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Introduction

It is perhaps fair to say that in Indology textual criticism is often prac-
ticed without much theoretical background. Just as most scholars of
Indology translate texts without being experts on theories of transla-
tion, textual criticism is often viewed as something to be learned by
practice rather than from reading about it. As Housman said:[1]

> A man who possesses common sense and the use of reason must not
> expect to learn from treatises or lectures on textual criticism anything
> that he could not, with leisure and industry, find out for himself.

In fact, both translating and editing are something most Indologists
have learned in a pragmatic way through examples from within the field,
and some have managed to become quite good at it. And even if this
acknowledgement may deter the reader from continuing, in most cases
this approach is sufficient. The reason is that many, perhaps most, deci-
sions in textual criticism are made through selecting the "better read-
ing", a reading that is within the reach of the editor who knows the most
about the author, his times, the literary conventions of his time and so
forth, but not necessarily arrived at by the one who has read widely on
textual criticism. There are, however, two reasons for combining theory
and practice: first, not all texts can be treated with the pragmatic ap-
proach; and second, without background, we are unable to understand
the wider implications of editorial decisions, or explain the method's
rationale when it is criticized from a theoretical angle.

However, as soon as we forage for views on textual criticism in other
academic disciplines, we are likely to end up in considerable interdisci-
plinary confusion. There is not only a bewildering variety of methods
tailored to types of texts ("Textsorten"), but also a multitude of differ-
ent schools with irreconcilable approaches. The unsuspecting textual
critic who reads beyond the boundaries of their own area is about to
open a can of worms. The approach in one subject does not tally with
that of another; some strands of anglophone textual criticism, for ex-
ample, hardly share a common frame of reference with German textual

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[1] J. Diggle – F.R.G. Goodyear (ed.), *The Classical Papers of A.E. Housman*. Vol. 3.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, p. 1058.

criticism.[2] In this situation there are different escape routes: one is to ignore theory and continue pragmatically. Another is to differentiate between disciplines, especially between classical philology and modern philologies, which is usually done in both camps. As a consequence the theories current, e.g., in modern Germanic studies, where the basis of textual work are autographs and printed editions prepared by the authors themselves, have almost no impact on the criticism of classical Greek and Latin works that survive in manuscripts several hundred years removed from the author's lifetime and vice versa. The studies of Indian and European literature differ from each other, however, with regard to the boundaries between classical and modern as well as with regard to the role of the printed book in textual criticism.

Unless one decides to adhere to the pragmatic approach, there is no alternative to studying methods from other disciplines and determining whether they can be applied to the various fields of Indology. The former is within the reach of everyone willing to skim through large quantities of literature, but for the latter, that is, for testing whether one or the other method actually works, one has to record the experiences of practitioners of textual criticism in different Indological fields. This is one of the purposes of the present volume.

Text-critical Methods

Once we read more widely on the topic, we find that textual criticism within Indology has lived in a kind of splendid isolation. Criticisms of the method are usually not taken into account, and one often follows the genealogical method or takes an entirely pragmatic approach without further ado. Often it is attempted in an edition to draw up a *stemma codicum* through determining shared error according to the lines of the brief, but influential handbook by Paul Maas.[3] This manual is commonly held to contain the essence of Lachmann's prestigious method, whose name, however, is not even mentioned in the book.[4] The reason may be that there is considerable confusion about Lachmann's actual method. To put it briefly: we expect the Lachmannian editor to collate a large number of manuscripts, excluding only the few apographs of available manuscripts, to establish a stemma, and finally to select read-

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[2] See, for instance, Martin-Dietrich Gleßgen – Franz Lebsanft (ed.), *Alte und neue Philologie*. [*Beihefte zu Editio* 8]. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1997.

[3] Paul Maas, *Textkritik*. Leipzig: Teubner, ⁴1960.

[4] See the review by Giorgio Pasquali in *Gnomon* 5 (1929) 417-435 and 498-521.

ings by using the information gained from the stemma. However, as practised by Lachmann and his immediate followers, the method implied the exclusion of all contaminated or "interpolated" manuscripts, and the test of contamination did not necessarily involve a complete collation.[5] Thus a considerable number of manuscripts – in the case of Latin this usually meant all humanist ones – were excluded on comparatively weak grounds and the editor was left with a very moderate number of remaining sources from which he had to select his readings; in some cases he was left with two or even one manuscript! The widespread reference to "Lachmann's method" in literature on textual criticism is the result of a historical misunderstanding, for which Bédier, the most influential critic of Lachmann, seems to have been responsible.[6] For this reason, if we speak of stemmatics we mean the method that was described by Maas including its later modifications.

