rajendra Gupta (Rājendr Guptā), Rajinder Pal (Rajindr Pāl) and Om Shivpuri (Om Śivpurī). He loved to spend money on his friends in the restaurants and coffee-houses of Connaught Place they frequented together. A few years later, he edited a collection

²⁴ His early one-act plays appeared in a collection entitled *Satya aur kalpnā: chah ekānkī* (*The Truth and Imagination: Six One-Act Plays*) in 1949.

²⁵ She was Sushila Meherwal; their son Naveen was born in 1956.

²⁶ He married Pushpa Chopra in 1960. They had no children and separated after two years.

²⁷ The first collection was published in 1950 with the title *Insān ke khaṇḍ* (*The Ruins of the Human Being*) and the second, entitled *Naye bādāl* (*New Clouds*), in 1957.

²⁸ It appeared in 1953 as *Ākhirī caṭṭān tak* (*Up to the Final Rock*).

²⁹ It was published in 1957 with the title *Sāhitya racnā: anubhūti se abhivyakti tak* (*The Literary Work: From Experience to Expression*). The same year it appeared in English as *Intuition and Expression in Literature*.

³⁰ *Ek aur zindagī* (*One More Life*).

³¹ *Andhere band kamre* (*Dark Sealed Rooms*).

³² Their daughter Purva was born in 1966 and son Shaleen in 1970.

³³ 'You have a third place in my life; my writings are in the first place, and are my friends in the second,' she quotes him as saying in her book *Satrē aur Satrē*, the story of her life (Rākeś 2002).

of self-portraits of prominent Hindi writers.³⁴ Having settled in Delhi in 1964, Rakesh dedicated himself to full-time writing. The stage success of his debut play *Āṣāṛh kā ek din* in 1959,³⁵ which won him the annual award for the Best Play of the year for 1958 from the National Academy of Performing Arts in Delhi, strengthened his position as a writer and playwright. He entered the realm of Indian theatre like a monsoon of change,³⁶ as he insisted that stage directors and theatre makers closely cooperate with him. Dharwadker lists their names:

(...) the Anamika group of Calcutta [...] mounted the first major production of *Ashadh* the following year, under Shaymanand Jalan's direction. Over the next two decades, the play consolidated its position in the culture of contemporary urban performance through notable productions by nationally prominent directors, including Ebrahim Alkazi, Satyadev Dubey, Mohan Maharshi, Om Shivpuri, Amal Alana, Rajinder Nath (Dharwadker 2015: 2).

Thus, after a decade of writing new short stories, Rakesh shifted to drama, where he moves from idealism of previous to him writers to pure realism. In his view, this genre would better express the conflicts which he and his generation were experiencing. His second play, *Lahrō ke rājhamṣ*, appeared in 1963. He then undertook to translate Kalidasa's Sanskrit drama *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, and in 1965 he published its Hindi version entitled *Śākuntal*, at the same time working on *Ādhe-adhūre*, his next play which appeared in 1969. But he did not give up writing prose and produced, meanwhile, his fifth collection of short stories,³⁷ second novel³⁸ and new theoretical literary essays.³⁹ The following years brought him even more success, as his short stories, novels and dramas were reprinted in new editions and translated into English. The renowned filmmaker Mani Kaul (Maṇi Kaul, 1944–2011) has made two films based on Rakesh's short story "Uskī roṭī" ("Her Bread" or "Daily Bread")⁴⁰ and on his debut play, respectively.⁴¹ The playwright received the Nehru Fellowship,

³⁴ See his *Aine ke sāmne* (*In Front of the Mirror*) of 1966.

³⁵ In his *Diary*, Rakesh writes that the play was first staged at the convention of the Congress Party in Nagpur in January 1959, and then in Lucknow by the theatre Rangmanch and during the Theatre Festival, where it won The Best Production Award. Cf. Rākeś 1985: 226–227 and the excerpts translated into English by Dharwadker in Rākeś 2015: 216–219.

³⁶ In his books, Govind Cātak called him 'the messiah of modern drama' (*ādhunik nāṭak kā masiha*) and 'the herald of modern Hindi drama' (*ādhunik hindī nāṭak kā agrdūt*) (Cātak 1975 and Cātak 2003).

³⁷ Cf. *Faulad kā ekas* (*The Sky of Steel*) of 1966.

³⁸ Cf. *Na anevālā kal* (*The Tomorrow That Never Arrives*) of 1968.

³⁹ Cf. "Parives" ("The Frame of Reference") of 1967.

⁴⁰ It was released in 1970.

⁴¹ In 1971.

started to do research for a monograph on drama and went to Europe to collect materials for his project on *The Dramatic Word*.⁴² In 1972, he published another novel and short biographies of some distinguished personalities.⁴³ His work in literature and drama was suddenly cut short by his death of cardiac arrest. A collection of his radio plays, essays, one unfinished novel, his diary and interviews have been published posthumously. Many of his works have been translated into other Indian and foreign languages, and his full-length dramas and one-act plays have been produced in theatres in India and worldwide.⁴⁴ Memorial issues dedicated to Rakesh were published immediately after his death, including interviews edited by Rajinder Pal (Rajindr Pāl) and Carlo Coppola.⁴⁵ Coppola recorded his long talk with Rakesh on 30th July 1968.⁴⁶ This conversation was elaborated upon with the help of Asghar Wajahat (Asḡar Wajāhat, born 1946), who was a PhD student at Aligarh Muslim University at that time, and Kunvar Pal Singh (Kūvar Pāl Simh), a professor at the same university.⁴⁷

Rakesh's contribution to Hindi drama and his use of ready-made images from the past literary traditions

Rakesh's selection of themes and protagonists for his dramas was crucially underpinned by his specific ideas. In the preface to the third edition of *Lahrō ke rājhamś* (1968), he comments on the theme of his first play: 'When reading *The Cloud-Messenger*, I felt that the story was not so much about the banished *yaksha* as it was about the poet exiled from his soul who had poured his feelings of guilt into his work of imagination.'⁴⁸ Thus, the poet's inner struggle is the main theme of this play. One of its main protagonists is the 5th-century

⁴² He visited Geneva, Moscow, Vienna, Prague, Munich, Paris, London, East and West Berlin, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Helsinki. See Dharwadker 2008: 147.

⁴³ *Antarāl (Interval)* and *Samānya-sarāthī (Time's Charioteer)* of 1972.

⁴⁴ Dharwadker lists them in her detailed chronology of Rakesh's works. See Dharwadker 2015: 57–64.

⁴⁵ Mohan Rakesh memorial issues and interviews appeared in *Nāṭaraṅg* of December 1972, edited by Nemicandr Jain; in *Enact* of January-February 1973, edited by Rajinder Pal; in *Sarikā* March 1973, edited by Kamleshwar; in *Journal of South Asian Literature* Vol. 9, No 2/3 of 1973, edited by Carlo Coppola.

⁴⁶ Dharwadker 2008: 160.

⁴⁷ Rakesh, [Coppola], Singh, Wajahat 1973. A. Dharwadker argues that this interview is still 'the most substantial primary source for Rakesh to appear in the West.' See Dharwadker 2008: 160.

⁴⁸ Translation mine. See original Hindi: "Meghdūt parhte hue mujhe lagā kartā thā ki vah kahānī nirvasit jakṣ kī utnī nahī hai jitnī svayam apne ātmā se nirvasit us kavi kī, jisne apnī hī ek aparādh-anubhūti ko is parikalpnā mẽ ḍāl diyā hai." Rākeś 2004: 20. See also Rākeś (2015): 229.

Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, called Kalidas (Kālidās in Hindi), who must choose between life with his beloved Mallika (Mallikā) in the country and a career at the imperial court at Ujjaini. Rakesh explains in the preface to the first edition of this play that this character is fictional and the name of the renowned Sanskrit poet is introduced to serve as ‘a symbol of our creative energies and, in the play this symbol is meant to signify the inner conflict that drives the artistic imagination in any historical age.’⁴⁹ But he is also convinced that the character dramatised by him is not far removed from the personalities depicted in Kalidasa’s works written centuries earlier. In the preface to the second edition, Rakesh is even more lucidly: ‘The play contains some symbolic gestures towards life in our times; chief among them is the issue of the poet’s acceptance of state patronage.’⁵⁰ The artist’s inner dilemma is whether to accept the call of the emperor of Ujjaini and serve the patron at his court or to follow his independent life and remain with his beloved. The setting of the main plot in a Himalayan village is again only symbolic, as the work reflects modern conflict. The city came to stand for the centre of conflict in Hindi literature in the second half of the 20th century. Thus, Rakesh’s work is also designed as ‘struggling against the idealizing nationalist focus on a village India.’⁵¹ In *Āṣāṛh kā ek din*, Kalidas leaves the mountain village and accepts the post of a royal poet. He writes his famous works there, marries princess Priyanguṃaṃjari (Priyaṅumaṃjari) and moves to Kashmir as a ruler called Matrīgupt (Matrīgupt). When, at the end of the play, he returns to his village, having dissipated and exhausted his creativity, he finds out that Mallika, whom poverty forced into prostitution, has a child. She had to seek the protection of his rival, Vilom. While experiencing his own inner conflict, Kalidas realises that he was not the only one to struggle. He leaves Mallika without a farewell. Unable to help her, he departs to Benares.

In *Lahrō ke rājhamś*, Rakesh again turns to the Sanskrit literary past and uses Ashvaghōṣa’s (Aśvaghōṣa) drama *Saundarānanda*.⁵² He chooses the royal court of the handsome prince Nanda, Buddha’s half-brother, as the setting of the play. The prince’s pleasant and happy life with his newly married wife Sundari (Sundarī) is disrupted by the temptation of a new religion. The conflict between following Buddha’s calling and fulfilling his royal and husbandly duties, which arises in the protagonist’s mind, reflects, in fact, the predicament of the modern human mind, torn by divergent ideas as it is. An unexpected turn in Nanda’s life comes at the end of the play, as he neither chooses his married life with Sundari nor follows Buddha. Unable to choose, he sets off on his own path into an unknown future, in search of himself.

⁴⁹ Translated by A. Dharwadker. See Rākeś 2015: 226.

⁵⁰ Rākeś 2015: 222.

⁵¹ Dalmia 2010: 124–125.

⁵² Aśvaghōṣa lived in the 2nd century AD.

In *Ādhe-adhūre*, Rakesh does not use any symbols from the literary past. The play is located in an urban environment and depicts various levels of conflict in a middle-class Indian family. The simple living room of their flat serves as the setting for the action. The play's protagonist, Sawitri (Sāvitrī), is an emancipated wife and mother of two children who provides her family with money as her husband Mahendrnath (Mahendrnāth) is unemployed. Rakesh explains:

The central character is a working lady. There are four men around her: her husband, her boss, the ex-partner of the boss who the woman thinks is the cause of her husband's ruin — the husband, incidentally, sits at home not earning anything; he was in some business with the ex-partner and lost everything. The fourth man is an ex-flame, the man whom she once thought of running off with, leaving her husband behind. But she couldn't bring herself to do it; she couldn't make up her mind at the time. Now she is about forty with a boy who is about twenty-one; there's also a daughter about nineteen who's already eloped, and another daughter about fourteen. This woman is the central character and I want the four men to be played by the same actor. What I want to indicate by that is that it's not the individual who's responsible for his situation, for he would have made the same choice no matter what, regardless of the situation. Any choice anyone makes has a certain irony in it, for things turn out the same regardless of the choice.⁵³

The conflict involves all the members of the family, who fail to communicate with each other. Instead of dialogues, there are long monologues, and there is no climax in the play. At the end, Mahendrnath has a heart attack, and his daughter takes care of him. Rakesh's aim here is to show the essence of drama as a modern form. What remains constant is his protagonists' sense of being in crisis, which Rakesh calls 'today's mood of life.'⁵⁴ This crisis is also visible in the form of his play. He proposes a new understanding of the modern Indian urban middle-class individual as alienated, incomplete and incapable of grasping the surrounding reality around. To underline this, Rakesh employs the idiom of the street in the play — a modern variety of language which is in contrast with the ancient linguistic stylisations in his two first plays. This also marks the departure from idealism to pure realism in Hindi play. His first two dramas served him as a prelude to the tragedy that fully plays out in the last one. This is a tragedy of fragmented, incomplete individuals and of drama as a form.

The idea of crisis or conflict as the essence of realism pervades all Rakesh's dramas thematically and structurally. While the first two plays have

⁵³ Rakesh, [Coppola], Singh, Wajahat 1973: 38.

⁵⁴ Dalmia 2010: 136.

a traditional division into acts, the last one has no divisions. The comic scenes richly interpolated in the first play are reduced in the second and entirely disappear in the last one. In the composition of his dramas, conflict always serves as the germ of the plot and also as its climax and culmination. The protagonists are portrayed as unable to make choices or as struggling with their decisions. They are shown as incomplete in their personalities and achievements. In the last play, even the very name of the male protagonists is reduced to 'M' (M1, M2, M3, M4).⁵⁵ The Man in a Black Suit, who acts as a narrator in the prologue of the play, symbolises all the male characters in the play and the crisis of man in general. The traditional roles ascribed to man and wife in India are reversed in this work. The heroine, Sawitri, is shown as a split personality, a woman who continuously changes her partners, as no one can fulfil her expectations. Thus, conflict results in the incompleteness of the female and the male, their alienation and their estrangement despite living together.

As the plots of Rakesh's respective dramas progress, dialogues become increasingly fragmented, communication gaps proliferate, and dialogic exchanges are eventually replaced by long monologues. At the end of the first play, there are two long monologues by Kalidas and Mallika; the second is concluded by monologues by Nand and Sundari; and the last play closes with the monologue by the character called M4. This suggests that, by violating the rules of dramatic form, Rakesh seeks to illustrate the tragedy as a new type of drama in Hindi. Nirad Choudhuri confirms this intuition: 'With Mohan Rakesh [...] Hindi drama makes a departure from pseudo-modernism and traditional symbolism to the drama of "non-communication" — the modern man's failure to understand himself or to understand the other person and their mutual failure to understand each other, which is the real tragedy of modern life.'⁵⁶ Dalmia argued that by depicting no possibility of action and the lack of dialogue between the characters, Rakesh developed a form which seems to exhaust its potential.⁵⁷

In his first two dramas, Rakesh uses the powerful ready-made images of Kālidāsa and Buddha.⁵⁸ Besides from historical facts, he evokes legends associated with the Sanskrit poet and with Buddha's half-brother, prince Nand. He disagrees with Indian critics who doubt the validity of his sources:

There is a class of researchers that has treated Kalidas and Matrugupta as the same individual historically. [...] there is another class of researcher that

⁵⁵ See Rākeś 1973.

⁵⁶ Originally appearing in *Hindi Drama (Contemporary Indian Literature)*, the passage is quoted by Badal Sarkar in his book on the changing language of theatre in India. See Sarkar 1982: 27.

⁵⁷ See Dalmia 2010: 136.

⁵⁸ Rakesh admits that Nand was supposed to represent Buddha himself.

does not accept the validity of such an interpretation... [...] the people deeply devoted to ancient texts should not be taken aback. They can find the satisfaction of history based on facts in a different place, and should not search for it in this play. The story of Nand and Sundari here is merely a launching pad, because I felt that it could be reconfigured in time. The fundamental inner conflict in this play is modern in the same sense in which its equivalent is modern in *Ashadh ka ek din*.⁵⁹

While the legends used by Rakesh form a rather semi-historical background in these plays, the quotations from Kalidasa's real works and the names of Kalidasa, Nanda and Buddha belong to factual Indian history. Rakesh thus engages in a debate with the Sanskrit literary tradition of past ages: in the first play, with the golden age of Sanskrit *kāvya* literature by quoting from Kalidasa's *Meghadūta* (*The Cloud Messenger*), and in the second play, with the tradition of Sanskrit drama from around 2nd century AD by employing the theme of Ashvagoshā's epic poem *Saundarānanda*. In both plays, he uses the style of language modelled on these remote literary predecessors. His aim in introducing this literary and religious past is, on the one hand, to present a new form of drama in Hindi — the tragedy — as a clash between idealism and realism and, on the other, to express his call for the freedom of individuals, and writers too, in making their choices, regardless of the traditional attitudes or of the patronage of state or religion.

Rakesh's innovation in theatre

Rakesh articulates his theoretical vision of drama and the stage in his essays "Nāṭak-kār aur raṅgmañc" ("The Dramatist and the Stage"), "Raṅgmañc aur śabd" ("The Stage and Words") and "Hindī raṅgmañc" ("The Hindi Stage"), published posthumously in a volume entitled *Nāṭya vimarś* (*Reflections on Theatre*).⁶⁰ He demands in them that playwrights take part in the process of staging their works:

I do not find it acceptable that the playwright should be a mere visitor, a respected audience, or an external unit in the entire process of theatre. Nor that the playwright's experimental practice should be limited to its own four walls and the practice of functional theatre to its own four walls remote from the former. For these two to be brought into the same space, the playwright must become an essential part of the entire stage process. At the same time, he could see this process as the next step of his own experimental practice⁶¹ (Rākeś 2003a: 41).

⁵⁹ See Rakesh's preface to the first edition of his second play in: Dharwadker 2015: 225, 228.

⁶⁰ Rākeś 2003a.

⁶¹ Translation mine. See original Hindi: Raṅgmañc kī pūrī prayog-prakriyā mẽ nāṭak-kār keval ek abhyāgat, sammānit darśak yā bāhar kī ikāi banā rahe, yah sthiti mujhe

Rakesh also expresses his views in the prefaces to his plays and in his letters to Upendranāth Aśk.⁶² In the preface to the second edition of his first play, he admits: ‘I believe that the real value of the dramatic work — its success or failure — is decided only on the stage. If good, successful plays are to be written, it really would be appropriate to expect that they be performed on stage before publication, and be given their final textual form only in light of that experience. But I think it will take us some years to get to such a phase.’⁶³ In *Nāṭakkār aur raṅmañc*, he regrets that despite ‘a deep interest in contemporary theatrical activity he feels cut off from it because Hindi lacks the kind of well-developed theatre in which the playwright could create a viable role for himself.’⁶⁴ He also insists that the stage should represent the ‘cultural achievements and aspiration’ of its immediate audience and proposes ‘a performance culture mediated not by state patronage, but by voluntary, energetic and creative collaboration among all those committed to the theatre.’⁶⁵ Thus, the creation of language which would be ‘a living idiom for the stage’ was a central notion in his vision of the Hindi stage. Dharwadker stresses that Rakesh ‘locates the uniqueness of theatre not in its mimetic qualities (which it shares with film) or even in the fact of live performance, but in the creation of a living idiom for the stage, which he describes as the playwright’s particular challenge.’⁶⁶ In an interview with C. Coppola, Rakesh states that the forging of a ‘sensitive, yet robust language’ was an important achievement during the *Naī Kahānī* movement and the period that followed it. He contrasts it with the language of his predecessors: Premchand (Premchand, 1885–1936), Prasad, and Agyeya⁶⁷ (Ajñeya, 1911–1987), who, as he puts it, used either ‘progressive language’ or ‘refined, sophisticated language.’ He distances himself from the *chāyāvād*,⁶⁸ Indian romanticism, writers, whose language ‘has sensitivity,

svīkārya nahī lagtī. Na hī yah ki nāṭakkār kī prayogśiltā uskī apnī alag cārdīvārī tak sīmit rahe aur kriyātmak raṅmañc kī prayogśiltā usse dūr apnī alag cārdīvārī tak. In donō ke ek dharātal par lane ke liye apekṣit hai ki nāṭakkār pūrī raṅg-prakriyā kā ek anivārya aṅg ban sake. Sāth yah bhī ki vah us prakriyā ko apnī prayogśiltā ke hī agle caraṅ ke rūp me dekh sake.

⁶² Dharwadker 2015: 215–230.

⁶³ The second edition of this play appeared in 1958. The preface has been translated by A. Dharwadker. See Rākeś 2015: 221.

⁶⁴ See Dharwadker 2008: 150–151.

⁶⁵ See Dharwadker 2015: 27.

⁶⁶ Dharwadker 2008: 152.

⁶⁷ The transcription of this writers’s name follows the rules of Sanskrit pronunciation as it was used by the writer himself and prevails in works about him in English.

⁶⁸ The name of the period in Hindi poetry between 1920 and 1934, known as neo-romanticism. In Hindi, *chāyā* means: “shade,” “shadow,” “reflection” and “imitation.” See McGregor 1993: 342.

sophistication, but lacked intimacy, robustness.⁶⁹ Dharwadker argues that the most celebrated feature of Rakesh's *Āṣāṛh kā ek din* is its diction, which she calls: 'a unique and perfect medium that simultaneously evokes the classical and the contemporary.'⁷⁰

Dalmia also admires Rakesh's use of language: 'at the same time poetic and yet idiomatically close to the rhythm of everyday speech, it does not need to fall back upon songs to highlight emotional moments, as prevalent in dramaturgy up to Pradas's days.'⁷¹ She lists two other stage innovations introduced by Rakesh, namely 'the comic scenes which he reduces in each play and the usage of stage light, which isolates, blends or fades the parts of reality, which should be exposed or withheld.' These innovations 'support the illusion of [Rakesh's] exclusive stage realism.'⁷² In the text of the play, this stage realism is amply showcased by the extensive bracketed stage directions. Rakesh's very detailed and long stage directions serve to retain the rigour of the dialogues, which should suit the character, and to keep the simplicity of the scenography. It results in a scarcity of props; for instance, in his first play, Mallika's simple book made for Kalidas symbolises a new *Meghadūta*, written by her own life. Rakesh believed that drama and theatre must be regarded as 'primarily verbal-aural rather than visual forms.'⁷³ For Rakesh, words were central to plays, while images were crucial to films.

Before Rakesh, Hindi dramatists had had fewer opportunities than he did to present their theatrical works to wider audiences. The National School of Drama only provided such a stage from 1959 on. Long before Rakesh featured his *Āṣāṛh kā ek din* in the theatre, he had been obsessed with the idea that a dramatist should produce a play himself and a drama should prove itself on the stage before being published.⁷⁴ He wrote about his second play that 'this play, too, could not be tested on the stage before its publication in print. I would like to hope that, like the earlier venture, this too, will make a place for itself.'⁷⁵ Dharwadker states in the context of Rakesh's *Āṣāṛh kā ek din* that "sustained attention [...] for more than fifty years has firmly established the play among the classics of contemporary drama and theatre alongside such works as Dharmavir Bharati's⁷⁶ *Andhā yug* (*Blind epoch*, 1954), Girish

⁶⁹ See Rakesh, [Coppola], Singh, Wajahat 1973: 28

⁷⁰ Dharwadker 2015: 36.

⁷¹ Dalmia 2010: 128.

⁷² Dalmia 2010: 128.

⁷³ His essay "Theatre Without Walls" was published in *Sangeet Natak* 6 (October–December 1967). See Dharwadker 2008: 152.

⁷⁴ Cf. Rakesh's *Diary*, 29 September in: Dharwadker 2015: 219.

⁷⁵ This quotation comes from the preface to the first edition of his second play. See Dharwadker 2015: 228.

⁷⁶ Dharmavīr Bhārtī (1926–1997).

Karnad's⁷⁷ *Tughlaq* (*Tuglak*, 1964) and Vijay Tendulkar's⁷⁸ *Śānttā! Corṭ cālū āhe* (*Silence! The Court is in Session*, 1967).⁷⁹

More than half a century after Rakesh's death, Asghar Wajahat, who had by that time garnered renown as a Hindi dramatist, novelist and scriptwriter for Hindi movies, used his preface to the collection of his dramas *Āṭh nāṭak* (*Eight Dramas*) to address demands from Indian dramatists and theatre makers which resonated with Rakesh's vision of drama and theatre. In Wajahat's opinion 'writing dramas is an inherent part of their reproduction on stage; as long as a drama is not directly combined with its stage production, it will not have any impact. Such an initiative is urgently needed in Hindi...'⁸⁰ With this statement, Wajahat confirms that, even in the 21st century, there is no close cooperation between Hindi theatre-makers and the authors of the plays that are being staged. He articulates the same dilemma that Rakesh and his contemporaries faced and discussed at length in the 1950s. In an interview published in 2011, Wajahat admits that: 'Hindi theatre is not much developed and most of the plays I wrote were not staged.'⁸¹ Were the achievements of the golden age of Hindi drama and its close interrelation with the stage initiated by Rakesh lost after his death? As a detailed analysis of the five decades of the development of Hindi drama and theatre after Rakesh is impossible here, Anuradha Kapur's (Anurādhā Kapūr) insights about the condition of Hindi theatre in the 21st century and Rakesh's contribution to it will come in handy.

Kapur is one of the leading producers of modern Hindi theatre, an acclaimed former director of the National School of Drama, and a professor of acting and direction. As a young actress, she had an opportunity to learn from Rakesh when acting in his *Ādhe-adhūre* in the 1970s. In an interview given on the occasion of the 93rd anniversary of Rakesh's birth, she describes the 1970s as 'a veritable renaissance in Hindi theatre.'⁸² In her opinion, Rakesh

⁷⁷ Girīś Kārṇād (1938–2019).

⁷⁸ Vijay Teṇḍulkar (1928–2008).

⁷⁹ Dharwadker 2015: 2.

⁸⁰ In *Bhūmikā* he states in Hindi: nāṭya lekhan darausal raṅgmañc kā ek abhinn aṅg hai. Jab tak ise sidhā raṅgmañc se nahī̃ joṛā jāegā tab tak nāṭya lekhan prabhāvaśālī nahī̃ ho saktā. Hindī bhāṣā mẽ is pahal kī āvaśyaktā hai.' (Wajāhat 2016: 5).

⁸¹ In this interview, he says: 'I wrote *Jinnay Lahore nai dekhyā*... somewhere around 1989–90. After I had written it, I invited four of the leading directors from Delhi for a reading of the play, but nobody turned up. The well-known director Habib Tanvir selected this play when the Sri Ram invited him to do a play for them [in 1989]. Everybody kept saying that it would be a disaster. Tanvir would sink along with the play for them. [...] The play is realistic while Habib Tanvir is renowned for the folk roots of his theatre with a lot of songs and dances. But when the play was staged, it did not sink...' Wajāhat 2016: 4. Translation from Hindi mine.

⁸² The interview was published in *Quint Hindi* on 8th January, 2019. See Kapur, Sharma 2019.

exerted a profound influence on Hindi theatre-makers. However, she notes that in the 21st century, certain regressive tendencies have again put the Indian stage in urgent need of someone like him, a person who would insist on struggling and want people to feel free and have the freedom to make choices. She stresses that theatre reflects contemporary problems, and Rakesh was an individual capable of identifying the problems around him. She admits that: 'Theatre needs to invoke the energy again that Mohan Rakesh has brought to it. [...] That energy lasted for quite a bit. But in her opinion, this energy does not need to come from playwriting or playwrights; rather theatre directors should trigger it. She stresses that the way Rakesh and Anita lived their lives'⁸³ 'set a precedent for youngsters' and 'challenged society's regressive rules.' She adds that the 'social structure does not give us all freedoms; we need to claim them.'⁸⁴ Kapur states that the prevalent themes and characters of all Rakesh's dramas convey the suffocation of the middle-class individual in life and relations, which he understood very well. She is convinced that the secret of Rakesh's success lies in the contemporaneity of his protagonists:

[...] his characters of the 60s and 70s still feel realistic. There would be something [...] in his plays that we could all relate to. Like the *Ādhe adhūre* character of a little girl, Kinni, she is a school-going girl who deals with the pressure of school. She feels upset with her mother, gets trashed by her as well. The older girl struggles with relationships and marriage. Or the boy who does not wish to work as he believes that he would not achieve much by working. These struggles don't belong to the 1970s; they can be seen today as well, through Kalidas, Mallika, and Ma, the problem of the older generation exists today as well.⁸⁵

In the interview with Carlo Coppola, Rakesh confesses that his protagonists reflect his own experience and struggle:

real happiness, which is an individual discovery, could not be discovered by any of my characters because I had not yet made that discovery. I know that down deep, I am very sad. I have always been the one who's being checked in restaurants for laughing too loudly, and I always indulge in lots of witty repartee in the coffee shops. But as I have grown in the last twenty years, seeing everything that has happened around me, I must confess that deep within myself, I am very, very sad. [...] the indecision and unhappiness of my characters is simply a reflection of my character.⁸⁶

⁸³ They married against the will of Anita's parents. When she left her home, she was even 21, and Rakesh was seventeen years older.

⁸⁴ See Kapur, Sharma 2019.

⁸⁵ See Kapur, Sharma 2019.

⁸⁶ Rakesh, [Coppola], Singh, Wajahat 1973: 34.

Kapur remembers the way Rakesh behaved in the theatre during the staging of his *Ādhe-Ādhūre*, when she was a young actress in Om Shivpuri's Dihantar Group⁸⁷: “during rehearsals, he would not look ahead but always down [...]. He listened first and gave directions after dialogues were completed.”⁸⁸ She also recalls that, when writing, he always a well-ordered routine, was organised and had a ‘clarity of artistic purpose.’⁸⁹ Kapur points to another feature of Rakesh's dramatic style — his use of language is what made him stand out among his contemporaries. She calls it in Hindi *rozmarrā kī bhāṣā*, ‘everyday language.’ In Rakesh's plays, it changes with the characters. Rakesh was advised to abandon the stylised language of his earlier dramas for the language of his times by Ibrahim Alkazi (Ibrāhīm Alkāzī, 1925–2020), a famous Indian theatre director with whom Rakesh collaborated in the 1960s. The change was supposed to help him appeal to the modern public.⁹⁰ Kapur remembers that Rakesh would even specify in the text of a drama how sounds were to be included. In her opinion, today ‘the language has to be developed which would express all the nuances of our feeling, yet retaining the quality of flesh without going into that sort of abstraction which would denude it of the human appearance, that human flesh so needed in our writings.’⁹¹ She stresses that Rakesh's contribution to theatre is now commonly recognised, and he is considered ‘a modern Indian classic.’⁹² Dalmia confirms it, she counts Rakesh among the greatest modern playwrights of Indian theatre, together with Badal Sarkar (Bādāl Sarkār, 1925–2011), Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad.⁹³

By revisiting and negotiating with the Sanskrit literary tradition and framing the defragmentation of drama as a new genre Rakesh earned the status of a theoretician of modern Hindi drama. Well acquainted with the achievements of his great precursors, he was able to employ ready-made images to serve as symbols of his idea of conflict as central to it. Today, his plays belong to the canon of Hindi dramatic art, and he is regarded as one of the most representative authors of the post-independence era.⁹⁴ Given all this, any attempt to trace Rakesh's influences in the work of modern playwrights should involve exploring a range of themes, therein: the dramatist's attitude to the drama and stage relationship; the inclusion of detailed stage directions concerning props, sounds and the light; the concept of realism entailing the selection

⁸⁷ Om Shivpuri's Dihantar Group was ‘one of Delhi's important pioneering theatre groups of its era and produced many plays with him as a director.’ Cf. Saran 2014: 120.

⁸⁸ See Kapur, Sharma 2019.

⁸⁹ Kapur, Sharma 2019. Rakesh's *Self-Portrait* and *A diary* bear testimony to this.

⁹⁰ See Dalmia 2010.

⁹¹ Kapur, Sharma 2019.

⁹² Kapur, Sharma 2019.

⁹³ See Dalmia 2010: 139.

⁹⁴ See Dmitrova 2004: 12.

and handling of the theme; the rootedness of the theme in personal experience; the portrayal of the protagonists as torn by diverse unsolvable dilemmas; the reflection of conflict in both the plot and the form of the drama; the use of contrast, irony and everyday speech, with the language adjusted to the character, including stylisation; the employment of ready-made images (such as Kalidasa in *Āṣārḥ kā ek din*) as powerful symbols to strengthen the textual message of the play; the centrality of a message focused on the struggle of individuals for freedom in society, religion and family.

Asghar Wajahat and Rakesh

Like Rakesh, Wajahat regards drama as a literary genre intended for staging. As already stated, his view is that only when staged can a play exert an influence on the audience. Both writers share the belief that a realistic theme is an essential feature of modern writing, and they explore this in their works. If they use historical and semi-historical backgrounds, they do so with a view to presenting a modern conflict. Wajahat reflects on the time when he started as a fiction-writer: 'From the 1960s onwards, life became more complicated in metropolitan centres like Delhi. If such people had been born 50 years ago, they would have lived a simple life. But being born at that moment in time, they live in illusions and a past which makes them refuse to accept the present and this gives rise to a conflict.'⁹⁵ He reveals his inspiration for writing fiction:

...there is a desire for sharing whatever we have observed or experienced, not only the experience itself but our point of view about it. [...] I think that every writer has his own view — what should be called a parallel worldview. It means that whatever is happening is not acceptable to me and this is what I want to see unfolding and taking place, instead of that. So that leads to writing fiction. The way I reacted towards my society and the impulse to share my experiences and reactions urged me to take up fiction.⁹⁶

He admits too that it is of the utmost importance for him as a writer to keep negating himself. Wajahat combines his passion for writing literature with his academic career, which he has never given up, unlike Rakesh. Born in 1946 in Fatehpur in Uttar Pradesh, he graduated from Aligarh Muslim University, where he obtained a PhD degree in Hindi Literature, having produced a dissertation entitled *A Comparative Study of Progressive Hindi and Urdu poetry (1936–1950)*. He did post-doctoral comparative research on the trends of Hindi and Urdu literature at the turn of the 19th century” at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. Later, he was affiliated with the Jamia Millia

⁹⁵ Wajāhat 2011.

⁹⁶ Wajāhat 2011.

