

Religions de l'Inde : études shivaïtes

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To Edit or Not to Edit

THE following is a brief summary¹ of a series of lectures held at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in March 2015. They aimed at explaining the rationale for editing unknown Sanskrit texts by adducing as concrete examples some ongoing editions at Philipps-Universität Marburg. Another aim was to provide an overview of the historical and current editorial principles as well as indological attempts at solving the problems involved in editing.

Modern Translations into Sanskrit

One blind spot in the history of Sanskrit literature is certainly the genre of translations *into* Sanskrit. It is well-known that Sanskrit authors were hesitant to deal with and recognise foreign cultures in writing. When they did, it is all the more interesting.

One example for this would be the translation of Don Quixote into Sanskrit. It was produced by the Kashmirian Pandit Nityananda Shastri and Jagadhar Zadoo between 1935 and 1936, and the credit for making this known goes to S. N. Pandita, who described these translations briefly in a chapter of his book on Marc Aurel Stein.² The background given there is roughly as follows: When Stein was trying to acquire funds to continue his researches, the Harvard Sanskritist Charles R. Lanman tried to find support for his Central Asian tours, Stein was invited to give lectures on Central Asia in Harvard, and the University eventually funded his expeditions. It was in Massachusetts that he met Carl Tilden Keller (1872–1955). After studying in Harvard, Keller worked as an accountant in Boston, and was a renowned book collector interested among other things in translations of Cervantes' Don Quixote into various languages of the world. The Houghton Library

1. A monographical version is being published as: *To Edit or Not to Edit*, New Delhi 2017 (Pune Indological Series 1).

2. S. N. PANDITA, *Western Indologists and Sanskrit Savants of Kashmir*, Siddharth Publications, New Delhi 2002. See there *Kashmiri and Sanskrit Translations of Don Quixote*, p. 269–287.

of Harvard University houses his collection, which contains one section devoted to his exchanges with Stein.³ Keller had asked Stein to organize a translation of the Spanish novel into Sanskrit and Kashmiri, which he did. In March 1937 Stein acknowledges the receipt of the translation, but—as with other project completed before the war—nothing more came of it. It has remained in the Harvard archive since then, has never been printed or studied. This is most unfortunate, since the Sanskrit text of Don Quixote immediately strikes the reader as unusually literal and thus an interesting departure from a pre-modern style of translation. Sometimes only a glance at the English version clarifies the Sanskrit syntax, which occasionally imitates the English as closely as to be almost incomprehensible. So how does the translator deal with Spanish realia? For instance, in one passage a group of Benedictine monks appear. The monks are called *saṃnyāsis*, but no such self-explanatory translation for their monastic order was possible, and thus the denomination is simply transcribed as *benediktain*. When something is paid in the Spanish currency *real*, the translator decided to transcribe the word in the way he would pronounce it, that is as *rīl*. Here he could have used the common *dīnāra* without much loss, so we are led to assume that the translator made it a point of not completely masking the foreign character of the text. This is, however, done with great circumspection. When it is said of one character in the English version that he is not “worth a farthing” the translator does not try to imitate the idiom, but uses a corresponding Sanskrit one: “he does not value him even as grass”.

Naturally there were rather complex problems to solve. When reading the following passage in the English version of Jarvis and pondering on how to turn this into convincing Sanskrit, one may get somewhat lost:

And immediately he said over the cruse above four-score Paternosters, and as many Ave-Marias, Salves and Credos, and every word was accompanied with a cross, by way of benediction [...]

Nityananda Shastri did fare well with this; he decided to retain what he could not translate, but then added something familiar to clarify the context:

sadya eva sa tasya śuddhyai aśītisaṃkhyākān pīṭara nōṣṭar āve meris sālvas kriḍoz ityādīmantrān viniyogasanvitān saṃjajāpa | maṅgalārthe ca pratipadam krōsacihnaṃ vinidadhau |

The Sanskrit reader will notice through this that the European prayers with their unfamiliar names were not unlike mantras. They were used for purification and to this end had to be accompanied with a statement of the application (*viniyoga*). Another such clarification concerns the cross, which, as the translator adds, is used *maṅgalārthe*. There are many other interesting loan-words like *paīmta* “pint” or *raunḍ-tebal vīra* “knights of the round table”.

