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Walter Slaje, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

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Katrin Einicke und Andreas Pohlus

Roland Steiner (ed.)

Highland Philology

Results of a Text-Related Kashmir Panel at the 31st DOT, Marburg 2010

Dr. Roland Steiner, the editor of the present volume, is a member of the Mokṣopāya Research Group of the Seminar für Indologie, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The present volume is a collection of textual studies on various features of the history and culture of Kashmir. It is mainly based on revised versions of lectures delivered at a “Kashmir panel” held on the 22nd of September 2010 at the 31st German Oriental Conference (Deutscher Orientalistentag = DOT) in Marburg.

It deals with the transfer of India's sacred geography to the highlands of Kashmir in a miniaturized form (Walter Slaje), a previously unnoticed recording of an appearance of Halley's Comet in Kashmir by the poet-historian Śrīvara (Walter Slaje), the historical traces of vocal and instrumental music (*saṅgīta*) in Kashmir (Advaitavadini Kaul), as well as with the poetical figure *bhāṣāśleṣa* (simultaneous expression of different meanings in two or more languages) as a peculiarity of Kashmiri writers and critics (Michael Hahn). Further subjects are the formation of a specifically Kashmiri literary genre—the Kashmiri *kathā*—and the development of a special style connected to it (Luther Obrock), and the question, when, where and why did Bhaṭṭa Jayanta write his *Nyāyamañjarī* (Walter Slaje).

The last four contributions are about different aspects of the *Mokṣopāya* / *Yogavāsiṣṭha* literature: John Shore's lost translation of a Persian version of the so-called *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* which he already wrote in 1784 (Jürgen Hanneder), the special character of the fourth book (*Sthitiprakaraṇa*) of the *Mokṣopāya* (Roland Steiner), and the meaning of single words (*araghaṭṭa*, *saṁsārācakra*, *kośakāra*) used in the *Mokṣopāya* (Martin Straube). A reply to a review of a partial edition of Bhāskaraṇṭha's *Mokṣopāyaṭikā* along with general remarks on the “indological culture of debate” (Jürgen Hanneder and Walter Slaje) completes the volume.

Last but not least I would like to thank the editors of the *Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis* for accepting this volume into their series and Dr. Katrin Einicke for her careful supervision of the publishing process.

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Accident and Edition
John Shore's translation of the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*

Jürgen Hanneder

In the philosophy of the *Mokṣopāya* we find a peculiar mixture of accident and determination when it comes to explaining creation, for the creator Brahmā determines the future creation in a unique manner: his first accidental ideas automatically become the determining coordinates within his universe.¹ According to this text everything is produced by the mind and is thus no more than an insubstantial, “empty” imagination, and consequently the whole world is just a collective imagination of human minds within the mind of Brahmā. As we read in this text, fire burns upwards and water flows downwards, simply because the Creator had this idea in mind at the beginning of creation and for this reason no one within Brahmā's universe will be able to change these natural laws. In another universe created or rather imagined by another creator, the basic rules could be entirely different, so that in this theory of determination (*niyati*) the content of such “natural laws” is unpredictable. Brahmā's first thoughts are not premeditated, rather the opposite (*abuddhipūrva*), simply because the first ideas are by definition unprecedented and—as the *Mokṣopāya* would maintain—without a cause.

As we now know,² the *Mokṣopāya*, written in Kashmir in the 10th century, gained wider influence in a version transmitted by and adapted to an Advaita Vedāntic environment, where it was apparently understood as explaining their ascetic idea of liberation in life,³ the original use of the text in the instruction of *kṣatriyas* also continued, as can be seen from the instances, where it was recited to Indian rulers.⁴ Since the *adhikāra* for studying this work is not restricted, there was no reason why Muslim rulers of India should not be entitled to hear it, and we have evidence that they did.