Islamia University of New Delhi as a Hindi lecturer, a professor and, finally till his retirement in 2013, the Head of the Department of Hindi.⁹⁷ His first short story, which was a political satire, was published in *Kalpna* in Hyderabad in 1964, and his first story collection, *Andhere se (From the Darkness)*, was published in 1977⁹⁸ during the Emergency in India. He debuted as a playwright with his *nukkaḍ nāṭak*, i.e. street plays,⁹⁹ which were later published as *Sabse sastā gośt (The Cheapest Meat)*.¹⁰⁰ The author explains the title play: 'It was about Hindus and Muslims fighting over the meat of cows and pigs, but when the meat of a human being is thrown in, neither group wants to claim it.'¹⁰¹ Over the five decades of his prolific career, he has authored five collections of short stories, six novels, travelogues and many literary essays, establishing himself as an acclaimed playwright and novelist. Over the five decades of his prolific career, he has authored five collections of short stories,¹⁰² six novels,¹⁰³ travelogues¹⁰⁴ and many literary essays, establishing himself as an acclaimed playwright and novelist. Wajahat won prize for the best novel of the year 2005 awarded by London-based Indu Sharmā Kathā Sammān,¹⁰⁵ and he received Śalākā Sammān, the highest literary award of the governmental Hindi Academy, in 2016. His contribution to Hindi playwriting was acknowledged with an award from the Indian National Academy for Music and Drama in 2014. The following year, his collected plays appeared in a volume entitled *Āṭh nāṭak (Eight Plays)*,¹⁰⁶ including *Firaṅgī lauṭ āye (Firaṅgi returned)*, *Innā kī āvāz (The Voice of Inna, 1986)*, *Vīrgati (Hero's End, 1981)*, *Samidhā (The Solution)*, *Jis Lāhaur naī dekhyā o jamyāī naī (One Who Has Not Seen Lahore Has Not Lived, 1991)*, *Akī (Aki, 2000)*, *Godse@gāndhī.kom-2012 (Godse@Gandhi.com-2012)* and *Pākiṭmār raṅgmaṅḍal (Pickpockets' Theatre, 2016)*. His latest play, *Mahābalī (The Mighty Power)*, was published in 2019.¹⁰⁷ Wajahat's works have been translated into several Indian

⁹⁷ He was also Associate Professor at the Department of Indo-European Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary.

⁹⁸ In cooperation with Pankaj Biṣṭ, whose short stories were also published in it.

⁹⁹ They were staged in Delhi by the Nishant Group.

¹⁰⁰ It was published as *Sabse sastā gośt*. See Wajahat: 2015.

¹⁰¹ Wajahat said this in an interview conducted by Deepa Punjani after he received the NSD award as a playwright. See Wajahat, Punjani 2020.

¹⁰² His later collections of short stories include *Dillī pahūcnā (1983)*, *Swimming pūl (1990)*, *Sab kahā kuch (1991)*, *Maī Hindū hū (2006)*, *Muškil kām (2010)*, *Demokreśiyā (2010)*, *Picāsī kahāniyā (2015)* and *Bhīrtantr (2018)*.

¹⁰³ His novels are *Sāt āsman (1996)*, *Pahar-dopahar, Kaisī āgī lagāī (2006)*, *Barkhā racāī (2011)* and *Dharā Ākurāī (2014)*. His short novel *Man-māṭī* appeared in 2009.

¹⁰⁴ Therein *Svarg mē pāc din* about his years in Hungary.

¹⁰⁵ He was awarded for his novel *Kaisī āgī lagāī*.

¹⁰⁶ See Wajahat: 2016.

¹⁰⁷ See Wajahat: 2019.

and foreign languages.¹⁰⁸ In 2018, Wajahat was elected National President of the Democratic Writers' Association of India. He has written for newspapers and magazines¹⁰⁹ and worked as an independent documentary filmmaker and a television scriptwriter. Kalyanee Rajan, the reviewer of Wajahat's collection of short stories *Bhīrtantr (The Nerve of the Crowd)* and of the three volumes of his *Sancayan (Collected Works)*,¹¹⁰ calls him: 'a humanist to the core above all other ideological positions,' who 'through his varied writings [...] posits himself firmly as a staunch critic of divisive, communal, elitist and hierarchic tendencies of contemporary society.'¹¹¹ She adds:

His forays into the form and content of short fiction are not only refreshing but realistic to the degree where he can invoke biting sarcasm, distortion bordering on the savage, and heartrending compassion, all at the same time reined in by an acute economy of words and plot. His writings emerge as invigorating exemplars of social conditions unbound by space and time, liberally peppered with humour, satire and intelligent indications.¹¹²

Rajan's assessment of Wajahat's narrative works is also applicable to his plays. His first full drama, *Firaṅgī lauṭ āye*, unfolds against the historical background of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.¹¹³ His next play, *Innā kī āvāz*, was written under the shadow of the Emergency in India and dwells on the destruction of art and culture through the politics of power. In *Vīrgati*, he juxtaposes right and wrong in a conflict between awareness and ignorance. *Jis Lāhaur naī dekhyā o jamyāi naī*, his most famous play, explores the impact of the Partition of 1947 on the inhabitants of India and Pakistan. It is based on the story of an old Punjabi Hindu woman who was

¹⁰⁸ His books which have received widespread critical acclaim include the novel *Sāt āsman (Seven Skies)*, and two plays: *Jis Lāhaur naī dekhyā o jamyāi naī* and *Innā kī āvāz*. A collection of his short stories was translated into English by Rakshanda Jalil and published as *Half Lies: Half Told* in 2002 .

¹⁰⁹ He edited the BBC Web magazine in 2007 as a guest editor and a special issue of the Hindi magazine *Hams* entitled *Indian Muslims: Present and Future*.

¹¹⁰ Edited and introduced by Pallav, three volumes of Wajahat's selected works were published as *Sancayan* in 2018. The first volume contains novels, the second a sample of Wajahat's plays and forty-six short stories and the third his two travelogues, five memoirs and twenty-one essays.

¹¹¹ Rajan 2019: 4.

¹¹² Rajan 2019: 4.

¹¹³ It was staged by Vijay Soni, who had some training in Poland in Jerzy Grotowski's theatre company, known for the foregrounding of body movement without much speaking. Wajahat remembers that during the performance of this play by the Lakhnau Artist Company he could not recognise it because the realistic play was staged in Grotowski's style. See Wajahat 2016: 4.

left in Lahore and does not want to leave. Wajahat delves into the conflicts caused by the narrow definitions of religion and the cultural bonds bred by such tensions. In his words, ‘this drama shows that human relations are bigger than nation, religion, caste and community, and that a human wishes to live in peace no matter his country or belief. This drama stresses religious tolerance, which we deeply seek in our times.’¹¹⁴ Having been performed by Habib Tanvir (Habīb Tanvīr, 1923–2009) in 1989, the play acquired an important place in the history of contemporary Hindi dramaturgy.¹¹⁵ Another of Wajahat’s dramas, *Godse@gāndhī.kom-2012*, is woven of the same serious political threads.¹¹⁶ It presents an alternative version of historical events from the time of Indian independence. In an imaginary situation, Gandhi, who survived the assassination attempt on him, and his assassin Godse are put into the same jail barrack. Their conversations reveal the determination of the man of non-violence and truth to change the mind of the fanatic Hindu follower of Hindutva. They both follow the teachings of the sacred *Bhagavadgītā* (*The Song of God*), but they do so in diametrically opposed ways. The focus is on the conflict between two different ideologies and on the belief that only through dialogue can people hope to find a solution. Being convinced that Hindutva is not Hinduism, Wajahat addresses these communal issues, the development of India after independence and the idea of democracy. In his next play, *Akī*, he focuses on the suffering caused by war. Though set in medieval Central Europe, the play reflects modern conflict too. Wajahat explains: ‘you are told to love your country, die for it, but when the time comes, those responsible to protect it betray and common people suffer.’¹¹⁷ One of his latest plays, *Pākītmār rangmaṇḍal*, takes a different course and is full of humour and irony, as its plot is set in a theatre of pick-pockets who are rehearsing for their own show. It reveals the existential problems of poor and marginalised young people from Delhi-6, who earn their living by thieving and other minor crimes. In this drama, they are fond of theatre and, despite the lack of money, are determined to stage *Khūbsūrat bālā* (*Beautiful Girl*), a famous Urdu play by Agha Hashar Kashmiri (Āgā

¹¹⁴ Translation mine. See Hindi text: nāṭak yah sthāpit kartā hai ki manavīy sambandh deś, dharm, jāti, sampradāy ādi se baṛhe hote haī aur manuṣy vah cāhe kisī deś yā dharm kā ho śānti se rahnā cāhtā hai. nāṭak dhārmik sahiṣṇutā par bal detā hai jo āj hamāre samay kī bahut baṛī āvaśyaktā hai. Wajāhat 2016: 4.

¹¹⁵ It has been staged abroad: Karachi, Lahore, Sydney, New York and Dubai. It has been translated into Punjabi and Sindhi.

¹¹⁶ The play has been translated into Gujarati, Kannada, Assamese and Punjabi. The theatre director and actor Tom Alter staged it in 2015.

¹¹⁷ Cf. the article published in *The Hindu*. <https://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/theatre/One-more-to-go/article16837834.ece>.

Haṣr Kaśmīrī, 1878–1935),¹¹⁸ adapted by their director Bhagwan (Bhagvan). The play satirises the culture of the social elites, such as the Kulin Brahmins, and exposes their corruption.¹¹⁹

In what follows, a scrutiny of the application of ready-made images from the literary past will help corroborate Rakesh's influence on Wajahat's craftsmanship as a playwright. While Rakesh shifted from plots located in the Indian literary and historical or semi-historical past to modern and purely realistic settings, Wajahat returns to the past in his last drama. He admits in the introduction to his *Āth nāṭak*: 'After writing *Vīrgati*, I suddenly realised that till then I had chosen historical or semi-historical plots for my dramas. I needed to write a drama which would realistically focus on contemporary life and its problems.'¹²⁰ In fact, after the opting for purely realistic and modern backgrounds in *Jis Lāhaur naī dekhyā o jamyāi naī* and *Pākiṭmār raṅgmaṇḍal*, Wajahat again goes back to the literary tradition and remote history in his latest play, *Mahābalī*. In their works both playwrights, Rakesh and Wajahat, rely on ready-made images entrenched in the Indian literary past as symbols of modern conflicts. As already mentioned Rakesh uses the name and the legend of the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa in his debut play. He quotes from Kalidasa's famous *Meghadūta* composed in the 5th century. In *Mahābalī*, Wajahat employs the image and legend of the 16th-century Hindi bhakti poet Tulsidas (Tulsīdās).¹²¹ He also refers to Tulsidas's major work *Rāmcaritmānas* (*The Lake of Rama's Deeds*)¹²² and quotes from it. Danuta Stasik argues that Tulsidas's work, while re-telling the story of the Hindu god Rama in the time of Muslim power, 'can be seen as a work that, following important traditions of Hindu India, has become an epitome of the ideal (Hindu) society, state and its ruler — a counter-proposal for the reality in which Tulsīdās and his contemporaries lived.'¹²³ This opposition, re-cast to resonate with the 21st century, may have inspired Wajahat in his reworking of Tulsidas's story.

Rakesh shows the conflict faced by modern Indian writers as torn between their freedom and dependence on their state patrons by means of Kalidasa's imagined dilemma whether or not to heed the summons of the most powerful

¹¹⁸ Agha Hashar Kashmiri was called "the Shakespeare of Urdu." He wrote plays in Urdu and Hindi. A number of his plays were Indian Shakespearean adaptations. The play *Khūbsūrat bālā* was written in 1910.

¹¹⁹ See Wajāhat 2016: 4.

¹²⁰ *Vīrgati* likhne ke bād acānak mere man mẽ yah savāl utpann huā ki maīne ab tak nāṭak ke liye kathānak itihās yā logkathāo se uṭhāe haī. Mujhe ek nāṭak aisā likhnā cāhiye jo samkālīn jīvan aur uskī samasyāo par yathārthavādī ḍhaṅg se kendrit ho. Wajāhat 2016: 4.

¹²¹ On the dating Tulsidas's life to 1532–1623, see Stasik 2009: 72.

¹²² Tulsīdās started to write it in 1574. See Stasik 2009: 75.

¹²³ See Stasik 2009: 87.

emperor Chandragupta,¹²⁴ who calls the poet to join his *navaratnas*, the “nine jewels” of his court. In Rakesh’s play, Kalidas’s acceptance of the royal post results in the loss of inspiration and triggers tragedy in his life. Wajahat depicts a similar tension between the modern Hindi writer and state patronage in 21st-century India by having Tulsidas decline an invitation from the powerful Moghul emperor Akbar (1556–1605).

He places at the centre of his *Mahābalī* a poet Tulsidas, who is also a devotee of the Hindu god Rama. The plot revolves around two episodes from his legendary life. In the play, Tulsidas spends all his time in his ashram on the riverbanks in Benares, adoring Rama and writing *Rāmcarit-mānas*. But the fact that he writes the story of Rama’s life in Awadhi,¹²⁵ a dialect spoken by common people, is seen by the scholars of Benares as offensive to the Sanskrit tradition of *Rāmāyana*.¹²⁶ The first part of the play focuses on this issue. In the second part, Akbar, the emperor of the Mughal Sultanate, repeatedly dispatches Abdul Rahīm Khānkhānā and Rājā Todarmal,¹²⁷ to invite Tulsidas to join or at least visit his court. As the drama has it, both these emissaries are not only Akbar’s *navaratnas* but also Tulsidas’s friends. The poet declines the emperor’s invitation, even when the local people in Benares accuse him of disrespecting Sanskrit, the holy language of *Rāmāyana*, and throw bricks and bones into his ashram. If he were willing to accept Akbar’s invitation, he could live safely at his court.¹²⁸ At the end of the play, the Moghul emperor and Tulsidas meet in a dream; Akbar comes to the bank of the Ganga to visit the poet and debates with him. But Tulsidas persistently states that Rama is his only ruler. A long dialogue concluding the play dwells on the issue of the true ‘mighty power.’ Tulsidas explains that the poet and not the emperor is in fact “the Mighty Power,” because the poet’s work will live forever in the present while the emperor’s deeds will only live forever in history. He says:

¹²⁴ Chandragupta II, known as Vikramaditya.

¹²⁵ Avadhī, a Hindi dialect of the Awadh region, widely used together with Braj in North India in the 16th century.

¹²⁶ An epic poem in Sanskrit, composed between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD; it deals with the life and deeds of Rama, the king of Ayodhya.

¹²⁷ Both were among the jewels — *navaratnas* — of Akbar’s court.

¹²⁸ This is fiction, as Wajahat writes: “Unlike other contemporary poets, Tulsidas never visited the royal palace. The 16th-century Mughal Emperor Akbar was an aficionado of the arts and attracted the best contemporary minds/talent to his court. There is no historical record to prove that Akbar invited Tulsidas to the court. But it is known that Akbar was well acquainted with Ram Katha and Tulsidas because he had a gold coin with the image of Ram and Sita cast on it. This coin was called Ram Taka.” “See A Note in English,” Wajahat 2019: 5.

The rule over the body comes to an end ... but the rule over the mind ... never comes to an end [...] You will live forever in the past, the Mighty Power. [...]

I will not be bound to the past, the Mighty Power. [...] I will remain in the present, in the present ... [...] Forever in the present.¹²⁹

Akbar's favourite form of address, the term *mahābalī*, derived from the Hindi adjective *mahābal* ('very powerful'),¹³⁰ denotes one who has 'a mighty power.' Akbar was the one who could give orders to whomever he wanted. Tulsidas's refusal to obey Akbar's request questions not only the emperor's attribute of choice but also his total power. Wajahat admits:

In this scene, the relationship between art and politics has been portrayed in a way that the royalty appears in the boundaries of time, whereas the poet crosses these confines. The emperor is locked in history books, while the poet lives on in society even after hundreds of years of his death. [...] Certainly, Mahabali is the poet who crosses the bounds of time.¹³¹

One stage prop in this play is a book which is referred to as *pothī* in the text. As Tulsidas revels at the end of the play, it symbolises all the mentioned 'history books.' It is reminiscent of the way Rakesh employed props as symbols as exemplified by a simple book which Mallika makes for Kalidas in his first play and which represents a new *Meghadūta* and the playwright's realistic approach.

If the message of *Mahābalī* is transposed onto the realities of 21st-century India in which modern writers live, the issue of the tension between the state's censorship and the artist's freedom re-emerges. Like Rakesh, Wajahat remains a staunch critic of his society, whose burning problems he reveals along with the state's hypocrisy in dealing with them. With *Mahābalī*, he seems to suggest first that in 21st century India it is relevant to inquire whether writing the epic of *Rāmāyāna* in the people's language would reduce its importance. In the introduction to the play, Wajahat describes the literary contribution of Tulsidas in the form of Rama's tale in Awadhi as pioneering 'the democratization of a thought.'¹³² He admits that while working on it the writer faced the opposition of the very powerful regime of his time. Wajahat draws readers' attention to the relationship between Tulsidas and Akbar, wherein he exposes

¹²⁹ Translation mine. See original Hindi text: śarīr par adhikār samāpt ho jātā hai...par man par adhikār... kabhī samāpt nahī hotā [...] Āp itihās mē amar ho jāēge mahābalī. [...] Ham itihās mē nahī rahēge mahābalī. [...] Vartmān mē rahēge mahābalī, vartmān mē... [...] sadā vartmān mē... (Wajahat 2019: 62).

¹³⁰ See McGregor 1993: 799.

¹³¹ See "A Note in English," Wajahat 2019: 5.

¹³² Wajahat 2019: 5.

that ‘the theme of this play is the tension between an authority of the state and the freedom of an artist.’¹³³ The same impulse that urged him to write fiction — namely, to respond to unacceptable developments in society — compelled him to write this play. Kalyanee Rajan is certainly right to claim that Wajahat’s works can transcend all the national, political and religious barriers by showing what is actually true, though not always obvious.¹³⁴ Wajahat shares this attitude with Rakesh, for whom the writer’s freedom was of the utmost importance. In his last play, Wajahat calls for a further democratisation of thought and locates the dignity of the human being at the centre of his reflection. Rajan argues that ‘he feels that the job of the writer is not to sing songs of happiness and jubilation, but to share the pain of those in sorrow, and that in this process, the society, the writer and the reader together create a triangle where they energize each other.’¹³⁵

Conclusion

In the introduction to his *Āth nāṭak*, Wajahat writes that after almost forty years of writing dramas, he is convinced that ‘the less dramatic the play is the more dramatic its performance on stage will appear’¹³⁶ The rigorous dramatic structure and the simplicity of language are important features of Rakesh’s and Wajahat’s playwriting. But Wajahat’s concept of the playwright’s and the theatre director’s role in staging dramas differs from Rakesh’s ideas. Whereas Rakesh stresses the close collaboration of the two in the process of bringing dramas on the stage, Wajahat gives ample freedom to directors, as long as they do not alter the message of the play. The stage directions in the playwrights’ respective works bear the evidence of the difference between their approaches. In Rakesh’s all plays, the stage directions are very extensive, occasionally taking up more than a page. Wajahat’s stage directions are brief, rarely longer than a few lines. What is common to both writers is that they pay equally careful attention to the accurate use of the light and sounds to support the atmosphere of episodes and the development of conflict. Like Rakesh, Wajahat masterfully uses language, both the high, stylised idiom and the common speech of the street, which is perfectly evinced by *Mahābalī* and *Pākiṭmār rangmaṇḍal*. Both playwrights apply in their works ready-made

¹³³ See in *Bhūmikā*: rājsattā aur kalākār kī svādhīntā kā yah dvandv hī is nāṭak kā viṣay hai. (Wajāhat 2019: 2).

¹³⁴ Rajan is convinced that Wajahat is “one such underrated, but extremely potent voice of fearless exploration of contested but enormously vital social territories.” See Rajan 2019: 1.

¹³⁵ Rajan 2019: 3.

¹³⁶ Translation mine. nāṭak likhne mē jitnī nāṭakīyā nahī hotī usse adhik nāṭakīyā nāṭak ko mañcit karne kī prakriyā mē sāmne ātī hai. Wajāhat 2016: 4.

images of famous poets from the literary past which serve the main messages of their plays. Similarly to Rakesh, Wajahat seems to propose a performance culture mediated not by state patronage, but by all those committed to theatre, including playwrights and their immediate audiences with their aspirations. While Wajahat undoubtedly differs from Rakesh in being more concerned with the Hindu-Muslim relations and appreciating the technique of the urban Parsi theatre, both writers are fond of contemporising the literary traditions of past ages and are determined to challenge society's regressive rules with their choice of themes, situations and characters.

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**WRITING LETTERS, WRITING LIFE:
KRISHNA SOBTI'S *ŚABDŌKE ĀLOK MĒ* /
IN THE GLOW OF WORDS AS
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY PROJECT**

Abstract: The oeuvre of Krishna Sobti (1925–2019), probably the best-known contemporary Hindi writer, includes several works that may be viewed as autobiographical, among them *Śabdō ke ālok mē / In the Glow of Words* (2005). Written in the form of letters addressed to author's niece, Sarwar, and appended with several family photos, it offers fascinating insights into Krishna Sobti's life, interspaced with essay-like expositions on history, society, and writing. Read together with her other works, it shows Krishna Sobti as a masterful wordsmith mining her own life experiences to create a powerful autobiographical narrative. This paper proposes to analyse literary and other devices employed by the author to stage her life in *Śabdō ke ālok mē / In the Glow of Words* and briefly compare them with those used by Krishna Sobti in her other writings.

Keywords: Krishna Sobti, autobiography, epistolary writing, paratext, ante-autobiography, serial autobiography

By way of opening

In 2015, the shortlist for the Nike award, the most prestigious literary prize in Poland, included a slim novel by Magdalena Tulli called *Szum/Noise* (2014). Seen by reviewers as a continuation of an autobiographical project undertaken in an earlier work, *Włoskie szpilki/Italian Pumps* (2011), and written from the perspective of a second-generation Holocaust survivor, it prompted the presenter at the award gala to ask Tulli this question: "How far is the current novel autobiographical?" Her answer caught my attention, "W *Szumie* jest dużo materiału osobistego, ale to wszystko jest przemontowane. Literatura

polega na montażu.”/ “*Noise* has a lot of personal material but everything is re-shuffled. Literature hinges on the re-shuffling”¹ (Chehab 2015). Such a peculiar turn of phrase, with its use of very specific Polish words, “montaż,” “przemontowane,” suggesting extensive editing and reworking, maybe even “taking something to pieces” in order to “construct it anew” made me think of the great Hindi writer, Krishna Sobti (1925–2019), and her writings, always carefully crafted, always attentive to form and language. Moreover, with Sobti’s life, like Tulli’s, scarred by the traumatic memories of the past, in her case, the Partition of India, the similarity seemed uncanny. As a Polish scholar of South Asia, I could see a link.

The writer and her times

Krishna Sobti was born in 1925 in the town of Gujrat (now in Pakistan), and her childhood passed between her grandparents’² ancestral havelis in rural Punjab and her nuclear family homes in the capitals of Delhi and Shimla, where her father, a central government employee, was posted.³ She did her schooling in Delhi and Shimla, at an English medium educational institution, the Lady Irwin School,⁴ and later joined Fatehchand College⁵ in Lahore, the then cultural capital of the undivided Punjab. Her literary debut came in 1944 with a story called “Lāmā,” which was soon followed by another story, “Nafīsā.”⁶ Sometime at the beginning of 1947, with Punjab in the throes of the communal tension attending the British withdrawal and the imminent Partition, she travelled to Delhi, in time to celebrate her birthday, which falls in February. She never saw Lahore again. 15 August 1947 found her, and her family, in their government quarters near Connaught Place, right in the heart of the recently completed British New Delhi. Shaken

¹ All translations, unless specified otherwise, are mine.

² Both maternal and paternal.

³ In the pre-independence India, the British government of India, with all its departments and employees, moved in summer from Delhi to Shimla, known hence as the summer capital.

⁴ Intended for children of central government employees, Lady Irwin School for Girls, Shimla and Delhi (originally established in Shimla in 1927) migrated from Delhi to Shimla when the capital migrated (until 1939).

⁵ Established in Lahore in 1935; re-established in 1954 in Hissar, Haryana.

⁶ Both stories are included in the collection *Badlō ke ghare* (1980). In an interview with Trisha Gupta (1 September 2016, *Caravan*), Krishna Sobti gives the same dates for “Lāmā” and “Nafīsā” (1944); both were published in the weekly *Vicār*, a leading literary magazine of the day (as Krishna Sobti tells her interviewers, Tarun Bhartiya and Jayeeta Sharma, 1996); as for “Sikkā badal gayā,” 1950 was cited to Trisha Gupta, but in *Gujrāt pākistān se gujrāt hindustān tak*, the protagonist, a stand-in for Krishna Sobti, gives the name of her first published story as “Sikkā badal gayā”; this story was first published in *Pratīk*, a magazine edited by Sachchidanad Vatsyayan Agyeya.

by the displacement and the severing of ties along religious lines, she tried to find a way of making sense of the suddenly changed world. Initially involved in work with the refugees, and thinking of pursuing, by and by, an MA course, Sobti ultimately decided to leave Delhi. Responding to a newspaper advertisement, she took up a job in Sirohi Raj, a princely state on the border of Rajasthan and Gujarat (Puri 2019). Two years later, she returned to Delhi and began looking for a new job (Sobti 2017a: 254–255). She soon “found employment in the Delhi Administration as an editor in the Adult Literacy Department; in 1980, she resigned from her job and dedicated herself exclusively to writing” (Browarczyk 2017: 140). The step was probably set in motion by the recognition engendered by her novel *Zindagīnāmā*. Published in 1979, it brought Sobti the 1980 Sahitya Akademi Award for Hindi. She was the first woman to have received the award in that language category and still only one of four.⁷ In 1996, she was elected Fellow of Sahitya Akademi⁸ and in 2017 was presented with the Jnanpith Award,⁹ the only second woman after Mahadevi Varma to be so honoured. The Selection Board, in its announcement, lauded her for having “immensely enriched Hindi literature by experimenting with new styles.”¹⁰

In her lifetime, Krishna Sobti has published eleven novels and novel-las;¹¹ a collection of short stories;¹² three works of non-fiction¹³ and four volumes of literary sketches.¹⁴ Her fictionalised autobiographical narrative, *Gujrāt pākistān se gujrat hindustān tak/From Gujrat, Pakistan, to Gujrat, India*, launched at the Delhi World Book Fair¹⁵ in January 2017, when she

⁷ The other three women writers for Hindi are: Alka Saroagi (2001), Mridula Garg (2013) and Nasira Sharma (2016). Sahitya Akademi awards have been conferred since 1955.

⁸ Sahitya Akademi Fellowships have been conferred since 1968 for exceptional literary achievements and at any given time there are just 21 Fellows.

⁹ A literary award instituted in 1961 and conferred for the first time in 1965. It is given for “outstanding contribution to literature” to Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India, and in English.

¹⁰ “Hindi writer Krishna Sobti chosen for Jnanpith Award,” *The Hindu*, 3.11.2017 (no attribution).

¹¹ *Ḍār se bichurī* (1958), *Mitro marjānī* (1966), *Yārō ke yār* and *Tin pahār* (both in 1968), *Sūrajmukhī ādhare ke* (1972), *Zindagīnāmā* (1979), *Ai larḳī* (1991), *Samay sargam* (2000), *Dil-o-dānīś* (2006), *Jainī maharbān simh* (2009), *Cannā* (2019). I group Sobti’s fictional works under the rubric of novel/novella without engaging into the debate. For the discussion of the genre of *Ai larḳī*, see Strelkova 2010.

¹² *Badlō ke ghere* (1980).

¹³ *Śabdō ke ālok mē* (2005), *Sobti vaid saṁvād. lekhan aur lekhak* (2007), *Buddh kā kamaṇḍal laddākh* (2012).

¹⁴ *Ham haśmat*, vol. 1 — 1977, vol. 2 — 1999, vol. 3 — 2012, vol. 4 — 2019.

¹⁵ Hindi language publishers have large presence at the Book Fair, with Rajkamal Prakashan, who publishes Krishna Sobti’s books, commanding usually the largest stall, followed by Vani Prakashan and others.

was almost 92, revisited the period she had spent in Sirohi (1948–1950),¹⁶ and, through that lens, the trauma of the Partition. In the two years between the publication of *Gujrāt pākistān se gujṛāt hindustān tak* and her death on 25 January 2019, five more books bearing Sobti's name appeared, the last two just days before her death.¹⁷

The publication of *Gujrāt pākistān se gujṛāt hindustān tak*, a self-confessedly autobiographical novel, in 2017, when Sobti was already 92 years old, a novel in which she openly revisits the Partition, turned the attention of the reading public to the autobiographical in Sobti's earlier oeuvre. Pieces of fictional writing, presented either as stand-alone stories, like “Sikkā badal gayā”/“Times have changed,” “Ḍaro mat, māi tumhārī rakṣā karūṅgā”/“Don't be afraid, I will protect you,” else embedded in longer narratives, fell into place and all at once acquired new hues for having been mined from personal life. This sudden change of reading perspective fostered new interest in Sobti's writing, both in the original Hindi and the English translation, inciting market pressure for a speedy English rendering of her newest book, *Gujrāt pākistān se gujṛāt hindustān tak*. Several publishers competed for the right to bring it out in English, Penguin Random House winning the race.¹⁸ The announcements of the forthcoming publication followed, with the book-cover and the name of the translator, who also authored drawing featuring Krishna Sobti found on the cover, publicised as a part of the marketing strategy. The book, in Daisy Rockwell's translation, came out under the title, *A Gujarat Here, a Gujarat There*, and was launched on 18 February 2019 to coincide with Krishna Sobti's birthday¹⁹ though the author did not live to see the launch, having passed away on 25 January.

¹⁶ I quote the dates after “Afterward” authored by Rockwell, Sobti 2019a.

¹⁷ A book of literary criticism dedicated to Muktibodh: *Muktibodh: ek vyaktitv sahī kī talāś mẽ/Muktibodh: In Search of True Personality* (2017); a selection of writings on Delhi excerpted from earlier works: *Mārfat dillī/Care Of: Delhi* (2018); a book of interviews, *Lekhak kā jantantr: Kṛṣṇa Sobtī se sāksātkār/Writer's Democracy. Interviews with Krishna Sobti* (2018); her first novel of 1952, originally printed by an Allahabad publisher, Bharati Bandar Press, and pulped on Sobti's decision as the publisher had taken the liberty of introducing extensive spelling and lexical changes, thus removing the Punjabi idiom and making the language closer to standard Hindi, was re-published in the original form as *Cannā* (2019); *Ham haśmat* vol. 4 (2019). Some interviews in *Lekhak kā jantantr: Kṛṣṇa Sobtī se sāksātkār* have been already published earlier in Hindi, for example in *Śabdō ke ālok mẽ*, while others have been specially translated from English for this volume.

¹⁸ Though ultimately published by Penguin, a number of other publishers, including Zubaan, had been very interested. The owners of Rajkamal Prakashan, the Hindi publishers of Sobti, opted for Penguin as the largest publishing house, with the widest reach.

¹⁹ 17.2.2019 *The Indian Express*, (no attribution) “*A Gujarat Here, A Gujarat There*: Translation of Krishna Sobti's last novel to hit stands.”

Authorial strategies and structuring the text

Close reading of the book in focus, namely, *Śabdō ke ālok mē*, is a continuation of my interest in Sobti's Partition narratives, an interest spurred on by the publication of her late autobiographical novel, *Gujrāt pākistān se gujrat hindustān tak*. Critical study of both books is a part of a larger research project dealing with, on one hand, life writings and Punjabi identity, and on the other, to borrow Leigh Gilmore's phrase, the limits of autobiography in the context of trauma and the ensuing testimony (Gilmore 2001).²⁰

Śabdō ke ālok mē appeared in print in 2005, when Krishna Sobti was 80, thus some 60 years after her literary debut. In view of its form, of which more later, it may be taken as a literary memory venture located somewhere in between different types of Sobti's autobiographical writings, such as, 1. short stories like those already mentioned or novels like *Ai laṛkī/Listen Girl*,²¹ all inspired by episodes from author's life; 2. literary pen-sketches making up the four volumes of the *Ham haśmat/I, Hashmat* series; 3. long conversation with a fellow writer, Krishna Baldev Vaid, published as a stand-alone book, *Sobti vaid saṁvād. lekhan aur lekhak/Conversation between Sobti and Vaid. Writing and Writer* (2007); and 4. the autobiographical novel, *Gujrāt pākistān se gujrat hindustān tak* (2017).

Considering its content and form and looking at it from today's vantage point, namely post the publication of *From Gujrat, Pakistan, to Gujrat, India*, the most autobiographical of Sobti's novels, *In the Glow of Words* appears even more intriguing formally and thematically and seems to hold crucial clues to the writerly development of her evidently life-long, open-ended "project of self-representation" (Gilmore 2001: 96) and personal choices of what to publish, how and when.

However, before moving on to the analysis of the text *per se*, let us take a short tour of the physical aspects of the book. *Śabdō ke ālok mē/In the Glow of Words* is a bulky volume of over 450 pages swathed in a plethora of paratexts: a dust cover with the author's photograph at the back, flaps featuring another photo of the author followed by a write up on the book (on the front flap) and a short biographical note (on the back flap). The contents is listed after the title and the copyright page, and is followed by a page holding an epigraph. The main body of the text is appended with an Index/Anukramaṇikā, which is very rare for a non-academic book in Hindi, its presence lending veracity to the text and providing a short-hand access to the topics discussed and the persons mentioned. Numerous line-drawings within the text are attributed to

²⁰ The phrase is borrowed from the title of Leigh Gilmore 2001.

²¹ To an extent it is autobiographical and was written after Sobti's mother died. See Bhartiya and Sharma 1996.

Vikram Nayak and introduce movement into the sameness of the printed page. The text is rounded off with sixteen pages of colour photographs, or a photo-essay, referred to in the contents as *citr yātrā* or “photo-journey,” each page containing a number of images arranged under different headings, such as “Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla”; “Friends”; or, right at the end, “Some Unforgettable Moments,” all of them a tribute to the Institute where Sobti spent three years (September 1996–September 1999) as a fellow and writer-in-residence.