The whole project of editing *Ḍān Kvikṣoṭa* began with leisurely afternoon reading sessions, which were pursued for a few semesters by Dragomir Dimitrov,

3. *Carl Tilden Keller Collection Concerning Sir Aurel Stein*. (MS Am 2532). Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Stanislav Jager, Maximilian Mehner, and myself, occasionally including other scholars as Martin Straube or visiting scholars like Chandra Bhushan Jha (Delhi) and Shrikant Bahulkar (Pune). They combined interests of the various participants, in Spanish, in Modern Sanskrit, manuscript reading, etc., but in the end it yielded more interesting results than expected.

From a modern Indian perspective a translation of Don Quixote into Sanskrit may seem negligible. The author of the first translation from Spanish directly into Hindi, Vibha Maurya, says in an interview⁴ that “there are translations of El Quijote into Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Kashmiri, and Hindi. But always made from English.”⁵ The earlier Hindi translation by the Sanskritist Chavinath Pandey (1964) she considers to be unsuitable for the modern reader, being written in a highly sanskritized Hindi.⁶ So it seems that the Indian Cervantes experts have failed to notice that this translation is a singular instance of an unusually literal translation of a European classic into Sanskrit. Whether this is the first translation into Sanskrit that is not in the classical adaptive style, I am unable to say, since to my knowledge the history of translations of European works into Sanskrit still needs to be written.

Of our next translator into Sanskrit, Sāhib Rām, we do not know a date of birth, but he probably died in 1872. He was employed at the court of the Kashmirian Mahārāja Ranbir Singh,⁷ whose reign gave a great impetus to the study, copying and printing of Kashmirian literature. Many works that now belong to the most interesting areas within Sanskrit literature were discovered when scholars made research tours to Kashmir and were assisted by the Kashmir government. The most well-known report was made by the German indologist Georg Bühler,⁸ who expressed his appreciation of the works of Dāmodara, the son of Sāhib Rām in no unclear terms:

As regards the present state of literary activity, I can say that I saw one really distinguished Pandit, who would be able to hold up his head anywhere,—Dāmodar, the son of Sāhebrām, the chief teacher in the Mahārāja’s Mudriṣṣa [...] His own poetical composition,—a continuation of the *Rājataranginī*, and a letter-writer entitled *Praudhalekhāḥ*, which he was good enough to read and to explain to me

4. Interview conducted in November 2007 by Ma. Teresa Elizarrarás for *Revista de Estudios Cervantinos* 4 (2007–2008).

5. “Se debe mencionar que existen traducciones de El Quijote en bengali, marathi, tamil, casamiri y en hindi. Pero siempre hechas del inglés.” *Ibid.*

6. “En el año 1964 la Academia de Letras de India publicó la primera traducción hecha del inglés por un profesor de sánscrito, el Dr. Chhavinath Pandey. La traducción contiene errores de comprensión del original, así como el lenguaje es arcaico, sanscritizado, por eso poco asequible.” *Ibid.*

7. See for instance Sukh Dev Singh CHARAK, *Life and Times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, 1830–1885*, Jammu 1985.

8. *Detailed Report of a Tour in Search of Sanskrit Mss. made in Kásmir, Rajputana, and Central India*, Bombay–London 1877.

for hours,—certainly surpass Śrīharsha and Bāṇa, and can be only compared to Subandhu's *Vāsavadattā*.⁹

Now Bühler, at least for German indologists, is of some authority. Why international Indology never even looked at the works of Sāhib Rām and his son Dāmodara therefore remains a mystery to me. Perhaps they never fitted into academic fashions and did not seem to matter to Indology. The interesting question of course remains: Even if Bühler was only mildly exaggerating the literary quality of the works of Dāmodara, was he correct?

Solving this question is unfortunately not so simple. Since a few years I have tried to motivate students with an interest in editorial work to take up some of the unknown pieces in Stein's collection of Kashmirian manuscripts. The first result was the so-called *Fifth Rājataranṅinī* of Dāmodara edited by my student Bidur Bhattarai in Marburg,¹⁰ a continuation of those of Kalhaṇa, Jonarāja, Śrīvara including the editions by Śuka or Prājyabhaṭṭa. While the work was very interesting, it did not display the sparkling style Bühler was talking about. Stein's copy was prepared directly from the autograph, and it seems that Dāmodara passed away before finishing the work. Stein writes: "At the time that these passages are passing through the press news reaches me that this most learned and amiable of all Kashmirian scholars has fallen a victim to the epidemic now raging in the Valley [...]"¹¹ The apograph seems to reproduce the author's copy in much detail: we find that in few places the text is given in two columns, one contains a prose version of the text, the other a versified one. Most probably Dāmodara formulated his ideas in prose first and then put them into Ślokas, for the main part of the text itself is metrical. This is one of the rare and interesting cases, where we can look into an author's workshop!