It is tempting to use the *Mokṣopāya*'s theory of accident and determination to explain facets of the history of research on Indian literature. A good example could be the formation of literary canons in the early history of research on Sanskrit literature, which has been the subject of elaborate, but ill-informed overinterpretation. Theories were built upon the fact that, for instance, the *Bhagavadgītā* became so well-known and famous in

1 See HANNEDER 2006: 194ff.

2 Thanks to the research initiated by WALTER SLAJE. See SLAJE 1994.

3 As attested in the use of the work in Vidyāranya's *Jīvanmuktiviveka*. See SLAJE 1998 and SLAJE 1995.

4 HANNEDER 2006: 131–134.

the early nineteenth century,⁵ and that its immensely positive reception in Europe had repercussions in India. But such theories do not seem to take into account that the first selection of texts from an unknown literature are to an extent arbitrary that contradicts the notion of a premeditated canonization. Often works were edited or translated simply because they were available, or famous in the area the first researchers had access to, not because of their intrinsic value for a literary history not yet written. As one would expect, many of these first decisions were overturned through further research. The *Hitopadeśa* was translated frequently in the beginning of Indological research, only because it was widely known in Bengal, at the seat of the East India Company, but only until the *Pañcatantra* was discovered to be its source.

Of course, not all is largely accidental. WILLIAM JONES selected the *Śakuntala* for translation, because the Pandits advised him thus.⁶ It is difficult to imagine now how unclear even the most basic categories must have been at the time, despite unique field study conditions. For apparently in JONES' time, people had wondered what "Nátacs" could possibly be, and JONES himself first "concluded that they were dialogues on moral or literary topics; whilst other Europeans, whom I consulted, had understood from the natives that they were discourses on dancing, music, or poetry."⁷

When JONES himself enquired, the response still did not ring a bell: "when I was able to converse with the Bráhmens, they assured me the Nátacs were not histories, and abounded with fables; that they were extremely popular works, and consisted of conversations in prose and verse, held before ancient Rájás in their public assemblies, on an infinite variety of subjects, and in various dialects of India: this definition gave me no very distinct idea; but I concluded that they were dialogues on moral or literary topics [...]"⁸. It is instructive to see that an early comparatist was required to enlighten him on the genre: "At length a very sensible Bráhmen, named Rádhákánt, who had long been attentive to English manners, removed all my doubts, and gave me no less delight than surprise, by telling me that our nation had compositions of the same sort, which were publicly represented at Calcutta in the cold season, and bore the name, as he had been informed, of plays."⁹

5 MARCHIGNIOLI 2004: 245ff. To mention only a few points: the author refuses to acknowledge an academic interest in India on the part of the founders of Indology, thinks that there is "much evidence that German discourse on India began primarily as project connected to German culture's self-understanding" (p. 247). This is as banal (every attempt to study another culture earnestly makes us rethink our own presuppositions) as it is wrong, because it can only be explained by blurring all boundaries between academic and romanticizing approaches to India. In fact it is as meaningful as saying that in the 1980s German Indology was no more than the academic branch of the wide-spread Indomania within hippie culture.

6 For this and the following, see the preface to JONES 1796.

7 Preface (no page number).

8 Op. cit.

9 Op. cit.

When analyzing formative events as these one wonders how long such first decisions influenced the course of research, or whether some of them still do. But one may also muse about what had happened if the “first decision” had been different. Here historical accident comes into play, as the following example will show.

During the end of the 18th century not much was known about Indian culture in Europe. Only few so-called *orientalists* working in the administration of the East India Company devoted their leisure time to the study of Indian culture. With the foundation of the Asiatick Society and especially its journal *Asiatick Researches* the results of these studies became known in Europe. The members of the Society, who were probably best used to the language of administration, Persian, worked on translating texts from different languages, as one biographer explains:¹⁰

The effect of the concentration of the efforts of Students—who, notwithstanding the enlightened patronage of Mr. Hastings, had as yet found no rallying point—was, under the auspices of such a Leader, immediately perceptible. Mr. Halhed had previously contributed valuable aid to the prosecution of Oriental studies: and Mr. Wilkins completed in this year, in the hallowed precincts of Benares—whither he had retired, by Mr. Hastings's permission, for the purpose—his celebrated Translation from the Sanscrit of the Bhagavat Geeta; a work which Mr. Hastings describes, in an eloquent Preface to it, as a very curious specimen of the Literature, Mythology, and Morality of the Ancient Hindoos.