The very arrangement of the main text is of great interest. There are 22 chapters, all identified in the contents by their titles, for example: “50 Years of Independence” (p. 54), “Curzon Road” (p. 347), “The Night of Diwali” (p. 424), and so on. The first of those mentioned offers the author’s account of the half century of independent India and puts a date to the event: we are in 1997; the second revisits the area of New Delhi where Sobti lived with her family at the time of the Partition; and the third provides a description of a Diwali party at the Rashtrapati Bhawan (the residence of the President of India), an annual celebration she has been invited to attend alongside other prominent intellectuals. Throughout the book, each chapter or its subsection is a discrete composition focused usually on one subject — an event, a place, a person, a memory, a book, a poem and so on. Moreover, included in the body of the text are some of the papers that Sobti had read at various seminars and, interestingly, accounts of her travels, with that to Ladakh probably the most extensive (Sobti 2005: 39–49) though not marked out by a separate heading. Some passages from *Śabdō ke ālok mē/In the Glow of Words* related to this trip can be found almost verbatim in Sobti’s later, beautifully edited travelogue, *Buddh kā kamaṇḍal laddākh/Ladakh, the Treasure House of Buddhism* (Sobti 2012), for example those recounting Sobti’s conversation with her taxi driver about going down to the river (Sobti 2005: 41, Sobti 2012: 84) or placing her shawl like a flag next to the fluttering Tibetan banners (Sobti 2005: 45, Sobti 2012: 162). The second episode is a part of a section titled “Khārdulāṅg” (Sobti 2012: 159–163), which tells of the excursion to Khardung Pass, some 40 kms from Leh; a pass apparently accessed by the world’s highest motorable road. The passage ends with a very Krishna Sobti line, almost identical in both renderings, *Mañe gahre bhāv se khārdulāṅg ko salām kiyā. mumkin huā to phir āūṅgī* “I saluted Khardung La from the bottom of my heart. If possible, I shall come [here] again” (Sobti 2005: 46, Sobti 2012: 163), reminiscent of her other leave-takings, among them the most notable farewell — to Lahore.

Narrator’s reminiscences of the pre-Partition life form a large part of *In the Glow of Words*. Some of them are just a few sentences long; others merit the label of a full-fledged essay. One such piece from the book was reprinted, almost verbatim (the only significant changes are in the punctuation and the spacing of paragraphs/dialogues), in *Gujrāt pākistān se gujṛāt*

hindustān tak (Sobti 2005: 88–95, Sobti 2017: 105–115). The passage starts with the words, “My birthday was in February/*pharwarī mē merā janam-din thā*”²² and recounts the narrator’s last birthday celebrations in Lahore, on the bank of the Ravi. There is a boat ride and merrymaking, followed by the usual singing and recitations of poetry. The narrator recalls reciting a stanza from Pandit Narendra Sharma’s²³ poem: “Those torn apart today, who knows when will they meet again.../*āj ke bichure na jāne kab milēge...*,” which, when read in the post-Partition scenario, betrays the feeling of a prescient nostalgia. The account found in *Śabdō ke ālok mē* has an additional sentence missing in the later work: “*apne janamdin par phir kabhī maī rāvī kināre na hūī*/I never happened to be on the bank of Ravi on my birthday again,” acting as a sort of answer to the last sentence of the preceding paragraph (present in both publications), “*udās thī kī kyā patā phir isī din yahā ānā ho, na ho!*/I was sad, for who knows if I would be able to come here, on this day, again!”²⁴

Punctuating the volume at uneven intervals are four interviews (dubbed simply *bātētī* or ‘conversation’), all conducted, as far as I understand, during Sobti’s stay at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Shimla: “Memory and History: Conversation with Alok Bhalla” (Sobti 2005: 121–143),²⁵ “Conversation with Anamika” (Sobti 2005: 172–197), “Conversation with Niranjan Dev Sharma” (Sobti 2005: 305–322), and “Conversation with Kamal Ahmad” (Sobti 2005: 326–340). While the first interview was translated from English, the other three were originally conducted and published in Hindi. The transcript of the conversation with Alok Bhalla, one of the first scholars of the Partition literature, is preceded by a three-page section (Sobti 2005: 118–121) in which Sobti tells Sarwar (more on her later) about a recent seminar on the Partition organized at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Shimla, one of the many events held all over the country to commemorate the half-century of Independence. The actual interview is preceded by yet another, short introductory paragraph, again addressed to Sarwar, set out strategically on

²² Most probably the birthday celebration took place in 1946, long before the onset of the communal riots, for we know that in February 1947 Krishna Sobti was already in Delhi.

²³ Pandit Narinder Sharma (1913–1989) was a poet and a well-known songwriter for Bollywood films.

²⁴ I quote here from my own article on Sobti. Cf. Skakuj-Puri 2019.

²⁵ I know of five publications that contain this interview, of which three are in English, and two in Hindi: 1. as “Memory and History on the Partition” in *IIC Quarterly* 24, 2–3 Monsoon 1997: 55–79 (Bhalla 1997a); 2. as “Memory and History: Krishna Sobti in Conversation with Alok Bhalla” in: Sen 1997: 55–78; 3. as “Memory and History,” in Bhalla 2006; the third version is the most extensive; 4. as “Smṛti aur itihās. ālok bhallā kī bātētī” in Sobti 2005: 121–143, trans. from English: Mukesh Kumār; 5. as “Smṛti aur itihās. ālok bhallā kī bātētī” in Sobti 2018a: 29–48; both the Hindi texts are identical.

the same page as the opening of the Bhalla interview, the copy of which Sobti is forwarding to Sarwar with these words, “*vibhājhan par do sām bātcūt hotī rahī. sāvād mē jo ubharkar āyā, use parhkar dekho*/For two evenings we talked about the Partition. [This is] what came out of the conversation, just read it” (Sobti 2005:121).

The second interview, originally published in *Vāgarth*,²⁶ is mediated by Anamika, a well-known female Hindi poet of younger generation. Like the earlier interview, it is preceded by a brief introduction addressed again to Sarwar: “*parhkar dekho do pīrhiyō kā sāvād.*/Read [this] dialogue between two generations” (Sobti 2005: 172). The exchange with Niranjana Dev Sharma is, as explained in a short introductory write-up authored by the interlocutor, a collated account of three conversations that took place on three separate occasions (Sobti 2005: 305) and touches both on Sobti’s life as well as her writing. The fourth and last interview, by Kamal Ahmad, which, among other things, explores the historically changing definition of *vatan* / “homeland” and the meaning of patriotism, is separated from the previous one, by Niranjana Dev Sharma, by a short, delightful to read and beautifully crafted piece, “*zindagī ke purāne dher...*/The Heaps of Past Lives...” (Sobti 2005: 323–325). The positioning of this vignette appears to be a stylistic device meant, on one hand, to physically separate the interviews from each other, and on the other, hold them together, that too, by using as a bridge an emotive piece telling of the author’s visit to the flea-market at Jama Masjid in Old Delhi, with its heaps of old, discarded things bearing witness to past lives: cups, plates, pots, pans, ink-pots, three-leg side tables, notebooks filled with children’s handwriting, and what not! The piece ends with Sobti leaving the market with a pair of old, consigned-to-oblivion calendars of bygone years. I cannot help but quote Sobti’s Hindi sentences, honed to perfection and astutely commenting on the value of things old — for some, of no use; for others, the cherished objects of desire: “*kabādī bāzār mē lāvāris paṛe purāne san ke do kailēṅdarō ko apan banā liyā. vah bhī fakat saṭh rupae mē*/I adopted two old calendars abandoned at the flea-market. That, too, for a mere sixty rupees” (Sobti 2005: 325).

The chapters of the book, be they long or short, are, at times, complete wholes in themselves, like the flea-market episode; at times, portmanteaus for a bunch of literary pieces, each on a different subject and in a different register, where individual subsections can be read as stand-alone compositions. However, there is an interesting device to hold all those pieces together — essays, bits of poetry, interviews, articles, seminar talks and papers, letters, diary entries and literarily reworked memories from the past — all of them are framed by letter-like compositions with an addressee mentioned

²⁶ A Hindi literary magazine published by Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad from Calcutta.

by name. As already hinted, the addressee is Sarwar, author's niece, whose photo can be found on the last page of the photo-journey collection, in the "Some Unforgettable Moments" section — she seems to be visiting her aunt, possibly in Shimla.

Sarwar's name does not appear at all in the opening essay titled "Śabdō ke alok mẽ samay ke rang" or "The Glow of Words and the Hues of Time," which is the author's exposition on the subject of literature. But in the second section of the same chapter, a section written in a different register and for all purposes looking like a very personal entry from a diary, we have an account of a phone conversation, which introduces us to Sarwar. She is the caller on the other side of the line for to Sobti's urgent, "Hello, hello?," comes the reply: "*hailo, jījī mausī, maī sarvar bol rahī hū*/Hello, Jiji Mausi, it is me, Sarwar, speaking" (Sobti 2005: 10). The call gets disconnected, but this brief exchange transports the reader right into the middle of a very intimate setting — Sobti relaxing after a long walk, the sudden ringing of the landline phone and a girl's voice addressing the writer lovingly as "aunt"²⁷ — a peep into a domestic narrative. It also sets the frame for an I-you relationship with Sarwar standing in for the reader-in-general while simultaneously letting the reader partake of the close bond she has with the author, her aunt, thus inviting a more engaged reading of the text.

The whole book is presented as a missive to Sarwar, a close family member and a daughter Sobti never had, allowing the author-sender the freedom of taking up any topic she wishes to speak on and choosing for the expression of her ideas any register she might want to. In some instances, Sobti begins her narrative ramble disguised as a letter or a talk with a direct invitation, *suno* — "Listen [to this]!" (Sobti 2005: 78), though the usual mode of address is just the evocation of the addressee's name, "Sarwar, ..."

The last page of the book, the one just before Index/Anukramaṇikā, is very interesting for it holds a kind of epigram. On top there is a title we have already encountered in the table of contents, "*Śīrṣak rāg ke niyātrit noṭeśan mẽ nayā gat torā*"²⁸ "Introducing New Tradition into the Customary Notation of the Title Raga," and below, a text of seven lines set in the middle of the page,

is kriti ke nāmkaṛaṇ ko 'hailo sarvar' se 'śabdō ke ālok mẽ' tak pahūcāne
mẽ jin dhurādharī dādāō ne hāth kī safāī dikhāī, unhẽ ek sāth dhanyavād aur

²⁷ From *Gujrāt pākistān se gujrat hindustān tak* we learn, on the very first page of the book, that the narrator (a stand-in for the author) is called *mañjhli* "the middle [one]," being the middle of the siblings (Sobti 2017a: 9). The appellation *jījī mausī* suggests that Sarwar is a daughter of Sobti's younger sister (who calls the author *jījī*) or else Sarwar treats Sobti as an elder sister-aunt-figure calling her *jījī mausī*. Though on p. 290 of *Śabdō ke ālok mẽ*, Sobti writes: "*parivār mẽ sabhī log mujhe jījī kahkar pukārtẽ hāī. / everybody in the family calls me jījī.*"

badhāi. jo mahālekhak apnī mahākalam se racit mahān kriti kā śīrṣak cunne mē asamarth hō, aur dusrō ke śīrṣak mukhḍō kī nocā-nācī kar use apnī kriti par caspā karē, aise pratibhāsālī lekhak ko kis nām se pukārā jāe, ye to āp hī tay karē (Sobti 2005: 435).

To the venerable and wise men whose sleight of hand pulled off the feat of changing the title of this work from *Hello Sarwar* to *In the Glow of Words*, both my thanks and salutations. As to the great writer, who is incapable of choosing a title for the great work created through her great penmanship, and who must pinch title headlines from others in order to affix them to her own work, you yourself decide what you would call such a brilliant writer.

The comic effect produced by the incongruity between the high-tone register — a very formal heading followed by a no-less formal-sounding text repetitively resorting to the ironic use of the prefix *mahā*/great — and the more mundane matter at hand, namely the issue of the book’s title, shows Krishna Sobti at her best. Having in mind an informal motley of writings put together for a private/public consumption and without the need to adhere to the self-imposed compositional rules underwriting the more formal writerly offerings of hers, she wanted to call the book simply, *Hello, Sarwar*. However, better counsels (of her editors and/or publishers?) having prevailed, she did give in but on the condition of having the last word and the last laugh.

Drafting the perfect text

Within the Ladakh narrative set out in *In the Glow of Words* there is a short paragraph addressed to Sarwar, which provides reader with the provenance of the fragments / *ṭukre* used in this text as well as the later travelogue (Sobti 2012). Sobti writes,

sarwar, kisī purāni fail mē se mil gayā yeh ṭukrā. kuch panne likhe the laddākh par. śāyad dillī mē pare hōge. mil gaye to kuch bāt banegī, nahī to itnā hī. mālūm nahī, maīne cīzō ko tartīb se rakhnā kyō nahī sikhā. (Sobti 2005: 42)

Sarwar, found this fragment in some old file. I did write a few pages on Ladakh. Possibly they are in Delhi. If located, I could use them, if not, then that’s it. I don’t know why I have never learnt to keep things in order.

When read together with other remarks scattered throughout the book, it gives one an idea about the making of Sobti’s personal archive, seen by her as an “ante-autobiography” material stockpile (Lynch 2013) to be used when and where required. Its physicality is very real and for those who have ever seen Krishna Sobti delivering her lectures, read always from pages filled with beautifully honed sentences, it comes as no surprise that some of those

oft-used and re-used sheets of paper might have actually got misplaced. Sobti's physical archive, we are informed, is perpetually verging on the chaotic; no *tartīb* or "order" there, she says, everything in fragments spread out on numerous leaves of paper that can be put together, scavenged or even re-purposed at will. An interesting illustration of this is found in the chapter titled, "Dil-o-dānīś!" (Sobti 2005: 98–304), where Sobti tells Sarwar how a piece originally meant for *Zindagīnamā* and then re-purposed as a part of "Do bichaunō ke do aulādē"/ "Two Bedspreads, Two Off-spring" (the working title of *Dil-o-dānīś*), finally ended up in her novel *Dil-o-dānīś/Heart Has its Reasons*. Sobti quotes the peripatetic passage in its entirety giving one a peep into the workings of her writerly mind and the physical aspect of the storing and re-shuffling of the ready-to-use fragmentary pieces.

The title "Do bichaunō ke do aulādē" probably makes its first appearance in Sobti's 1989 book, *Sobti ek sohbat/Sobti. A Companion*. (Sobti 2014c), which again is a miscellany, though a more formal one than *In the Glow of Words* and comprises of fragments taken from earlier books as well as the work in progress, but basically no first person, authorial narratives, such as mock letters or diary entries. A piece with this title is found in the first section, "Upanyās āś"/ "Fragments from novels" (Sobti 2014c: 7–128), under the sub-section "Zindagīnamā-2: kuch aprakāśit āś"/"Zindaginama-2: Some Unpublished Fragments" (Sobti 2014c: 9–37). However, the fragments of "Do bichaunō ke do aulādē" found there (Sobti 2014c: 9–18) are different from the one included in *Śabdō ke ālok mē*, though further perusal of Sobti's disclosures, both direct and indirect, indicates that what might have been earlier called "Do bichaunō ke do aulādē"/ "Two Bedspreads, Two Off-spring" and eventually, shedding its title,²⁸ metamorphosed into *Dil-o-dānīś/Heart Has its Reasons*, was originally envisaged as a direct continuation of the *Zindagīnamā* saga, so maybe *Zindagīnamā-2*.

Having a space of her own to write and re-write her drafts, a space domesticated by the presence of specific paraphernalia like a table lamp with red shade brought from her Delhi home (Sobti 2005: 27), is very important to Sobti. Immediately following the earlier cited phone-conversation with Sarwar there is a longish, very poetic description of Sobti's study in Shimla and of what goes on there, a description of which I would like to quote the opening lines, forgoing for the moment the more sinister goings-on when her literary characters take over the room. She writes:

apnī ṣṭaḍī kī or lie caltī hū.

bilkul kabāristān hai. koī tartīb nahī. ūpar-nīce kāgaz par kāgaz. kitābē. koī sāl-bhar se atkī paṛī hai. koī chah mahīne se aur koī saṭkī paṛī hai dher ke nīce.

²⁸ Chapters in *Dil-o-dānīś/Heart Has its Reasons* have no titles, only numbers.

rahne dē ise. ham sabke smṛti-baīk tośākhāne haī. ambār haī cīzō ke, āvāzō ke, yādō ke, vicārō ke. (Sobti 2005: 11).

I turn towards my study.

Total junkyard. No order of any sort. From top to bottom paper upon paper. Books. Some stuck for over a year. Some other, for six months, and yet others, invisible under the heaps.

Let it be. All of us have memory-bank-like treasure-houses. Stockpiles of things, voices, memories, thoughts.

The physical appearance of Sobti's workroom bears striking resemblance to the appearance of the Jama Masjid flea-market and its wares alluded to earlier. Both locations have the power to hold Sobti's gaze, and both seem to be depositories of abandoned items, witnesses to past lives. It is not for nothing that Sobti lovingly styles her study, in the passage just quoted, as *kabāristān*. Translated here as "junkyard," this eloquent honorific is actually a word freshly coined for the occasion and an untranslatable wordplay on *kabristān* — "a graveyard." The only way to hold on to and make sense of the debris of this *kabāristān/kabristān* is by recognising its emotional capital and mining it for future literary consumption. Scattered fragments of yellowing pages covered with almost undecipherable handwriting can be brought together by becoming, for example, a part of a personal "chapbook," a pseudo-confessional miscellany assembled with a loving reader in mind — Sarwar, who would embrace the offered missive as a family heirloom; a reader who would fall in love with the "*citkabrā pāṭh*/dappled text" (Sobti 2005: 9) as a chronicle of a writerly life.

Indeed, despite the apparently fragmentary nature of the pieces assembled in the volume, all the "scraps" carry an unmistakable stamp of an "autobiographical inscription," all play a role in the "identity assemblage" (Smith 2019), and all have a part in a larger plan subsumed by "the self-in-performance" act (Arnold and Blackburn 2004) of its main protagonist, the author. It comes as no surprise that *In the Glow of Words* provides numerous insights into Krishna Sobti's personal view on the performative aspect of the authorial act delivered basically through a written text, conceived here as a perfect/ed piece of writing. Sobti's thoughts on the subject unfold out of a reflection on her own authorial habits. This is how Sobti brings up the subject. Apparently, after completing a piece of writing, Sobti needs, as she tells Sarwar, to re-read it, presumably aloud, or act it out to herself, relentlessly weeding each and every imperfect or jarring note:

likh lene ke bād mere lie paṛhnā bahut zarūrī hai. likhne ke tanāv se barī hokar lekhak use paṛhte hue svayam apnā pāṭhak aur ālocak bantā hai. āp jis nepathya se uṭhkar 'vicār' ko śabdō se ghaṛ rahe the — maun ke rahasya ko vyakt kar

rahe the, use bhāṣā de rahe the — us ‘taikṣṭ’ ko paṛhkar usmē rah gaye jhol aur salvaṭē āpkī ākhō mē tairne lagṭī haī. samvād se bhī jhāṅkne lagṭī haī choṭī-baṛī zyādtiyā. (Sobti 2005: 79)

After the writing is done, reading it over is a must for me. Free from the tension of writing, the writer — reading it — becomes his own reader and critic. Having moved from theatricality to “thought” crafted out in words — having revealed the mystery held by the silence, given it a language — re-reading the text, I see, swimming in front of my eyes, all the bulges and creases still left behind. And peeping from the dialogues — the smaller and bigger superfluous flourishes.

This expose, where finding right language is likened to dress-fitting (costume-fitting, fitting one out with a disguise?) with its single-minded smoothing of bulges, creases and other shortcomings, is contextualised further by recalling a discussion Sobti has had with her fellow writers. The account reads almost like minutes of a meeting, each statement and counterstatement attributed to a specific person mentioned by name attesting to the gravitas with which Sobti considers the matter. This is how the subject came up. Taking umbrage at the “theatrical indulgences” of some co-presenters at the just concluded seminar, Nirmal Verma²⁹ apparently observed, with a sneer, “*kuch log māc par ‘parfārm’ karte haī*/some people like to ‘perform’ when on stage”, to which Krishna Sobti replied: “*ham sabhī māc par ‘parfārm’ karte haī*/all of us ‘perform’ on a stage” (Sobti 2005: 79), opening the floor for a heated discussion. The outcome of the discussion might not be as important as Sobti’s conviction that at least she herself consciously “performs” for an “audience” every time she writes, speaks or interacts with others. Her carefully cultivated public persona, with its distinct sartorial imprint and her famous Haśmat impersonation,³⁰ are probably the most visible aspect of the self-in-performance, colouring, but also nurturing, her writerly enterprise. To confirm that the performative feature of a writer’s being-in-the-world is, in Sobti’s view, a part of the force nourishing her/his creative act, there is an interesting detail relating to the Haśmat aspect of her persona which she shares with the reader. Talking about the handwriting, she remembers how tiny hers once was (she would not be able to read the handwritten manuscript of “Sikkā badal gayā” now even if she wanted to) and how Bhagwati Sharan Verma’s habit of putting no lines atop the Devanagari letters emboldened her to do the same.³¹ And then she adds:

²⁹ Nirmal Verma (1929–2005), a well-known Hindi writer, activist and translator.

³⁰ For extensive discussion on Sobti’s alter-ego or Hashmat, see Browarczyk 2017. What is worth noting is the fact that despite Sobti’s confessing that certain writings were done by/as Hashmat, all works always appeared under Sobti’s own name.

³¹ Bhagwati Sharan Verma (1903–1981); a well-known Hindi writer.

barsō bād jab ‘haśmat’ ujāgar hue to māñ ne sahaj hī ek aur naī likhāvaṭ taiyār kar lī. isī ke sāth merī likhit ke do alag-alag raṅg mere lekhan mẽ ākit ho gaye. māñ in donō mẽ kisī ek kī tarafdārī nahī kartī (Sobti 2005: 167).

Years later, when Hashmat manifested himself, I naturally prepared another, brand new handwriting [for him]. In this way, two different styles of penmanship ingrained themselves into my writing. I harbour no partiality towards either.

Sobti’s dedication to the detail and the economy of words belies the straightforward assumption that *In the Glow of Words* might be anything but a well-planned, well-executed piece of creative assemblage displaying in fact less than a reader might have been led to believe, thus a perfect “anti-autobiography” hiding a reticent persona,³² for “anti-autobiography means not just not writing your autobiography, an astonishingly prevalent practice, but writing it in such a way as to outwit the prurience and immodesty of the genre by frustrating your own desire for self-display and the reader’s desire to enter your inner life” (Eagleton 2001: 57).

Applying a theoretical framework

In Western literary tradition a book like *The Glow of Words* would have been earlier classified probably under the rubric of epistolary writing — and indeed, what is called the epistolary form of writing was a popular device for composing novels, including the Gothic and sensational fiction of the 18th and 19th centuries. As Francesca Orsini writes in the context of early 20th-century Hindi literature and its impact on society,

More than articles and discussions on social reform, I would argue, it was these hybrid genres (confessions, epistolary novels, social novels), mixing reality with fiction, instruction with entertainment, that allowed taboo issues concerning women to be raised, directly and with the heightened impact of a melodramatic narrative (Orsini 2002, Kindle Locations 9173–9176).

Yet though the overt mode of presentation in *Śabdō ke ālok mẽ* is indeed a letter, or rather a set of letters, all addressed to Sarwar, some shorter, some

³² I use ‘reticent’ in the sense it was used by Orsini (2004: 54–82) to describe Mahdevi Varma (1907–1987) as ‘a reticent autobiographer’ and keeping in mind discussion this provoked, especially Snell’s refutation of the appellation as reported by Browarczyk (2019: 53): “Snell (forthcoming), however, sees Varma’s erudite, literary style with its high-register vocabulary and complex syntax as a mark of a very deliberate and well-thought out narrative.” For more on uses of terms such as ‘life writing,’ ‘autobiography,’ ‘life narrative’ etc. in South Asian context, cf. Browarczyk 2019, Lambert-Hurley 2018, Malhotra and Lambert-Hurley (eds.) 2015, Arnold and Blackburn (eds.) 2004.

longer, often appended by enclosures, like copies of interviews, seminar papers, fragments of older compositions or drafts of newer ones, the prevailing sense the book evokes is not of an edited volume of correspondence but some sort of a miscellany. It does not have the neatness of the famous prison letters written by Jawaharlal Nehru to his daughter, Indira, (Nehru 2016 [1929]) or the similar letters of Abul Kalam Azad (Azad 1991 [1946]). Much closer in form would be, to my mind, a work of fiction authored by Allan I. Sealy, namely *The Trotter Nama* (1988); family *akhbar* books maintained lovingly over generations;³³ or some of the autobiographies of Punjabi intellectuals from the Literary Autobiographies Series (*sāhitak sva-jīvanī laṛī*), conceived and published by the Department of Punjabi Literary Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

All the Punjabi autobiographies in the series share a generic title, *Merī sāhitak sva-jīvanī/My Literary Autobiography*, which is only rarely accompanied by a subtitle,³⁴ and interestingly, most of them defy the generic autobiography format. The editors of the series seem to have given their authors free hand as to the form and content, the objective here being the building up of an authorial archive in Punjabi for the future generations of scholars and readers. Hence, some autobiographies are straightforward chronological accounts of life, or pick up where a previous autobiography (published elsewhere) has left off. Sometimes, which is the case of Prabhjot Kaur, the case of Prabhjot Kaur, *Merī sāhitak sva-jīvanī* is a steppingstone to a future, more extensive autobiographical writing. So, while the life account published by Patiala University sets Prabhjot Kaur's life story as framed by her poetic output, her later autobiography, this time in two volumes, published in 1996 in Delhi, under the title *Jinā vī ek adā hai/Living Too is an Art Form*,³⁵ narrates the story of her life as a game of revealing and withholding, told from the present-day perspective. Yet other volumes in the Patiala series are made up of a mixture of autobiographical sketches and essays devoted to the field of scholarly activity typical for the author and in keeping with her/his other writings on the subject, like Mahinder Kaur Gill's work, which includes numerous articles on Sikhism. Often polemical articles, in dialogue with contemporary literary developments, are included, like in the literary autobiography authored by Sutinder Singh Noor. In view of the above, it would have been probably

³³ Lambert-Hurley (2018: 159–177) discusses the *akhbar* book or family diary tradition of the Tyabji family; the never published scrap book is a miscellany of autobiographical essays, travel accounts, photographs, etc. Started in the last years of the 19th century, the practice has been kept alive till the present day, with the whole clan getting together every few years when over a couple of days the earlier entries are re-read and the new ones produced and added.

³⁴ E.g., the autobiography by Chandan Negi, 2011, *Sāhitak sva-jīvani. nimolīā de hār/ Literary Autobiography. Strings of Neembeads*.

³⁵ *Adā* — graceful or coquettish movement or gesture, style of expression, blandishment.

more appropriate to translate the Punjabi appellation *Meri sāhitak sva-jīvanī* as *My Life in Letters* rather than the earlier proposed translation of the title, which seems to suggest itself at the first glance — *My Literary Autobiography*. Krishna Sobti's epistolary volume would have been an excellent fit in the Patiala series, and had she been writing in Punjabi, which was her mother tongue, and not in her language of choice, which was Hindi, she would undoubtedly have been a welcomed and cherished contributor.

However, no work of Sobti has ever had the term “autobiography” or “autobiographical” else “my life” in the title or as a subtitle, though she certainly did not shy from mining the autobiographical for her literary offerings. Except for the first-person narratives in *Śabdō ke ālok mē/In the Glow of Words* or the *Ham haśmat/I, Haśmat* volumes where there is no doubt that the author is speaking about her life, family, people she knew or personal experiences, and which can be read alongside the interviews she gave, like the four found in this volume or the others anthologised in *Lekhak kā jantantr: Kṛṣṇa Sobtī se sākṣātkār/Writer's Democracy: Interviews with Krishna Sobti* (2018), Sobti's other autobiographical utterances have been highly fictionalised and/or “re-montaged/re-shuffled” to borrow the word used by the Polish writer Tulli when speaking of her own books. Thus, the autobiographical elements, if present, can be retrieved only through an analytical analysis of the material at hand. In view of the research undertaken as part of the Partition and identity study, one could say, with a high degree of confidence, that Sobti's oeuvre may indeed be examined through the autobiographical lens, and many of her books may be viewed as “self-representational texts” (Gilmore 2001: 13) forming in fact an autobiographical series. What Gilmore has to say about many other writers and their autobiographical enterprises, could easily apply to Sobti as well: “Several writers have taken the project of self-representation to be open-ended, susceptible to repetition, extendible, even, perhaps, incapable of completion. In their sustained multibook projects, the notion of an *end* to autobiography becomes ironic with each new publication” (Gilmore 2001: 96).

All the above notwithstanding, Sobti's *Śabdō ke ālok mē/In the Glow of Words*, like many of the non-generic Punjabi autobiographies of the Patiala series, did indeed exercise severely my systematising proclivities, but then I came across Foucault's essay — “Self Writing” (1997),³⁶ where he discusses *hupomnēmata* kept by the ancient Greeks:

Hupomnēmata in the technical sense, could be account books, public registers, or individual notebooks serving as memory aids. (...) One wrote down quotes in them, extracts from books, examples, and actions that one had witnessed or read about, reflections or reasonings that one had heard or that had

³⁶ I must thank Tara Puri for bringing this text to my attention.

come to mind. They constituted a material record of things read, heard, or thought, thus offering them up as a kind of accumulated treasure for subsequent rereading and meditation. They also formed a raw material for the drafting of more systematic treatises, in which one presented arguments and means for struggling against some weakness (such as anger, envy, gossip, flattery) or for overcoming some difficult circumstance (a grief, an exile, ruin, disgrace). (Foucault 1997: 209–210)

Approaching *Śabdō ke ālok mē/In the Glow of Words* by way of Foucault's essay and seeing it as a form of *hupomnēmata* resolves the vexatious matter of its classification by providing an opportune category wide enough to embrace with ease the book and its mixed content. "However personal they may be," *hupomnēmata* are not "intimate journals," writes Foucault, as "the intent is not to pursue the unspeakable, nor to reveal the hidden, nor to say the unsaid, but on the contrary to capture the already-said, to collect what one has managed to hear or read, and for a purpose that is nothing less than the shaping of the self" (Foucault 1997: 210–211). Almost exactly Krishna Sobti's case.

In lieu of an ending: Some quotations and a poetry reading

Some twenty years back I read a collection of essays by Borges, *The Total Library. Non-Fiction 1922–1968*, which had a short but amazing introduction hidden under an innocuous title, "A Note on This Edition" (Borges 1999: xi–xvi). The introduction, written by Eliot Weinberger, the editor of the book, has stayed with me and proved invaluable whenever faced with narratives whose authors liked to shift their text fragments around. Having encountered repetitions in Borges's writings, Weinberger invested considerable energy into explaining the case to the possibly baffled readers:

Readers will immediately notice that the same phrases, sentences, paragraphs and on one occasion, pages recur throughout the book. The first reaction may well be that Borges (...) was merely cutting corners by repeating himself. This is quite clearly not the case, as I discovered when my first editorial instinct was to wonder if any could be excised. Borges nearly always uses the same sentence to make a different point, or as a bridge between points C and D that are not the points A and B that were linked the last time the sentence was used. The repetitions are a part of his lifelong fascination with the way old elements can be reassembled, by chance or design, to create new variations, something entirely different, or something that is exactly the same but now somehow different (Weinberger in Borges 1999: XV).

Though Sobti's style of writing is nothing like that of Borges, she being less exuberant in the use of words and less given to verbal flights of imagination, some of their writerly habits seem to have been similar. One they

shared would have been the compulsion for squirreling literary/linguistic jetsam and flotsam and using it to create new forms and elicit new meanings. Sobti's moveable archive consisting of hundreds upon hundreds of pages filled with jottings of ideas, notes on readings, diary-like entries recording events and thoughts, scraps of paper with copied poems, discarded fragments of text meant for the already finished books, resided wherever she did, tempting its owner, time and again, to scavenge the piles in search of something that was there and could be re/used. Sobti's readings would have stayed with her the way my own reading of Weinberger's introduction had stayed with me, allowing me, years later, to recognise similar pattern in writings located in different time and space: Sobti's obsessive recycling of certain fragments; Tiwana's³⁷ need to repeat the same longish passage at the beginning and the end of a novel; Stasiuk's³⁸ re-purposing of a sentence or two here and there; Rylski's³⁹ masterful strategy of ending one chapter and beginning the next without losing a beat by resorting to anadiplosis; Orszyn's⁴⁰ numerous editions of the same but each time differently aligned texts. Great deal of Sobti's hoarded and often unused material landed up in letters to Sarwar. Of what ends up in letters, Foucault writes:

Notebooks, which in themselves constitute personal writing exercises, can serve as raw material for texts that one sends to others. (...) when one writes one reads what one writes, just as in saying something one hears oneself saying it. The letter one writes acts, through the very action of writing, upon the one who addresses it, just as it acts through reading and rereading on the one who receives it. In this dual function, correspondence is very close to the *hupomnēmata*, and its form is often very similar (Foucault 1997: 214).

Sobti's *hupomnēmata*-like book, *Śabdō ke ālok mē*, included poetry, too. I have counted over forty poems of different length scattered throughout the volume. Some are Sobti's own, others by Indian poets like Iqbal, Firaq Gorakhpuri or Nirala, yet others by world-famous poets: Pablo Neruda, Fernando Pessaro, Ricardo Rais, the names of the authors of the originals as well as their Hindi translations thoughtfully acknowledged, at times even furnished with a rare footnote. Though Sobti never claimed to be a poet, nor

³⁷ Dalip Kaur Tiwana (1935–2020), a well-known and prolific Punjabi writer; her novel in six parts, *Kathā kaho urvaśī* (1999), translated into English as *Tell the Tale Urvashi*, has the same passage at the opening of the first and the sixth part. And this is not the only example of the repetitions in Tiwana's oeuvre.

³⁸ Andrzej Stasiuk (b.1960), a Polish writer.

³⁹ Eustachy Rylski (b.1944), a Polish writer; the novel I have in mind is called *Warunek/Clause* (2005).

