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Introduction

The present volume of Cracow Indological Studies contains articles addressing different issues pertaining to a broadly formulated subject *History and Society as Described in Indian Literature and Art*. Its first part (Cracow Indological Studies, vol. 14) was devoted to visual and performing arts, as obviously the interpretation of sculptures, paintings, objects of craft as well as film art cannot be neglected while searching for pieces of information providing a better insight into the ancient and modern history of India. The articles presented in the second part use literary sources in order to examine diverse aspects of the past and present. Similarly to the first part, which contains in its subtitle the Sanskrit word *dṛśya*—'what should be looked at'—and in this way brings together the varied phenomena which can be described by this term, starting from ancient Indian theatrical art and finishing with modern Indian cinematography, the present volume's subtitle also refers to the indigenous Indian theory of literature, using the Sanskrit word *śrāvya* or 'what should be listened to', 'what is worth listening to'. This term covers both poetry and prose compositions. The authors of this particular volume bring manifold literary works, among them also scientific treatises and scriptures, which 'should be listened to' to readers' attention and analyse them in order to have

a better understanding of Indian society and culture. The essentially plural identity of Indian literature is represented in this volume by the pan-Indian Sanskrit literary tradition, Hindi literary culture encompassing the North of India and the most important and ancient among the South Indian Dravidic literatures, namely Tamil writings. The specialists explore a great number of issues: the relations between writing, history and ideology, gender, class, changing sensibilities, discourse and language—to name only a few.

The opening article by Tiziana Pontillo introduces the fascinating question of asceticism as a permanent life choice. The authoress quotes *Raghuvaṃśa* passages regarding renunciation as a praiseworthy act rather than an obvious course of life. She focuses on two relevant passages from the *Buddhacarita*: one of them presents Buddha's father, whose lineage probably did not observe the brahmanic *varṇāśrama* system, however wishing that his son would go successively through prescribed stages of life and not renounce the world too early. Indeed, Aśvaghoṣa's work reflects the socio-religious conflict between the brahmanic inclusivistic theory of four ordered stages of life and the Buddhist encouragement to renounce the world (here the latter path is unusually called *ārṣamārga*). The article elaborates also on the term *sūkṣma dharma*, interpreting it as an 'uncertain common *dharma* path', constituting the point of departure for both, the true Buddhist *dharma* and the brahmanic *śrauta* reform.

The next paper, "Political Metaphors in the *Mahākāvya*. The Conceptual Metaphor THE STATE IS THE HUMAN BODY in Māgha's *Śiśupālavadha*", authored by Anna Trynkowska, applies cognitive linguistics methods in order to study the metaphor. The selected stanzas concern politics, a subject which appears prominently in Sanskrit court poems, and the conceptual metaphor under discussion is "the state is the human body". Trynkowska shows it in the relevant passages of Māgha's poem entitled *Śiśupālavadha*. Perhaps it is not surprising that the majority of examples provided by Māgha focus on the condition of the state and its stability. The fitness of the human body is mapped onto political stability and the power of functional elements of the state. Political enemies

are conceptualized here in terms of diseases, causing an inappropriate condition of the human body. There are also stanzas naming these dangerous diseases, consumption being referred to most frequently. Trynkowska presents the set of mappings used in these metaphors, specifying the categories in the source domain (the human body, its structure and condition as well as the causes of an inappropriate condition of the body and their remedies) and the corresponding functional elements of the state in the target domain. The proposed method of analysis sheds more light on the structure of such stylistic devices and helps in a better understanding and noticing of their specific features.

The epic poem which Tomasz Winiarski discusses is the famous *Raghuvaṃśa* by Kālidāsa. The author has identified a very interesting passage in its sixteenth canto (verses 4–24), which presents a dying capital city in a very specific way. The main stress is on the role of the female characters in the description. Step by step Winiarski introduces the reader into the sophisticated technique implied by Kālidāsa, namely the process of deconstructing/reconstructing the image of the city, a subtle play between reality and illusion, the past and present, light and darkness. The images stereotypical and characteristic of *kāvya* literature are put into an unusual context and combined in unusual ways. As Winiarski points out, taking *kāvya* works as the source of knowledge "may be deceptive if one wants to know what the physical reality and the form of a city was", but "it is a valid and maybe the only source to answer the question of what it meant for Indians of that time. (…) the way urban life was rendered in stories and poetry was, and still is, a way to fully understand what the city was, how to be a part of it, and how to preserve its existence and meaning."

The following two papers deal with the Sanskrit historiography in South India.

Rajendran Chettiarthodi examines the *Mūṣikavaṃśa*, a poem written in the 11th century by Atula, as an example of sanskritization of regional history. Choosing Sanskrit as his medium and the *mahākāvya* as a form of expression Atula made an attempt to enhance the prestige of his patron, king Śrīkaṇṭha of the Mūṣika dynasty ruling over North Kerala.