Naturally even the briefest possible description of the methods of textual criticism would by far exceed the length allowed for this introduction, so I shall merely give an overview. First, there are the stemmatic methods: the classical one, where agreement in significant scribal error is used to determine the relationship between extant manuscripts, which are arranged into a genealogical tree. This tree is then used as a tool for the constitution of the text by assigning more value to certain patterns of agreement in readings. Stemmatics has also demonstrated that criteria such as the age of manuscripts or the number of manuscripts preserving a certain reading can be dismissed.

Historically, stemmatics was an important development within textual criticism, but according to Maas it could work only under the assumption that the author wrote exactly one version of the work, that no scribe copied from more than one manuscript, and that the scribes did not try to correct mistakes. Otherwise we would be faced not only with variants produced in the course of transmission, but also with variants introduced by the author himself; or manuscripts would not agree in error in regular patterns because learned scribes emended their texts, thus effacing the true relationships. These phenomena are usually subsumed under "contamination". Here adherents of stemmatics did not follow Maas. In cases where contamination is not too strong, it is still

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[5] For the method and terminology, see Sebastiano Timpanaro, *Die Entstehung der Lachmannschen Methode*. Hamburg: Buske, 1971.

[6] On Lachmann's Method cf. P.L. Schmidt, On the History of a Misunderstanding. In: A.C. Dionisotti et al. (ed.), *The Uses of Greek and Latin*. Historical Essays. [*Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts* 16]. London: The Warburg Institute, 1988, p. 233.

possible to create a stemma.[7] In cases where no significant scribal errors can be detected, patterns of agreement in plausible readings are used instead of significant scribal errors to create a stemma,[8] although this departure from the common-error method is itself in need of theoretical justification. Some of these methods have been enriched with recent computer-based statistical methods from biology, which are the topic of two contributions to this volume.[9]

A further complication arises once we dare to look at modern philologies. In classical studies the author is in some sense negligible, for his text has been taken from him by his readers and has for some time lived a life of its own. All we can attempt to do is to try to understand the author and produce a text most faithful to his presumed intentions. Human error is inevitable in this endeavour and the claim to objectivity in editing a text is no less problematic than in understanding it. However, in modern philologies dealing with more recent authors, authorial intention is not just something to be inferred from their works. Sometimes the authors' struggles with their works, with the correctors and with the publishers are well documented. In the best, or perhaps worst cases, large archives permit the editor to reconstruct every tiny correction made by the author in the long course of working on the text. Sometimes there exists a multitude of editions, all seen and corrected by the author, in which the influence of publishers, or of censorship, can be studied. The various sources are all authorized and most probably all are slightly, or sometimes decisively, different. Thus in modern philologies the task of the editor is by no means easier; it is only different and raises questions of a more fundamental nature. For instance, is it desirable for the editor to honour the express wish of the poet to print the last version of a given work? This was, for instance, done in the famous Weimar edition of the works of Goethe. However, the versions the author had revised in his last years were not those read, praised and criticized by his contemporaries, which are therefore more interesting from a historical point of

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[7]   In Classical Studies there seems to be the consensus that despite the omnipresence of contamination, it is still possible to produce a stemma: "In den letzten Jahrzehnten sind die Überlieferungsverhältnisse vieler Texte durch arbeitsinternsive Untersuchungen geklärt worden, wodurch immer deutlicher wird, daß Kontamination verschiedener Stränge fast überall die Regel ist. Trotz dieser Schwierigkeiten kann bei vielen Texten ein glaubwürdiges Stemma konstruiert werden" (Joseph Delz, Textkritik und Editionstechnik. In: Fritz Graf [ed.], *Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie*. Stuttgart – Leipzig: Teubner, 1997, p. 58).

[8]   See Martin L. West, *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique*. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973, p. 46f.

[9]   See the papers by Philipp A. Maas and Wendy J. Phillips-Rodriguez et al.

view. Thus in the case of literary works, the first unrevised edition might be preferable to later ones, unless one wishes to produce a genetic edition that documents all stages of correction, which – as one may imagine – is quite unreadable.