⁴⁰ Zyta Orszyn (1940–2018), a Polish writer.

had published any of her poems as stand-alone pieces, she had an unerring ear of a poet and an impeccable musical recall. Things once heard stayed in her mind to be summoned up when needed. So, there is also a surprising Polish accent in the book, introduced by Sobti thus: “*ek poliś kavītā tum-hāre liye. bahut pahle paṛhī thī. kavi kā nām yād nahī. kahī se dhū sakī to likhūgī*/A Polish poem for you. Read it a long time ago. Don’t remember the name of the poet. If I manage to find it somewhere, will write and let you know” (Sobti 2005: 17).

The author of the poem copied into Sarwar’s letter is Tadeusz Rózewicz,⁴¹ though Sobti does not know that. The particular poem, reproduced by Sobti without a title, is actually called *Hāsī* “Laughter”/“Śmiech” and has been translated into Hindi by Somdatt, a Bhopal based poet.⁴² It is included in the volume of Rózewicz’s poetry in Hindi translation edited by Ashok Vajpeyi and Renata Czekalska (Vajpeyi and Czekalska 2001). However, it originally appeared, alongside four other poems by Rózewicz, all of them in Somdatt’s translation, in *Punarvasu*, an anthology of world poetry published in Bhopal in 1989 (Vajpeyi and Czekalska 2001: 256). Below is the Hindi version of the poem the way Sobti enshrined it in her book, though now furnished with a title it earlier lacked, followed by the English translation, probably the very one used by Somdatt who did not know Polish, and then, the Polish original.

Hāsī

pījrā itne din band rahā
ki ek cīṛiyā paidā ho
gaī usmē
itne din khāmoś rahī cīṛiyā
pījrā khulā
khāmośī kī jāg lagī
khāmośī itnī der tak rahī
ki
kāle śīkhcō ke pīch se phūṭ
paṛī hāsī.⁴³

Laughter

The cage stayed shut
until a bird was hatched inside

⁴¹ Tadeusz Rózewicz (1921–2001), a well-known Polish poet.

⁴² Somdatt (1939–1989), a poet writing in Hindi, editor of the literary journal *Sākṣāt-kār* published by Sāhitya Kalā Pariṣad, Madhya Pradesh.

⁴³ I reproduce Krishna Sobti’s line arrangement; the one in Vajpei and Czekalska 2001:119 is slightly different and follows the English translation.

the bird remained mute
 until the cage
 rusting in the silence
 opened

silence lasted
 until behind black wires
 we heard laughter
 (English trans. Adam Czerniawski; Różewicz 1994)

Śmiech

Klatka była tak długo zamknięta
 aż wylał się w niej ptak

ptak tak długo milczał
 aż klatka otwarła się
 rdzewiejąc w ciszy

cisza tak długo trwała
 aż za czarnymi prętami
 rozległ się śmiech

Not many would know that Krishna Sobti had a close, life-long friend, Dr Agnieszka Kowalska-Soni, a Delhi-based Polish scholar who translated Herbert⁴⁴ into Hindi. It is more than probable that Sobti's interest in and knowledge of Polish poetry came through her. But it is also possible that Sobti read Różewicz's poem in one of the two anthologies mentioned above or even heard it in Bhopal, from the translator himself, for, as she tells us, she was often invited there for literary gatherings (Sobti 2005: 161–166). With Sobti's habit of jotting down things that caught her attention — pieces of poetry, phrases heard in the bazaar, words of songs sung by labourers at work, and so on — this particular poem would have made enough of an impression on her to make her jot it down albeit without the author's name or the title; else, she knew it, for some reason, by heart. And then, who else but a reader already familiar with this specific Polish poem in the original could have recognised it in the Hindi version quoted by Sobti and provided an academic footnote to the little gem.

⁴⁴ Zbigniew Herbert (1928–1998), a famous Polish poet, essayist and drama-writer.

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THE ORIGINS OF POST-PARTITION VICTIMISATION IN KHUSHWANT SINGH'S *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN*

Abstract: Khushwant Singh, a famous Indian post-colonial writer in English, an editor and columnist, was in his late nineties when he died in 2014. His first novel, *Train to Pakistan*, is considered a masterpiece. Published in 1956, the novel is based on Singh's personal experiences during the Partition and was one of the very first books to address the subject. While the novel contains many themes, its major focus is on the trauma of people having lived peacefully in a tiny, multicultural, intact society and whose feelings of confusion and mutual hate have started from the day of Partition. This extremely brutal episode brought to an end their long and communally shared history. This is Singh's attempt to capture the beginning of the contemporary phenomenon of victimisation originating from the unfortunate division of the Subcontinent.

Keywords: Partition, victimisation, communalism, Kushwant Singh, Indian English literature

The Partition of the Indian Subcontinent in August 1947 was a critical event for both the local and the world's history. The division announced by the British was made along sectarian lines and led to enormous geographical, political and socio-cultural changes. It was based on the two-nation theory, informed by the political philosophy of communalism, according to which Hindus and Muslims could not live together as one nation since they had their distinct social, cultural and religious identities. Consequently, the north-west and extreme east territories of British India became the Islamic Republic of Pakistan,¹

¹ The created dominion included much of modern-day Pakistan and Bangladesh, its status ended in 1956 with the creation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which was administratively split into West Pakistan and East Pakistan. In 1971 East Pakistan seceded from the union to become Bangladesh.

and the rest became the Republic of India. No doubt, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims had long lived together, but the inculcated feelings of harmony and unity failed to resist the politics of communalism supported by the colonial power. The division gave freedom to both countries, but the price paid for the independence from the British Empire was among the highest human cost ever paid. With no help from the political leaders of either party, the process claimed many lives. Millions of refugees moved between Pakistan and India in what is considered to have been the largest single migration. The mass scale of migration entailed unprecedented violence, murders, rapes and bestiality. It is not easy to establish exactly how many people suffered this trauma. The estimates of people killed in Partition violence vary widely between 200,000 (the contemporaneous British figure) to two million (a later Indian estimate), but it is widely accepted today that about one million people died,² up to one hundred thousand women were raped, and the number of refugees in the two countries totalled 15.63 million,³ all this in a blink of history's eye.

Instead of bringing peace, the foundation of the two new countries over seventy years ago resulted in hostilities. Riots, rapes, murders, looting and wickedness spiralled out of control, destroying all that came in its path. This left both India and Pakistan devastated, with no established, experienced system of government requisite for an economic and political re-organisation as well as with a number of traumatised victims of communal violence unable to heal their psychological wounds.

In every Indian city, there is a Muslim locality distinct from the Hindu. Even villages where the two groups live together are more often than not known by their religious identity — a Muslim village, a Hindu village or a Sikh village. For a while, euphoria sparked by Independence obliterated the differences of race, language and religion. Most people, particularly the young, made it a point of describing themselves as Indians and refused to define their racial, religious or provincial background. They were proud of being Indian, primarily because India was the land of Gandhi and would prove that a people as diverse as they were could be one nation. There was also a generally shared belief that, in following the path of Gandhi, India would prove to the nations of the world that international disputes could be resolved by honest, open and peaceful methods, instead of by cunning diplomacy or war.

Very soon, the process of disillusionment began as Hindus and Muslims continued to kill each other. When Gandhi tried to stop them, he was assassinated. People said: "We have killed Gandhi but we will keep Gandhism alive." Even that did not happen.⁴

² TOP, Vol. XII, p. 301 as cited in Godbole 2011: 220.

³ TOP, Vol. X, p. 490 as cited in Godbole 2011: 208.

⁴ Singh 2016: 16.

The contemporary manifestations of post-Partition victimisation in the Indian subcontinent together with its socio-political consequences are worth mentioning. Victimisation ideologies are not exclusively based on the experience of the harm suffered but are an open door to various forms of extremism, revanchist politics and revenge sentiments. It is a kind of double-edged sword which does psychological and moral damage to the members of the victimised nation. The governments of both India and Pakistan were apparently not well prepared to tackle the spread of the victimisation ideology, which often was underestimated or ignored. The process of democratisation and modernisation of social life will not erase the notions of national and ethnic identity; nor will it eliminate the memory of injuries suffered and tragedies endured.

In Indian literary history, Khushwant Singh is known as one of the finest historians and novelists, as well as a political commentator, an outstanding observer and a critic of social life.⁵ A distinguished man of letters and an eminent post-colonial writer in English, Singh had his writings translated into Hindi and Urdu. He was born in a village named Hadali in present-day Pakistan in 1915. Having been educated in Lahore and London and having worked abroad for many years, he considered himself a blend of East and West, valued Indian art and culture and was deeply rooted in the soil of India.⁶ Cultured humanist, exposed to the ideas and attitudes of the West, he seemed to be an orientalist in outlook and a pure Indian at the same time. A man of international reputation who felt a Sikh at heart, he portrayed India both from an outsider's and an insider's perspectives.⁷

For Khushwant Singh, the Partition was a time of dire disillusionment, a crisis of values and a distressing and disintegrating period in his own life.

The beliefs that I had cherished all my life were shattered. I had believed in the innate goodness of the common man but the division of India had been accompanied by the most savage massacres known in the history of the country. (...) I had believed that we Indians were peace loving and nonviolent that we were concerned with matters of the spirit while rest of the world was involved in the pursuit of material things. After the experience of autumn 1947, I became an angry, middle-aged man, who wanted to show his disenchantment with the world. I decided to try my hand at writing.⁸

Singh debuted as a novelist at the age of 40, and his first book brought him immediate fame. *Train to Pakistan* is his supreme achievement.

⁵ Dar 2013: 21.

⁶ Cf. Sharma 2015: 1.

⁷ Tank 2011: 43.

⁸ Dhavan 1985: 162.

A realistic masterpiece of a structure well thought over, an artistically conceived plot, an absorbing narrative and imaginatively realised characters. It has a symbolic framework, meaningful atmosphere and a powerful mode of expression.⁹

The action of the novel takes place in a small, imaginary village of Mano Majra, located half a mile from the river Sutlej. Mano Majra was also the original title of the novel. In this small community of about 70 families, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims live together in peace and harmony. The village is known for its railway station, and the passing trains dictate the pace of people's everyday life. The morning train to Lahore gives signals for the start of the morning prayer, and the midday express calls people back to work. The late goods train announces bedtime. The same trains will also bring in changes. Suitably, the title of the novel was reconsidered, and *Train to Pakistan* was adopted instead.

The harmonious atmosphere and functional, local integration within the village community is symbolised by a single slab of sandstone standing upright under a tree. All Mano Majrans come there whenever they are in special need of a blessing. 'Religious diversities are thus overcome, and forces of division alternate with forces of union.'¹⁰

People lead their simple lives in the calm country setting. It is summer 1947, but they do not know much about the planned partition of their country and, independence and freedom do not particularly matter to any of them. The village seems to be unaffected by the great events of the world politics. 'I am sure no one in Mano Majra even knows that the British have left and the country is divided into Pakistan and Hindustan, some of them know about Gandhi but I doubt if anyone has ever heard of Jinnah.'¹¹

The ignorance of things happening in the outer world keeps the community in harmony. Although blood is flowing and violence is raging around them, the village stays far away from hatred, murder and mayhem,¹² surprisingly free from communal stress and tension. It is in fact like a small oasis in the vast desert of communal violence and unprecedented carnage.¹³

The peaceful life in Mano Majra suddenly comes to a halt. First, the news of communal violence arrives as riots spread all over India and mass migration starts. The peace of the village is ultimately shattered by the murder of the local money lender. Then come the massacres and eventually afflict Mano Majra.¹⁴

⁹ Shahane 1972: 68.

¹⁰ Shahane 1972: 78.

¹¹ Singh 2006: 30.

¹² Parmar 2011: 397.

¹³ Tank 2011: 46

¹⁴ Daiya 2014: 6.

The impact of the Partition is noted by the train-conscious villagers in the late running of the overcrowded trains, which disturbs their regular life routines. One morning, in broad daylight, a ghost train arrives from Pakistan, loaded with hideously butchered corpses of Sikhs and Hindus.¹⁵ The dumb-struck villagers are overwhelmed by events. Ordinary men and women are bewildered. They feel victimised and torn apart.¹⁶ 'The fact is, both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped.'¹⁷

The bond of fraternal feelings is shattered by the unfortunate developments.' Mano Majra has been divided into two halves as neatly as a knife cuts through a block of butter.'¹⁸

The Hindus and the Sikhs decide to take revenge on the Muslims by killing all the passengers on board a train carrying the refugees fleeing India and head to Lahore.¹⁹ When the Muslim villagers are requested to go to Pakistan, they say: 'What have we to do with Pakistan? We were born here. So were our ancestors. We have lived amongst you as brothers.'²⁰ Religion did not divide them, but the Partition did.

For the British Government, the partition was just a shrewd and convenient administrative arrangement and a selfish political move,²¹ 'Communal discord (...) was very designed first by the British under the policy divide and rule and then by the nationalists leaders and their mulish approach,'²² The British government had set the scene for political separatism by giving Muslims, and later other religious minorities, separate electorates in elections to legislative bodies. This policy had encouraged political parties that represented only the interests of their respective communities.²³ The inexperienced newly formed Indian government could not show the required courage and capability to reinstate peace and cordiality.²⁴ Singh shows the ghastliness, grossness and total insanity of the two-nation theory based on simple bidding between two mutually exclusive victimisation ideas, which led to a political tragedy. The slow process of corruption and common suspicion combined with cruelties perpetrated by the magistrates and the police made even the saviours ironically affected by the winds of destruction.

¹⁵ Sharma 2015: 5.

¹⁶ Dar 2013: 23.

¹⁷ Singh 2006: 30.

¹⁸ Singh 2006: 178.

¹⁹ Ud Din, Khan, Mahmood 2010: 200.

²⁰ Singh 2006: 184.

²¹ Cf.: Pandey 2015: 402.

²² Pandey 2015: 406.

²³ Singh 2016: 12–13.

²⁴ Pandey 2015: 405.

Singh also stresses the fact that historians termed the ensuing riots as inevitable in their books and were more concerned about their national heroes than the suffering of the effected people who were forced to face this calamity.²⁵

Train to Pakistan brings forth a picture of bestial horrors enacted on the Indo-Pakistan border during the Partition and a brutal story of political hatred when the spirit of communal frenzy and a passionate zeal for self-expression were fanning and manipulating with the masses. The predominant quality of the novel is its stark realism, its absolute fidelity to the truth of life. Based on Singh's personal experiences, the book is fictional based on the events.²⁶ I think it is a documentary novel of the Partition, an extremely tragic event which hurt me very much. I had no animosity against either the Muslims or the Pakistanis, but I felt that I should do something to express that point of view.²⁷

Singh endeavours to find the root cause of these inhuman acts, giving vital and legitimate reasons to convince the readers how the loathsome communal fire was set and how the roles of the victim and the torturer were adopted. He exaggerates nothing, he leaves nothing.

The village becomes a microcosm of the vivisected subcontinent, caught in the whirlpool of history. In spite of the ethnic diversity, peace and unity exist until the communal conflict and violence generated by the Partition overwhelm the minds of the villagers.

The novel analyses the historical facts in a very balanced and unprejudiced manner to prove that what happened in history were not at all inevitable and predestined facts, but rather that these situations were intentionally created and imposed for the achievement of vested interests of some power-famished politicians.²⁸

Psychoanalytically, when a nation's collective psyche is wounded through humiliating military defeats and the abuse of its people, it is in danger of fragmentation and loss of identity. In order to survive, the national psyche must compensate for its devastated self-esteem by restoring its pride. The greater the narcissistic wound, the more defensively grandiose it must become, believing it is superior to other nations and sometimes even concluding its inhabitants are God's "chosen people" Mortifying national shame is unconsciously transformed into glorified victimhood associated with intense nationalistic fervour.²⁹

The aim of Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is to liberate people from their narrow loyalties to caste, community and politics and awaken their conscience

²⁵ Pandey 2015: 406.

²⁶ Cf. Shahane 1972: 68.

²⁷ Shahane 1972: 68.

²⁸ Pandey 2015: 402.

²⁹ Wolson 1999.

to live a real human life upholding the values of liberty and equality.³⁰ It also encourages a deeper reflection on confronting the dangers which victimisation ideologies bring.

An ambivalent religious adherence is accentuated in the novel by the inscrutable devotion of Mano Majrans to the deo, the local deity, “a three-foot slab of sandstone” which is worshiped by all villagers alike.

Religious diversities are thus overcome by the centre of supernatural and divine power, and forces of division alternate with religious forces of union. This continual change in the efficacious operation of forces — good and evil, affection and alienation, friendship and hostility, union and division — is a significant aspect of the movement of thought and feeling in the novel. Mano Majra is, then, what John Bunyan would have aptly called ‘the World.’³¹

Although the village is the real protagonist of the novel, the individual is important as well. The fate of the individual is so closely linked to what is in store for his/her community and his/her religion that the collective destiny of groups and communities inevitably dominates the individual’s fate. Although humans have their own selves and their own free will, they become part of the train and are overrun by it, at times at least.³²

Considering oneself a victim is combined with a feeling of moral superiority over the enemy. The greater the moral distance between the two is, the more chance there is for winning the bid. The ideological victimisation strengthens one’s belief in one’s absolute innocence and precludes any critical self-reflection. ‘Instead of going for the person against whom you have a grievance, it is easier to gang up with members of your own community and go for those who are not.’³³ According to Hindu communal groups, which are trying to unite Hindus, ones traditionally divided into several mutually antagonistic caste and linguistic groups, the common enemy is ‘the *foreigner*, namely the Muslims and the Christians who must be forced into a subordinate status or hounded out or even decimated.’³⁴ Victimisation is only addressed by liberal academics, which makes it extremely difficult to share with the general public.

Victimisation is connected with the legitimacy of distrustfulness and even hostility towards others. Having been defined, the enemy becomes unfavoured, dehumanised and finally demonised. It is because it is the only way to get rid of any scruples fighting against it. The relationship between victim and victimiser is unconsciously internalised in the abused individual’s psyche.

³⁰ Khobragade 2013: 2.

³¹ Shahane 1972: 79.

³² Shahane 1972: 103.

³³ Singh 2003:128.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

This internalisation also occurs in a collective unconscious when it has experienced traumatic abuse. Communities overcome humiliation by defeating their enemies.³⁵

One would expect that the last thing a victimised group would do is victimise another, especially in the fashion it has been abused. However, this is not true. 'The former victim seeks revenge by forcing the victimiser to experience the same abuse he perpetrated.'³⁶

Victimisation makes the bill for the suffering experienced impossible to be paid. Deep-running feelings of real or partly imagined hurt may fuel the establishment of movements dedicated to revenge. The preoccupation with evening the score prevents communities from moving on towards normal development. The best cure for victimisation is forgiveness based on moral maturity. This both alleviates the perpetrator's remorse and helps the victim live without permanent anger and overwhelming will for revenge.

The problem with overcoming one's victimisation by victimising the abuser is that the cycle never ends. As long as the victim-victimiser dynamic exists in a nation's psyche, the nation will be unconsciously motivated to seek out other victimisers to triumph over.³⁷

The question that can hardly be answered is how to avoid hurting the victim's pride. Forgiveness needs to be mutual, both public and personal. Last but not least, forgiveness cannot mean forgetting or unconcern.

Khushwant Singh does not intend to blame any particular community or person or social or political leader of that time³⁸ but shows how easily hatred and violence can be provoked and escalate. In *Train to Pakistan*, 'it was not the cruel deeds but the rumour of such deeds which provoked people's emotions.'³⁹ He attempts 'to show how intentionally the atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust was created by the power starving people to fulfil their narrow political objectives even at the disgusting cost of the innocent lives'⁴⁰ Such powers are culpable 'for any communal disharmony and disorder not just at the time of the Partition but even in the present scenario.'⁴¹ As a witness of, first, the pre-partition national movement, then, the post-partition Independence and, finally, the modern complex world where victimisation ideologies

³⁵ Wolson 1999.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ Wolson 1999.

³⁸ Cf.: Pandey 2015: 404.

³⁹ Pandey 2015: 405.

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

⁴¹ Ibidem.

play their roles, Singh warns us 'that we should stop letting the politicians use religion to take advantage of the sentiments of the masses.'⁴² Singh says:

We cannot wish communalism away. We cannot pretend communal differences are seen only during riots and don't exist otherwise. They always have and they will in the future. So we must all, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, somehow overcome our stereotyped notions of communities other than our own. We must avoid the tendency to build community-based housing societies, schools and clubs. Hindus and Sikhs must understand that the Muslims of India do not have to atone in perpetuity for the historical mistakes of some post rulers of their faith who were in fact more concerned about security of their empires not their religion. Muslims have as much right to this country as anyone else. If they are foreigners, we all are.⁴³

The only conclusion that we can draw from the experience of the Partition in 1947 is that such things must never happen again. And the only way to prevent their recurrence is to promote closer integration of people of different races, religions and castes living in the subcontinent.⁴⁴

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⁴² Maqbool 2016: 12.

⁴³ Singh 2003: 131.

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**PRZEMILCZANE, ZAPOMNIANE, WYPARTE.
O PISANIU HISTORII LITERATURY BENGALSKIEJ
W XIX I NA POCZĄTKU XX WIEKU**

Abstract: The paper discusses the literary choices made by the Bengali authors of the first histories of Bengali literature in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. I examine both the first publications on this subject and the later, canonical studies. The first historians evidently divided Bengali literature according to the religious backgrounds of the writers, even though they shared the same aesthetic and literary values.

Keywords: Bengali literature, Muslim writers, history of Bengali literature

Głównym założeniem niniejszego artykułu jest próba analizy sposobu pisania o literaturze bengalskiej w wieku XIX oraz w pierwszej połowie wieku XX. Ten okres ukształtował sposób myślenia Bengalczyków o swojej literaturze, głównie z uwagi na wielkich badaczy, których autorytet do dzisiaj jest trudny do podważenia przez badaczy zachodnich, a prawie niemożliwy przez badaczy indyjskich. Przyczynkiem do tej analizy była zwykła naukowa ciekawość autora tego artykułu, badacza języka bengalskiego oraz powstałej w nim literatury, którego wielokrotnie zadziwiał brak niektórych wątków, gatunków literackich, jak i wielu twórców w tworzonych od początku XIX wieku dziełach traktujących o historii literatury bengalskiej, także tych uważanych za wybitne i ważne. To, co dziwiło i nadal zadziwia najbardziej, to nieobecność autorów muzułmańskich w literaturze obszaru, którym przez ponad sześć wieków rządzący władcy muzułmańscy¹. Jak się okazuje, powodów takiego

¹ Okres ten liczy się od 1203 roku, kiedy to bengalskie królestwo Gaur, rządzone przez hinduską dynastię Senów, zostało zaatakowane przez głównego dowódcę Qutb

stanu było wiele. Na podstawie najważniejszych i najbardziej wpływowych dzieł kształtujących historię literatury bengalskiej postaram się przedstawić kilka z nich i zastanowić, co powodowało, że tylko niektórzy autorzy pojawiali się na stronach tych dzieł. Ważnym wątkiem niniejszego artykułu jest też przedstawienie sposobu, w jaki pisano o pisarzach muzułmańskich, ich dziełach oraz stylu.

Hinduscy intelektualiści klasy *bhadralok*² z Kalkuty z XIX i początków XX wieku, którzy tworzyli pierwsze historie literatury bengalskiej, całkowicie lub częściowo pomijali spuściznę literacką pisarzy muzułmańskich okresu średniowiecza bengalskiego, który to zakończył się przed wielką rewolucją kulturalną i społeczną XIX wieku zwaną renesansem bengalskim. W okresie tym powstały pierwsze dzieła próbujące opisać stan literatury bengalskiej, zbadać jej przeszłość i uporządkować.

Pierwsze prace dotyczące historii literatury bengalskiej to przede wszystkim artykuły, które ukazywały się w periodykach bengalsko- i angielskojęzycznych, oraz referaty wygłaszane zarówno na spotkaniach literackich, seminariach, jak i w klubach, z których część pojawiała się później drukiem. M. Sengupta w swoim artykule o historiografii bengalskiej twierdzi, że pierwszy z takich artykułów pojawił się w 1830 roku na łamach magazynu wydawanego w języku angielskim „Literary Gazette” i nosił tytuł *Bengali works and writers* (Bengalskie dzieła i ich twórcy) autorstwa Kaśiprasada Ghosza (Kāśiprasād Ghoṣ)³. Do 1872 roku, kiedy to wydano pierwsze, całkiem informatywne dzieło o literaturze bengalskiej, kilku z badaczy i pisarzy próbowało swoich sił, tworząc mniej lub bardziej udane podsumowania literackiej kultury Bengalczyków. Znaleźli się wśród nich wybitny poeta Iśwarćandra Gupta (*Iśvarcandra Gupta*) oraz pisarz Bankimćandra Čattopadhjaj (*Bankimcandra Čaṭṭopadhjāy*)⁴. Ramgati Njajaratna (*Rāmgati Nyāyaratna*), autor dzieła *Bāṅglābhāṣā o bāṅglā sāhitya biṣayak praṣṭāb* (O języku bengalskim i literaturze bengalskiej), najprawdopodobniej był pierwszym, który dokonał istniejącego do dzisiaj czasowego trójpodziału literatury bengalskiej na:

ud-Dīn Aibak, władcę Delhi, Ikhtiyār ud-Dīn Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī’ego, do słynnej bitwy pod Palasi (Plassey), gdzie wojska Kompani Wschodnioindyjskiej zwyciężyły nad bengalskim nawabem, Sirāj ud Daulā w 1757 roku.

² Termin *bhadralok* jest dosyć skomplikowany i różnorodnie używany przez badaczy zajmujących się Bengalem, szczególnie w XIX wieku i rozwijającym się w tamtym okresie odnowieniu sztuk, czyli renesansie bengalskim. Sam termin jest bengalską kalką językową, terminy „gentleman”, *bhadra* + *lok* i w XIX-wiecznym Bengalu określał grupę społeczną nie tyle o podobnym statusie ekonomicznym, ale przede wszystkim o podobnym, czyli wyższym wykształceniu, oraz raczej wyższym pochodzeniu społecznym.

³ Sengupta 1995: 58.

⁴ Sengupta 1995: 58.

- I. starobengalską (*prācīn*)
- II. średniobengalską (*madhyayuger*)
- III. oraz współczesną (*ādhunik*)⁵.

Powyższy podział funkcjonuje do dzisiaj w zasadzie w niezmiennych ramach czasowych, jeśli nie liczyć nowych odkryć manuskryptów z bengalskimi utworami na początku wieku XX⁶. Zaznaczyć trzeba, że zdecydowana większość dzieł zajmujących się problematyką literatury bengalskiej w XIX wieku powstała na terenie Bengalii Zachodniej i wedle mojej wiedzy nie ma dzieł próbujących zgromadzić i usystematyzować wiedzę na temat literatury bengalskiej z ówczesnego Bengalii Wschodniej, czyli współczesnego Bangladeszu.

W 1895 roku ukazało się dosyć obszerne dzieło, liczące prawie 300 stron, *The Literature of Bengal* (Literatura Bengalii) autorstwa Romesha Chundera Dutta (*Romesh Chunder Dutt*)⁷. Autor był zaskoczony, że dwadzieścia lat po pierwszych próbach opisanie literatury bengalskiej zmuszony był dokonać tak wielu zmian, w związku z nowymi danymi dostarczonymi w międzyczasie przez innych badaczy⁸. R. C. Dutt swoje dzieło rozpoczyna od stwierdzenia, że ruch literacki w Bengalii rozpoczął się wraz z poetą Dżajadewą (*Jayadeva*) i jego poematem napisanym w sanskrycie, zaś literatura bengalska sensu stricto rozpoczęła się w wieku XIV imitacją dzieła wyżej wymienionego poety⁹. Następnie w kolejnych dziewiętnastu rozdziałach opisuje najważniejsze postaci literackie Bengalii, do czasów mu współczesnych. Zaraz po Dżajadewie pojawiają się więc Ćandidas (*Caṅḍīdās*), jako najstarszy przedstawiciel literatury w języku lokalnym/wernakularnym, tj. bengalskim, oraz Widjapati (*Vidyāpati*), tworzący w innym idiomie językowym (*maithili/brajabuli*). O ile autor nie miał problemu z włączeniem Dżajadewy do listy poetów bengalskich (a może tylko urodzonych w Bengalii), o tyle postać Widjapatiego stanowi dla

⁵ Nyayaratna 1929: 26.

⁶ Dwa najważniejsze odkrycia to odnalezienie i wydanie w 1914 r. przez Haraprasāda Śāstrī'ego zbioru *Ācāryāpada*. Jest to najstarszy zabytek literatury bengalskiej, którego przynależność językowa do dzisiaj jest przedmiotem sporów jeszcze trzech kultur literackich: asamskiej, orijskiej oraz maithili. Pieśni te reprezentują najstarszą dostępną nam formę j. protobengalskiego i tworzą zbiór ezoterycznych utworów buddyizmu mahajany. Więcej w: Kvaerne 1977.

⁷ Jest to angielska wersja zapisu imienia *Rameścandra Dutta*. Co ciekawe, sam autor przyznaje się we wstępie do wydania swojego dzieła z 1895 r., że jest on ponownym wydaniem serii artykułów, które opublikował w 1877 r. w lokalnym magazynie pod pseudonimem literackim, niestety nie podaje, pod jakim i dlaczego go używał. Za: Dutt 1895: 1.

⁸ Dutt 1895: 3.

⁹ Dutt 1895: 4. Dziełem tym jest słynny poemat *Gītagovinda* (*Pieśń o Krysznie Pastorzcu*). Dutt, opisując jego twórczość, podkreśla, że jest jedynym bengalskim poetą, który zyskał olbrzymie uznanie, a tworzył w martwym języku — sanskrycie.

niego problem. Zalicza go w poczet twórców z Biharu, jednak jak stwierdza, poprzez podobieństwa w tematyce i fakt, że obaj twórcy żyli w tym samym czasie, nie jest możliwe pisać o Ćandidasie bez Widjapatiego. Ponadto, dodaje, obu poetów łączyła podobna tematyka, miłość Kryszny (*Kṛṣṇa*) i Radhy (*Rādhā*)¹⁰. Przykłady dosyć specyficznego podejścia R. C. Dutta do literatury można zaobserwować w kilku miejscach jego dzieła, np. gdy pod koniec rozdziału o pierwszych poetach bengalskich dodał, że skoro wspominał najważniejszych, to nie ma potrzeby, żeby zajmować się pozostałymi: „Całkiem duża kolekcja ich dzieł znajduje się w [zbiorze pieśni wisznuickich] *Padakalpataru* i stratą czasu jest czytanie tych starych autorów, nawet z literackiego punktu widzenia”¹¹.

Na ponad 300 stronach dzieła R. C. Dutta pojawia się tylko jedno imię muzułmańskiego pisarza, Sajada Amira Aliego (*Sayad Āmir Āli*), który według autora wyróżnił się tym, że zasiadł w ławach Sądu Najwyższego i napisał biografię Mahometa oraz zbiór praw muzułmańskich¹². Autor poniekąd „upycha” go w krótkim podrozdziale dotyczącym publikacji na temat prawa, poświęcając mu dokładnie dwa zdania. Należy dodać, że R. C. Dutt był dosyć znaczącą postacią świata literackiego przełomu wieków. W roku 1894 został pierwszym prezydentem najważniejszej w ówczesnych czasach instytucji kulturalnej zajmującej się promocją i zachowaniem literatury bengalskiej — *Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad* (Akademia Literatury Bengalskiej)¹³. Skupiała ona postaci literackie i badaczy głównie z kręgu hinduskiego i promowała literaturę powstającą w języku bengalskim.

Zaraz po ukazaniu się publikacji R. C. Dutta, Radźnarajan Basu (*Rāj-nārayan Basu*) wydał *Bāṅgālā bhaṣā o sāhitya biṣayak baktṛta* (Wykłady o języku bengalskim oraz literaturze)¹⁴. Autor jako pierwszego bengalskiego poetę wymienia Widjapatiego¹⁵, chociaż kilka stron dalej wzmiankuje, że większość jego pieśni powstało w maithili hindi¹⁶. Zaraz za Widjapatim opisuje Ćandidasa (*Caṅḍīdās*), Gobindadasa (*Gabindadās*), Krittibasa (*Kṛttibās*), Kabikankana (*Kabikāṅkan*), Kaśidasa (*Kāśīdās*), Kszemanandę (*Kṣemānanda*),

¹⁰ Dutt 1895: 26.

¹¹ Dutt 1895: 37: „There is a tolerably good collection of their works in the Pada Kalpataru, and it is by no means a waste of time to go over these old authors, even from a literary point of view”.

¹² Dutt 1895: 246.

¹³ *Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad* powstał 23 VII 1893 roku. Jego głównymi założycielami byli L. Leotard oraz Kszetrapal Ćakrabarti (*Kṣetrapāl Cakrabartī*).

¹⁴ Basu we wstępie już przyznaje się, że wiedzę czerpał przede wszystkim z dzieła Njajaratny oraz dzieła *Descriptive Catalogue of Bengale Works* autorstwa Jamesa Longa. Basu 1878: 9.

¹⁵ Basu 1878: 2.

¹⁶ Basu 1878: 4.

Bharatcandrę (*Bhāratcandra*), Rameśwara (*Rāmeśvar*) oraz Ramprasada (*Rāmprasād*), czyli poetów hinduskich. Interesujące jest, że R. Basu pod koniec swojego długiego wykładu (*bakṛtā*) dokonuje podziału języka bengalskiego na popularny (*pracaḷita*), bengalski chrześcijan (*khriṣṭānī bāṅgālā*) oraz bengalski muzułmanów (*musalmānī bāṅgālā*)¹⁷. Według niego opublikowano wiele książek w języku bengalskim muzułmanów, podkreślając, że wydano je wyłącznie dla muzułmanów, które to czytuje się wioślarzom/sternikom łodzi (*mājhi*), gdy oni zajęci są pracą. Po tej dziwnej i lakonicznej informacji na temat specyficznego idiomu językowego używanego przez muzułmanów w Bengalu, autor dostarcza jednego przykładu, z którego jasno wynika, że jest to fragment dzieła z popularnych, słabych literacko publikacji z Battala (*Battala*) w Kalkucie¹⁸. R. Basu wyraźnie kpi sobie z autora podanego przykładu, niejakiego Azimuddina (*Āzimuddin*), dziwiąc się, że w bhanicie (*bhāṅitā*) autor dzieła nie przyznał sobie przydomka „Podwójnie Urodzony” (*dvijā*)¹⁹. Najciekawszy fragment pozostawił autor na koniec, oświadczając, że „język bengalski jest bliski trzem nurtom religijnym: wisznuizmowi, chrześcijaństwu oraz braminizmowi”, pomijając całkowicie społeczność muzułmańską²⁰. R. Basu w swoich wykładach, na których wzorowali się następni badacze, w sposób bezpośredni odrzuca prawo połowy społeczeństwa bengalskiego (muzułmanów) do identyfikacji językowej z językiem bengalskim jako ich językiem ojczystym. Buduje tym samym historię literatury na podstawie religijnej, w tym wypadku na hinduizmie i jego wielu odłamach, gdyż odrzuca ostatecznie także chrześcijaństwo.