Then we have a so-called "letter-writer"¹² attributed to Dāmodara, which Stein describes as follows: "Specimens of letters, composed by the late Pandit Dāmodar by order of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. Original copy, sold to me by Pt. Mahānandajīva, son of Pandit Dāmodar, who attests that this letter-writer was adapted from a Persian text. Srinagar Sept. 30, 1892 M. A. Stein."¹³ If we look at this text, we find letters addressed to various recipients, to the "son" (*apatya*), to the head of a village, to the king (*rājānam prati vijñaptipatrikā* fol. 8), to a father (fol. 10ff.), uncle, guru (16ff), the rest is again devoted to an *apatya*. Since there is more than one hand involved and the quality of the text is in some parts problematic, it is doubtful whether this was really, as attested by Pandit Mahānandajīva, the "original".

9. BÜHLER: *Detailed Report*, p. 26.

10. *Critical Edition of Dāmodara Paṇḍita's Pañcamī Rājataranṅinī*, Master thesis., Marburg 2010.

11. Preface to M. A. STEIN, *Kalhaṇa's Rājataranṅinī. vol. 1. Sanskrit Text with Critical Notes*, Bombay–Leipzig 1892, p. xviii, n. 1.

12. For the genre, see I. STRAUCH, *Die Lekhapaddhati-Lekhapāñcāśikā: Briefe und Urkunden im mittelalterlichen Gujarat*. Reimer, Berlin 2002.

13. Ms. Stein or. c. 10, last folio.

Then there is another letter-writer attributed to his father, but partly written by the son, which is called “Lekhaśikṣā śrīpaṇḍitasahibrāmakṛtiḥ”. In this manuscript the name *sahibrāma* stands over a deleted *dāmodara*. An explanation is given in Stein’s description: “This copy was prepared from the original MS. of the author (written partly by him partly by his son Pandit Damodar) in September 1892. M. A. Stein.”¹⁴ From the copy we cannot know where the juncture was. It is written in Devanāgarī and has quite a few corrections by a second hand, which concern usually omissions and misspelt letters.

For possible candidates for the artistic style Bühler was praising, there are furthermore the fragmentary historiographic materials written not by Dāmodara, but by his father Sāhib Rām, which have been edited in another Marburg project by Anett Krause.¹⁵ After perusing these materials, it is possible to make sense of Bühler’s enthusiasm.

The second *Lekhaśikṣā*, which is attributed to both authors, is written in a highly artistic Praśasti-like style, which reminds one of the classical prose novel in Sanskrit, but its function as a model of courtly communication one could nowadays describe within the genre of “Huldigungsschriften”.¹⁶

Further indication of a high literary sophistication is not found in works of Dāmodara, but in one of Sāhib Rām. In what appear to be the unfinished materials for a *Rājataranṅiṇī* we find a description of the court of Ranbir Singh. One stanza there contains a multilingual paronomasia. Such *bhāṣāsleṣas* are not unknown,¹⁷ but they usually concern Sanskrit and Prakrit, where the task is to find words common to both languages, as if someone would write a sentence that could be read in Latin and in Italian. In Sāhib Rām’s text, which would be incomprehensible without his long auto-commentary, the Sanskrit yields in the third layer of meaning the names of some individuals in the entourage of Ranbir Singh. An interpretation of a whole stanza is beyond the scope of this summary, but I shall give one example.¹⁸

Ranbir Singh is described in one expression as *moṭīsimḥarasadgalo*, which is explained as “one, under whom wealth (*mā = lakṣmī*) accumulates (*ūti = vṛddhi*), and who roars like a lion” (*siṃharasadgala iti siṃhavad rasan śabdāyamāno galo yasya siṃhagarjanakārītyarthaḥ*), not an unusual imagery for referring to a king.