As is well-known the *Bhagavadgītā* soon acquired a special status, with the first critical edition by A.W. SCHLEGEL typeset in Bonn and widely discussed by German humanists, as WILHELM HUMBOLDT. The first play translated into German, the *Śakuntala*, even influenced what would become one of the most famous pieces of German literature: the introduction of GOETHE's *Faust* is inspired by the introductory dialogue between actors.

To the readers of secondary literature rather than historical records another figure of the time, JOHN SHORE, a close friend of WILLIAM JONES, will be much less well-known. The above description is from the biography of JOHN SHORE (1751–1834), Lord of Teignmouth, written by his son. JOHN SHORE,¹¹ whose father had worked for the East India Company but died early, was trained in England; among his schoolmates we find HALHED and HASTINGS. Through the help of a friend of the family he could travel to India in 1767 as a writer in the East India Company, and also as a translator of Persian. For a seventeen-year-old youth, the journey itself must have been daunting; members of the

¹⁰ SHORE 1843: 110.

¹¹ For the following, see STEPHEN and LEE 1917 (Vol. XVIII): 149–151. According to that source he was created BARON TEIGNMOUTH in 1798, when he left India after serving as governor of Bengal. There is also a brief biography including a drawing of SHORE in Teignmouth 1835.

crew succeeded in fighting duels at all stops, and shortly before arrival he fell so ill that he was almost given up. Then, at the age of 19, when two of his superiors were incapacitated, the writer was suddenly entrusted with the fiscal and civil jurisdiction of a large district. In the evenings he pursued his studies.¹²

So little had the utility of Oriental Learning been as yet appreciated by the Company's servants, that not three of them were conversant with any Oriental Language but Hindostanee; broken English being their only medium of communication with their native servants. Some of the future founders of the Asiatic Society had indeed, about this time, commenced their isolated grammatical and philological labours. Hastings had incited their ardour, by his example; and Wilkins had just reached India. But little facility or encouragement was afforded to those whose curiosity directed them to an apparently unpromising field of investigation. Mr. Shore perceived the advantage to be derived from the study of the Oriental Languages. His industry embraced at once the Hindostanee, Persian, and Arabic. Nor did he neglect the Bengalee though not essential, as the natives with whom he sought conversation spoke Hindostanee. In the prosecution of his elementary pursuits, he was in a great measure his own pioneer. He acquired the Hindostanee Language through the medium of colloquial intercourse. It was his practice to employ an individual who had held the office of Story-teller in the service of various Nabobs, in narrating to him, as he reposed after dinner, tales extracted from the works of different authors.

There is no positive evidence, but it is not unlikely that his story-teller also narrated to him the *Yogavāsistha*, who would thus have followed the old practice of imparting lessons on detachment to the king¹³ faltering in his duties, and promising to him that through this detachment he would be able to be liberated while leading an active life. From the Indian perspective such instructions would be most befitting to a youthful judge suffering under his obligations. The reason for making this connection is one passage from SHORE's letters:¹⁴

12 SHORE 1843: 80f.

13 Five historical cases from the 10th to the 18th century are given in HANNEDER 2006: 132f.

14 SHORE 1843: 94.



George Richmond: John Shore, 1st Baron Teignmouth.
National Portrait Gallery, London; NPG ID: 5145

My illness before was more owing to the loss of my friend Cleveland than to any other cause. I had scarce recovered from that shock, when a severer came upon me. Human happiness depends upon too many contingencies, and time in a moment saps the weak foundation on which delight is built.

In the footnote his son and biographer tells us that this is a “Quotation from the *Jōg Bashust*”.