Ciekawą pozycją, na której opierał się m.in. Dutta, była wydana w 1855 roku przez J. Longa pozycja *A Descriptive Catalogue of Bengali Works* (Katalog opisowy dzieł bengalskich), zawierająca opis 1400 bengalskich książek i pamfletów opublikowanych przez 60 lat do połowy XIX wieku. Jest ona dla nas pod wieloma względami interesująca, nie tylko jako źródło wiedzy na temat publikacji ukazujących się w tamtych okresie, ale i na temat pewnych wyobrażeń dotyczących Bengalczyków muzułmanów. Na dwóch stronach tego dzieła poświęconych twórczości muzułmańskiej znaleźć można taki opis:

Muzułmanie zawsze byli znani z uporą, z jakim trwają przy swoich ideach i języku, jak i wytrwałości, dzięki której opierają się zagranicznym wpływom. Język perski, ich wielki ulubieniec, został pozbawiony w Indiach swojej

¹⁷ Basu 1878: 67.

¹⁸ Battala, dzielnica położona w północnej części Kalkuty, w wieku XIX znana była z licznych tanich drukarni. Określenie „publikacja z Battali” najczęściej oznaczało publikację tanią oraz niezbyt wyrafinowaną.

¹⁹ Basu 1878: 78.

²⁰ Basu 1878: 69. „Baṅga bhāṣā tinti dharmar nikaṭ biṣeṣ upakṛta, se tinti dharmā: baiṣṇab dharmā, kṛṣṇdharmā o brāhmadharmā”.

pozycji, a sami muzułmanie niechętnie uczą się języków lokalnych. Ponieważ urdu powstał poprzez połączenie perskiego i hindi, na podobny wzór muzułmanie w Bengalu stworzyli rodzaj *lingua franca*, połączenie bengalskiego i urdu, którą nazywają językiem wioślarzy [przewoźników]. Idiom ten musiał w pewnym momencie ustąpić przed przemożnym wpływem języka bengalskiego...²¹

Long przedstawia listę 41 utworów, reprezentatywnych dla muzułmanów czytających w tym „dialekcie”, wydawanych w muzułmańskich wydawnictwach w Kalkucie, a czytanych przez „wioślarzy i inną ludność muzułmańską w Dhace”²². Niestety nie podaje autorów tych dzieł, przytacza jedynie tytuły, liczbę stron oraz tematykę. Dzieła te różnią się długością i liczą od 20 do 444 stron i według niego są przede wszystkim tłumaczeniami z perskiego i urdu. Najdłuższe cytowane dzieło to *Āmir Hāmjā* (Amir Hamza), być może najśłynniejsza wersja tej popularnej w świecie muzułmańskim opowieści w języku bengalskim, skomponowanej w XVIII wieku przez Szeikha Garibullaha (*Śeikh Gāribullāh*), jednak żaden z XIX-wiecznych badaczy nie zwrócił na nie i pozostałe dzieła uwagi.

W 1896 roku publikacja Dineścandry Sena *Bāṅglā bhāṣā o sāhitya* (Język i literatura bengalska) zmieniła trochę perspektywę postrzegania literatury bengalskiej. Dzieło to znacznie różni się od dzieł jego poprzedników, przede wszystkim samą objętością, licząc bez mała ponad 600 stron. To, co wyróżnia jednak tekst D. Sena, to wykorzystanie nowych materiałów, jakimi były gromadzone przez autora w bengalskich wsiach manuskrypty nieznanych wcześniej dzieł. Pozycja ta stała się niebywale popularna i do 1926 roku doczekała się aż pięciu wydań. Wzmianki o muzułmańskich poetach, często w kontekście współegzystencji i wzajemnych wpływów, pojawiają się często na jej kartach²³. To właśnie on po raz pierwszy wspomniał Alaola (*Ālāol*), poetę z Ćittagongu (*Caṭṭagrām*), który w późniejszych opracowaniach doczekał się statusu jednego z najlepszych poetów literatury bengalskiej. Według ówczesnej wiedzy D. Sena, Alaol był autorem trzech dzieł²⁴,

²¹ Long 1855: 94. „The Musalmans have always been noted for the tenacity with which they have clung to their own ideas and language, and for the obstinacy with which they have resisted foreign influence. The Persian, their great prop, has been shorn of its honors in India, and the Musalmans are averse to learn the Vernaculars; hence as the Urdu has been formed by a mixture of Persian and Hindi, so the Musalmans have formed in Bengal, a kind of *lingua franca*, a mixture of Bengali and Urdu, called the boatmen’s language. This must eventually give way to the overwhelming influence of the Bengali...”

²² Long 1855: 95.

²³ Sen 1896: 492.

²⁴ Sen 1896: 495.

oraz współtwórcą dzieła innego poety — Daulata Kazi'ego (*Daulāt Kājī*)²⁵. Autor nie odmawia Alaolowi głębokiej wiedzy i umiejętności literackich, porównuje fragmenty jego dzieł (przede wszystkim poemat *Padmāvati*) z dziełami Kalidasy i Widjapatiego²⁶. Przyznaje, że z dzieł tego poety przebija „głębokie zrozumienie hindusów oraz znajomość sanskrytu”, pomimo tego, że jego dzieła to „tylko tłumaczenia”²⁷. Na koniec dosyć długiego wywodu na temat opisywanego poety i jego dzieł, D. Sen dodaje, że „język jego utworów jest sanskrytyzowany i mało w nim naleciałości języka mużułmanów” i dzięki temu „dzieła Alaola będą z radością przyjęte przez czytelników hinduskich”²⁸. To ważna wzmianka, sugerująca pewne kryterium, według którego o D. Sen określa wartość danego utworu, czyli nawiązanie do tradycji literackich praktykowanych przez poetów pochodzenia hinduskiego. Należy tutaj zaznaczyć, że XIX-wieczny bengalski staje się o wiele bardziej sanskrytyzowany niż jego forma wcześniejsza. Literatura średniobengalska zdecydowanie częściej korzystała z form prakryckich niż sanskryckich, co stało się trendem w czasach późniejszych.

Kilkanaście lat po publikacji *Bāṅglā bhāṣā o sāhitya* D. Sen wydał drukiem serię wykładów o literaturze bengalskiej, które wygłaszał na Uniwersytecie Kalkuckim w 1909 roku²⁹, zaś efektem jego zainteresowań literaturą pochodzącą ze wschodnich części Bengaluru było wielotomowe wydanie *The Ballads of Bengal* (Ballady z Bengaluru), które ukazały się w 1923 roku i zawierały przykłady z wielu dzieł autorów mużułmańskich. Najważniejsze dzieło tego badacza powstało jednak pod koniec jego życia. Możliwe, że to właśnie bogactwo ballad, które wydał wcześniej zwróciło jego uwagę na literackie tradycje Wschodniego Bengaluru. Już pośmiertnie, w roku 1940, ukazało się dzieło *Prācīn bāṅglā sāhitye musalmānera avadān* (Wkład mużułmanów w dawną literaturę bengalską), w którym D. Sen wychwala *triveni saṅgama* (święte zejście trzech

²⁵ *Ālāol* (ok. 1607–1673) jeden z najwybitniejszych przedstawicieli literatury średniobengalskiej, nadal niedoceniany i zaniedbany, jeśli chodzi o badania nad jego twórczością. Tworzył dzieła zróżnicowane tematycznie, m.in. poematy romantyczne (*Padmāvatī*, *Sayfulmuluk Badiuzzāmāl*), poematy historyczne (*Sikāndarnāmā*), poematy filozoficzne (*Sapta Paykār*), traktaty religijne (*Tohfā*) oraz muzyczne (*Rāgtālnāmā*). Ukończył też dzieło jego wybitnego poprzednika na arakańskim dworze, *Daulāt Kājī* (ur. ?–zm. 1638), najwcześniejszej mużułmańskiej gwiazdy literackiej średniowiecza, *Satī Maṅnā o Lor-Candrānī*. Dzieło to często określane jest jako najwybitniejsze dzieło literatury średniobengalskiej, jednak badań nad nim prowadzono mało i nadal nie doczekano się żadnego nowego wydania krytycznego manuskryptu, ani dogłębnych badań nad samym tekstem. Sen 1896: 495. Więcej w: Zbavitel 1976: 194–195.

²⁶ Sen 1896: 496.

²⁷ Sen 1896: 498.

²⁸ Sen 1896: 500. Sen podaje, że w samym wydaniu dzieł Alaola możliwe są błędy, gdyż oryginalny manuskrypt został zapisany w alfabecie perskim.

²⁹ Sen 1923: 5.

rzek), jak określa wkład kultur hinduskiej, muzułmańskiej i buddyjskiej w budowanie kultury i literatury bengalskiej³⁰. W dziele tym D. Sen zajął się przede wszystkim literaturą wiejską (*palli sāhitya*). Pomimo otwartości tego badacza na literaturę innych kultur religijnych, jego idea literatury nadal opierała się na klasycznych wzorcach inspirowanych kulturą literacką sanskrytu. Jeśli Alaol, poeta bengalski na dworze arakańskim, który oprócz bengalskiego płynnie posługiwał się sanskrytem i perskim, zasługuje na jakąkolwiek wzmiankę, to tylko dlatego, że użył „wysoko rozwiniętego sanskrytyzowanego bengalskiego”, co D. Sen uważa za nadzwyczajne jak na muzułmańskiego pisarza³¹. Mimo tego, że przypisuje się Alaolowi przebudzenie wieku klasycznego w literaturze bengalskiej (cokolwiek to oznacza), jest on traktowany jako ciekawostka wśród literatów tamtego okresu. Pomimo szczerego zainteresowania tym poetą, może dziwić więc poniższe stwierdzenie:

Z uwagi na długie dyskusje o teologii i sanskryckiej retoryce dzieło to może być tylko interesujące dla hindusów, dziwne więc, że zostało przechowane od czasów Aurangzeba tylko i wyłącznie przez muzułmanów, dla których mogłoby być nawet odrzucające... przez ponad 250 lat dzieło to było przepisywane, czytane i podziwiane tylko przez muzułmanów z Čittagongu³².

D. Sen nie był do końca osamotniony w poszukiwaniu zapomnianych zabytków literackich, w tym samym czasie podobne poszukiwania prowadził znawca sanskrytu oraz historyk Haraprasad Śāstri (*Haraprasād Śāstri*). W 1917 roku na łamach dziennika *The Calcutta Review* („Dziennik Kalkucki”) opublikował oparty na najnowszych badaniach i odkryciach artykuł *Bengali Buddhist Literature* (Bengalska literatura buddyjska)³³. Artykuł ten pokrótce podsumowuje wiedzę na temat literatury bengalskiej, wprowadzając nowe informacje na temat dokonanego przez autora odkrycia najstarszego zabytku literatury bengalskiej, wspomnianych już pieśni óarja. H. Śāstri jest świadomy wagi poszukiwań i gromadzenia manuskryptów dzieł literatury bengalskiej

³⁰ Sen 1940: 32.

³¹ Sen 1923: 625.

³² Sen 1923: 626. „This book, that we should have thought, could be interesting only to Hindu readers, on account of its lengthy disquisitions on theology and Sanskrit rhetoric, has been strangely preserved, ever since Aurunzeb’s time, by Moslems, for whom it could apparently have no attraction, nay to whom it might even seem positively repellent. (...) ...covering a period of nearly 250 years, this book was copied, read, and admired by the Mohomedans of Chittagong exclusively”. Co ciekawe Alaol nadal nie doczekał się właściwej sobie recepcji, pomijając wydaną w 2018 r., przełomową w badaniach nad literaturą okresu średniobengalskiego, pracę Thibaut d’Huberta, *In the Shade of the Golden Palace. Alaol and Middle Bengali Poetics in Arakan*. Patrz: D’Hubert 2018.

³³ Śāstri 1981 [1917]: 845.

i docenia wysiłki innych badaczy, którzy myślą i działają podobnie jak on, czyli prowadzą na szeroką skalę poszukiwania manuskryptów, które edytują i wydają. To prawdopodobnie u H. Śastriego po raz pierwszy pojawiły się pierwsze wzmianki o Abdul Karimie (*Ābdul Karim*), muzułmańskim badaczem literatury średnio-bengalskiej, największym kolekcjonerze bengalskich manuskryptów w historii literatury bengalskiej:

...jednym z nich jest muzułmański gentleman z Ćittagongu, maulawi Abdul Karim, który zebrał i opisał kilka tysięcy manuskryptów napisanych zarówno przez hindusów jak i muzułmanów. Jego opisy są zawsze pełne i dokładne, posiadają dużą wartość literacką i historyczną³⁴.

Pisząc te słowa, H. Śastri miał zapewne na myśli wydane w latach 1913–1914 dwa tomy dzieła *Bāṅglā pracīn puthi bibaraṅ* (Opis manuskryptów starobengalskich), w których większą część stanowiły dzieła autorów muzułmańskich³⁵. A. Karim, któremu w późniejszym czasie nadano zaszczytny przydomek *Sāhityabiśārad* — „Eksper w [dziedzinie] literatury” — był pierwszym Bengalczykiem, który poświęcił większość swojego życia na kolekcjonowaniu, edytowaniu i wydawaniu manuskryptów. Nie będzie zbytnim uproszczeniem stwierdzenie, że to dzięki jego wysiłkowi wiele zabytków literackich, przede wszystkim dzieł autorów muzułmańskich, dochowało się do naszych czasów³⁶. Posiadamy przekazy wielu badaczy, następców Karima, które informują o jego sposobie pracy. Karim zbierał każdy możliwy rękopis,

³⁴ Śastri 1981 [1917]: 847. „(...) one is a Muhammadan gentleman in Chittagong, Moulvi Abdul Karim, who has collected and described several thousands of Bengali manuscripts of works written both by Hindus and Muhammadans and his descriptions are always full and accurate and possess much literary and historical value”.

³⁵ Karim 1913–1914. Oba tomy zawierają opisy ponad 2 tysięcy zgromadzonych przez Karima manuskryptów. Większość z nich pochodzi z rejonu Ćittagongu (*Ćattāgram*), dla Bengalczyków z zachodnich części Bengaluru wydawał się końcem cywilizowanego świata. Taka liczba manuskryptów świadczy o wielkości centrum literackiego, jakim była ta daleko położona część Bengaluru. Większość ze wspomnianych przez A. Karima tekstów nadal czeka na opracowanie i krytyczne wydanie, niszcząc tymczasem w zbiorach bibliotek Bangladeszu.

³⁶ Wielka kolekcja A. Karima została podzielona na dwie części, które powędrowały do bibliotek uniwersyteckich w Dhace i Radźsahi. Co ciekawe hinduskie manuskrypty zostały podzielone według kryterium przynależności religijnej autora. W lutym 2019 roku miałem okazję odwiedzić Dhaka University Library, gdzie A. Karima przeprowadził badania nad niektórymi manuskryptami. Niestety sposób przechowywania i obchodzenia się z wieloma z nich pozostawia wiele do życzenia. Rozmowy z lokalnymi badaczami potwierdziły smutne przypuszczenia, że wiele z manuskryptów uległo zniszczeniu, a znaczna część z nich znajduje się w opłakanym stanie. Niewielkie zainteresowanie zarówno manuskryptami, jak i trudności w czytaniu tekstów średnio-bengalskich powodują, że ta część dziedzictwa kulturalnego i literackiego może ulec wkrótce zniszczeniu.

niezależnie od tego, czy dotyczył on literatury muzułmańskiej, czy też nie, w czasach, gdy społeczne uprzedzenia wobec muzułmanów osiągnęły wysoki poziom w społeczeństwie hinduskim; gdy muzułmanie byli uważani za niedotykalnych. Z przekazów możemy się dowiedzieć, że wielu hinduskich właścicieli rękopisów nie przyjmowało Karima w swoich domach, zmuszając go do pozostania poza progiem. Gdy sporządzał notatki, nie pozwalano mu na dotykane manuskryptów, ich właściciele sami przewracali strony, aby badacz mógł zapisać dane dotyczące danego manuskryptu³⁷. Pracując w ten sposób oraz wykorzystując swoją pozycję asystenta w Biurze Inspektora Szkół, przez długi okres 60 lat A. Karim zebrał ponad 2000 rękopisów głównie z Cíttagongu, ale także z okręgów Tripury, Noakhali, Rangpuru i Pabny, zachowując w ten sposób dla potomności szybko zanikające artefakty kultury materialnej i dziedzictwa kulturowego wschodniego Bengalów. Wysoko ceniony jako nieprzekupny asystent urzędu, jego „prawne gratyfikacje” były manuskryptami, do czego zachęcał każdego skarżącego do biura, aby sprowadzili je ze swoich wiosek, chroniąc je przed zniszczeniem przez „analfabetów, białe mrówki, ćmy, ogień, powódź, cyklon” i udowodnić swoje zaangażowanie w rozpowszechnianie edukacji³⁸.

A. Karim skatalogował swoją osobistą kolekcję manuskryptów, którą ostatecznie przekazał do publicznych kolekcji w Bangladeszu, zarazem publikując artykuły w licznych lokalnych czasopismach literackich na temat każdego nowego tekstu, który odkrył. Jego dzieło miłości dostarczyło nieocenionych podstawowych materiałów do przyszłych badań literatury muzułmańskiej w języku bengalskim. Badacz ten w swoich publikacjach podał nie dziesiątki, lecz setki imion pisarzy pochodzenia muzułmańskiego, w większości co do których do dzisiaj nie przeprowadzono żadnych dodatkowych badań. Większość kolekcjonerów na przełomie wieków była jednak przede wszystkim zainteresowana zbieraniem i zabezpieczeniem dzieł spisanych w sanskrycie oraz bengalskich, ale tylko tych, których autorami byli hindusi. Kilkadziesiąt lat później pisał o tym E. Haq: „Kilka ksiązek napisanych przez muzułmanów również zostało przypadkowo odkrytych, ale nie było celowych prób ich zebrania, a znaczna ich część została utracona”³⁹.

Pisząc o literaturze bengalskiej, nie można pominąć jej bodaj największego historyka pierwszej połowy XX wieku, Sukumara Sena (*Sukumār Sen*). Jego monumentalne dzieło *Bāṅglā sāhityer itihās* (Historia literatury bengalskiej) w pięciu tomach ukazało się w 1939 roku i stało się nie tylko *opus magnum* tego wybitnego językoznawcy i historyka literatury, ale i najpopularniejszym dziełem w swojej dziedzinie do czasów współczesnych. W tym olbrzymim

³⁷ Mustafi 1913: IX–X.

³⁸ Irani 2011: 9.

³⁹ Haq 1957: 53.

dziele Sen zawarł informacje dotyczące literatury tworzonej przez pisarzy mużulmańskich, korzystał z odkryć Karima, jednak w sposób wybiórczy. Niezbyt starał się też dokonywać głębszej analizy. Na 1111 stron obu tomów na literaturę mużulmańską S. Sen przeznaczył zaledwie 38⁴⁰. Wspomina kilkunastu poetów mużulmańskich, w zasadzie rzadko wypowiada się na temat jakości tych dzieł, tak jakby w ogóle go nie interesowały. Nawet powierzchowne zapoznanie się z dziełami S. Sena potwierdza, że jako badacz nie był za bardzo zainteresowany literaturą mużulmańską. Dowodem na to jest prywatny zbiór manuskryptów S. Sena. Na 1000 zgromadzonych przez badacza tylko jeden jest manuskrytem dzieła autorstwa mużulmanina⁴¹. Dłuższych wypowiedzi doczekali się przytaczani już wcześniej poeci z dworu arakańskiego, Daulat Kazi oraz Alaol. Tak pisał Sen o pierwszym, według jego wiedzy, poecie mużulmańskim, Daulacie Kazim:

Zdolności poetyckie Daulata Kaziego są dobre. Nie ma wątpliwości, że zasłużył na miejsce najlepszego poety wśród poetów mużulmańskich. Pokazał zdolności zarówno w języku bengalskim, jak i w bradžabuli⁴².

Zaraz potem pisał o Alaolu:

Alaol jest najbardziej znanym z mużulmańskich poetów. Jest autorem wielu dzieł, z których największą popularnością cieszy się Padmawati. (...) W literaturze średniobengalskiej nie ma drugiego poety, który napisałby taką ilość dzieł jak Alaol⁴³.

S. Sen po kolei wymienia każde z dzieł Alaola i przytacza ich fragmenty, gdzieś tam daje też ich krótkie streszczenia. Niestety nie dokonuje żadnej analizy jego twórczości, robi to w późniejszym dziele, które wydał dwadzieścia lat później, *History of Bengali Literature*:

Alaol, kolejny suficki poeta następujący po Daulacie Kazim na dworze w Arakanie także był dobrym uczonym. Bardzo dobrze znał poezję perską, wystarczająco sanskryt. Dobrze też znał się na muzyce. Jednak jako pisarz był mniej pomysłowy niż jego poprzednik. Był bardziej religijny i ta religijność często

⁴⁰ Sen 1940a: 605–631 oraz 924–936.

⁴¹ Irani 2011: 592.

⁴² Sen 1940a: 609. „Daulat Kazir kabitva biśeṣ upabhogyā. Musalmān kabidiger madhye tini ye sarbbaśreṣṭh āsan dābī karite pāren tāhāte sandeh nāi. Ki bāṅgālā ki brajabuli ubhāyābidhi racanāte tini samān kākṣata dekhāiyāchen”.

⁴³ Sen 1940a: 611. „Ālāol musalmān kabidiger madhye sarbbapekṣa supāricita. Ini anekguli kābya likhiyāchilen, kintu tanmadhye Padmābatī pācalir ādar sarbbādḥik. (...) Ālāoler mata etaguli kābya bāṅgālār kona prācīn kabi racanā karen nāi”.

dominowała nad jego wyobraźnią w jego dziełach, co wpłynęło na pogorszenie się stylu jego poezji⁴⁴.

To skrócona wersja dzieła S. Sena z 1940 roku, licząca 450 stron, zawiera zaledwie 10 stron poświęconych tematyce muzułmańskiej⁴⁵. Zdecydowanie wyraźniej na jego kartach zaznaczył swoje opinie. Wydaje się, że są bardziej krytyczne w stosunku do muzułmańskich poetów niż w jego dziełach bengalskojęzycznych. Warto przytoczyć jeszcze dwa cytaty z tego dzieła:

Daulat Kazi był dobrym poetą; był dobrze zaznajomiony z współczesną sztuką poetycką. Jego znajomość sanskrytu nie była powierzchowna. Czerpał porównania od Kalidasy i niektóre wzory metryczne od Dżajadewy. Wyraźnie widać jego dług w stosunku do wisznuickiej poezji⁴⁶.

Oraz:

Pisarze muzułmańscy z początku XIX wieku nie są warci wzmianki. Pisali głównie dla niepiśmiennych mieszkańców Kalkuty i czerpali przede wszystkim z popularnych romansów perskich, hindi i urdu. Ich język był tak nasączony słownictwem persko-arabskim oraz hindi, że często nie był zrozumiały dla osób niezających tych języków. Ten żargon znany jest jako muzułmański bengalski⁴⁷.

S. Sen dotknął tutaj ważnego zagadnienia, jakim było przekonanie funkcjonujące już od XIX wieku o odrębności kulturowej i językowej bengalskich muzułmanów. Określenia na język bengalski używany przez muzułmanów, jakie możemy spotkać w tekstach XIX- i XX-wiecznych, to *musalmāni*

⁴⁴ Sen 1960: 153. „Alaol, another Sufi poet succeeding Daulat Kazi in the court of Arakan, was also a good scholar. His knowledge of Prsian poetry was deep, and of sanskrit lore adequate. He was well versed in music too. But as a writer Alaol shows less facility and ingenuity than his predecessor. He was more religiously minded and the religious strain in his writings often dominated his fancy to the detriment of his poetry”.

⁴⁵ Sen 1960: 149–159. „Daulat Kazi was a good poet; he was thoroughly acquainted with the contemporary poet’s craft. His acquaintance with Sanskrit poetry was not superficial. He has drawn similes from Kalidasa and some metrical patterns from Jayadeva. His indebtedness to Vaishnav poetry is evident”.

⁴⁶ Sen 1960: 152.

⁴⁷ Sen 1960: 157–158. „The early nineteenth century Muslim writers of this region are not worth mention here. They wrote mainly for the consumption of the illiterate people residing in Calcutta, and they drew largely from persian, Hindi and Urdu popular romances. Their language was so much saturated with Perso-Arabic and Hindi words that it was often unintelligible to persons not acquainted with those tongues. This jargon was known as Muslim Bengali. It was a creation by the West Bengal Muslim writers and was taken up by their North and East Bengal brethren only towards the close of the nineteenth century”.

bāṅgāli, *muslim bāṅgāli* oraz w dziełach angielskojęzycznych — *Muhammadi Bengali*⁴⁸. Terminy te używane są różnie przez różnych historyków literatury bengalskiej. H. Śastri opisuje go jako język niewykształconej części społeczności muzułmańskiej, w odróżnieniu od języka warstwy wykształconej⁴⁹. R. Dutt, jak wspomniano na początku artykułu, opisał go jako „język wioślarzy/sterników”, identyfikując go z jedną z niższych klas społecznych na terenie Bengalii.

S. Sen nigdy nie uzupełnił swojego wielkiego dzieła, do dziś uważanego na równi z dziełem D. Sena za dzieło autorytatywne w historii literatury bengalskiej. Stwierdzenie, że to ci dwaj autorzy, górujący nad pozostałymi badaczami literatury bengalskiej, ukształtowali sposób, w jaki do dziś literatura ta jest postrzegana i nauczana, nie powinno być zbytnim uproszczeniem. A. Karima w 1951 roku, prawdopodobnie widząc, że nie może uniknąć tego tematu, podjętego przecież kilkadziesiąt lat wcześniej, a który często S. Sen cytował w swoich dziełach, wydał suplement do swojego *opus magnum* — *Islāmī bāṅglā sāhiya* (Bengalska literatura muzułmańska)⁵⁰. Autor na 150 stronach starał się przybliżyć czytelnikowi dzieła literatury muzułmańskiej. Nigdy jednak S. Sen nie włączył tego suplementu do głównej części dzieła, co można by odczytać w ten sposób, że nie była to literatura, którą należałoby traktować na równi z literaturą hinduską.

Druga połowa XX wieku to zdecydowanie inne podejście do historii literatury bengalskiej, głównie w związku z działalnością badaczy pochodzących z nowopowstałego Pakistanu Wschodniego. Badacze ci, mając dostęp do olbrzymiej kolekcji manuskryptów zgromadzonych przez A. Karima, rozpoczęli zakrojone na szeroką skalę badania mające na celu odzyskanie zapomnianych dzieł, przede wszystkim w latach siedemdziesiątych XX wieku. To „odzyskiwanie” muzułmańskiego dziedzictwa literackiego niewątpliwie było podyktowane potrzebą budowania narodowej tożsamości po podziale Indii w 1947 roku, gdy świadomie próbowano odciąć się od dziedzictwa kulturowego, które bezpośrednio łączyło się z hinduizmem.

Do najważniejszych z grona tych badaczy należy zaliczyć: Muhammada Enamula Haka (*Muhammad Enāmul Hak*), Muhammada Mansura Uddina (*Muhammad Mansur Uddin*), Ahmada Śarifa (*Āhmad Śarīph*), Raziję Sultaną (*Rāziyā Sultānā*), Mamtađura Rahmana Tarafddara (*Mamtāđur Rahmān Tarafđār*). Każdy z tych wielkich badaczy tworzył dzieła już w drugiej połowie XX wieku i opisywanie ich dokonań nie mieści się w ramach niniejszego artykułu, należy jednak zaznaczyć, że mimo ich prób, obecny stan badań nad

⁴⁸ Sen 1986.

⁴⁹ Śastri 1917: 569.

⁵⁰ Sen 1951: 2.

literaturą starobengalską, w obecnych czasach także hinduską, pozostawia wiele do życzenia.

Historyków literatury bengalskiej czeka jeszcze do otwarcia sporo puszek Pandory. Należałoby się zastanowić, jak potraktować literaturę, która powstała w języku perskim na dworach bengalskich władców lub wysokich dygnitarzy. Skoro powstała ona w sanskrycie, maithili, apabhramśa i bengalskim należy do kanonu literatury bengalskiej, dlaczego opracowania jej historii nie włączają literatury perskiej do kanonu? Czy częste postrzeganie literatury muzułmańskiej jako literatury tłumaczeniowej (*anubād sāhitya*) jest zasadne? Czy islam ma być nadal postrzegany jako element obcy w kulturze bengalskiej, a nie jako jedna z dostępnych form religijności dostępnej Bengalczykom? Język bengalski, genetycznie związany z sanskrytem, świętym językiem hindusów, dla większości muzułmańskich Bengalczyków pozostawał językiem ojczystym, zaś perski i arabski były przez wieki językiem władzy politycznej i religii. Analiza tekstów średniobengalskich przeprowadzona była przez twórców historii literatury bengalskiej przede wszystkim z punktu widzenia religijnej afiliacji twórców, a następnie z językowego, rzadziej zaś z samej krytyki literackiej. W taki sposób zanalizowana i przedstawiona była wykorzystywana do tworzenia historii religijnej i społecznej Bengalalu. Brak dogłębnej analizy utworów twórców muzułmańskich, jak to się działo w przypadku dzieł wisznuickich, które chętnie gromadzono i rozpowszechniano, przyczynił się do utrwalenia silnych stereotypów o odrębności kulturowej literatury tworzonej przez muzułmanów bengalskich. W rzeczywistości literatura tworzona przez hinduskich i muzułmańskich pisarzy była elementem współdzielonej i współtworzonej sieci estetyczno-literackiej.

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ROMANI ADJECTIVES

Abstract: The Romani language is a widespread New Indo-Aryan language which is spoken throughout the world. It contains multiple loanwords and some traces of foreign influences in its grammar but preserves the basic grammatical structure of an Indian, New Indo-Aryan language. Its grammatical forms can be traced back through the Prakrits to Sanskrit, whereby the phonetic laws of change in Old Indo-Aryan through Middle Indo-Aryan to New Indo-Aryan, and specifically to the Romani language, must be taken into account. This paper will discuss the derivation and inflection of Romani adjectives and participles, including phonetic changes from Sanskrit to Romani and foreign influences.

Keywords: Romani, Indo-Aryan, Sanskrit, adjectives, participles, comparison, analogy

1. Introduction

Romani is an Indian language classified in the New Indo-Aryan language subgroup, and it has been spreading across Europe and other parts of the world for centuries. While migrating from the Indian subcontinent to Europe, Romani was in contact with various Asian languages, which becomes apparent upon examining their loanwords. The same process took place after Romani arrived in Europe, where it was in contact with European languages.

Although Romani left its home about a millennium ago and has been influenced by many different languages ever since, it has retained a considerable part of its original Indian lexicon, as well as its grammar system inherited from Sanskrit. There are exact phonological rules by which Romani forms can be traced back to the Prakrits and Sanskrit.

This paper describes the morphology and semantics of Romani adjectives and participles, with a strong focus on their derivation. It also discusses the historical context of Indo-Aryan languages in as much depth as the length

constraints allow. Importantly, for the sake of lucidity, adjectives and participles only appear in their masculine singular form in most sections.

2. Derivation

2.1. Participles (verbal adjectives)

Sanskrit participles, as well as adjectives whose stems end in short -a, have developed NIA (New Indo-Aryan) forms ending mostly in -ā (e.g. Hindi) or -o (Sindhi, sometimes Gujarati and others): Skr. *ucca* “high” > Hin. *ūmcā*, Panj. *uccā*, Sindh. *ūmco*, Guj. *ūmco*; Skr. *kāla* “black” > Hind. *kālā*, Panj. Mar. *kālā*, Guj. *kālo*; Skr. *śuṣka* “dry” > Hind. *sūkhā*, Panj. *sukkā*, Guj. *suko*, Mar. *sukā*, Sindh. *suko*, Or. *sukhilā*, Beng. *śukā* (Beames 1872/1966a: 12–13). The respective Romani forms are *učo*, *kalo* and *šuko*.

At the end of the 19th century, John Beames published three volumes of *A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India*, mainly focusing in his study on the comparison of seven NIA languages: Hindi, Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Marathi, Oriya and Bengali. He also included Romani whenever possible, for example, in the comparison of Sanskrit verbal roots and participles with those in other Indo-Aryan languages.

Beames observed that the Romani verb *džal* “to go” must be the same as the Sanskrit verb $\sqrt{yā}$ and Hindi *jānā*, the past passive participle of which is *gayā* in Hindi, *gēḷa* in Bengali and *gelo* in Romani. The Sanskrit root $\sqrt{jīv}$ “to live” is *dživel* in Romani, while its past passive participle is *jīvita* in Sanskrit and *dživdo* in Romani. The Romani verb *tavel* “to cook” is derived from the Sanskrit root \sqrt{tap} “to heat,” whose Sanskrit past passive participles are *tāpita* and *tapta*. In Romani, these participles are *tavdo* and *tato* (Beames 1879/1966b: 97). Both participles could have developed in the following way: Skr. *tapta* > Pa. *tatta* > Rom. *tato*; Skr. *tāpita* > Pkr. **tābida* > Rom. **tavido* > Rom. *tavdo*.¹

These participles developed from their Sanskrit form to their Romani form on the basis of particular phonological rules characteristic of sound changes in the Indo-Aryan branch of languages and in Romani in particular. These sound changes are extensively described by Ralph L. Turner in his paper “The Position of Romani in Indo-Aryan” published in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*. Among other things, Turner noted the sound changes OIA (Old Indo-Aryan) *t* > Rom. *l* and OIA *a* > Rom. *e*, which explains the development of participles such as *gelo* and also the 3rd person singular ending *-el* (Turner 1926: 153, 159–160, 169–170). Therefore, Romani participles, as well as any other forms which developed from Sanskrit through sound changes, are actually tadbhavas. Their ending syllables can be -to, -do, -lo and -no,

¹ According to Turner, the confirmed Prakrit form is *tāvīa*.

as in *tato*/"cooked" *dživdo*/"alive," *gelo*/"gone" and *dino*/"given" (Beames 1879/1966b: 97). However, not all Romani participles are tadbhavas. Many of them were derived from modern verbal stems by using suffixes.