In the second layer of meaning the non-Sanskritic (*bhāṣā*) word *moṭī* is understood as “pearl” (*mauktika*). “Lion pearls” are understood as the “best pearls”

14. Ms. Stein. or. d. 34.

15. *Sāhibrāms Arbeiten zur Geschichte Kaschmirs: Erstedition und Analyse ausgewählter Textstellen*. Ph.D. dissertation, Marburg 2016.

16. See C. KLEINHUB, J. MANGEL (eds) *Vivat! Huldigungsschriften am Weimarer Hof*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2010.

17. See MICHAEL HAHN: “Der Bhāṣāsleṣa – eine Besonderheit kaschmirischer Dichter?”. In R. STEINER (ed): *Highland Philology. Results of a Text-Related Kashmir Panel at the 31st DOT, Marburg 2010*, Halle 2012, p. 77–105.

18. The passage is discussed by Anett Krause in her dissertation *Sāhibrāms Arbeiten zur Geschichte Kaschmirs*, p. 56f., see footnote 15.

shining at the kings collar (*moṭīsimhā mauktikaśreṣṭhāni tair hāralatārūpeṇa rasan lasamāno galo yasyeti*).

The third level of meaning is historically the most interesting and the one that explains the almost obscurantistic choice of the words *mā* for wealth and *ūti* for growth: *moṭīsimha* is of course Moṭī Singh, the third son of Gulabh Singh's brother Dhyān Singh. Now the question is: in what sense is Ranbir Singh's relative Moṭī Singh shining (*lasat*) at his throat? The question is relevant, since both Moṭī Singh and his brother had demanded land from Gulabh Singh via the British resident in Lahore. The land was not granted by the authorities, but Gulabh Singh gave it to him nevertheless and thereby pacified the potential conflict. The verse contains in the same hidden way the names of many other participants of the royal assembly and displays an extremely artistic mastery of Sanskrit. In any case the two examples are sufficient explanation of Bühler's praise directed to the son, but actually due to the father.

Sāhib Rām was furthermore translator of a Persian *nīti* work, the *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*, into Sanskrit under the name *Vīraratnaśekharaśikhā*, which is currently being edited in an interdisciplinary Indo-Persian project in Marburg.

How to Edit

In the field of textual criticism in European philologies we find a variety of methods, which Sanskrit criticism has inherited. There is firstly the meticulous application of stemmatics. Editors know that a critical edition needs a stemma, so it seems they produce one at all costs, that is, even where it has no effect on the editing process.

The fact that contamination is extremely wide-spread has led some Sanskrit editors to adopt an entirely different type of classical textual criticism to deal with contaminated recensions,¹⁹ the "Kontaminationskritik" as developed by Pasquali and others. This method may appear to be a roll-back before the time of Lachmann: from objective, stemmatic editing back to subjective decisions. But actually this impression is created only by the undue propaganda of Lachmann.

In the lectures the practices of textual criticism in pre-modern India and in 19th century Europe were analysed in much detail as well as the more current Indological solutions to the problem of editing.

Sāhib Kaul's Works

The works of Sāhib Kaul, an author of seventeenth-century Kashmir, are almost a blind spot in the literary landscape of Kashmir. Merely his *Devīnāmavilāsa*, a highly poetical verse commentary on the *Bhavānīsahasranāma*, which he wrote at the age of 24, has so far been edited, his other works, a substantial corpus of Stotras, ritual manuals (*paddhati*) and other treatises, have remained inedita.

19. See J. HANNEDER: "Introduction". In J. HANNEDER and P. A. MAAS (eds): *Text Genealogy, Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique*. [=WZKS LII–LIII (2009–2010)], p. 12.

Sāhib Kaul mentions the names of his works in the concluding verses to the chapters of the *Devīnāmaṅgīlāsa*, and many of these works survive in manuscript. Here is a list of his works:²⁰

Devīnāmaṅgīlāsa [edited in the KSTS], *Śivasiddhinīti*, *Gāyatrīmantrabhāṣya*, *Citsphārasārādvaya* [edition forthcoming], *Saccidānandakandālī* [edition forthcoming], *Śivaśaktivilāsa* [edition forthcoming], *Śārikāstava* [edition forthcoming], *Guruvṛttacintāmaṇi*, *Sahajārcanāṣaṣṭikā* [edition forthcoming], *Nijātmabodha* [edition forthcoming], *Candramaulīstava*, *Suprabhātastava*, *Gītāsāra*, *Jātakodāharaṇa*, *Kalpavṛkṣa* [edition forthcoming], *Kṛṣṇāvatāra*, *Śrīvidyānityāpūjāpaddhati*, *Śyāmāpaddhati* [edition forthcoming], *Hṛllekhāpaddhati*, *Janmacarita*.