It is easy for the classical editor to dismiss these discussions as irrelevant, and to argue that if there are variants that go back to the author, they are likely to remain undetected in the many variants or corrections that were introduced in the course of the transmission of the work. A recent introduction to textual criticism even claims that it is unlikely that variants or versions that might go back to the author have been preserved.[10]

Once one has read a certain amount on the history of the transmission of more recent works, as Pasquali did, one starts to wonder whether this is true. Of course, we may for our own reassurance assume that classical authors worked exactly as Horace advised his student in the Ars poetica,[11] namely to keep the text secret for a few years, before presenting it to his readership, but it would be unrealistic to assume that all authors in antiquity worked in this way; if they had, his admonition would not have been necessary in the first place.

The text-genealogical method works on the assumption that an author wrote exactly one text and that he did not care to revise it, or that according to the advice of Horace, he kept his continually revised text secret until publication (i.e., until he allowed the autograph to be copied) and destroyed all previous versions. It is true that some authors worked in this way: Some destroyed previous versions once the works were printed, but Goethe, for example, kept almost all of his in a large archive, which has survived to the present day. In view of the wide-spread occurrence of author variants in modern, that is, better documented times, it is not unrealistic to assume that some ancient authors worked like Goethe and kept record of how they developed their work. Furthermore, according to Pasquali, a plausible scenario for the "publication" of works is the following: an author composed and wrote down or dictated his work and permitted reproduction of his own copy. Not all authors died afterwards or lost interest in their work, leaving us with a single autograph without variants. Some authors may have added corrections in the margins, or copied a revised version. If we assume that the text was copied by the author in different stages of its development, every

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[10] Josef Delz, op. cit. (n. 7), p. 59.
[11] Verses 389f. See David R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), *Q. Horati Flacci opera*. Stutgardiae: Teubner, 1995.

text could be slightly different and all variants at that stage would be authorial variants; the final copy of the author would contain the last version, which – as we have seen – is not necessarily the definite one. In other words, we could have the same problem as the new philologist, but we are unlikely to notice it. At least in classical philology we have certain indications that this scenario is not as unlikely as it may seem to some critics.[12]

SANSKRIT TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Most scholars, when asked about the origin of textual criticism in Indology, would point to classical studies and the fact that the first editors, at least in the West, were trained in classical philology and most likely applied these methods to Sanskrit texts. It is possible to find an explicit statement supporting this by one of the first textual critics of Sanskrit, August Wilhelm Schlegel, who, with his editions of the Bhagavadgītā and parts of the Rāmāyaṇa, was instrumental in forming Indian philology in the early nineteenth century. Schlegel had studied classical philology under C.G. Heyne and later extended his interests to English, Italian, Spanish and eventually Sanskrit literature, where he finally felt confident that he would not – as he once wrote to Goethe[13] – run out of new material.

The method Schlegel employed in dealing with his textual material is hardly known, since studies about early textual criticism are dominated by Lachmann's stemmatical or text-genealogical method and its critics. The stemmatical approach is usually perceived as a transition from pre-scientific textual criticism – as practiced from antiquity – to an objective and verifiable method, and as a result the methods of earlier textual critics have been left almost unstudied.

Some of the modern critics[14] of textual criticism in South Asian Studies seem to assume that the first generation of Sanskritists adopted Lachmann's "objective" method. There are indeed even personal connections between Schlegel and Lachmann. Both had studied in Göttingen, and

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[12] Hilarius Emonds, *Zweite Auflage im Altertum*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1941.

[13] "Solchergestalt hatte ich die europäische Literatur gewissermaßen erschöpft, und wandte mich nach Asien, um ein neues Abenteuer aufzusuchen. Ich habe es glücklich damit getroffen: für die späteren Jahre des Lebens ist es eine erheiternde Beschäftigung, Rätsel aufzulösen, und hier habe ich nicht zu besorgen, daß mir der Stoff ausgehen möchte" (1.11.1824; see Edgar Lohner [ed.], *August Wilhelm Schlegel. Kritische Schriften und Briefe*. Vol. 7. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1974, p. 179).

[14] See below p. ##, note 33.

they were in contact over rival plans to edit the Nibelungenlied, which Lachmann eventually carried out, while Schlegel remained preoccupied with Sanskrit studies. What is usually forgotten is that Lachmann, twenty-six years younger and having studied in Göttingen some time after Schlegel, formulated the text-genealogical method in connection with his edition of Lukrez in 1850; Schlegel had died already in 1845. Therefore, if we wish to investigate the practice of textual criticism in early Indology, we have to look at its pre-Lachmannian phase. The task turns out to be more difficult than expected: There are not many hints in existing studies, and to infer Schlegel's text-critical method, or that of his immediate students, through the scanty remarks in their editions, has never been attempted.

A preliminary approach would be to look at the methodological sources that Schlegel would have known. One such work is Griesbach's introduction to his edition of the Greek New Testament.[15] Griesbach taught theology at the University of Jena and was a colleague of Schlegel's in the last years of the eighteenth century. His editorial maxims have never been dealt with in detail in text-critical works, the only exception being a Spanish overview of text-critical methods for theologians;[16] the maxims are mainly a convenient summary of text-critical principles current at the time, and some of them were formulated by much earlier authorities. Lachmann was well aware of these so-called "inner criteria" but rejected them as contradictory, in favour of his objective method for which no subjective judgment (*recensio sine interpretatione*) was supposed to be required.

It seems that from these principles only the preference for the *lectio difficilior* made it into text-critical modernity, and even there reliance on it is sometimes rejected as too dangerous. Nevertheless, some of the other principles are also still used without the editor being aware of this. For instance, an uncommon reading is often preferred, or an offensive reading. These would be the *lectio insolentior* and *lectio impior*, respectively, in Griesbach. Of course, none of these principles can be followed mechanically; uncommon readings can be just wrong, but they are useful as guidelines for forming one's own judgement in a specific case. Lachmann's unrealistic claim to objectivity may have pushed the earlier literature on the subject out of sight, but, as we can see, there still

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[15] *Libri Historici Novi Testamenti Graece*. Pars prior [...] Emendavit et lectionis varietatem adiecit Io. Iac. Griesbach. Halae, apud Io. Iac. Curt. 1774, Praefatio, p. xv-xi.

[16] See Friedrich Stegmüller, La Edición de las obras latinas de Ramón Lull, *Estudios Lullianos* 5 (1961) 223-226.

remains an astonishing continuity. Most interesting for Sanskritists is Srinivasan's principle formulated in §1.4.5.11 in his methodological introduction to his edition of the Sāṃkhyatattvakaumudī:[17]

> Liegen zu eine Stelle Wort- oder Formvarianten vor, von denen eine in einem anderen, aber benachbarten Kontext einheitlich überliefert steht, dann ist die Variante, die mit der einheitlich überlieferten übereinstimmt, durch unwillkürliche Ausdrucksvereinheitlichung von Seiten der Überlieferer entstanden.

This principle can be traced to one passage in a work by the theologian Johann Jakob Wettstein (1693-1754) which was reformulated by Griesbach[18] and quoted by Pasquali, one of Srinivasan's sources – an interesting instance of continuity of text-critical practice in spite of Lachmann.

Finally, we should explain how these "inner criteria" fit into the larger framework of textual criticism. This is an important point likely to be forgotten in the study of theories of textual criticism. In all methods in which any choice between variants is made, that is, in almost all methods except Bédier's according to which the "best manuscript" should be printed without changes, only some of the readings can be determined by external methods, that is, through a stemma. However, in a sometimes considerable number of cases decisions have to be made according to "inner criteria", in which case the editor has to judge the intrinsic value of all variants. It is misleading to term this procedure "Kontaminationskritik" because even in uncontaminated recensions the editor has to depend on this method for selecting variants between stemmatic branches of equal weight. Here knowledge of the pre-Lachmannian principles may be of some help, for they alert editors to phenomena they are likely to encounter. However, in actual practice in the classics, as Fränkel says,[19] editors did not even try to select the original reading in reliance on any criteria, but followed a "Leithandschrift" wherever possible. This is in some respect similar to the earlier humanists' *emendatio ope codicum* and the American copy-text theory. One text

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[17] Srinivasa Ayya Srinivasan, *Vācaspatimiśras Tattvakaumudī. Ein Beitrag zur Textkritik bei kontaminierter Überlieferung.* [*Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien* 12]. Hamburg: Cram, De Gruyter & Co., 1967, p. 36.

[18] "Ubi ex duabus variantibus lectionibus una totidem iisdemque verbis exprimitur atque in alio Scripturarum loco eadem sententia expressa legitur, altera vero discrepantibus, illa huic nequaquam praeferenda est" (quoted by Giorgio Pasquali, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo.* Firenze: Casa Editrice le Lettere, 1988, p. 11f.).

[19] Hermann Fränkel, *Einleitung zur kritischen Ausgabe der Argonautika des Appolonius.* [*Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse* 55]. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964, p. 131.

version is followed and only in cases of obvious corruption does one decide to read with another source.[20]

As far as I can see, Sanskritists often did better: They were attempting to include all possible sources even around the time when Lachmann was trying to eliminate as many manuscripts as possible, and to weigh individual readings. As stated, Lachmann published his famous edition of Lukrez in 1850, but two years before Kosegarten edited the Pañcatantra based on no less than eleven manuscripts.[21]

Of course, Sankritists have also used stemmatics wherever feasible, have developed criteria especially for complicated recensions and used even Bédier's best manuscript method when others failed, as in the case of editing certain Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit texts.[22] Sanskritists have also, despite all reservations voiced in classical philology, attempted to prove that an author may have published more than one version of his work – as Paul Harrison recently has with regard to Śāntideva's Śikṣāsamuccaya.[23] There are therefore various reasons not only for Sanskritists to study textual criticism in other disciplines, but also for those disciplines to learn more about textual criticism in Sanskrit. Textual criticism in Indology predates Lachmann, and has developed its own methods to deal with widely diverse types of transmissions.

Textual Criticism as practiced in Indology

Thus, while there is not too much in the way of a special theory of textual criticism in Indology, there is a great deal to be learned about how it is and how it was practised. The collecting of practical examples was

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[20] See also Schmidt (loc. cit. [n. 6]), who maintains that the practice of a rigorous *eliminatio* of the majority of manuscripts "seems to have been the rule, not the exception".

[21] *Pantschatantrum sive Quinquepartitum de moribus exponens, ex codicibus manuscriptis edidit commentariis criticis auxit* Io. Godofr. Ludov. Kosegarten. Pars prima. Bonnae: Koenig, 1848, p. ivff.

[22] Cf. Oskar von Hinüber, Der vernachlässigte Wortlaut. Die Problematik der Herausgabe buddhistischer Sanskrit-Texte. In: Kurt Gärtner – Hans-Henrik Krummacher (ed.), *Zur Überlieferung, Kritik und Edition alter und neuerer Texte*. [*Abhandlungen der geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur* 2000/2]. Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur – Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000, p. 17-36.

[23] Paul Harrison, The Case of the Vanishing Poet: New Light on Śāntideva and the Śikṣāsamuccaya. In: Konrad Klaus – Jens-Uwe Hartmann (ed.), *Indica et Tibetica*. Festschrift für Michael Hahn. Zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden und Schülern überreicht. [*Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde* 66]. Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 2007, p. 215-248.

the idea behind the panel "Textgenealogie, Textkritik und Editionstechnik in der Indologie" at the 30th Deutscher Orientalistentag held September 24-28, 2007, in Freiburg. The organizers are grateful to the editors of the *WZKS* for the opportunity to present the results in a regular number of their journal.[24]

Most of the articles collected might demonstrate to the general reader that the main problems and methodological solutions in textual criticism are specific to Indological studies, but in fact many parallels can be found in other disciplines. For instance, Anna Aurelia Esposito analyses the transmission of the famous group of Keralite drama manuscripts, also called "the Trivandrum plays". In her criticism of the first edition by Gaṇapati Śāstrī, she tackles the complicated issues of South Indian palaeography and Prakrit orthography, in which grammatical variants turn out to be also orthographic variants. Her conclusion is that standardization of spelling should be avoided in critical editions of Prakrit texts since supposed writing mistakes may actually be original forms or historically appropriate spellings. The problems faced by an editor of Prakrit texts, as of some Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit texts, are comparable to those encountered when one deals with many medieval texts in European philologies, where intervention or standardization on the part of the editor is best minimized.

Another matter of enormous practical value for all disciplines is that of the selection of manuscripts. When the number of manuscripts of a text exceeds a certain margin, the process of editing is considerably impaired. Not only are the chances of completing editions of such works quite low due to the dwindling resources allotted to editorial projects, but the text-critical work itself, which aims at a systematic reduction of possible readings, is also quite slow. Formerly in such cases the radical exclusion of manuscripts and the unacknowledged practice of following a "Leithandschrift" were the pragmatic way out, but this of course amounts to a failure of textual criticism itself.

In this context Cristina Pecchia's in-depth look at the question of the utility of manuscripts is very useful. She goes beyond the common practice of the elimination of apographs to an assessment of the possibilities of excluding, for instance, contaminated manuscripts in complicated recensions.

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[24] Instead of Yasutaka Muroya's contribution to the panel ("On the Kerala Version of the Nyāyabhāṣya: An Inquiry into the Textual Transmission") a related article of his was included by the editors of the *WZKS*.

As is well known, Pasquali rejected Maas' rule regarding the identification and elimination of apographs. Moreover, he stated that sometimes the external condition of a manuscript alone is sufficient to prove its dependence on another witness. An example for this would be Stanislav Jager's analysis of the transmission of two poems composed by the Kashmirian author Ratnakaṇṭha, for which two manuscripts are available. Here text-critical matters should be straightforward, and the application of Maas' rule that a manuscript which has all the errors of another manuscript plus at least one of its own can be excluded as an apograph, should lead to the elimination of the second manuscript. In the case discussed by Jager, this is contradicted by the palaeographic evidence, which shows the opposite dependence. Here the scribe of the apograph clearly did not use additional sources, but emended the text carefully and sensibly.

It is of course the dilemma of textual criticism that at least in theory it works best on a tradition with uneducated transmitters, where error simply accumulates. However, it would be pure wishful thinking to assume that after the publication of a perfect authorized text all subsequent transmitters committed only mistakes. It may seem to us so, because it is the failures we detect, while intelligent redactors mostly remain invisible. Very often in Indian texts we have versions that might have gone through a sophisticated redaction: these are the influential text versions of commentators.

An example of the critical editing of a philosophical text for which commentaries play an important role is found in Birgit Kellner's study of the Pramāṇavārttika. She demonstrates how secondary information on the process of the acquisition of manuscripts, their transcription, etc., can be utilized for making the best use of an important previous edition. Here the situation is further complicated by the external testimony of Tibetan translations – a complex, but not unusual constellation in Indo-Tibetan textual criticism.

It is not unusual that an older edition is deficient in many respects, mostly in the reporting of variants, but at the same time invaluable as being our only link to sources that are not available any longer. The assessment of the method, quality and reliability of the older edition is an important preliminary step for the production of a new edition. Takahiro Kato gives such a critical assessment of the unpublished edition of Bhāskara's commentary on the Brahmasūtra by van Buitenen, which only recently resurfaced.

Three articles present case studies concerning extremely popular Sanskrit texts with an extensive or even pan-Indian manuscript distribution. Here an analysis of selected portions with methods developed in evolutionary biology has become an interesting alternative to conventional stemmatical methods. The application of phylogenetic software to research into the history of textual transmissions raises a number of wide-ranging questions, as for instance: Are we still construing a stemma through the common-error method? Can the principle of bifurcation that is applied by the phylogenetic software invalidate the results? Wendy Phillips-Rodriguez et al. examine these questions. She and her co-authors analyze a phylogram created with data from the Mahābhārata textual tradition by using the "neighbour-joining" method. Philipp Maas applies the "parsimony" principle to the transmission of the Carakasaṃhitā and shows how the interaction of conventional text-critical methods, i.e. detailed discussion of variants, with computer-aided cladistic analysis, may enable us to reconstruct underlying stemmata even in cases of contamination. Pascale Haag tackles the opening portion of an extremely important and popular text, the Kāśikāvṛtti, once thought to reveal no significant variation, but which actually, in the very definition of the basics of Pāṇinian grammar, holds surprising variants.

Reinhold Grünendahl has taken pains to discuss in detail some postcolonial deconstructions of textual criticism. One would rather prefer to ignore these positions as being unfounded and even absurd, but they have become so fashionable as to endanger a thorough study of South Asian texts. It is to the merit of Grünendahl's contribution that he shows how a number of postcolonial positions defame philological work as being fascistic and thereby radically deny the academic legitimacy of philological work.

The articles collected here show an enormous breadth of approaches suited to individual cases, but not without taking into account general principles, which apply to most, if not all, facets of textual criticism. What is lacking is perhaps an analysis of these basic principles on a wider scale, but Indology, being a comparatively young field of studies,[25] may be granted the freedom to pursue research rather than reflect on it. The dictum of the first textual critic in the field, August Wilhelm Schlegel, holds still true: The student of Indian philology will not run out of work for a long time.

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[25] This is not the case in a strictly historical perspective, since Indology started fairly early. However, the few scholars working in the field have not been able to cover much ground.