Taking this into account, Boretzky (1994: 88) identified three main types of Romani participles: a) participles without a formation suffix; b) participles with the suffix -do; and c) participles with the suffix -lo. What Boretzky calls participles without a formation suffix are originally OIA past passive participles mostly formed by using the suffix -ta. Due to phonological changes in the Prakrit period, their morphological structure became obscure, which makes them appear as though they were participles without any suffixes. As already mentioned, such participles are in fact Romani tadbhavas. Some representative examples are: *tato*/"heated" (< Skr. *tapta*), *pako*/"ripe(ned)" (< Skr. *pakva*), *gelo*/"gone" (< Skr. *gata*) and *suto*/"asleep" (< Skr. *supta*). Since these Romani participles have no recognisable formation rules, they should be learned by heart. The other two types given by Boretzky are participles derived by using suffixes -do and -lo.

This division would not be problematic if it did not imply a certain discrepancy. "Noticeably, some participles ending in -do and -lo are tadbhavas (e.g. *gelo* and *tavdo*), which means that they do not belong to the second and third types defined by Boretzky²." Therefore, a more precise division should be made to avoid misunderstanding.

My suggestion is to divide Romani participles into two groups: regular and irregular participles. Irregular participles would be participles belonging to Boretzky's first type, that is, those that originated from Sanskrit and must be learned by heart, e.g. *suto*/"asleep" (*sovel*/"to sleep"). Consequently, regular participles would encompass those belonging to Boretzky's second and third types, i.e. those derived from modern Romani verbal stems by adding suffixes -do or -lo, therein the tadbhavas, which only seem to have been formed this way, such as *tavdo* and *dživdo*.

In this context, interesting questions arise about the reasons why there are both participles of Sanskrit origin and modern Romani participles which are built simply by adding a suffix to a verb stem, and about the mechanisms behind the emergence of the latter appeared. They must have originated by analogy to the participles which seem to have a transparent structure, such as the tadbhavas *tavdo* and *dživdo*.

Participles such as *tavdo* and *dživdo* developed simultaneously and independently regarding their respective verbs. The form *tavel* developed from OIA *tāpayati* (Skr. *tāpayati* > Pa. *tāpēti* > Pkr. **tābēdi* > Pkr. **tābēri* > Rom. **tabel* > Rom. *tavel*), while its participle *tavdo* developed from OIA *tāpita*

² In terms of structure, *tavdo* and *dživdo* can be classified as the second type, but this does not reflect their actual derivation.

(Skr. *tāpita* > Pkr. **tābida* > Rom. **tavido* > Rom. *tavdo*). The same is true about *dživel* (Skr. *jīvati* > Pa. *jīvati* > Pkr. **jīvaḍi* > Pkr. **jīvaṛi* > Rom. *dživel*) and *dživdo* (Skr. *jīvita* > Pa. *jīvita* > Pkr. **jīvida* > Rom. *dživdo*). However, to the native speaker, participles such as *tavdo* and *dživdo* rather appear as verb stems — of *tavel* and *dživel*, respectively — with suffixes attached to them. Since this looks like a simple formation, it also influenced the formation of other participles.

The simplification of the morphological system of a language is a spontaneous and expected occurrence, and Romani is not the only language in which this process has taken place. Germanic languages also have a distinction between *starke Verben* (strong, i.e. irregular, verbs) and *schwache Verben* (weak, i.e. regular, verbs). Still, the number of regular verbs increases because irregular verbs tend to become regular ones. There are also some verbs which have both regular and irregular forms as their transition from irregularity to regularity is underway. This phenomenon is exemplified by Ger. *senden* “to send,” whose passive participle can be both *gesandt* and *gesendet* (Helbig, Buscha 2005: 35–42). The same process must have happened in Romani, but unfortunately no example of a verb in transition from irregular to regular can be found at present. There is one verb with an irregular and regular participle: *sovel* “to sleep,” but this only regards its form. Its irregular participle is *suto*, which means “asleep,” while its regular form is *sovdo*, meaning “sleepy.”

As already mentioned, regular participles are built by combining a verbal stem with a suffix. Which one of the two suffixes — -do or -lo — should be used depends on the phonological environment, that is, on the ending phoneme of the verbal stem. According to Matras (1994: 71), the suffix -do applies to verbal stems ending in -n, -l, -d and -r, while the suffix -lo is used in all other cases, as in following examples: *ašundo* “heard” (*ašunel* “to hear”), *kerdo* “done” (*kerel* “to do”) and *kamlo* “loved” (*kamel* “to love”). The logic behind why -do and -lo appear in different environments is probably connected to pronunciation. For instance, pronouncing *kerdo* is easier than pronouncing **kerlo*.

Both suffixes -do and -lo developed from the Sanskrit past passive participle suffix -ta. In irregular participles, this suffix became -do and -lo (et al.) under the influence of Middle Indo-Aryan sound changes, depending its phonological environment. In regular participles, the application of -do or -lo depends on the easier pronunciation (as already mentioned, -do appears mostly after -n, -l, -d and -r).

Boretzky (1994: 88) shows that, depending on gender and number, participles end in -o, -i and -e, which can also be extended as -ino, -ini and -ine. The only possible participles of *del* “to give” and *lel* “to take” are extended — *dino* “given” and *lino* “taken.” By analogy to *dino*, many participles derived from verbal stems ending in -d are extended forms which end in -ino, e.g. *čhudino* “thrown off” derived from *čhudel* “to throw” (Boretzky 2003: 74).

They should not be confused with participles derived from denominatives containing the verb *del*, such as *kandino*/"obedient" (*kan*/"ear" + *del*/"to give").

Boretzky (1994: 88) also identifies a group of participles which are formed by using the Greek suffix *-me*, as in *rrindome*/"put in order" derived from *rrindol*/"to put in order." In this context, he mentions adjectives which are derived from nouns but have a participial meaning, such as *barrome*/"petrified" (from *barr*/"stone"). Such adjectives are indeclinable and, in most cases, derived from loanwords. Besides, they can also contain *-isar/-osar-* before the Romani suffix *-do*; as a result, participles such as *skriime*/"written" can also appear as *skriisardo* (Boretzky 2003: 75).

As may be noticed, despite their diversity, all the participles mentioned in former studies and analysed above are passive participles. Indo-Aryan and many other languages are known to usually have more than one type of participle, which prompts the question: Why does Romani have only the passive participle, according to its morphology and its semantics?

Examination of Romani adjectives shows that those ending in *-avno* or *-amno* have stems that look like both noun and verb stems. One example is *dukhavno*/"painful" which looks like a derivation from the noun *dukh*/"pain" and, as such, denotes something related to pain. However, another possibility — that *dukh* is actually the verb stem of *dukhal*/"to hurt" — should be taken into consideration. Essentially, in this group of adjectives, there is not a single stem that can only be a noun but not a verb. Another example is *čoravno*/"long-fingered," which looks derivable from *čor*/"tief," as well as from *čorel*/"to steal." Even more significant is *dikhavno*/"attentive" as the noun **dikh* does not exist and there is only the verb *dikhel*/"to watch." The same refers to *činavno*/"sharp" where **čin* does not exist as a noun, and there is only the verb *činell*/"to cut." This suggests that such adjectives should be perceived as derived from verbs, which means that they are a kind of participle.

It seems that the suffix *-amno/-avno* may correspond to *-māna*, a Sanskrit suffix for the present medial participle (Skr. *-māna* > Pkr. **-mano* > Rom. *-amno* > Rom. *-avno*). Both *-amno* and *-avno* are in use, but since the sound change *m>v* is quite common in Romani, *-avno* must have been derived from *-amno*. This means that these participles could be present participles.

According to this theory, the word discussed above have also literal meanings: *dukhavno*/"hurting; being painful," *čoravno*/"stealing," *dikhavno*/"watching" and *činavno*/"cutting." These participial meanings perfectly coincide with their adjectival meanings.

There is also a group of Romani participles derived from causative verbs, such as *sikavno*/"instructive," which is derived from the verb *sikavel*/"to teach, to instruct." The literal meaning of the participle would be "teaching, instructing." *Daravno*/"terrible, horrid" must be derived from *daravel*/"to frighten." Which is to say that its literal meaning is "frightening." As can be noticed,

causative verbs in Romani contain the suffix -av (< OIA -āp(aya-)), which does not appear as a component of participles, probably due to contraction.

2.2. Adjectives

Adjectives can be derived from nouns by means of different suffixes, which sometimes determine the type of adjective. Most common suffixes are: -alo, -a(m)no/-u(m)no, -valo, -utno, -ikano and -ame/-ime/-ome. The suffix -me, which is combined with -a-, -i-, -o-, is of Greek origin, while the other suffixes are Indo-Aryan (Matras 2002: 77).

The Romani suffix -alo may be the same as the Bengali suffix -āl^a, which, according to Chatterji's historical grammar of Bengali, developed from the Sanskrit suffix -āla (Chatterji 1975: 669). The example of such a Sanskrit adjective given by Jules Bloch (1934/1965: 164) is *vācāla* "talkative," derived from *vāc* "talk, language, word" (Beng. *bācāl^a*). The Romani word for "talkative" is *čhibalo*, derived from *čhib* "tongue; language." Among many other examples, there are also: *vastalo* "long-armed" (*vast* "arm"), *masalo* "meaty" (*mas* "meat"), *sapalo* "snaky" (*sap* "snake") and *arralo* "floury" (*arro* "flour"). This indicates that the adjectives ending in -alo are descriptive.

Adjectives derived from the same nouns by means of another suffix, such as -ano/-uno in *čhibano*, *vastuno*, *masano* and *sapano*, have different meanings from those cited above. *Čhibalo* means "talkative" while *čhibano* means "language (related)." *Vastalo* means "long-armed" while *vastuno* means "manual." *Masalo* means "meaty" but *masano* means "made of meat." *Sapalo* means "snaky," and *sapano* means "snake's." Adjectives with the suffix -ano/-uno are relational. This suffix can also appear in the form of -amno/-umno, as in *nakhumno* "nasal" and *vešumno* "forestial," but it should not be confused with the suffix -amno/-avno appearing in present participles (see the previous section). The suffix -umno only appears joined to noun stems, in the same way as -avno only appears joined to verbal stems. Possibly, the original form of -amno/-umno was -ano/-uno and changed by analogy to the participle.

The Romani suffix -valo can be related to the Hindi suffix -vālā, which developed from the Sanskrit noun *pāla* "guard, keeper" (McGregor 2002: 915). Nevertheless, its function in Romani is the same as that of -alo. *Nakhalo* "long-nosed" and *nakhvalo* have the same meaning, while *ratvalo* means "bloody, covered in blood." Its function is, in other words, descriptive. Unlike the suffixes mentioned above, the suffix -utno does not form a particular type of adjective (*arrutno* "of flour," *vešutno* "forestial; wooded," *šerutno* "big-headed").

Matras (2002: 77) and Boretzky and Iгла (1994: 120) regard -ikano as an Indo-Aryan suffix, which is, according to Boretzky and Iгла, a combination of two suffixes: -ika and -ana. Most Romani adjectives with this suffix are

relational adjectives, such as *mulikano*/"mortal" (*mulo*/"dead"), *devlikano*/"divine" (*devell*/"god"), *kherikano*/"domestic" (*kher*/"house"), *manušikano*/"human" (*manuš*/"human") and *amarikano*/"ours" (*amaro*/"our").

As already mentioned, the suffix *-me* is of Greek origin. It is used for the formation of passive participles, mostly of loan verbs, but also of adjectives, e.g. *manušime*/"human." Of course, other suffixes are available as well, such as the Slavic suffix *-ast* in *čhibalasto*/"tongue-shape," though it appears mostly in loanwords.

Despite the diversity of formation suffixes, a far more common way of forming adjectives is by using nouns in the genitive case. This method serves to form not only possessive adjectives but all types of adjectives, e.g. *phenjako*/"sister's" (*phen*/"sister"), *bahvaljako*/"windy, unstable" (*bahval*/"wind"), *sulumesko*/"(made of) straw" (*sulum*/"straw") and *gavesko*/"village, rural" (*gav*/"village").

However, most of the Romani adjectives of this type are actually syntagms in the genitive case combined into one word. Such syntagms also appear in other languages but in the form of complex attributes, which is not the case in Romani. For example, the Romani syntagm *kale jakhengo* means "of black eyes, belonging to black eyes," while *kalejakhengo* means "black-eyed." Patently, both words, *kalo*/"black" and *jakh*/"eye," are in the genitive case, which indicates that such adjectives cannot be compounds, but only syntagms. Other examples include "*zurale šeresko*" of a hard head," forming the adjective *zuralešeresko*/"stubborn," and "*gugle vorbako*"/"of a sweet word," forming *guglevorbako*/"flattering." Adjectives of this kind have even preserved the old genitive form of numerals, which disappeared together with the entire numeral declension system after Romani reached Europe (most probably due to the influence of borrowed numerals 7, 8 and 9) (Matras 2002: 96). That is the reason why the adjective *trineberšengo*/"three-year-old" contains *trine* instead of the indeclinable form *trin*. In Hindi, this would be *tīn bar^asō kā*, which is an identical syntagm (*trine-beršen-go*) and is indeed thought of as a syntagm.

The question thus is why these syntagms are regarded in Romani as single words and not as syntagms (like in Hindi, Croatian and other languages). One explanation is that there are too many of such words with meanings which are not the literal meanings of their respective syntagms, which means that they are idiomatic. Some of them cannot even be understood properly if one is not acquainted with their entrenched meanings. For example, the adjective *dujeogeski* consists of the genitive form of the numeral *duj*/"two" and the noun *ogi*/"soul," and it literally means "of two souls." But, its actual meaning is "pregnant," because it denotes a person having two souls — one's own soul and the unborn child's soul. The adjective *bokhalešeresko* means "stingy," while the syntagm *bokhale šeresko* literally means "of a hungry head" or "having a hungry head."

2.3. Additional affixes

The most common additional affix is the negative prefix *bi-*, which can be attached to most adjectives. According to the etymology provided by Boretzky and Igla (1994: 25), it developed from the Sanskrit prefix *vi-* (related to Persian *be-*), whose meaning is “without” or “not.”

If *bi-* is attached to a descriptive adjective or a participle, it means “not” exactly as the prefixes *in-* and *un-*. Relevant examples are: *bipako*/“unripe” (*pako*/“ripe”), *bikamlo*/“unloved” (*kamlo*/“loved”), *bibaxtalo*/“unhappy” (*baxtalo*/“happy”), *bišukar*/“ugly” (*šukar*/“pretty”) and *bičačo*/“untrue” (*čačo*/“true”). If *bi-* is attached to a genitive form, it means “without,” which can be expressed through the suffix *-less*. Examples include *biagoresko*/“endless” (*agor*/“end”), *bidevlesko*/“godless” (*devel*/“god”) and *biratesko*/“anaemic” (*rat*/“blood”).

There is an additional affix whose function is to “euphemise” the meaning of an adjective. This is the diminutive suffix *-orro*. Some examples are: *guglorro*/“sweetish” (*guglo*/“sweet”), *barorro*/“biggish, somewhat big” (*baro*/“big”) and *matorro*/“tipsy” (*mato*/“drunk”). In some cases, *-orro* intensifies the meaning of an adjective, specifically of the adjectives which denote the lack or absence of something, e.g. *tiknorro*/“tiny, very small” (*tikno*/“small”), *korkorrorro*/“completely lonely” (*korkorro*/“lonely”) and “jehhorro”/“the only” (*jekhl*/“one”).

Besides, there are also some Slavic affixes in use, such as *po-* in *potikno* “somewhat small” and *za-* in *zasuto*/“fallen asleep.”

3. Declension

The declension of Romani adjectives and participles (verbal adjectives) is quite simple. As in Hindi, adjectives ending in consonants are invariant, such as *šukar*/“pretty”, while almost all adjectives with a vowel ending are inflected. A vowel ending is, in most cases, *-o* (masculine), *-i* (feminine) and *-e* (plural or oblique form of both genders). Unlike in other NIA languages, in Romani gender is neutralised in plural forms of adjectives (Matras 2002: 72). The declension of feminine adjectives in plural changed by analogy to the declension of masculine adjectives (Bloch 1934/1965: 183). The same may have happened with feminine oblique forms in singular.

Table 1. The declension of Romani adjectives

Singular			Plural		
Masculine	Feminine	Oblique	Masculine	Feminine	Oblique
-o	-i	-e	-e	-e	-e

In some cases, Romani adjectives are inflected by a nominal declension. This is a regular practice in Russian Romani, where, besides *tikne čhaven-sa* “with small children,” there is also *tiknensa čhavensa* (Matras 2002: 94). The same happens in Romani if an adjective appears after a noun it refers to, e.g. *e rakleske majterneske* “of the youngest girls” (Boretzky, Iglá 1994: 382). Of course, adjectives are also inflected according to a nominal declension if they are nominalised.

In his research on Romani nominal paradigms, Elšík (2000: 16, 25) has shown what the declension of adjectives was like in Proto-Romani and Early Romani.³ In Proto-Romani, masculine and feminine adjectives in singular had different oblique forms, while the oblique forms in plural had already been homogenised, which is still the case today. In Early Romani, the declension was the same, but with an additional paradigm for borrowed (athematic) adjectives.

Table 2. The declension of adjectives in Early Romani (Elšík 2000: 25)

	Nominative			Oblique form		
	Sg. m.	Sg. f.	Pl.	Sg. m.	Sg. f.	Pl.
Thematic	-o	-i	-e	-e	-a	-e
Athematic	-o	-o	-a	-one	-ona	-one

The oblique forms of feminine adjectives ending in -a as in Proto-Romani are still used today, though only in a few dialects. In the Lovari dialect, it is possible to say *phura romnjake* “for the old woman” alongside *phure romnjake*, because the process of gender neutralisation is still in progress (Matras 2002: 95).

Some dialects have retained the athematic declension, while in other dialects athematic adjectives are either inflected as thematic ones or considered invariant. For example, the syntagm *opasno manuš* “dangerous man” contains the Slavic adjective *opasan*, whose Slavic neutral gender form *opasno* has been adjusted to the Romani paradigm. The plural form of this Romani syntagm is *opasne manuš*, where *opasno* is inflected as if it were a Romani adjective. On the other hand, *razno životinje* “different animals” contains the Slavic adjective *razni* (neutral gender *razno*), but used as invariant (Boretzky 1994: 48).

³ Proto-Romani refers to the stage of Romani before leaving the Indian subcontinent, while Early Romani denotes the Romani language strongly influenced by Greek after reaching Byzantium.

4. Comparison

The comparison of adjectives is very diversified and differs from dialect to dialect due to a strong influence of contact languages. Dialects which have been in contact with Macedonian, such as Arli, Džambazi and Bugurdži, build the comparative form by using the prefix *po-*, as the way it is done in Macedonian (Rašić 2008: 368). Consequently, the comparative form of *baro*/'big' is *pobaro*/'bigger.' The superlative form is built with another Slavic prefix: *naj-*, so "biggest" is *najbaro*. Besides, there are also hybrid forms in which the Slavic prefixes *po-* and *naj-* are used together with the Romani suffix *-eder* (Boretzky 1993: 42). Therefore, the comparative and superlative forms of *baro* can also be *pobareder* and *najbareder*. Another way of forming the superlative form is by using the prefix *em-* (which is the Turkish adverb *en*/'most'), as in *em-učo*/'tallest' (Rašić 2008: 368).

In Vlach dialects, such as Gurbeti, Lovari and Kalderaši, the comparative form is formed by using the prefix *maj-* (which is the Romanian adverb *mai*/'more'), but also by using the suffix *-eder* (Rašić 2008: 368). Therefore, the comparative form of *baro* can be *majbaro* or *bareder*. However, according to Boretzky (2003: 39), the comparative form with *-eder* is barely preserved in Vlach dialects. This is also confirmed by Matras (2002: 78), who states that *-eder* is used in all dialects except Vlach, whose speakers use the prefix *maj-*. According to Rašić (2008: 368), the superlative form is formed by adding the definite article to the comparative form, e.g. *o majphuro*/'oldest.'

Although Romani seems to have completely lost its own comparison system, a part of it is still preserved in the suffix *-eder*. Unlike other affixes, *-eder* is of Indo-Aryan origin, and it must have been derived from the Sanskrit comparative suffix *-tara* (Skr. (-V)-tara > Pkr. (-V)-dara > Pkr. *(-V)-dar > Rom'. (-V)-der) through Romani comparative forms, which are derived from Sanskrit through phonological changes. This means that the suffix *-eder* was originally *-atara* — the vowel ending of a stem combined with the suffix *-tara*. The Romani adjective *učo*/'tall' was derived from Skr. *ucca*, while its comparative form *učeder* has been derived from Skr. *uccatara* by following changes: Skr. *uccatara* > Pkr. **uccadara* > Pkr. **uccadar* > Rom. *učeder*. The suffix *-eder* developed as a result of sound changes *a>e*, which means that the ending sound of the adjective stem must have been Sanskrit *-a*, and *t>d* (VC[-V]V > VC[+V]V), which would not have been possible if there had been no preceding vowel during the Prakrit period.

This means that comparative forms, such as *učeder*, are not built by adding the suffix *-eder* to the stem, but were derived from Sanskrit through phonological changes. However, as is the case with participles, some Romani comparative forms are formed by analogy to forms such as *učeder*. This is illustrated by *šukareder*/'prettier,' whose positive form is *šukar*. Since comparative forms like *učeder* appear to be formed by adding *-eder* to a stem, this way

of constructing comparative forms is applied to other adjectives, especially those with a consonant ending.

5. Conclusion

Romani is a New Indo-Aryan language that left the Indian subcontinent during the Middle Indo-Aryan (Prakrit) period. Its Indo-Aryan lexicon and grammatical forms can be traced back to Sanskrit by following phonetic laws, most of which are characteristic of Prakrit, with an addition of some specific to Romani. This explains why past passive participles have different endings (-to, -do, -lo, -no) and how the comparative suffix -eder originated.

Romani participles were not originally formed by adding suffixes to verb stems, but were derived from Sanskrit participles ending in -ta as a result of Prakrit and Romani sound changes. The same refers to the comparative form of adjectives, which evolved from the Sanskrit comparative form with the suffix -tara. This is the reason why the formation of Romani participles seemingly does not follow any exact rules and why some of them are irregular (in the context of New Indo-Aryan grammar), unlike the regular forms which are formed by adding suffixes to verb stems due to analogy.

This indicates that Romani has two types of participles: the past passive participle and the present participle. The present participle is built by adding the suffix -amno or -avno to a verb stem and derives from the Sanskrit present medial participle ending in -māna. Although in the literature this participle is considered to be an ordinary adjective, it can now be seen that it is in fact a participle, because its stem can only be classified as a verb stem.

Various suffixes serve to derive adjectives from nouns. Some of them even determine the kind of adjective, such as -alo, which is mainly used to form descriptive adjectives; and -ano and -ikano, which are chiefly used for relational adjectives. However, most adjectives are formed out of the genitive form of nouns or even syntagms, producing not only possessive adjectives but relational and descriptive ones as well. They are considered to be single words rather than syntagms, because their respective meanings are mostly idiomatic and cannot be taken literally.

There are additional affixes that can be combined with adjectives and participles, such as the diminutive suffix -orro, which euphemises or intensifies the meaning of an adjective, and the negative prefix bi-, which is used for building adjective antonyms.

Adjectives and participles are inflected according to an adjectival declension system which is almost identical with that of Hindi. Adjectives with consonant endings are invariant, while most adjectives with vowel endings end in -o if they are masculine, -i if they are feminine and -e if they are plural or oblique forms of both genders.

The comparison of adjectives is very diversified because of the influences of different languages on each dialect. The comparison system still preserves the Indo-Aryan suffix *-eder*. Derived from the Sanskrit comparative ending *-(a)tara* through Romani *tadbhavas*, this suffix is now used in most dialects for the building of comparative and superlative forms, wherein it is added to an adjectival stem.

For approximately one millennium, Romani has been and still is in contact with many different languages, which have had an immense influence on its lexicon and morphology. Despite that, Romani has managed to preserve its basic structure inherited from Sanskrit, which also becomes apparent when analysing its adjectives and participles.

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RZEŻBA MATHURAŃSKA JAKO ŹRÓDŁO WIEDZY O DAWNYCH SPOŁECZNOŚCIACH — PRZEDSTAWIENIA ZWIĄZANE Z PŁODNOŚCIĄ I OCHRONĄ POTOMSTWA

Abstract: This paper analyses a group of images related to the protection of offspring and the glorification of fertility and abundance in Indian art. It reflects on what influenced the formation of the relevant myths and stories and then their transfer to the visual sphere (public sanctuaries and the domestic space, with an emphasis on the latter). This approach yields a detailed picture of women's lives during pregnancy and puerperium. Noteworthy is a considerable number of representations of this kind of supernatural beings and spirit-deities, whose appearing in the human consciousness can be derived both from the class of guardian spirits and from the group of malicious beings. The objects discussed in the article are only a selection from a large and diverse group of representations. As the Mathura sculpture held a special position in the material culture of Indians, it is without a doubt the best source of the most complete specimens which embody extraordinary artistry and a wealth of symbolically conveyed meanings. The multitude of preserved images indicates that these issues were central to society, in particular to women's daily lives. Additionally, the preserved representations are probably the last so complete record of these cults in their separate form, before being absorbed into greater traditions. Presumably, all mothers or mothers-to-be were familiar with the rituals of warding off threats to their children by worshipping spirit-deities, such as Grahas, Matrikas and Naigamesha. It was important to venerate these ambivalent figures in order to appease them and thus remove dangers lurking for those neglecting these practices. This required recourse to appropriate — preferably figurative — images containing strong symbols. These sculptures are also interpretable in psychological terms as protective amulets involved in magical or medical rituals which could help women and their families control fear and anxiety.

Keywords: Mathura, sculpture, symbols, fertility, abundance, protection of offspring

Wprowadzenie

Ze względu na liczbę zachowanych przedstawień, które powstały w ośrodku rzeźby w Mathurze na potrzeby różnych tradycji religijnych, zarówno poszczególne dzieła, jak i najistotniejsze zjawiska znajdujące odzwierciedlenie w sferze wizualnej, budzą zainteresowanie badaczy wielu dziedzin. W niniejszej analizie chciałabym zająć się jednym z ciekawszych zjawisk, które w niej zilustrowano — problemem ochrony potomstwa. Główny materiał datowany jest na pierwsze wieki naszej ery, a zatem głównie na czas panowania w tym regionie dynastii Kuszanów. Znaleźiska pozyskane w trakcie prac wykopaliskowych przechowywane są przede wszystkim w różnych kolekcjach muzealnych, nie tylko w Indiach, ale też na całym świecie, rzadziej natomiast *in situ*. Na ich podstawie można postawić hipotezę, że nie tylko płodność, obfitość, dostatek i gloryfikacja natury czy macierzyństwa, jak jest to widoczne już w dziełach z okresu przedkuszańskigo, ale właśnie opieka nad dziećmi była jednym z ważniejszych tematów znajdujących odzwierciedlenie w rzeźbie mathurańskiej. Zagadnienie to w literaturze przedmiotu traktowane jest nadal dość marginalnie. Tymczasem, uwagę może zwrócić niespotykana już potem w sztuce ogromna różnorodność i liczba przedstawień istot nadprzyrodzonych¹ (*spirit deities*), których zadaniem było odsunięcie zagrożeń czyhających na dzieci w łonie matki, takich jak choroby, poważne uszkodzenia czy wręcz śmierć. Może być to swego rodzaju ostatni lub jeden z ostatnich „zapisów” rytuałów i wierzeń nie tyle ze sfery domowej, lecz nawet ściśle kobiecej, ze względu na to, że w kolejnych epokach dziejów rzeźby indyjskiej wiele ze wspomnianych w tym opracowaniu postaci straciło na znaczeniu, zmieniło charakter bądź w ogóle zniknęło. Chciałabym odnieść się do głównych elementów takich przedstawień na tle ogólnej symboliki związanej z kultami płodności, urodzaju i obfitości, wskazać najważniejsze wspólne cechy, a także omówić po krótko zjawisko ochrony potomstwa w dawnych Indiach — tak, jak można je poznawać za pośrednictwem omawianych przedstawień. Analizowany w tym artykule materiał wizualny należy zaliczyć zatem do ikonosfery Indii północnych przełomu er i początku naszej ery. Złożony jest z obiektów, które mogą funkcjonować w bardzo różnych przestrzeniach i znaczeniach. Część wizerunków można potraktować jako kultowe, a tym samym przypisać do grupy obiektów religijnych i wówczas odnieść się

¹ Chciałabym zaznaczyć, że terminu tego używam nie po to, by czynić sztuczne podziały czy negować wiarę w przynależność tych bytów do sfery rzeczywistej, ale w odniesieniu do ich nadprzyrodzonego funkcjonowania i szczególnych mocy. Np. Freedberg zauważyła, że nie możemy zakładać, że inne kultury tak samo odróżniają nadnaturalne od naturalnego, ponieważ nadprzyrodzone — czyli duchy, bogowie — stanowią część naturalnego porządku. Z kolei to rozróżnianie mocno powiązane jest z nauką epistemologią i krytyką metafizyczną (Freedberg 2005: 81–82).

do ich oddziaływania w sferze sacrum. Jednakże raczej z dużym naciskiem na użycie sakralne w skali mikro² łączącej się, jak wspomniałam wyżej, być może przede wszystkim ze sferą domową³, w funkcji apotropaicznej, a więc np. z wykorzystaniem wizerunków jako przedmiotów ochronnych, amuletów czy talizmanów. Argumentem przemawiającym za tą hipotezą mógłby być niewielki rozmiar większości przedstawień. Wówczas należałoby mocno podkreślić związki ujętych w prezentowanych rzeźbach postaci istot ochraniających ze szczególną rolą użytkową, co w pewnym sensie wyklucza wyłączone, bezpośrednie odnoszenie się jedynie do pojęcia sztuki sakralnej. Ze względu na niewielkie rozmiary bardzo dużej części wizerunków trudno przyjąć, że były one np. głównym posągami w sanktuarium czy częścią jego dekoracji. Z pewnością dyskusyjne może także okazać się jednoznaczne potraktowanie tych przedstawień jako dzieł sztuki, z jednej strony bowiem można dyskutować o problemie ustalania jasnych granic między wizerunkiem kultowym, przedstawieniem religijnym, przedstawieniem w sferze sacrum a dziełem sztuki w Indiach, z drugiej odnieść się do zagadnienia samego odbioru rzeźby i jej użytkowania. Tym samym, co kluczowe dla niniejszego materiału, w analizie włączony zostaje widz/odbiorca/użytkownik w kluczowej roli. Mając na uwadze powyższe wątpliwości oraz zakres funkcjonowania wizerunków

² Skalą makro natomiast określiłabym posągi świątynne, zarówno ze względu na rozmiary, jak i miejsca ich lokowania (główne sanktuaria).

³ W tym kontekście warto zwrócić uwagę na indyjskie praktyki związane z kultem jakszów (*yakṣa*) i ich żeńskich odpowiedników (*yakṣī*). Jak ustala Misra (1981: 1, 5–6, 19–21) tworzyli oni klasę istot, które można by nazwać półboskimi, ale też demonicznymi, pozostającymi bardzo blisko człowieka kierującego do nich prośby w najbardziej kluczowych, podstawowych sprawach życiowych, niczym do duchów opiekuńczych czy aniołów stróżów (m.in. *Mānava Gṛhyasūtra* 2.14.28–29 odnosi się do sposobu czczenia takich postaci i podaje też ich imiona). Oddawano cześć ich wizerunkom umieszczonym w sanktuariach (*caitya*, *āyatana*), ale zachowało się również wiele przedstawień w mniejszej skali — przykłady terakotowych figurek oznaczonych jako jaksza zamieszcza np. Bautze (1995: Pl. XXVIII cd, XL a, d). Jak się okazuje, również w kręgu europejskim można wskazać bezpośrednie analogie, co mogłoby dowodzić uniwersalnego charakteru pewnych ludzkich potrzeb i zachowań: „To, co oferowano w kulcie publicznym, znajdowało później kontynuację w czci oddawanej bóstwom domowym i geniuszom. Gdzie w grę wchodziły prywatne oczekiwania pewnych dobrodziejstw, tam użytek czyniony z obrazów wykazywał bogactwo form i treści mające niewiele wspólnego ze sztywnym schematem oficjalnych niebios. Herosi i bogowie-uzdrowiciele, jak Asklepios, byli dostępni bezpośrednio w przypadkach osobistych nieszczęść albo stawali się partnerami w wymiarze lokalnym”. (...) „Po co obrazy? Pytania tego nie sposób oddzielić od innego, a mianowicie od pytania, kto się nimi posługiwał i co z nimi czynił. Dotyczy ono sfery prywatnej, w której we wszelkiego rodzaju kłopotach wzywano pomocy patronów domu. Zapewniano sobie ich fizyczną obecność, aby śluby lub dziękczynienie kierować do widzialnych partnerów, a więc zdobić wieńcami ich obrazy, albo zapalać przed nimi świece” (Belting 2010: 47, 54)

ochronnych w społeczności postulowałabym przydzielenie formie wizualnej, a co za tym idzie reprezentacji materialnej, roli nadrzędnej oraz w pierwszej kolejności pochylenie się nad możliwą bezpośrednią relacją obiekt–odbiorca. Przy tej okazji przywołać należy kluczową dla problemu analizę omawiającą reakcję na obrazy kultowe, ich wpływ na odbiór oraz funkcjonowanie w świadomości społecznej. Mowa o *Potędze wizerunków* Davida Freedberga (2005), do której w ostatnim proponowanym obszarze problemowym nawiązuje także Kiepuszewski (2018), zwracając uwagę na badania z dziedziny psychologii odbioru oraz antropologii, a więc właściwie na swego rodzaju emocjonalną władzę wizerunków.