Sāhib Kaul's works are not merely devotional Stotras: the so-called *Citsphārasārādvaya* is a soteriological dialogue, in which the disciple, seeing the suffering of existence (vs. 1c), speaks to his teacher (vs. 2), describes his mental state and requests to be shown how his own self is an abode of being, consciousness and bliss. The teacher, who is said to have found his own luminous self, listens to the words of the disciple, and now starts to teach from his own experience (4). Since the mind of the pupil is fortunately already pure, has escaped like a lotus the mud through his own power and has been washed with the waters of detachment, he is merely in need of the touch of the Sun, that is the teaching, to blossom (5). The setting reminds one of the *Mokṣopāya*, where Rāma, in a religious depression, has all the prerequisites to be liberated through this kind of religious didactic intervention.

At this point the author suddenly reveals his identity. It is Sāhib Kaul himself, or rather Śiva acting through him, who teaches the non-duality of the expanse of consciousness—hence the title of the work—to his pupil (6).

*evam śāntvanam asya satyavacasā kṛtvā svatantrātmavīti
sāhibkaulapade sthitaḥ sati mahāmāheśvaraḥ paścime
sacchiśyam vyapadiśya śāntamanasaṃ svātmasvarūpaṃ param
provāca prakṛtaṃ vimuktam atulaṃ citsphārasārādvayam* (6)

Having thus consoled him with true words, the knower of the free self, the great devotee of Śiva, residing in the last state of Sāhib Kaul, taught a true disciple, whose mind was pacified, about the supreme nature of his own self. Thus he taught this (*prakṛta*) free, incomparable non-duality of the expanse of consciousness.

In his disquisition the author uses the Vedāntic triple methodology of hearing, thinking and meditating, in the course of which insight is said to appear on its own accord (*svataḥ* 7d). According to the essence of the Vedic revelation, Śiva is always liberated, awakened, pure, etc. (8a), whereas the world is identical with him, consists of him, and appears thus, or is, real (8c). We find here in other words a curious blend of ideas from monistic Śaivism and Vedānta, and similarly in the next verse, where the eternal reality *brahman*, from which everything is born like waves from the ocean, is said to have an egoity (*ahantā*), and its realization is the

20. The forthcoming edition referred to is my critical edition of the works of Sāhib Kaul.

recognition of something forgotten (10). Here we do not find the term, but idea of *pratyabhijñā*.

It was already known from the *Devīnāmavilāsa* that Sāhib Kaul used especially the popular *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* of Kṣemarāja alongside other ideas, but the extent to which he mixes different strands of thought is well worth noting. Also in the *Citsphāra* we find pieces from the Kashmirian monistic Śaivism: Śiva is said to appear as someone else (*asaḥ* 12c), like an actor who plays different roles and cannot be recognized. The student is repeatedly urged to give up his limitations, the “contraction” (*saṃkoca*) that causes suffering. All fears will be groundless, once one’s own nature as Mahābhairava is realized (14).

In the text then follow appeals to the disciple in his state of religious despair to understand that he himself is Śiva, is all-pervading, pure, etc. Much of the work is just a rephrasing of this central message with the help of all kinds of religious doctrines and images. The emphasis is here not philosophical or systematical, it is like an individual instruction aiming at bringing the student to the intended realization of his or her true nature.

At the end of these lectures, the question, whether producing first editions makes a difference, should have answered itself. Even the brief overview on unedited Kashmirian texts²¹ shows our deficient picture of India’s literary history, but also that filling in the blank spots is possible, if only we continue unearthing unedited works.

21. The monographical version contains more examples of unedited or recently edited texts, the *Maṅkhakośaṭīkā*, the works of Sahib Rām, Sahib Kaul, Ratnakaṇṭha and Bhāskaraṇṭha.