Rajendran Chettiarthodi shows how historical facts are reconstructed or sometimes probably constructed within the framework of the *mahākāvya* genre, providing the reader with a list of conventional descriptions found in the poem (the sea, mountains, seasons etc.). Yet another example of sanskritization discussed here are Sanskrit equivalents of regional names. The author demonstrates also that Atula made use of classical mythology to legitimize the Mūṣika dynasty and the matrilineal system of royal succession, which was introduced later. The *Mūṣikavaṃśa*, similarly to other historical *mahākāvya*s, freely combines historical facts with mythical stories, but, as Rajendran remarks, lacks the critical attitude characteristic of the *Rājataraṅginī*.

The question of poetry in the service of political interests is discussed also by Lidia Sudyka in her article on the *Acyutarāyābhyudaya*, a little-known *mahākāvya* of Rājanātha Ḍiṇḍima. The authoress points out an unusual feature of the poem praising the Vijayanagara king Acyutarāya: true to the canons of classical poetry Rājanātha describes his patron's war campaign, but surprisingly the expedition turns out to be a pilgrimage. In fact, Acyutarāya entrusts the Salaga prince, Cinna Tirumala, with military actions against the Cera King and himself is absorbed in religious obligations, including enormous donations to the temples. The article discusses his consecutive visits to Tirupati, Śrīkālahasti, Kāñcī, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and Śrīraṅgam, comparing the relation of the poet with available inscriptions. Lidia Sudyka explains the reasons behind the selection of sacred places and their sequence which is by no means accidental. She observes that from the political point of view the royal pilgrimage was equally important as a military campaign: the support from powerful religious institutions was desirable by the king, who has been only recently consecrated. The authoress concludes that though it is uncertain whether Rājanātha's account of the royal pilgrimage is entirely based on facts, the poem must have had a considerable propaganda value.

The paper by Lidia Szczepanik deals with another extremely productive genre of South Asian literature, namely the messenger poem (*sandeśakāvya* or *dūtakāvya*). Such poems in their first part usually

show the route of an extraordinary messenger selected by one of a pair of separated lovers (a cloud, the wind, a peacock or another bird, a language, etc.) and the second part presents its reaching the destination and delivering the message. One could expect that while describing successive stages of a courier's journey, an author would provide some historically or culturally important pieces of information in connection with particular places on the map of India. And this happens quite often—the historical events and the names of people living in certain times and places are mentioned as well as customs characteristic of particular regions or important temples are named. Judging by the *Vāgmaṇḍanaguṇa-dūtakāvya* of Vīreśvara, also a short stay in prison can be included into a messenger's itinerary! Vīreśvara's depiction of prison life, although unexpected in Sanskrit *kāvya*, seems to be realistic and believable in opposition to the idealistic vision of the *Arthaśāstra*, as Lidia Szczepanik proves.

The essay by Yigal Bronner is devoted to a stylistic device *śleṣa*, or "embrace", which combines, as Bronner explains: "two or more topics, characters, or plotlines and convey them concurrently to their respective destinations, or targets." He stresses the importance and dimensions of the *śleṣa* phenomenon in South Asia. In fact, it is a self-conscious artistic movement with its demonstrable and meaningful history. The article is a kind of a guidebook to Bronner's by now famous monograph *Extreme Poetry: The South Asian Movement of Simultaneous Narration,* which at the same time adds a handful of new reflections and observations,[1] stressing the intensity of fascination with *śleṣa*-like phenomena in South Asian culture. The *śleṣa* richly inspired two professional discourses, namely those pertaining to the field of

[1] Among them Yigal Bronner mentions an interesting example of *śleṣa* from the *Stutikusumāñjali* (*The Flower-Offerings of Praise*), a praise-poem to the god Śiva, composed by the fourteenth-century Kashmiri writer Jagaddhara Bhaṭṭa and recently discussed by Stainton (Stainton, H. 2013. *Poetry and Prayer: Stotras in the Religious and Literary History of Kashmir*. PhD thesis, Columbia University of Columbia).

lexicography and "Sanskrit poetics, where *śleṣa* was identified, named, defined as a specific 'ornament of speech' (*alaṃkāra*), and analyzed at great length for well over a millennium and arguably ended up becoming the 'most discussed *alaṃkāra*'" (see p. 123).