Freedberg już we wstępie zaznacza:

Pewne reakcje — moim zdaniem — były uderzające — i to raczej reakcje natury psychologicznej czy behawioralnej niż reakcje krytyków sztuki. Odniosłem wrażenie, że występowały one na przestrzeni całych dziejów sztuki i we wszystkich kulturach czy to „cywilizowanych”, czy „prymitywnych”. Zwykle nie omawiano ich w literaturze przedmiotu, ponieważ uważano je za prymitywne, pierwotne, przedintelektualne, „surowe” (Freedberg 2005: XXI–XXII).

Przytoczony fragment zawiera swego rodzaju klucz do analizy często dość subtelnej relacji między wizerunkiem a jego użytkownikiem czy odbiorcą. Trudno oprzeć się wrażeniu, że podstawowe, „surowe” — jak je nazywa Freedberg — reakcje niosą w sobie dużo więcej niż jałowe teoretyzowanie i intelektualne debaty krążące tylko wokół problemu, a niesięgające sedna sprawy. Warto zastanowić się nad tym, że aby „odkryć” podstawowe zasady kodowania i dekodowania, wystarczy często sam człowiek i jego funkcjonowanie czy zaprogramowanie umysłu. Rzecz jasna dla materiału, z jakim mamy tu do czynienia, z zaplecza teoretycznego wybrać można różnorodne podejścia, przy czym dwa główne to 1) odniesienie zabytku czy prezentowanej postaci do historii, mitu, literatury; 2) zwrócenie uwagi na działanie, funkcję, towarzyszenie człowiekowi w konkretnych sytuacjach, w których objawi się przede wszystkim moc wizerunku. W odniesieniu do rzeźb związanych z płodnością, obfitością i ochroną potomstwa, przyjęcie drugiego podejścia może okazać się bardziej pomocne. Jako obiekty obecne w pewnej przestrzeni i pewnym czasie jednocześnie są wytworami kultury powiązanymi bezpośrednio z potrzebami społeczności, a zatem dzięki materialnej formie, wręcz fizycznie dostępnej człowiekowi, pełnią rolę medium⁴, są ucieleśnieniem pewnych potrzeb ich zleceniodawców, użytkowników.

⁴ Zdaniem Beltinga obrazy traktować można jako media poznania, które zapośredniczają się inaczej niż teksty, badacz wprowadza więc pojęcie obrazu i medium jako dwóch stron tej samej monety (Belting 2012: 14–15).

Przy czym forma ta bardziej przemówi za koniecznością zawarcia określonej treści — z użyciem stosownego repertuaru symboli, z naciskiem nie tyle na samą ideę bóstwa bądź opiekuńczego ducha (JAK go postrzec czy sobie wyobrazić), co jego mocy sprawczej i ochronnej (CO on może uczynić). W moim rozumieniu na wizerunki nałożona zostaje wówczas rola wizerunków-talizmanów, zaklinaczy rzeczywistości, które obecne w swej materialnej formie w otoczeniu użytkownika włączają swoje ochronne moce⁵. Tworząca się między nimi a odbiorcą relacja, ma więc bardzo szczególny charakter. Ponadto bierzemy pod uwagę specyficzną grupę przedstawień związanych bardzo mocno głównie z intymnym światem kobiet, w którym pielęgnowano z zasady żeńskie energie czy moce konieczne do działania, utrzymania dostatku, płodności, ciągłości rodu, jakie mogły wspomóc kobietę w chwilach trudnych, wymagających szczególnego wysiłku (gotowość do poczęcia dziecka, utrzymanie ciąży, pomyślne rozwiązanie, opieka nad noworodkiem). Mocny wizerunek jest w stanie utrzymać wspólnotę grupy, która włącza go w swą przestrzeń i czyni zeń punkt odniesienia w kluczowych dla owej grupy kwestiach, jak zapewnienie dobrostanu i dobrobytu. Moim zdaniem moc ta bezpośrednio powiązana jest z doбором symboli użytych w akcie kodowania treści — jako taki akt bez wątpienia można potraktować wybór formy i poszczególnych elementów wizerunku.

Odniesienia do płodności i obfitości w sferze wizualnej

Skoro podstawowym założeniem jest możliwe oddziaływanie wizerunków na odbiorcę, obdzielanie mocą otoczenia, które traktuje je nie tylko jako obiekty, jakim należy się cześć, ale także jako przedmioty pomyślne, chroniące — odpędzające to, co złe i przyciągające to, co dobre, wiąże się z tym w sposób nieodłączny kwestia potęgi symboli. Nie są wyłącznie elementami wizerunku, same posiadają moc, mogą przecież pojawiać się niezależnie. Ich zadanie to zatem nie tylko kodowanie i przekazywanie stosownych treści, by mogły łatwo trafić do odbiorcy, ale także wspomaganie swą mocą całego wizerunku i w kontekście poszczególnych zjawisk obdzielanie nią otoczenia. Za najbardziej „mocne” można uznać atrybuty i gesty, ale poza nimi należy wziąć pod uwagę również inne kluczowe elementy. W przypadku analizowanych w tym artykule przedstawień ich użycie można odbierać jako zupełnie powszechne, a pochodzenie połączyć z wizualnym językiem, jakim posługiwała się społeczność rolnicza, czcząca przede wszystkim bóstwa związane z naturą,

⁵ Jak zaznacza Freedberg, „Jeżeli bowiem wizerunki bywały niegdyś, powiedzmy, obdarzane siłą istot żywych oraz mocą nadprzyrodzoną, to byłoby nieodpowiedzialnością twierdzenie, że jakkolwiek odbiór dzieła sztuki może być wolny całkowicie od swej historii” (Freedberg 2005: 75).

ziemią i jej urodzajnością (płodnością)⁶. Wskazać też można, z racji charakteru obiektów, przykłady konkretnego zastosowania w zabiegach magiczno-rytualno-medycznych związanych z utrzymaniem zdrowia, harmonii i dobrostanu (także w sposób taki, jak rozumiemy to w znaczeniu psychologicznym)⁷. Jak bardzo uniwersalny, trwający w przestrzeni wizualnej przez wieki, nośny, a przez to mocny jest ten repertuar symboli, postaram się pokazać w poniższym, krótkim przeglądzie. Przede wszystkim jest on pełen żeńskich figurek wyobrażających, zgodnie z najczęstszymi wskazaniem literatury przedmiotu, Boginię Matkę, żeńskie bóstwa płodności, urodzaju, ziemi, wegetacji, co w przypadku dawnych społeczności wydaje się oczywiste.

Liczne, zachowane do dziś dzieła sztuki i literatury dowodzą, że od czasów starożytnych w Indiach troska o dostatek, urodzaj, płodność czy potomstwo stanowiła jedną z kluczowych kwestii. Począwszy od najstarszych wizerunków związanych z kultem Bogini Matki lub bóstw płodności, pewne stałe elementy obecne były w sferze wizualnej niemal nieprzerwanie przez wieki. Również w okresie obejmującym pierwsze wieki p.n.e. i pierwsze n.e., jaki został wybrany do analizy, były one powszechne i funkcjonowały w uniwersalnym zbiorze symboli wykorzystywanym przez różne nurty religijne. Na stupach pojawiały się bardzo często lotosy (*padma*), pełne dzbany (*pūrṇaghaṭa*, *pūrṇakumbha*, *maṅgalakalaśa*) czy kobieta łamiąca gałąź drzewa śala (*śālabhañjikā*). Ponadto, obiekty kultowe i dekoracje w omawianym czasie obfitowały w wizerunki

⁶ Zdaniem Junga ziemia jest jednym z symboli archetypu matki jako miejsce, które rodzi (bądź nie), analogia do kobiecego macierzyństwa jest zatem oczywista (Jung 1998: 306). Jest to symbol o charakterze uniwersalnym, ponadkulturowym i oddawanie czci ziemi, personifikowanie jako bogini, nie jest wyłącznie właściwe kulturom subkontynentu indyjskiego. Archetyp według Junga jest takim komponentem psyche, który w polu świadomości inicjuje różnorodne wyobrażenia tego samego motywu niezależnie od epoki, rasy i kultury (Pajor 2004: 123–124).

⁷ Np. Rees i Yoneda (2013) prezentują w swym opracowaniu interesujące dla tematu znaleziska z klasztoru Jetavana, wśród których znalazło się wiele figurek przedstawiających bóstwo Naigamesza (Naigameśa, będzie omawiany w dalszej części) datowanych na okres między I a VII w. n.e. Autorki uznają, że należy powiązać je z rytuałami ochronnymi, powołują się na teksty *Cūlavamsa*, *Mahāvamsa* oraz wskazują, że klasztor Jetavana był również wymieniany w tradycji literackiej jako miejsce oferujące kobietom pomoc w zakresie połoźnictwa (jak przekazują: *Dhammapada Commentary* 1.4, 8.13; *Majjhima Nikāya* 86; *Udāna* 2.6). Ponadto Ahuja (2005: 351) opisuje wykonane z kości słoniowej lub terakotowe bransolety, których średnica wskazuje na zakładanie ich dzieciom. Na wewnętrznej stronie wyrzeźbiono przedstawienia opiekuńczych duchów, jak np. jaksa — najczęściej ukazany jako kuczająca, brzuchata postać. Jest to dowód na używanie talizmanów, przedmiotów o funkcji magiczno-rytualnej. Jeśli połączymy je z ochroną dzieci, z możliwymi zagrożeniami chorobą lub śmiercią właściwie już od momentu urodzenia, mamy materialne przykłady, które zestawzić można także z fragmentem z *Atharvavedy* (6.81.1–3,) gdzie jest mowa o *parihasta*, pierścieniach-amuletach, używanych w czasie porodu.

jakszów i ich żeńskich odpowiedników, a także przedstawienia kultów fallicznych i płodności — symbolizowanej przez piękne kobiety o obfitych kształtach. Postać kobieca wykorzystywana była zresztą w sferze wizualnej od samego początku — co istotne dla poruszanego w tej analizie zagadnienia — starożytne figurki kobiet mogą jako pierwsze dostarczyć informacji na temat wierzeń tamtych społeczności, jak również na temat sposobów samej wizualizacji. Odnalezione zostały już w najstarszej cywilizacji rozwijającej się w miastach Doliny Indusu. Jak postuluje Biagi, mimo ograniczonych informacji na temat rzeczywistej roli kobiet w tamtych kulturach, figurki kobiece mogą rzucić na ten problem nieco światła. Badacz zwraca uwagę na wyszukane fryzury, strój, a w szczególności bogate ozdoby. Pewne elementy figurek mogą sugerować możliwość zaklasyfikowania ich jako wizerunki kultów płodności. Szerokie biodra, wydatne łona, krągłe kształty i krótkie pękate nogi powiązane ze stanem brzemiennym bądź macierzyństwem — to cechy, na które warto tutaj zwrócić uwagę. Zdaniem Biagiego bogini natury-lasu odgrywała ważną rolę w wierzeniach twórców tej cywilizacji. Wnosi to na podstawie analizy niezwykle interesujących pieczęci steatytowych z wizerunkami tzw. rogatego bóstwa (Biagi 2004: 24–25). W niektórych publikacjach pojawiają się interpretacje, które proponują nowe odczytanie przywołanych przedstawień. Miałoby to być zatem wyobrażenie bogini, nie boga, a jej związek ze światem natury potwierdzać mogłyby zestawione z nią na pieczęciach zwierzęta czy drzewo⁸. Połączenie kobiety z drzewem jest przecież bardzo częstym motywem w późniejszych przedstawieniach. Znaleźiska archeologiczne z Harappy i Mohenjo Daro zdaniem Johnson potwierdzają kult Bogini Matki dominujący w kulturze tamtej społeczności. Figurki kobiece, biorąc pod uwagę sposób wykonania i rozmiary, używane były zapewne w kulcie domowym (Johnson 1994: 284). Następnie, przeglądając dość bogaty materiał z kolejnych wieków, można uznać, że istnieje ciągłość, zarówno w tworzeniu figurek kobiecych zbliżonych kształtem do harappańskich, jak i w oddawaniu czci formom żeńskim, które najczęściej są związane z kultami płodności i Bogini Matki. Popularność i ważność takich kultów potwierdza ich ogromna liczba⁹.

⁸ Jedną z teorii wysuwa Johnson (1994: 283–284), analizując znaną pieczęć ze sceną ofiary tzw. bóstwu drzewnemu (obecnie w Islamabad Museum, nr NMP 50.295) datowaną na 2500–1750 r. p.n.e. Johnson pisała: (...) „Goddess stands between the branches of a sacred fig tree. A horned god or divine king kneels before her, offering for sacrifice a sphinxlike combination of human, bull and ram. Seven horn-crowned priestesses attend the Goddess (...). The subject of the Harappan seal suggests the presentation of a gift by a divine king to a goddess whose generative powers will be triggered by the sacrifice. There can be little doubt that the seal represents renewal through the female deity (...)”.

⁹ W Indian Museum w Patnie przechowywane są terakotowe figurki z epoki Maurjów (np. nr 4177, 8508), które przedstawiają kobiety z rozbudowanym, wymyślnym nakryciem głowy, szerokimi biodrami i wydatnym biustem.

Natura jako źródło symboli

W wielu zabytkach, głównie stupach, począwszy od najstarszych zachowanych przykładów, w scenach rodzajowych oraz w warstwie dekoracyjnej odnaleźć można płaskorzeźby z przedstawieniami kwiatów, owoców, wici roślinnych bądź drzew. Nietrudno zatem stwierdzić, że głównym źródłem symboli jest sama natura. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje m.in. dekoracja stupy w Bharhut¹⁰, której *vedika* ozdobiona jest licznymi motywami floralnymi i zwierzęcymi¹¹. Także w poszczególnych medalionach bądź na licach filarów odnajdziemy różnorodne symbole bazujące na świecie przyrody, niejednokrotnie bezpośrednio łączące się z przedstawieniami kobiecymi. Jednym z najbardziej popularnych motywów jest lotos, który występować może w postaci pąków lub w pełnej — rozwiniętej, niekiedy z łodygami, całymi pędami, często mocno stylizowany, wkomponowany w medaliony. Poza tym, że stanowi podstawę tej floralnej dekoracji, funkcjonuje również jako element innych znaczących przedstawień (takich, jak kolejny ważny symbol — pełny dzban) bądź atrybut postaci. Innym ważnym motywem dekoracyjnym zaczerpniętym ze świata przyrody jest drzewo. W tym kontekście jednak nie chodzi o przedstawienia symboliczne, jak np. drzewo *bodhi* i włączenie do tradycji buddyjskiej starożytnego kultu drzew, lecz takie, które odnoszą się do bogactwa, obfitości lub rytuałów płodności.

Podobnie na stupie w Sanchi odnajdziemy całe bogactwo roślinnych motywów. Wykorzystywane są one jako dekoracja (np. pełne lotosy zdobiące bramy) oraz element przedstawień, spośród których z pewnością również warto wyróżnić: 1) lotosowe łodygi wyłaniające się z ust lub pępeków jakszów; 2) przedstawienie zwane powszechnie Gajalakṣmī, którego istotną część stanowią lotosy; 3) *yakṣī* w formie *śālabhañjikā*.

Lotos zatem to jeden z najstarszych i najbardziej rozpowszechnionych symboli powiązanych zarówno ze światem natury, kreacją, żeńskim organem rozrodczym, jak i ze Słońcem (funkcjonuje jako atrybut bóstw solarnych: Viṣṇu, Surya). Łączony z płodnością, z twórczą mocą samej natury, umieszczony w rękach bóstw obrazuje ich zdolności kreacyjne, a ściślej, w przypadku postaci kobiecych odnosi się bezpośrednio do funkcji rodzenia.

¹⁰ Niezachowana *in situ*, obecnie w większości w kolekcji Indian Museum w Kalkucie, datowana na okres dynastii Śunga, zob. np. Sharma 1994.

¹¹ Jak zauważa Sharma, „Bharhut sculptures are known for the wonderful depiction of nature. The large undulating lotus creepers or the meanders issuing from the full vase, bushes, trees, plants, birds, animals etc. have been exquisitely rendered in abundance that a feast to eyes is presented. (...) Artistically, also the delineation of nature in Bharhut is of superb quality and this has been appreciated by scholars like James Fergusson who observed, »Some animals such as elephants, deer and monkeys are better represented there than in any part of the world; so too are some trees«” (Sharma 1994: 14).

Jest obecny w dawnej rzeźbie m.in. w wizerunkach zwanych Gajalakṣmī, np. użyty jako postument, na którym bogini wspiera się w scenie interpretowanej jako jej *abhiṣeka*. Piękny przykład tego zachował się na jednym z medalionów stupy w Bharhut (Sharma 1994: 28–29), gdzie widzimy zarówno postać bogini, jak i dwa flankujące ją słonie, stojące na kwiatkach lotosów wyłaniających się z dzbanu. Ponadto bogini trzyma w jednej ręce łodygę z lotosowym pakiem. Inny przykład znajduje się na ogrodzeniu stupy nr 2 w Sanchi¹² — tło płaskorzeźby niemal w całości pokrywają szczelnie lotosy. Na jednym z nich stoi bogini, na dwóch innych słonie wznoszące nad nią trąby z dzbanami, wszystkie zaś rozkwitają na łodygach wyrastających z głównego korzenia. Następnym z medalionów wewnętrznej strony ogrodzenia stupy nr 2 w Sanchi ukazuje kobiecą postać w otoczeniu lotosów, lecz już bez słoni. Zatem połączenie lotos–postać kobiety należy uznać za najbardziej popularny i nośny motyw. W istotnych dla tej analizy mathurańskich przedstawieniach dla bogini ze słoniami wypracowano bardzo podobny wizerunek, w którym słonie stojące na ukazanych po jej obu stronach lotosach trzymają nad jej głową dzbany, a w jej lewym ręku, na wdzięcznie wygiętej długiej łodydze, wznosi się okrągły kwiat (np. figurka w State Museum w Lucknow, nr O.236). Ponadto, trzeba zauważyć, że lotos w tej samej formie jest atrybutem, który w figurkach z Mathury należy do postaci ujętych w typie Mateczki (*mātrkā*), zachowanym w osobnych lub grupowych przedstawieniach (tzn. w zbiorowym przedstawieniu Mateczek bądź w towarzystwie jakszy). Istotne jest także to, że kilka takich kobiet trzyma również dziecko na ręku lub kolanach (np. płaskorzeźba w Los Angeles County Museum of Art, nr M.85.72.2, z II–III w. n.e.).

Dziecko jest szczególnym atrybutem związanym z płodnością i urodzeniem, można uznać je za najdobitniejszą ilustrację efektu ludzkiej zdolności kreacji. Na pewno także umiejscowione na kolanach lub w ramionach postaci¹³ sprawia, że zyskuje ona charakter dobrowórczy, zdaje się zapewniać o obdarzeniu licznym potomstwem i sprawowaniu nad nim pieczy. Ze względu na liczne zagrożenia chorobami, a nawet śmiercią, które dotknąć mogły zwłaszcza nowonarodzone dzieci, niezwykle ważne dla tej kultury wydaje się stworzenie w sferze wizualnej wyobrażeń takich postaci ochraniających. Dzieci pojawiają się też na wizerunkach pięknych kobiet z kunsztownie utrefionymi włosami, na tle bujnej roślinności (głównie lotosów). Przedstawienia te emanują kobiecą czułością, spokojem i troską. Można potraktować je jako

¹² Przedstawienie znajduje się na filarze 49A, strona wschodnia, datowane jest na II w. p.n.e.

¹³ W przypadku innego typu postaci dziecko przedstawione jest jako niemowlę leżące w koszu lub kołysce — ujęcie to sugeruje, że postać ta prezentuje, przynosi niemowlę (ilustrowane w Shah 1952–53).

próbę stworzenia metafory macierzyństwa (np. rzeźba w Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin, nr I 10168, z II–III w. n.e.).

Podobnie za metaforę taką służyć może wolnostojący posąg kobiecy w National Museum w Delhi (nr B.89) datowany na II w. n.e., zwyczajowo określany jako Śrī, a przedstawiający najprawdopodobniej boginię płodności i urodzaju jako matkę karmicielkę (fot. 1). Cała kompozycja oparta jest na dzbanie wylaniającym gąszcz lotosów, ptactwa i kaskadę wody, wszystko ułożone jest w pionową kompozycję wyrzeźbioną na odwrocie. Z przodu, tuż nad brzegiem dzbana, ukazano dwa lotosowe pączki, na których stoi postać. W tym przedstawieniu jest zatem połączenie kilku kluczowych dla symboliki płodności motywów. Dzban obfitości nie tylko antycypuje bogactwo natury, ale także samą jej personifikację w postaci kobiety. W późniejszych realizacjach właściwie te dwa główne typy (dzban obfitujący w roślinność lub wodę) powtarzają się, bez większych zmian. Naczynie z wodą jest ponadto bardzo mocnym symbolem, który we wczesnej rzeźbie religijnej staje się niemal tak bardzo popularny jak gest odpędzenia strachu (*abhaya*). Może być kolejno wykorzystywany w mniejszej skali jako stały element przede wszystkim wizerunków bóstw, które złączono z wodą, rolnictwem, a kolejno też z urodzajem i bogactwem. Dzban w omawianym przedstawieniu może być także wypełniony życiodajną wodą¹⁴, dzięki której przyroda może rozkwitać a plony wzrastać. Lotos jako typowo wodna roślina staje się nieodłącznym komponentem przedstawienia magicznego dzbana. Trzecim i zarazem najbardziej wymownym elementem wizerunku Śrī jest prawa pierś, którą postać ściska lewą ręką tak, aby trysnęło z niej mleko. Wskazuje na ważny aspekt macierzyństwa — możliwość wykarmienia potomstwa. Oczywiście, cechą charakterystyczną omawianych w tym artykule przedstawień kobiecych jest niewątpliwie ukazywanie ich właściwie w przeważającej większości z odsłoniętym, wydatnym biustem. Od początku, niezależnie od materiału, skali czy sposobu opracowania (małe figurki z gliny, terakoty, duże pełnoplastyczne kamienne rzeźby, dekoracyjne płaskorzeźby) prezentują pełne piersi, często ozdobione biżuterią. Nawet jeśli pojawia się szal, nigdy nie zasłania tej części ciała. W związku z tym nagie piersi należy uznać za stały element kobiecych przedstawień. Wśród nich jednak szczególnym i znaczącym motywem jest

¹⁴ To ogromne znaczenie wody i uwzględnianie jej w różnych symbolach oraz atrybutach ma charakter uniwersalny i ponadkulturowy. Jest traktowana jako miejsce, z którego pochodzi życie. Osadnictwo uzależnione od obecności zbiorników wodnych ma oczywiście wymiar praktyczny, ale też mogły one oddziaływać na człowieka bardziej w wymiarze magicznym. Jung uważa, że symbol wody rozpatrzeć można w aspekcie macierzyńskim: „Projekcja *imago* macierzyńskiego na wody sprawia, że woda otrzymuje wiele właściwości numinalnych czy magicznych — w ten sposób udziałem jej stają się cechy charakterystyczne dla matki” (Jung 1998: 319–320.)

konkretny gest — mianowicie wskazanie na pierś bądź ujęcie jej w dłoń, a nawet ściśnięcie. Możemy odnaleźć go już na przywoływanej powyżej płaskorzeźbie Gajalakṣmī z Bharhut (Sharma 1994: 28–29). Jest to prawdopodobnie najstarsze zachowane w rzeźbie przedstawienie tego gestu, niewątpliwie ważne też ze względu na powiązanie go z konkretną boginią — Śrī. W rzeźbie okresu Kuszanów gest pojawia się kilkakrotnie, tym razem w przedstawieniach pełnoplastycznych. Postać przyjmuje z pewnością rolę matki, choć w jej ramionach czy też u jej piersi nie pojawia się dziecko¹⁵. W tym repertuarze symboli gest ujęcia piersi zostaje wykorzystany jako jeden z kluczowych, gdyż piersi pełne życiodajnego mleka to główny atrybut kobiety, a zatem i żeńskich bóstw czczonych dla zapewnienia urodzaju i obfitości.

To z kolei powinno zwrócić naszą uwagę na wykorzystanie postaci ludzkiej w ogóle. Jeśli uznamy, że natura jest źródłem symboli, trzeba podkreślić, że nie chodzi tu wyłącznie o świat przyrody — roślinność i zwierzęta. Twórcy omawianych wizerunków wykorzystali różnorodne elementy swego otoczenia, w tym także ciało ludzkie. Zarówno w przypadku postaci żeńskich, jak i męskich, zilustrowanych w rzeźbie kuszańskiej, oglądający może od razu zauważyć niezwykłą ich cielesność, niezależnie od tego, czy mamy do czynienia ze scenami rodzajowymi, co do których możemy przypuszczać, że ukazani w nich ludzie są zwykłymi śmiertelnikami, czy też z przedstawieniami o religijnym charakterze. Jest to wyjątkowo bliski naturze sposób patrzenia na świat. Sylwetki kobiet o pełnych, zmysłowych kształtach, postaci męskie z potężnymi ramionami, szerokimi klatkami piersiowymi, wydatnymi brzuchami same w sobie symbolizują obfitość i dostatek. Nie tylko poszczególne symbole, elementy wizerunków, ale także samo ciało ludzkie w niektórych przypadkach może być potraktowane jako mocne, znaczące, jako przekaźnik treści. Dlatego np. jakszowie, nagowie wyobrażani od samego początku, czyli od najdawniejszych posągów datowanych na okres Maurjów, mają tak okazałe sylwetki.

Najdoskonalszą formą wyobrażenia płodności, urodzaju i pomyślności jest jednak głównie postać kobieca. Jak wspomniałam, w kultach płodności, wegetacji, Bogini Matki, Matki Ziemi, nie może zabraknąć w tej już upostaciowionej warstwie pełnych kształtów, wydatnych piersi, szerokich bioder, krągłych brzuchów. Samo kreowanie strefy sacrum w taki sposób, aby kojarzyła się z prosperitą i obfitością, można traktować jako pewien zabieg magiczny. Nie

¹⁵ W niektórych ujęciach Mateczek, gdzie jednym z atrybutów jest niemowlę trzymane na ręku lub kolanie, pierś także jest znaczącą częścią przedstawienia. Najczęściej dziecko ujmuje ją swoją ręką. Trzeci typ przedstawienia eksponujący piersi to wizerunek kobiety z dzieckiem, jak np. opisany wyżej egzemplarz w muzeum w Berlinie. Dziecko, które kobieta trzyma na lewym ręku, dotyka jej lewej piersi jedną ręką (dokładniej łapie za sutek lub wskazuje na niego), a drugą chwyta kosmyk jej włosów.

tylko bowiem posąg w kulcie umieszczany w sanktuarium czy miejsce święte (jak np. stupa), ale i jego otoczenie jest z założenia dobrowróżebne. Obecność kobiecych przedstawień, np. jakszinie na ogrodzeniach stup stanowi doskonały przykład projektowania takiej przyjaznej, pomyślnej przestrzeni. Według mnie należy przyjąć, że jest to nie tylko świadectwo potęgi dawnych kultów natury, istotnych dla rolniczych społeczności¹⁶, asymilowanych przez nowsze, rosnące w siłę tradycje (jak dżinizm, buddyizm czy kultury hinduizmu). Nawet ujmując tego rodzaju wizerunek kobiecy całościowo, można go interpretować jako symbol obfitej i płodnej natury.

Omawiane zjawiska w wybranych przykładach rzeźby z Mathury

Na kolejnym etapie tworzenia wizerunków do opisanych powyżej symboli i kluczowych elementów zaczerpniętych z natury dodano, rzecz jasna, nowe. Jednak można uznać, że podstawowy repertuar został zachowany. Symbole obfitości i urodzaju nadal są ważnym komponentem wizerunków związanych z płodnością i ochroną potomstwa w kuszańskiej rzeźbie. Gdyby zastanowić się, który wizerunek, wśród całej mnogości dostępnych rzeźb, jest z jednej strony najbardziej wymowny w przekazie, z drugiej zaś nowatorski i charakterystyczny dla tego okresu oraz omawianego tematu, wówczas należy zdecydowanie wskazać Naigameszę (Naigameśa)¹⁷. Jest to jedyne przedstawienie wśród prezentowanych męskich postaci, które wyróżnia się głową zwierzęcia identyfikowanego najczęściej jako kozioł (Agrawala 1947: 68, Agrawala 1950: 66). Pojawia się zarówno w ujęciach indywidualnych, jak i w scenie rodzajowej, w towarzystwie kobiet, które oddają mu cześć (relief z Kankali Tila w State Museum Lucknow, nr 626). Formy indywidualne ukazują go w pozie stojącej w towarzystwie dzieci. Zachowało się wiele przykładów, co wskazuje na spore rozpowszechnienie i znaczenie kultu tego bóstwa. Wyglądają jakby tworzono je zgodnie z raz ustalonym wzorem. Co ciekawe, dzieci wprowadzone zostały do wizerunku na różne sposoby — mogą być ukazane na jego ramionach bądź trzymane w rękach, tak jakby je złapał w garść i dokądś niósł. Postać zidentyfikowana inskrypcją „Bhagavā Nemeso” na reliefie z Kankali Tila (Smith 1901: 25, Agrawala 1947, Shah 1987: 323), niestety nie może już

¹⁶ Jak zauważa Coomaraswamy (2001: 33), wprowadzenie takich postaci jak *vrksaka* może być zaskakujące, zwłaszcza z perspektywy buddyjskiego czy dżinijskiego mnicha. Jednak ze względu na rozpowszechnienie tych religii wśród szerokich mas, pewne elementy wcześniejszych kultów, jak sądzi wielu badaczy, musiały się znaleźć w wizualnym przekazie. Coomaraswamy zauważa: „These figures of fertility spirits are present here because the people are here. Women, accustomed to invoke the blessings of a tree spirit, would approach the railing pillar images with similar expectations (...)”.

¹⁷ Inne wersje imienia, jakie można znaleźć w źródłach, to: Nejamęsa, Naigameya, Nemesa, Nemeso, Hariņgameśi.

służyć jako podstawa atrybucji tej postaci, a co za tym idzie, także innych zabytków, gdzie widzimy mężczyznę z głową kozła, ponieważ inskrypcja faktycznie nie zawiera imienia Nemeso, jakiego tam się pierwotnie dopatrywano. Innym zatem źródłem wiążącym głowę kozła z Naigameszą jest przytaczany przez Agrawala fragment *Suśruta Samhitā*¹⁸, w którym Naigamesza określony jest jako bóg z głową kozła ochraniający niemowlęta (Agrawala 1947: 70). Badacz podaje, że związek kozła z ceremoniami narodzin stał się elementem popularnych wierzeń i przytacza przykład z *Kādambarī*, w którym opisano wprowadzenie i przywiązanie kozła do drzwi *sūtikāgrha* w dniu Śaṣṭhīpūjā (czyli szóstym dniem od narodzin) jako część ceremonii po przyjściu na świat księcia Candrāpīḍa (Agrawala 1947: 73).

Tradycja literacka mocno łączy Naigameszę z dżinizmem, pojawia się bowiem jako kluczowa postać w historii o przeniesieniu płodu Mahawiry z łona braminki do łona kszatrijki (Agrawala 1947: 69, Shah 1952–53: 19–20). W odmiennej roli jednak występuje jako jedna z tych złośliwych istot, które należy przebłagać. *Kalpasūtra* podaje dziewięć imion postaci należących do klasy *graha*: gdzie Skanda, Viśakha, Naigamesza otrzymują przydomek „*pitṛgraha*”¹⁹. Jest on zatem w grupie tych spersonalizowanych lęków, jakie przyjmują postaci obwiniane o choroby, śmierć dzieci (a więc dosłownie „obejmujący w posiadanie, zabierający”). Jednym z najbardziej popularnych grahów, który następnie wyniesiony zostaje do innej klasy bóstw, a wręcz zamieniony w przywódcę boskiej armii, jest przecież Skanda (Mann 2012). Ciekawych informacji o Naigameszy dostarcza jednak przede wszystkim literatura medyczna. Można wręcz uznać, że spośród analizowanych w tym opracowaniu postaci jest najbardziej na styku medycyny i praktyk religijnych oraz może poszczycić się najdłuższą obecnością w tradycji literackiej, wspomina go bowiem już *Rgveda* (Khila 30.1)²⁰. Ściślej rzecz ujmując, zawartą w przywołanym hymnie mantrę intonowano w czasie ceremonii *sīmantonnayana*. W tłumaczeniu Winternitza brzmi ona: „*O Nejamesa! Fly away, and fly hither again, bringing a beautiful son; to my wife here who is longing for a son, grant them an embryo and that a male one*” (Winternitz 1895: 151). Zarówno Winternitz, jak i Shah zwracają uwagę na to, że w tekstach wedyjskich i gryhjasutrach jest to (jeszcze) bóstwo przyjazne, do którego kierowane są prośby o obdarzenie potomstwem. Pod względem charakteru jest zatem blisko późniejszej dżinijskiej wersji, gdy występuje w historii życia Mahawiry

¹⁸ SS, *Kaumaratantra* 36.9: ajānanaścaḷāksibhraḥ kāmarūpī mahāyaśāḥ / bāla pālayitā devo aigamešo`bhiraksatu//.

¹⁹ Co Agrawala interpretuje jako jego znaczącą pozycję w panteonie dziewięciu *graha* (Agrawala 1947: 70).