Of course SHORE tried to acquire a first hand knowledge of Indian literature and also had his own opinions as to which works he thought to be of most interest:

Mr. Wilkins, whose name is mentioned in the Preface to Halhed's Bengal Grammar, is the only European acquainted with the Sanscrit; and he has made some progress in translating a Hindoo book, called the Mahabharit. It contains history, fable, and religious and moral instructions. He might, in my opinion, have made a better choice.¹⁵

We also learn that at the time SHORE was—as other members of the Asiatick Society—very much interested in Indian culture and tried to defend it against the prejudices of the time:

Two assertions have been propagated in Europe: that the Hindoos will not explain their tenets; and that the Mahomedans, from their contempt of idolatry, have taken no pains to investigate the Hindoo religion. I differ from both. It is true that the Brahmins, in general, will not read the Bedes to Europeans (the Bedes are supposed to have been written by Birmha, at the inspiration of the Deity or Birmh) but they will communicate the purport of them. The fact is, that the Brahmins are, in general, very ignorant, and conceal their want of knowledge under the cloak of religious prohibition: and another reason is, that many absurdities must be attended to before truth can be developed; and Europeans are too apt to ridicule what appears absurd, or what they do not understand, and to treat their instructor less politely than they ought. Communication is thus effectually barred. I have in my possession Persian translations of many valuable Sanscrit books on Religion and Morality; and these were acquired within these six months only. A Brahmin is also ready to attend me whenever I want him; and from him I find I can depend on my Persian versions.

From his letters we can also glean an academic though sympathetic interest in Hinduism:

The Hindoo religion, as generally practised, is Idolatry: and is not the Roman-Catholic the same? Middleton's observations at Rome sufficiently prove it, I think. But, in fact, it is pure Deism, and has a wonderful resemblance to the doctrines of Plato. I doubt if any of his writings are more metaphysically abstract than some of the Hindoos.

In other words SHORE was an early oriental scholar, soon to be joined and also overshadowed by such figures as WILLIAM JONES and CHARLES WILKINS. In this early phase, while WILKINS was working on a translation of the *Bhagavadgītā*, he was also busy with translating an Indian text:¹⁶

¹⁵ SHORE 1843: 106f.

¹⁶ Op. cit.: 110f.

Mr. Shore meanwhile prepared Translations from Persian Versions of Hindoo Works, with the intention, which his return to England defeated, of comparing them with the original Sanscrit. In 1784, he translated, in three MS. volumes, the Persian version of an Abridgment of the Jôg Bashust, or "Instructions of Bashust," composed, like its original, in Sanscrit. This work is supposed to contain the doctrines delivered by Birmha, the Revealer of the Bedes, or the only existing original Scriptures of the religion of Birmha to his son Bashust. It consists of an eloquent exposition, replete with Oriental imagery, of the sublime but cold metaphysical theology, apathetic piety, and ascetic morals of the Vedanti School of Brahminical Hindooism. The redundancy of sentiment in this treatise must have rendered such an undertaking irksome to any one endowed with less enthusiasm and perseverance than its Translator; whilst the gloomy tenor of its reflections, harmonizing with his then saddened feelings, may be traced in his correspondence.

In troubles which had weighed heavily on his spirits, Mr. Shore had as yet experienced, in a degree far less than he afterwards realised, the consolations of the Christian Religion. He had been indeed fully impressed with a belief of its truths; and had ever felt so deep a sense of the Majesty of the Supreme Being, that he could not tolerate the profanation of God's holy name; and had endeavoured to impart to others his own convictions.

This "abridgment of the Jôg Bashust" was a Persian version of the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*,¹⁷ whereas the "original" was the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* proper. Of course SHORE could not have known that the original version of the text, the so-called *Mokṣopāya*, which was widespread only in Kashmir, had never come under the influence of the Vedānta school.