The article by Katarzyna Pażucha refers to the history of Sanskrit poetics, being a discussion of the *Kavirahasya,* the first, and the only one available to us, chapter of the *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* (10th century) and the figure of a poet as described in it. The uniqueness of Rājaśekhara's treatise consists in the fact that the author focuses on the process of composing poetry and not, as his predecessors, on its final product. Katarzyna Pażucha strictly follows the organization of the *Kavirahasya*: at the beginning she presents Rājaśekhara's reasons for producing a handbook for poets, discusses the inclusion of poetry and poetics in different knowledge systems (*śāstra*s, *vidyāsthāna*s and *vidyā*s) and expounds a mythological account of their origin and their mutual relation. Then follows the discussion of other topics elaborated by Rājaśekhara, concerning the skills required of a poet, and form and content of poetry. The authoress draws our attention to the chapter containing advice regarding everyday life of a poet (place to live, day schedule, social relations), which leaves a somehow depressing impression that a poet is a craftsman, provided with specific tools and depending on his patron.

The next article, authored by Ewa Dębicka-Borek, concerns Sanskrit religious literature and deals with the worship of the *narasiṃhamantra* as described in the *Sātvatasaṃhitā* belonging to the *Pāñcarātra* tradition. Drawing on chapter 17 Ewa Dębicka-Borek analyzes the intricate procedure of the *narasiṃhadīkṣā* and the following worship of the *narasiṃhamantra* aiming at the acquisition of supernatural powers. The second part of the article is focused on chapter 16, which presents the whole practice comprising *narasiṃhadīkṣā* and the worship of the *narasiṃhamantra* as a preliminary purifying rite preceding the proper initiation. The authoress demonstrates that in certain circumstances the ceremony, described as removing sins committed in previous lives and accessible to all, might have had a converting

function. She arrives at the conclusion that initially the *dīkṣā* in question was meant for advanced adepts seeking magical powers and only later was it transformed into a purifying ceremony.

The next two articles by Mariola Pigoniowa and Danuta Stasik transfer us to the realm of the epic narratives of Rāma, bringing up the question of the ideally structured society.

Mariola Pigoniowa deals with the account of Rāma's rule in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and its connection with the topos of the four ages of humankind. The authoress shows that the long-standing reign of Rāma shares many common characteristics with the "golden" period, *kṛtayuga*, as described in various Sanskrit texts. In fact, the *Rāmarājya* with its ideal social order restores the *kṛtayuga*, a time of peace, affluence, high moral standards and uninterrupted happiness. Mariola Pigoniowa points out some mythical features (unusual natural phenomena) occurring in the descriptions of that perfectly ordered kingdom and arrives at the conclusion that its ruler should not be regarded as an ordinary mortal. Thus in the debate concerning the nature of Rāma, the authoress supports Sheldon Pollock's view that the king of Ayodhyā was a divine human.

The subsequent article concerns the *Rāmcaritmānas*, a popular 16th century North Indian retelling of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Danuta Stasik examines Tulsīdās's work as a code of conduct aiming at regulating the relations between different social strata and those in the family. At first the authoress discusses a common epithet of Rāma, *maryādāpuruṣottam*. In both poems, that of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Rāmcaritmānas*, Rāma is portrayed as a model man endowed with all virtues, unhesitatingly fulfilling his social obligations and as a perfect ruler establishing norms to be observed in everyday life in accordance with one's class and stage of life. Danuta Stasik explores the most important rules of conduct prescribed in the *Rāmcaritmānas*, referring chiefly to two passages, one condemning antisocial behaviours and the other blessing desirable actions. Finally, the authoress discusses the controversial passage granting Rām, as the upholder of

social norms, the right to modify them and to punish those who act contrary to the public interest.

The article by Danuta Stasik, devoted to the *Rāmcaritmānas* or "Divine Lake of Ram's Deeds", a work written in the pre-modern Avadhi dialect of Hindi, at the same time opens the section dealing with Hindi literature. In the next paper Piotr Borek challenges a monolithic concept of the so-called history of Hindi literature, which actually comprises the collective histories of various genetically close but still different languages such as Braj or Avadhi. The author argues that European categories had been imposed on the complex lingual situation in North India, with the aim of creating the supremacy of the Hindi language and neglecting diglossia or polyglossia typical of both oral and literary cultures all over India. On the other hand, it is diglossia as a specific feature of literary cultures of India, as Piotr Borek writes, which entitles both *bhakti* and *rīti* style works, although created in Braj or its dialectical variants, to be a part of the history of Hindi literature. However, in the nationalist discourse some literary traditions were labelled as more or less valuable. The *rīti* style was treated with disrespect because of its secular and erotic character while the *bhakti* poetry was highly appreciated due to its spiritual message. But as Piotr Borek points out, in fact, Braj became a cosmopolitan idiom due to the popularity of *rīti* poetry promoted also at the courts where Braj was not even the spoken vernacular. The coexistence of two or more languages legitimates the idea of history of a polyglossic literary culture, Borek concludes.