²⁰ nejameṣa parā pata suputraḥ punar ā pata / asyai me putrakāmāyai garbham ā dhehi yaḥ pumān//.

jako bohater pozytywny. Nie przypomina groźnego demona szkodzącego dzieciom, jakiego obraz rysuje się w tekstach medycznych (Winternitz 1895: 149, Shah 1952–53: 23). Spostrzeżenie to trudno jednak uznać za trafne, gdyż po pierwsze, każde z tych bóstw może mieć zarówno przyjazny, jak i złowrogi charakter (można zaliczyć go do grupy postaci o naturze ambiwalentnej, i chociażby Rudra zwany w Wedach Śiwą jest także jedną z nich). Nie przeszkadza to nadal prosić go o potomstwo. Po drugie, tak skromne fragmenty nie mówią wiele o samym charakterze bóstwa, trudno zatem stwierdzić kategorycznie, że na początku nie mogło być ono czczone w celu prześlągania, jako ujęty w kształt lęk czy spersonifikowana choroba, a cechy te zostały mu przypisane dopiero później. Naturalne jest, że w trakcie tak kluczowej ceremonii, jak *sīmantonnayana*, uczestnicy odwołują się do dobrej natury bóstwa. Z pewnością jest to najstarsza postać łączona z ochroną dzieci do momentu ich przyjścia na świat, przywoływana w trakcie rozwoju płodu, jaką potwierdzają źródła literackie. Szczególnie więc łączona jest z embrionem, co w później stworzonych opowieściach dżinijskich skutkuje wprowadzeniem jej w rolę zamieniającej płody. W historii o życiu Mahawiry Naigamesza nie powinien być jednak traktowany jak bóstwo dżinijskie, co zauważa też Agrawala i określa go nienależącym do żadnej tradycji (Agrawala 1947: 71–72). Shah przypomina, że odłam Digambara nie uznaje opowieści o przenosinach płodu, a sama *Kalpasūtra* ma być, jego zdaniem, w swym charakterze nieprzychylna bramińskiej tradycji. Te i inne przesłanki pozwalają mu wyciągnąć wniosek, że historia jest późniejszym dodatkiem, a *Kalpasūtra* datowana może być nie wcześniej niż na V w. n.e. Badacz podaje, że po zakończeniu panowania dynastii Kuszanów raczej nie instalowano Naigameszy osobnych wizerunków w sanktuariach (Shah 1952–53: 20–22). Można zatem przypuszczać, że oryginalnie jest on uosobieniem realnego zagrożenia, jakie pojawia się w przypadku brzemiennych kobiet, a o jakim wspomina cytowany już wielokrotnie Agrawala, powołując się na fragment ze *Suśruta Samhitā*²¹ opisujący chorobę u ciężarnych zwaną *naigameṣāpahṛta*. Polegała ona na tym, że u płodu zanikał puls, co powodowało wrażenie, jakby zgasło w nim życie, a brzuch stawał się wzdęty bądź zgnieciony (Agrawala 1947: 70). Możemy sobie wyobrazić, że potencjalne uszkodzenia dziecka przed narodzinami były jednym z głównych koszmarów spędzających sen z powiek brzemiennym kobietom. Dobitym świadectwem tego jest wyżej wspomniana ceremonia *sīmantonnayana*. Możemy uznać, że jedno z bóstw „oddelegowane” zostało do tego, by wziąć szczególnie odpowiedzialność za rozwój dziecka w łonie matki. Poza przenoszeniem dzieci Naigamesza wyspecjalizował się w zapewnianiu prawidłowego życia płodowego, co tak naprawdę równa się zapewnianiu matkom spokoju poprzez odprawienie stosownych ceremonii i/lub uczczenie bóstwa.

²¹ Śārīrasthāna, 10.68.

Warto zwrócić uwagę, że w omawianej w niniejszej analizie klasie jest to jedno z najliczniej reprezentowanych bóstw w Mathurze, a niektóre przykłady mają spore rozmiary (ok. 0,5 m). Dosłownych ilustracji omówionych historii jednak nie znajdziemy. Towarzyszą mu licznie dzieci, co jest niezwykle, choćby z uwagi na to, że jest postacią męską. Ponadto zwykle w przedstawieniach innych postaci, które już wspomniałam, trzymają one po jednym dziecku. Gdy porównamy Naigameszę z bóstwami w grupie, zauważymy, że to jest wyraźnie odróżniająca go cecha. Choć ze względu na zniszczenia obiektów nie mamy przedstawić w pełnej formie, w zachowanych przykładach i tak widać wyraźnie, że Naigamesza przynosi te dzieci w dwojaki sposób — na ramionach — wygodnie i bezpiecznie — oraz w rękach (fot. 2). Czasem wygląda to właściwie tak, jakby mu z tych rąk zwisały (mają dużo mniejsze proporcje), na innych z kolei, jakby je prowadził za rękę (postaci są większych rozmiarów). Te, które siedzą na ramionach (niekiedy po 2 na jednym), albo trzymają go za rogi, albo wykonują gest *namaskara*.

Podsumowanie

W analizie tak specyficznego materiału, jakim jest grupa przedstawień związanych wyraźnie z ochroną jednego z najcenniejszych dla człowieka zasobów — potomstwa — warto zastanowić się nad tym, co miało wpływ na uformowanie związanych z nimi mitów, opowieści, a następnie ich umieszczenie w sferze wizualnej. Dzięki temu możemy zyskać dużo bogatszy obraz funkcjonowania kobiet w tym szczególnym czasie, jakim jest ciąża i połóg. Z pewnością na uwagę zasługuje ogromna liczba przedstawień tego typu istot nadprzyrodzonych i duchów, których pojawienie się w świadomości ludzkiej wywieść można zarówno z klasy duchów opiekuńczych, jak i złośliwych, szkodliwych istot. Zaprezentowane powyżej przykłady są jedynie wybranymi z licznej i różnorodnej grupy przedstawień. Nie ulega wątpliwości, że rzeźba mathurańska z racji swojej szczególnej pozycji w kulturze materialnej Indusów, dostarczyć może jednocześnie najlepszych i najbardziej kompletnych przykładów ze względu na niezwykłą umiejętność tamtych twórców do wpiśnięcia w obraz znaczeń czy treści przy użyciu stosownych symboli. Liczba zachowanych wizerunków bóstw oddelegowanych do sprawowania pieczy nad potomstwem świadczy o tym, że był to problem ważki dla ówczesnej społeczności, kluczowy dla codziennego funkcjonowania przede wszystkim kobiet i matek. Dodatkowo, zachowane przedstawienia stanowią prawdopodobnie ostatni tak pełny zapis tych kultów w ich odrębnej, niezależnej postaci, przed wchłonięciem w większe tradycje. Możemy założyć, że każda matka czy też przyszła matka była zaznajomiona z obrzędami odpędzania zagrożeń od dzieci poprzez oddawanie czci takim istotom jak grahowie, Mateczki czy Naigamesza. Warto zauważyć, że niektóre z postaci ewoluowały i zyskiwały

na znaczeniu, a następnie około IV–V w. n.e. zaczęły w warstwie wizualnej z wolna tracić swój oryginalny charakter. Rzecz jasna to, że w rzeźbie epoki Guptów widzimy zmiany, wycofanie niektórych postaci nie jest jeszcze dowodem na zupełne wygaśnięcie tych kultów, utratę ich znaczenia czy spadek popularności na rzecz nowych, zreformowanych i synkretycznych bóstw. Ludzkie potrzeby związane z zapewnieniem bezpieczeństwa potomstwu postawiłabym tu jednak na pierwszym miejscu. Być może twórcy późniejsi wybierali po prostu inne tematy, Matriki włączane były w hinduizm w zmodyfikowanej formie, kulty płodności, bóstwa obfitości były stosownie modyfikowane w trakcie wchłaniania przez inne postaci. Niewykluczone, że kobiety nadal przywiązywały ogromną wagę do problemu, ale temat nie przebiegał się już tak namacalnie do głównego nurtu.

Z racji tego, że opisując postaci związane z ochroną potomstwa, wchodzi my w sferę szczególnie dotyczącą człowieka i jego podstawowego funkcjonowania, często, jak pokazuje przykład Naigameszy, blisko dziedziny medycyny, trudno nie odnieść się do problemu ścisłego związku między somą i psyche. Należałoby zatem zastanowić się także nad rolą ludzkiej psychiki w całym procesie kreowania takich postaci, budowania wokół nich konkretnych opowieści, przydzielania im funkcji, a wreszcie tworzenia dla nich materialnej formy²². Ma ona zapewne za zadanie wspomóc różnorodne zabiegi związane z ochroną potomstwa. Można to wspomaganie rozumieć na poziomie religijnym — w sensie oddawania czci, kierowania modlitw, składania drobnych ofiar. W przypadku ambiwalentnych duchów kluczowe jest przede wszystkim godne ich uczczenie, przebłaganie, by odsunąć potencjalne zagrożenia, jakie mogłyby spaść na osobę, która zaniedbała te praktyki. Można jednak interpretować te wizerunki, bezpośrednio odnosząc się do psychiki, w tym sensie, że zabezpieczenie w postaci amuletu, rytuału magicznego/medycznego pomocne być mogło w kontrolowaniu strachu, jaki z pewnością dotyczył zarówno kobiet, jak i ich otoczenia, najbliższej rodziny. Aby likwidowanie zagrożenia było skuteczne, konieczny był oczywiście stosowny wizerunek, najlepiej figuralny, stworzony m.in. z wykorzystaniem mocnych symboli²³. W takim

²² Nie tylko w indyjskiej tradycji można spotkać się z objaśnieniem genezy wytwarzania wizerunków, w którym zaznacza się pewne niedostatki człowieka w procesie postrzegania boskości czy wchodzenia w relację ze sferą nadnaturalną. Freedberg (2005: 65) ujmując to następująco: „Ludzie powinni potrafić nawiązać właściwy stosunek z boskością, bez uciekania się do pośrednictwa przedmiotów. Niestety, nie potrafią. Ludzie, wyjąwszy prawdziwych mistyków, w większości nie potrafią się wspiąć wprost na Wyżyny intelektu bez pomocy postrzeganych Zmysłowo przedmiotów, które mogą być, przynajmniej potencjalnie, łącznikami między oddającym cześć a tym, co czczone, a zarazem przez nie przedstawiane”.

²³ Nie można także wykluczyć obrazów mentalnych lub wyłącznie symbolicznych, tzn. diagramów bez wykorzystania postaci ludzkiej jako podstawy.

przypadku byłyby to po pierwsze wizerunek wizualnie kompletny, a więc od strony formalnej posiadający cechy, które stanowią o jego potencji. Po drugie natomiast, od strony funkcjonalnej mający moc sprawczą i oddziałujący obecnością w domostwie, przy kobiecie rodzącej lub w sanktuarium, do którego udawała się poprosić o pomyślny poród czy opiekę nad nowonarodzonym dzieckiem, na psychikę i emocje tak, że wspomagał obniżenie jej strachu, który wywołany był przecież jak najbardziej realnym zagrożeniem²⁴. Podobnie w przypadku choroby dziecka, noworodka czy też starszego potomstwa, wsparcie zabiegów medycznych i magicznych takim wizerunkiem mogło mieć działanie potęgujące. Jak zauważa Grzymała-Moszczyńska (1991: 115):

W tradycji Wschodu pojęcie choroby jest pojęciem wertykalnym, zaburzenie określa na poziomie całości funkcjonowanie organizmu, relacji ze społecznością, bóstwem. Dlatego w konsekwencji proces leczenia też musi zawierać jednocześnie leczenie ciała, umysłu, dążenie do poprawy relacji między człowiekiem a otaczającym światem.

Można zatem założyć, że w tym przypadku strach matki przed porodem, utratą dziecka, jego chorobą i wszelkimi nieszczęściami, które mogą się przydarzyć w tym szczególnym czasie, byłyby podstawą wykreowania opowieści o stworzeniach zagrażających lub odwrotnie — cały proces wspomagających. Nadanie im konkretnych postaci, imion, a w rzeźbie form, jest wówczas nie tyle tłumaczone ścisłym kultem wizerunków, co pewnym sposobem redukcji całego stresu związanego z ciążą i narodzinami, sposobem oswojenia zagrożenia oraz odpędzenia strachu, a zatem radzenia sobie z czysto ludzką sytuacją, która dotyczyć może teoretycznie każdego człowieka, w każdym czasie²⁵. Podsumowując — charakter analizowanych postaci stawia je bardzo blisko człowieka, a ściślej, w kręgu domowym, w sferze kobiecej. W analizowanym zjawisku sztuka staje się medium przekazującym obraz dawnych społeczności,

²⁴ Freedberg (2005: 134) podchodzi do tej kwestii tak: „Nawet jeśli będziemy twierdzić, że to jedynie potęga naszych nadziei, pragnień, lęków i wdzięczności sprawia, iż wierzymy w skuteczność tych przedmiotów, które, koniec końców, działają, ciągle potrzebne jest nam przedstawienie, które podkreślałoby, uzupełniało czy intensyfikowało całą każdą tego rodzaju projekcję. Znowu więc powraca pytanie: czy ma znaczenie to, jak wygląda choćby najprostsze przedstawienie figuralne? Prawdopodobnie tak. To dzięki przedstawieniu wszystkie przedmioty, o których dotąd mówiliśmy, zyskują swoją potęgę i zajmują tak ważne miejsce w systemach intencjonalności, bez których trudno wyobrazić sobie całą komunikację i w znacznej mierze emocje”.

²⁵ Belting (2010: 47) zauważa, że w ten sposób używano obrazów od czasów najdawniejszych. Nie należy tego jednak łączyć z praktykami tzw. niższych warstw. Badacz uznaje, że w obliczu nieszczęść, które dotyczą pojedynczą osobę bądź społeczność, jest zupełnie naturalne, aby zapewnić sobie obecność wspomoczonego boskiego, najlepiej w konkretnym miejscu kultu lub w wizerunku.

ich potrzeb, sposobu postrzegania świata, radzenia sobie z ważnymi sprawami dnia codziennego. To nie tylko dowód na funkcjonowanie człowieka blisko natury, ale także na przeważającą nad innymi, bardziej duchowymi potrzebami, chęć zapewnienia podstawowych potrzeb w sferze materialnej. Pomyślność, dostatek, płodność i urodzaj przede wszystkim rozumiane są jako pożywienie i posiadanie potomstwa, co człowieka w epoce przywołanej w tym artykule zajmowało najbardziej, a wyrażał to za pośrednictwem różnego rodzaju przedstawień. Rzeźby powstałe właściwie na styku religii, obrzędów, medycznych zabiegów, z uwzględnieniem roli procesów psychicznych, mogą dowodzić, że u podstaw stworzenia postaci, od uczczenia których zależały pomyślne narodziny zdrowego dziecka, leży powszechny ludzki strach o potomstwo, w ogólności natomiast ewolucyjna potrzeba rozmnażania się, przedłużania gatunku, która także jest uniwersalna.



Fot 1. Przedstawienie tzw. Śri-Lakszmi, II w. n.e., Jamalpur, Mathura, National Museum Delhi (nr B.89)



Fot. 2. Posąg Naigameszy, II–III w. n.e., region Mathury, Government Museum Mathura (nr E.1)



Fot. 3. Terakotowa figurka jakszy, II w. p.n.e., Kaushambi, Allahabad Museum

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WHAT DID GROTOWSKI EXPERIENCE IN INDIA?

Abstract: The most creative period in the career of Jerzy Grotowski, one of the greatest theatre experimenters of contemporary times, was associated with the Laboratory Theatre in Wrocław. The inner that Grotowski experienced at some point in his life was prompted by his trip to India in the summer of 1970. As Peter Brook said in an interview, 'What Grotowski experienced in India had a fundamental significance for his life and understanding. There, he had profound experiences, which are difficult to talk about.' Eugenio Barba, Grotowski's theatre collaborator, one of his closest disciples and the founder of the Danish Odin theatre, wrote in his book: 'If today I were to define Grotowski's attitude throughout his entire active life, whether in theatre or on its periphery, I would adopt the Sanskrit term *sādhana* which is untranslatable into any European language and means simultaneously: spiritual quest, method and practice.' In the Indian tradition, there are two ways leading to liberation. Grotowski was interested in both different periods of his life. One of them relied on a classical *sādhana* and used yoga techniques to equip actors with a tool for transcending and reversing physiological processes. The other one built on tantrism through expression, movement, dance and singing. Grotowski's source and organic experiences were particularly inspired by the baul yogis, those rebels and 'fools for God.' In this chapter, I describe Grotowski's inner revolution and share my own feelings and experiences from meetings with Jerzy Grotowski, when I participated in his numerous para-theatrical projects between 1975 and 1981.

Keywords: Grotowski, Indian philosophy, universal sacred, yoga, theatre

1. Who was Jerzy Grotowski

Jerzy Grotowski is best known across the world as a theatre director and a reformer of the performing arts. However, he was not only man of the theatre. Any attempt to 'label' the creator of the unconventional 'poor theatre' and the man himself is superficial. Upon closer analysis, any classification

proves incomplete. A short biographical note below conveys the complexity of Grotowski and his work. His activities may be divided into three phases: the phase of theatrical performances, the phase of para-theatrical activities and the phase of individual pursuits.

Grotowski was born in Rzeszów in 1933. After completing his theatrical studies in Cracow and Moscow, he collaborated with Ludwik Flaszen to establish the avant-garde Theatre of 13 Rows in Opole in 1959. In the second half of the 1960s, he moved with his team to Wrocław and created the Laboratory Theatre. It was the time of his greatest international success associated with the performances of *Acropolis*, *The Constant Prince* and *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*.¹ In the 1970s, his para-theatrical period started, whose culminating point was marked by the Theatre of Sources. In 1982, he went to the US, where he continued his para-theatrical activities in academic circles and prepared for the phase focused on individual work with the 'actor.' In 1985, he founded the Centro di Lavoro di Jerzy Grotowski in Pontedera, where he worked until 1999.

In this chapter, however, I do not explore Grotowski's theatrical activities and work but focus on a significant transformation and peculiar change which he experienced after travelling to India in 1970. The problem with Grotowski is that it is impossible to precisely define his field of research, which can be described in various ways, depending on the stage of his life and work. During his first lecture as a newly appointed professor at the Collège de France, he introduced himself saying:

I am not a scholar or a researcher. Am I an artist? Probably yes. I am a craftsman in the field of human behaviour in meta-daily conditions... If I was to call himself an artist, he would define art as a form of mystic experience Art is the shape of cognition, the shape of cognition of the world from the point of view of its unity with ourselves, the cognition of our own selves from the point of view of our unity with the objective world... it is the manifestation of the cognition of the unity of one's own "separate" and transient "I" with the indivisible and infinite world; in a way it is the manifestation of the obliterated border...

¹ It is impossible to interpret Jerzy Grotowski without depicting the reality of communist Poland, in which he lived from 1945 to 1982. In particular, *Apocalypsis cum Figuris* was a performance, where was very uncomfortable to both state and the church authorities. On the one hand, Grotowski was seen as an initiator of an inner revolt and catharsis, which were so meaningful for the Polish youth in the 1960s and 1970s that pilgrimages of young people headed to him. On the other hand, he became a problem for the church hierarchs. The contraposition of Ciemny (The Dark) personifying the liminal holiness and Simon Peter representing the Catholic Church and the texts of *The Grand Inquisitor* by Dostoyevski was equal to the criticism of the church.

Further he said: ‘such an aspect of art hides the experience of the eternity, the overcoming of death, obviously in a purely lay, non-religious or even anti-religious way. It is eternity experienced in the present, without any hope for eternity...’ (Osiński 1997: 3).

In his book about Grotowski entitled *Guślarz i eremita (The Guslar and the Hermit)*, Grzegorz Ziółkowski lists multiple naming quotes many labels applicable to Grotowski (Ziółkowski 2007: 23). They may be divided into three categories. The mystic-religious group includes: heretic, ascetic, shaman, rational mystic, blasphemer, hermit, guslar and pantocrator. The social-political group includes: reformer, politician of apoliticism, therapist of healthy people, trickster, teacher, master and rebel. The theatre-anthropological group includes: craftsman, artist, leader, director, anthropologist and explorer (Ziółkowski 2007: 18), Ziółkowski concludes:

I believe that in the case of Grotowski, this soteriology in the vein of Gnosticism merged into one with the soteriology of Hindu yoga, which constitutes not only a system of beliefs but above all a precise tool for the execution of the idea of suspension time. Grotowski’s practices may therefore appear as drawing on yoga understood as restraining processes of consciousness, as well as a link to the transcendental reality (translation mine)² (Ziółkowski 2007: 23)

2. Fascination with India

As a ten-year-old child, Grotowski experienced rejection for his spiritual investigations³; he was also medically diagnosed as ‘a person with a specifically limited life expectancy.’⁴ This taught him that he had to pursue his search all by himself and that the time he had at his disposal was limited. He was interested in the philosophy of Far East. Being one ‘who searched for his home,’ he neither embraced grandiloquent descriptions of altered states of consciousness nor copied the Far Eastern practices. As a child, he was pondered important questions, he was aware of the reality in which he lived and worked, and he longed for the Far Eastern idea of self-realisation described by Paul Brunton:

² Grzegorz Ziółkowski in *Guślarz i eremita* (Ziółkowski 2007: 23) explicitly writes about Grotowski’s “camouflaged” way of following the path of *sadhana*.

³ His relationship with the Gospels is frequently cited and described as, on the one hand, full of fascination and, on the other, full of personal disappointment with Catholicism and the institution of the Catholic Church. In texts about himself, Grotowski often goes back to his childhood and the village of Niedanówka, revisiting the traumatic experience of being beaten by a local priest for excessive interest in the Gospel.

⁴ As a child he was told by a doctor that due to a certain condition his lifespan would be limited.

My mother went to town; she either walked by herself, or walked with someone, or drove; anyway she brought back a book entitled *A Search in Secret India*, which was written by Brunton, an English journalist. He wrote about people he had met in India, and in particular about a certain peculiar man who would have been called a fool of God in our civilisation; the man lived on the side of Mt Arunchala, which is believed to be sacred, the Hill of the Flame; his name was Maharishi. He had a peculiar habit: he would ask the same question of everybody who wanted to know what was important in life or what could make life meaningful or what was important in general; his question was: 'Who are you?' But the question was asked in the first person singular, so he would say ask himself: 'Who Am I?' ... Almost by coincidence, I happened to arrive at the village of Tiruwannamali, where the man described by Brunton lived. The memory of this man, the mountain and the place had the feel of coming back to something source-like, to a familiar land. I did not recover my sentiment to the question 'Who?' But I kept all my heart for the man who used to ask this question, for his life, for his courage to break with everything that we might consider classifiable as ordinary (translation mine).⁵

It is tempting to present Grotowski's very personal fascination with Indian philosophy and yoga. I will depict it on the basis of his biography, texts, lectures and statements, and in doing so I will also refer to my personal talks with Grotowski.

Since childhood, I've been interested in various 'psychophysical' techniques. In fact, when I was nine years old, my first point of reference were great personages associated with Hindu techniques... Fever was my first reaction to Brunton's story. Later, I started to re-write the talks of this fool for God with his visitors. Then, I discovered that I was not such a misfit as I had initially thought. I discovered that somewhere out there in the world there were people who were aware of a certain strange, uncommon capacity and deeply dedicated to it..., whatever I am saying is already rationalisation; and even if everything that happened under the influence of the story about the old man from Mt Arunachala opened a new horizon in front of me, paradoxically it concurrently served my need of self-importance, the development of my great ego. Anyway, that was the starting point for me to really make an effort and ask the question 'Who am I?' This was not a question on the level of the mind, but rather heading gradually closer to the source from which this 'I' originated. (Grotowski 1987: 102–115).

For the ten-year-old Grotowski, Sri Ramana Maharishi from Mt Arunachala was, in a way, the model of an ideal sage. He had favourable inspiration for that, including not only Brunton's book and the gospel, but

⁵ Bonarski 1975.

also Buddhist texts and Renan's *The Life of Jesus* (which was blacklisted by the Catholic Church back then). As a teenager, he read the Quaran and the Zohar (some passages of which he memorised). He was interested in the Old Testament, especially in the stories of Job, Ezekiel and Jacob, and in the tradition of Judaism, including Baal Shem Tov, Hasidic Jews, and texts by Martin Buber. As he wrote: '... in a way I started my own research when I was still a young man, almost alone... I continued this work for years, but after all it was still almost my personal work' (Grotowski 1987: 102–115). He remembered a constructive dispute with the priest Franciszek Tokarz and his contacts with the Sanskrit scholar Helena Willman-Grabowska and the Indologist, Maria Krzysztof Byrski at the 'Jagiellonka' (i.e. the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow).

3. The Mystic Journey to the East

Peter Brook, a famous English theatre and film director, knew and admired Grotowski before his meaningful journey to India. In an interview after Grotowski's Indian trip, Brook said: 'There, he had profound experiences, which are difficult to talk about' (Brook 2007). This subject may have been challenging to discuss back then, but today it is certainly worthwhile to inquire: What did Grotowski experience in India? In his text entitled 'Droga' ('The Road'), Grotowski expressed his mythical journey:

For me, in a longer perspective, all this is related to the concept of a journey to the East. It is not about a trip to India, to Tibet or to Japan. In our language, there is this unusual interconnectedness of the direction and the beginning: the geographical East ['wschód geograficzny'] and the sunrise ['wschód słońca']. A journey to the East is a journey to the rising, to the beginning. But it is also literally a journey (Grotowski 2012: 1119, translation mine).

As part of the Journey to the East, Grotowski discusses in more detail? 'an action on the road,' which does not refer to performing or repeating certain events in a symbolic space, premeditated and happening in a defined and agreed time, but to an actual road, 'literally during the journey on the road and totally in the one-off literality of human actions' (Grotowski, 1980: 10).

The journey to the East began to gain currency not only as a metaphor but also as a real project developed the 'younger part of the Laboratory Theatre.' It was launched in the post-theatrical phase, which was interrupted by the imposition of martial law in Poland. (Osiński 1993: 143).

Grotowski himself went on several 'Journeys to the East' (referring to the texts by Herman Hesse and Carl Gustav Jung) in a very real, and not

merely metaphorical, sense.⁶ He was familiar with all the key countercultural texts of the day and read the writings of Sri Ramana Maharishi and Sri Aurobindo. In the summer of 1970, he made a meaningful trip to India from which he returned thoroughly transformed, not only physically but also spiritually. Kazimierz Grotowski, Jerzy Grotowski's brother, related the Indian journey of 1970 (Zmarz-Koczanowicz, 1999), when Grotowski alone joined two sadhus wandering from temple to temple, equipped only with a begging bowl, to experience what asceticism meant in the Hindu guest for spirituality.⁷ Raymonde Temkine (Zmarz-Koczanowicz 1999) the author of the first book about Grotowski in French says:

I think that it was in India that he found what he was looking for. He met someone, a being/an individual?, a spiritual leader, one may say. There was something in him that longed for such a type of spirituality... Something happened in him; he was in India and a transformation took place (Zmarz-Koczanowicz 1999).

The change was visible not only in the way he dressed but also in the way he looked: he lost weight and grew long hair and a beard. His relations with people changed as well. He morphed from a demanding and formalist theatre manager into a community member who sought to be on personal terms even with newly met people. Most interestingly for his theatrical work, he started to talk about 'opening' to the 'post-theatrical' period, and he embarked on the project of building the utopia of 'a non-existent world,' a place for which he longed. Shortly after the trip to India which proved a turning point for him, he was interviewed by the *Teatr* monthly (1972: 17–20), where he said:

An encounter with the East, not in a theatrical sense, but in a wider human context, seems to be crucial by itself. Someone put it very nicely, let me quote: 'A European who has never seen India is like a man who has been raised in an institution for boys for all his life and has never seen a girl...' and immediately he added: 'Anyway, I can see a certain threat: Europeans sometimes go to the East to become "people of the East." As such, it is an absurd misconception in and of itself' (translation mine).

In his very private way and at his own cost, Grotowski tested the power of Indian spirituality in what was a confrontation with his private 'yoga.' He wanted to implement what he had found so meaningful in Brunton's

⁶ First, in the 1960s, Grotowski visited the ashram of Father Griffiths, among other places.

⁷ Among the places visited on the trip to India, the book by James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta lists the place of Ramakrishna worship, Bodh Gaya — the site of Buddha's enlightenment, or the meeting with the Mother from Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo's life partner.

book. Certainly, it was not about arranging his life into any copy or imitation of the masters who ‘learned it from experience’ as he mentioned during his lecture at the Collège de France when talking about Sri Ramana Maharishi.⁸ Zbigniew Osiniński insist that ‘without the context of India, Grotowski is unbearable’ (Soszyński, 2009). Leszek Kolankiewicz shares a similar opinion about a ‘radiating Grotowski’ though his point of reference is provided by Carl Gustav Jung and his concept of individuation.⁹

4. Towards a Search for the Universal Sacred

The centre in Brzezinka¹⁰ was an upshot of Grotowski’s Indian transformation. It fostered a special atmosphere for working outside of any theatre building, and, to a certain degree, it was to serve as a substitute of India. It was a forest theatre centre which became an ‘ashram.’ Rena Mirecka and Tomasz Rodowicz, who collaborated with Grotowski on the development of the Theatre of Sources, remember the extraordinary character of this place. As they phrase it, once you crossed the gate, ‘mystery opened up.’ The Baul yogi Abani Biswas and his group, who were invited from Calcutta to teach the work with voice, addressed Grotowski as ‘Joyguru’ and compared him to a guru or an Indian monk. Brook recalls the moment when Grotowski, aged 30 at the time, revealed his great nostalgia: ‘Before dying, I would like to transcend forms, forms of life, and to live what is beyond’ (Brook, 2007: 67). Brook writes about the fundamental significance of India for Grotowski’s life, including the symbolic meaning of his death and as a warning against imitation.¹¹ Grotowski’s activities in Brzezinka were designed for him to see and test how much intensive ‘spatial yoga’ would quench the discursive mind and enable

⁸ The lecture, which took place on 26th January 1998, was Grotowski’s last public appearance.

⁹ Grotowski’s personal interests were essentially informed by the work of Jung, yoga treatises, the pursuits of George Gurdjieff and Hasidic Judaism. These are canonical sources which also affected his para-theatrical work. I realise that these are only interpretative clues. Problems appear when they are adopted as the only context in for his life, both personal and theatrical.

¹⁰ Brzezinka, the forest base of the Grotowski Institute, close to Oleśnica, 40 kilometres from Wrocław.

¹¹ One of the most important questions asked by Peter Brook concerns relinquishing meaningless imitation of things that, though relevant in one culture, lose their pertinence in another cultural setting. “I have seen extraordinary rituals in India which I described with enthusiasm to my friends. Three months later, I saw them in England during an Indian festival. Gestures were the same but everything looked pathetic.” Similarly to Grotowski, Stanislawski and Osterwa, the purpose of Brook’s explorations was to find “rituals and gestures” of his own (Brook 2007: 61–62).

the consciousness to remain neutral. Simultaneously, Grotowski would find out to what extent he was able to achieve this expected state as a participant.

In the undertaking of the Theatre of Sources, we do not ask ourselves the famous question how to stop the stream of our mind, which is a bizarre melange of thoughts, memories, dreams, images, feelings and fantasies. When looking at one's self from the outside, I cannot really know if one has stopped this stream, but I can see that they are silent. External silence, if you maintain it, will bring you closer to your internal silence. (Grotowski 2012: 758)

As a participant in many of Grotowski's para-theatrical projects, my fundamental question back then was: Is the silence of the mind really the core of these activities? I have no doubt that those 'archaic techniques' included techniques inspired by Indian yoga, with which he had been familiar since his youth. At the same time, however, they exceeded what yoga could be when specifically defined as a methodology for approaching the sacred. In his last period, Grotowski became interested in Meister Eckhart and the Gospel of Thomas, but it was not due to any religious reasons. Rather, he identified his own eternal nostalgia in Eckhart's perverse mystic atheism; he noticed its link to *advaita*, the Vedanta school founded by Shankara. Was it finally possible to fulfil his childhood longing to have the two 'cradles'—the mysticism of Christianity and Hinduism — united?¹²

5. Personal *Sādhana*?

What did Grotowski experience in India in the memorable year of 1970? That he did experience something special is unquestionable. The mythical 'East,' which had permeated his life, became real, and the *sādhana* for which he had longed was verified in practice. He wanted to be 'his whole self,' and it was at that special moment in his life that he grasped and understood what this meant for him (Osiński, 2014). While we will probably never learn how much the journey mattered to him, the available written evidence and the living witnesses of his philosophy of life suggest that the following of its aspects were special to him:

- he experienced something that had kept him engrossed since childhood and felt a sense of "coming back to something source-like, to a familiar land;"
- he felt admiration and he truly had "all his heart for the man" who had inspired him to also ask himself 'Who am I?';
- he experienced a unique inner rebellion, an equivalent of the 'courage to break with everything that we might consider classifiable as ordinary.'

¹² Grotowski wanted to have his body cremated after death and his ashes to be spread on the slopes of sacred Mt Arunachala in South India.

Eugenio Barba, the founder of the Danish Odin Teatret wrote in his book:

If today I were to define Grotowski's attitude throughout his entire active life, whether in theatre or on its periphery, I would adopt the Sanskrit term *sādhana* which is untranslatable into any European language and means simultaneously: spiritual quest, method and practice. (Barba 1999: 55)

In one of his presentations, Jerzy Grotowski said:

You keep asking about my reason for such a great interest in the East, about my opinion about yoga or zen. Since early childhood, I have been interested in all kinds of liberating techniques. Liberating from what? From the conditioning by circumstances and time. This interest was prompted by an inborn curiosity, and also a quite clear awareness that the time I'd been given was very limited. However, when I talk about liberation from conditioning, I do not mean anything mystical or mysterious; quite the contrary, I mean something exceptionally simple, something that could be called the economy of attention. We almost always live in the past or in the future; through either resentment or a dream, sadness about having lost something or fear of something that is ahead of us. Paradoxically, liberation means living in what is now. It is all about the ultimate simplicity of being, de-conditioned being, being at the peak of one's capacities. This has always been the utmost temptation for me, due to curiosity when I was young, and now because of my age, to avoid being lukewarm? To be my full self. (Barba 2001: 21)

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