Following a conflict with MACPHERSON SHORE returned to England in 1785, on the same ship as his friend HASTINGS. He married and in 1787 again left for India, joining the supreme council, and eventually acting as governour-general of Bengal from 1793 until 1798. Being a good friend of WILLIAM JONES, he succeeded him as president of the Asiatic Society from 1794. According to his son the separation from his family and his political duties led SHORE to neglect his Oriental studies, but in one of his letters, dated 1786, he gives another reason:¹⁸

The business which detains me here allows me very little leisure; and I should not hesitate paying a visit to Oxford, not only for the pleasure of commencing a personal acquaintance with you, but to avail myself of your assistance in looking over the MSS. The very little encouragement I have met with, since my return to England,

17 FRANKE 2005: 113–129.

18 Op. cit.: 122.

has abated much of my zeal for prosecuting my investigations into the Hindoo Literature or Religion. I had prepared some translations of Persian Versions of the Hindoo Authors; and was at the trouble, before I left Bengal, to collate them with the original Sanscrit; but there are so few who have any curiosity to read them, that I have taken no further trouble about them; and the Jôg Bashust, or Jôg Vesesht, which is the name of the book I translated, is consigned to dust.

The *Dictionary of National Biography* unfortunately confirms the loss of this pioneering work.¹⁹ Although it is difficult to understand the British disinterest in Indian literature now, for those involved it must have been an obvious impediment to their work. Another early member of the Asiatick Society, ALEXANDER HAMILTON, the direct or indirect teacher of almost all German Indologists of the first generation, wrote sarcastically in an anonymous article in the *Edinburgh Review* of 1811 about the exclusive concentration on political and economic matters:²⁰

Would an accurate translation of the Purāṇas, in the least curb the ambition of Buonaparte? What effect could the most profound commentary on the Veda have, in procuring for the nation a wise, a strong, and an energetic ministry? Would the price of candles be sensibly reduced, by the most luminous disquisition on the Hindu Triad? [...] Nay, we could not even conjecture what argument Brahmā himself could use at the Alien-office, to prevent his being ordered to quit the country, until six months after the conclusion of peace,—or at least until the resumption of cash payments by the Bank.

HAMILTON, it has to be remembered, despite his pioneering interest in the study of Old Indian Culture, was employed as a teacher of Indian languages for those joining the East India Company and was known as the Sanskrit teacher of FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL, but almost forgotten in England—no one was able to write the obituary requested by an English newspaper—, and hardly anything was known about him until ROSANE ROCHER wrote his biography through painstaking research in archives.

In TEIGNMOUTH's case an important factor that turned him away from Indian studies was his own religious conviction. TEIGNMOUTH would become a leading figure among the *Clapham evangelicals* in later life and at least his son maintained—if we interpret the above quotation correctly—that a prolonged interest in oriental religions would have amounted to a profanation of God's name. If we read his response to Major SCOTT

19 "He translated in three manuscript volumes the Persian version of an abridgment of the 'Jôg Bashurst', but afterwards destroyed them in consequence of the little encouragement which his translation of Persian versions of Hindoo authors received." Op. cit.: 151. Please note another fanciful variant for transcribing of the name of the text.

20 ROCHER 1968: 103.

WARING, who in his *Observations on the Present State of the East India Company* had given the recommendation of “recalling every English Missionary, and for prohibiting the circulation of the Scriptures in India”,²¹ we can see a strong missionary conviction.

Perhaps it is through this change that some of his earlier activities went unnoticed. According to his son and biographer he had written a poem “The Wanderer”, which contains a description of the deity Brahmā influenced by his work on the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*:²²

During the last and most laborious year of this period of his residence in India, amid the turmoil of employments most uncongenial to poetical feelings, he soothed the weary hours of sickness by commencing and completing the greater part of a Poem, entitled “The Wanderer”; the plan of which was suggested by the painful circumstances of his separation from his country and kindred; but embraces, as it proceeds, the results of his Oriental Researches, and especially the sublime mysteries of that Metaphysical Theology which he had laboriously investigated in the Translation of the *Jōg Bashust*. It would be idle to trace the flight of his Muse through regions which have been explored by a bolder and less-encumbered wing. That her freshness was unimpaired, and her vigour still salient though chastened, is evinced by several passages; amongst which may be selected the following description of Bremh, or Bramha, the Creative Energy of the Deity, or Deity itself of Brahminical Hindooism: [...]