The article by Tatiana Dubyanskaya, entitled "Tyrants, Villains, Belles and Saints: Stereotyped Portraits of Muslim Characters in Early Hindi Novels", raises the significant and complex question of the Hindu-Muslim relationship and contributes to this interesting subject by analysing a relatively less researched field, namely the prose fiction and essays published in Hindi in North India in the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. The discussion of Muslim characters in the writings of Bharatendu Harishchandra, Devakinandan Khatri and Kishorilal Gosvami draws the conclusion that unfavourable images of Muslims, on the one hand, and the portraits of virtuous

Hindus, on the other, should be understood as enforcing communal binding of Hindus and seeking more reasons for national pride, rather than created in order to "humiliate the neighboring community or seek moral compensation for the reign over India in the past."

The article by Monika Browarczyk deals with *The Double Curse* of Kausalya Baisantri, the first Dalit woman autobiography in Hindi. Analyzing the text the authoress resorts to the philosophical concept of 'narrative self'. She observes that, dominated by autobiographical motifs, Dalit literature is regarded as a record of their oppression and struggle for socio-economic improvement. The autobiography of Baisantri, who in her youth was engaged in Ambedkar's movement, provides a valuable testimony of social changes. Monika Browarczyk stresses the fact that it is at the same time a story of an individual. We are confronted with a narrative of life marked, as Baisantri herself puts it, with a 'double curse', of being a Dalit and a woman, which involved constant fear, social exclusion, inferiority complex, the feeling of shame and humiliation. Monika Browarczyk examines the peculiarities of Baisantri's style: the uncomplicated syntax, colloquial Hindi in narrative passages, the prevalence of Sanskrit loanwords in sections containing exposition and argumentation. She discusses also her narrative techniques aiming at riveting the reader's attention and points out some recurring motives (obsession with food and cleanliness, gender inequality).

The next three papers again bring us from modernity back to the remote past as reflected in Tamil literature. Two of them concern kingship as shown in Tamil Sangam (*caṅkam*) literature.

Alexander Dubyanskiy concentrates on the royal attributes as depicted in the division of the old Tamil poetry called *puṟam*. The study gives interesting textual material and provides its analysis. The author stresses the connection of Tamil kings with plants and the symbolic meaning of certain objects as for instance royal scepter, the parasol and the drums, the important items in the image of an ideal ruler expressing his kingly power, are discussed in detail. The author shows a process noticeable in the corpus of the texts, namely "a certain

development from just naming the attributes to more complex poetical images, where a taken object becomes the field of an artistic play in which poets try to demonstrate their skill, imagination and wit."

Jaroslav Vacek in his paper examines Sangam literature in order to show how the Tamil kings and chieftains were described and what attributes of royalty were mentioned, including their linguistic frequency. In that way a useful list of "select data scattered in the texts and at the same time displaying some of the stylistic features, the most important being the formulas repeatedly used with the individual figures", is provided. The *puṟam* poems in particular add a lot to the picture of public activities, duties and obligations of the kings, chieftains and tribal chiefs, although *akam* or 'love poems' are not devoid of references to 'public' figures.

The last article in the section devoted to Tamil literature is "Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār's *Maṭal* Poems and Social History of Early Medieval South India" authored by Jacek Woźniak. Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār, a South Indian medieval poet-saint, probably living in the 9th century A.D., was an exponent of early Tamil bhakti ideology, focusing on Viṣṇu as the Ultimate Being. The word *maṭal* found in the titles of two works under discussion, namely *Ciṟiya tirumaṭal* ('Short Holy *Maṭal*') and *Periya tirumaṭal* ('Long Holy *Maṭal*'), refers to the custom of riding a horse made out of fan-shaped palmyra palm leaves, showing the desperation of a disappointed lover, ready to lay himself open to ridicule. A motif of riding a *maṭal* is known to the classical Tamil poetry of the pre-bhakti period. Jacek Woźniak tries to find the answer "why in order to describe his feelings towards God and to propagate new kind of religious devotion, Tirumaṅkai chose a humiliating and ridiculed act, known in the past."

The 12 contributions contained in this volume are reworked versions of papers presented during the International Seminar *History and Society as depicted in Indian Literature and Arts*, organised in 2011 by the Department of Indian Studies, Institute of

Oriental Studies, Jagiellonian University, within the framework of Milan/Prague/Kraków/Warsaw Research Group activities. Five more articles, by Yigal Bronner, Monika Browarczyk, Ewa Dębicka-Borek, Piotr Borek and Lidia Sudyka, which suited the subject of the present volume, have been included.

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Lidia Sudyka and Anna Nitecka

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