Everyone interested in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* will be stunned to see that as early as 1785 TEIGNMOUTH had not only translated the Persian version, but was aware of the Sanskrit source and also of the fact that the original, too, was in Sanskrit.

If we look at the chronology of events around the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, we notice that the voluminous commentary on the text by Ānandabodhendra was written only 70 years before,²³ the commentary by Bhāskarakaṇṭha on the *Mokṣopāya* recension perhaps a century earlier.²⁴

However, the most spectacular finding is that JOHN SHORE even used ideas from the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* in his poem “The Wanderer” in his description of Brahmā:²⁵

21 SHORE 1808: vi.

22 Op. cit.: 199f.

23 GOLZIO 2004: 301–303.

24 Bhāskarakaṇṭha was a disciple of Ratnakaṇṭha, whose last dated work 1685/86 suggests the end of the seventeenth century. See SANDERSON 2007: 422.

25 SHORE 1808: 199.

In Bliss, where rapt devotion never stray'd—
 In Light, impervious as the midnight shade—
 Eternal, Infinite, All-wise, alone,—
 From man conceal'd, and e'en by gods unknown,—
 Bremh, purest Essence, to no form confin'd,—
 Dwells, and contemplates his exhaustless mind.
 He will'd—Creation rose by measur'd laws;
 Himself, the Maker, work effect and cause;
 Though varied, ONE; though single, ALL; reveal'd
 In endless modes, in every mode conceal'd.
 Sole Source of Being! Whence, in constant tide,
 Perception's living emanations glide;
 Of Nature organiz'd, the immortal soul,
 That warms, inspires, dilates, impels the whole.
 In matter veil'd, not mix'd, this vital fire,
 Amidst the gloom of passion, sense, desire,
 Unconscious burns; till, freed from carnal ties,
 Elastic, glowing to its source it flies.

Here, in the seventh line, we find the idea introduced at the beginning of this article. That the history of research on this very text would be another instance proving the applicability of this peculiar combination of accident and determination, he could not know.

Had his translation of the Persian *Yogavāsishṭha* been published before 1800, an edition of the Sanskrit text would have appeared much earlier and the perception of the importance of this work would presumably be quite different, because it would have appeared in the same group of texts as the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Meghadūta*, *Śakuntala*, *Gītagovinda*, or indeed the Upaniṣads, also first translated from the Persian. But SHORE did not publish it, turned away from his earlier studies and the *Yogavāsishṭha* now seems to be a latecomer to our histories of Indian literature and philosophy and does not really fit into the categories formed without it.

Thus this example may caution from building arguments on inferred intentions connected to a literary canon of Sanskrit texts; with more thorough historical research such intentions may well disappear in thin air. But the example may also induce us to speculate on what would have happened, if accident had ruled only slightly differently: What would have happened if not SHORE, but WILKINS had become so involved in Christian issues to give up his interest in Indian literature before publishing anything, while SHORE would have in the meantime translated the Sanskrit *Yogavāsishṭha*. It is tempting to imagine that SCHLEGEL and HUMBOLDT would have conversed not on the unpublished *Bhagavadgītā*, but on the *Yogavāsishṭha*. It is a safe guess to think that they would have been fas-

minated by its narratives packed with creativity, its anti-sectarian world-view, not to mention its unusual philosophy.

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Contributors

Prof. Dr. MICHAEL HAHN	Fachgebiet Indologie und Tibetologie, Philipps Universität Marburg
Prof. Dr. JÜRGEN HANNEDER	Fachgebiet Indologie und Tibetologie, Philipps Universität Marburg
Dr. ADVAITAVADINI KAUL	Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi
LUTHER OBROCK, M.A.	Department of South & Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley
Prof. Dr. WALTER SLAJE	Seminar für Indologie, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
Dr. ROLAND STEINER	Seminar für Indologie, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
Dr. MARTIN STRAUBE	Seminar für Indologie, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg